

## The Esther Currier Wildlife Management Area at Low Plain



The map shows features on a self-guiding nature trail and informs you about the wildlife and plants to be seen here.

Self Guiding Trail Notes are available on Pages 2 and 3. The numbers here and on the map correspond to numbered signs along the trails.

**Important Notes:** Please observe posted signs. This map does not give a right to enter closed areas. Please avoid disturbing the wildlife and leave all plants where you find them. "Dogs must be kept under strict control at all times" per Town of New London Ordinance. Please note that hunting is permitted in season. Hunters are warned that hikers use these trails. Foot travel only.

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1. Enter the area from the Route 11 where there is parking. The Davis Path leads to Mountain Road (about 1¼ mile). This path was a road to gravel pits in the 1960s and to old pastures before that. About ¾ mile along this path leads to two observation blinds on the beaver pond shore.
2. This side trail leads to an overlook. Approach slowly and quietly and you may observe some of the numerous animals and birds. A panoramic view of the beaver pond and Mt. Kearsarge can be seen.
3. On your left was a gravel hill, now excavated. The gravel was used in the construction of Route 11 near the area's entrance. This area is now overgrown with early successional forest species (alder, aspen, willow, grey birch, red maple and various shrubs). Note signs of beaver activity
4. Close to the pond shore you can see remnants of beaver lodges. The beavers change the location of their lodge to be near their current food source. A sign is posted on the trail to indicate where the active beaver lodge is at present.
5. This impressive beaver dam, has been maintained by beaver since the 1960s. A man-made "beaver pipe" in the dam helps keep the water level constant and prevents flooding. In addition, the beavers have had the benefit of human help to keep their favorite wood species growing here.
6. On both sides of the path here, painted turtles lay eggs in the sand in areas warmed by the sun.
7. A side trail here off the Davis Path leads to observation blinds on the shore of the beaver pond.
8. Here the trail divides: Turn right along the side of the esker ridge to an observation blind at Turtle Point or turn left along the side of a quaking bog on a trail leading to the observation blind at Marsh Point.
9. The Turtle Point observation blind provides concealed viewing across the beaver pond. Turtle Cove is one of the places where you may see turtles sunning on logs.

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10. Here the trail crosses the quaking bog, *Danger! Stay on the Boards!* This bog is in late stage of development and supports cotton grass, bog cranberry, leather leaf and tamarack saplings. The dominant plant is sphagnum moss.
11. The trail crosses the crest of the esker ridge. (The diagram shows how the esker was formed.). The trail leads down to the observation blind at Marsh Point. Many small trees are felled by beaver. But also see the huge birches cut!
12. The Marsh Point blind permits concealed observation of the many water and shore birds. *Quiet!* Ducks nest in this marsh and in the nearby nest boxes. These boxes are maintained for wood duck nesting sites but also used by hooded mergansers and some song birds.
13. Continuing along at the side of the quaking bog the trail rejoins the Davis Path. Here you can see the steep side of the esker ridge  
Turn left here to return to Route 11. Turn right to Mountain Road.
14. Big Pond, formed by gravel excavation, and vernal pools are where you may see salamanders and frogs. If trail is flooded here, take the short detour up on to the esker.
15. This boulder collection shows the variety of rocks carried by ice age glaciers. Pebbles found along the trail match these boulders.
16. This is the trail access from Mountain Road. Trail maps are only available at the Route 11 end of Davis Path.
17. Across Mountain Road, there is a short woodland trail loop to Shephard spring which is the source of Chandler Brook.

**Note:** *This area was named as a tribute to Esther Currier, a founder-member and, for 22-years, a member of the New London Conservation Commission. She identified the area's potential as a nature preserve.*

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