

Deer Browse Monitoring Program

The Conservation Division has partnered with the Minuteman Technical High School earth sciences program to develop a long-term deer browse data collection project for the purpose of measuring the impact of Lexington's deer population on the health of our forests. Students constructed one deer enclosure and adjacent control plot at Cranberry Hill Conservation Area in the spring of 2018 and will build two more during the 2018-2019 academic year. Researchers at Harvard Forest helped design the project; the data will be used both locally by the Lexington Conservation Division and regionally to help guide decisions about deer management.



New Shade Street Trail Easement Complete

In the summer of 2017, the Conservation Stewards completed a new trail connection through a new conservation restriction that runs parallel to Shade Street on land currently owned by King Street Properties and occupied by Shire. The trail, which connects Spring Street with an existing fire road and trail system on the property out to the corner of Shade and Weston Streets, is part of the ACROSS Lexington Route H.





Willard's Woods Daylighting Project

What is Stream Daylighting?

In urban design and urban planning, daylighting is the redirection of a stream into an above-ground channel. Typically, the goal is to restore a stream of water to a more natural state. Daylighting is intended to improve the riparian environment for a stream which had been previously diverted into a culvert, pipe, or a drainage system.

Why Do This Here?

The existing Willard Woods stone drainage culvert was failing and required replacement. This effort will both accommodate drainage needs but also improve habitat value. The Willard's Woods stream daylighting project was identified as a priority project during Town-wide watershed and stream assessment planning and is a part of Lexington Public Works efforts across the community to enhance drainage systems in an ecologically-appropriate way. For more information check out our [stormwater site](#).

The Project Also Includes:

- Construction of a pedestrian bridge across the “new” stream.
 - Construction of a vehicular bridge (for fire access) on the trail to Brent Road.
-
- Lexington Public Works Director: David Pinsonneault
 - Lexington Town Engineer: John Livsey
 - Lexington Conservation Administrator: Karen Mullins
 - Construction Contractor: SumCo
 - Engineer: Woodard & Curran, Inc.
 - Landscape Architect: Regina S. Leonard Landscape Architecture & Design

Funding: Town of Lexington

See our informational flyer

Ecological Restoration of the Idylwilde Old Community Garden Site

The Lexington Conservation Division and Lexington Conservation Stewards are restoring the old garden site at Idylwilde Conservation Area to improve wildlife habitat, protect natural resources, enhance access for visitors, and improve the aesthetic quality of the site.

Work began at the site in the fall of 2014 and is ongoing. To learn more, check out the [land management plan](#) prepared by Parterre Ecological.



New Wayfinding Signage System Pilot Project

The Conservation Stewards have developed a wayfinding signage system featuring colored directional arrows and informational signs; the system was piloted at Whipple Hill in 2016.

Signage was installed at Lower Vine Brook in 2017; plans to roll out the system at Willard's Woods are in the works for 2019.

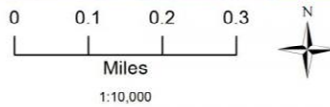
Lexington Conservation Lands

Town of Lexington Conservation Division • 1625 Massachusetts Avenue • Lexington, MA 02420 • 781.862.0500



Data provided by the Town of Lexington and the Office of Geographic and Environmental Information (MassGIS), Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

1/18



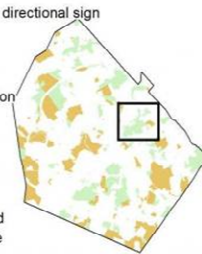
Lower Vine Brook

110 acres, 4.2 miles of trails (including the Lower Vine Brook Path). Lower Vine Brook offers a dramatic forested landscape shaped by a sand and gravel company that mined here until 1940. A paved recreation path runs along Vine Brook from Fairfield Drive to East Street and then continues along Vine Brook to North Street. A 14 acre parcel off of Vine Street purchased in 2009 through Community Preservation Act funding now connects the western and eastern parts of the area.

Access is from the recreation path, as well as from Utica Street, East Emerson Road, Vine Street, Webb Street, Hayes Lane, Laconia Street, Brookwood Drive, Saddleclub Road, and Fairfield Drive.

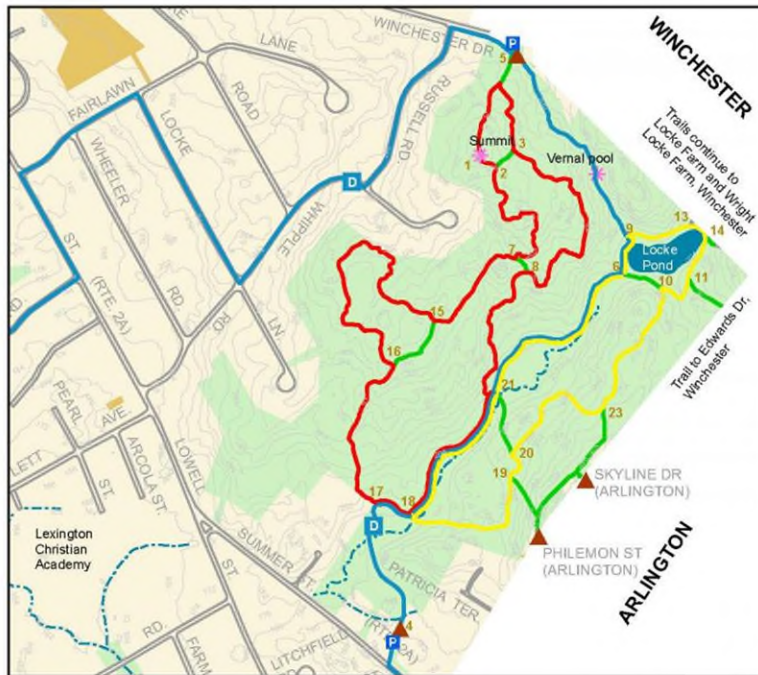
Legend

- 1 Numbered brown directional sign
- ▲ Entry point
- * Feature
- Red loop 1.43 mi
- ACROSS Lexington
- Connector trail
- Street
- Stream
- - - 10 ft contour
- Water body
- Conservation land
- Other open space



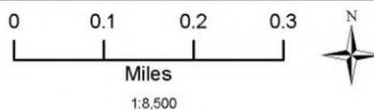
Lexington Conservation Lands

Town of Lexington Conservation Division • 1625 Massachusetts Avenue • Lexington, MA 02420 • 781.862.0500



Data provided by the Town of Lexington and the Office of Geographic and Environmental Information (MassGIS), Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

4/16



Whipple Hill

120 acres, 3.9 miles of trails. Whipple Hill is Lexington's second largest conservation area and includes the highest point in town, the summit of Whipple Hill (375 feet). Trails wind across ledge outcrops, through mature stands of northern hardwoods and white pines, and along Whipple Brook and Locke Pond. Many species of birds visit Whipple Hill, particularly during migration, and the vegetation is richly varied, including a few species that are considered to be uncommon to rare in our area.

Access is from Winchester Drive (with a small parking lot) and Summer Street in Lexington, and from Philemon Street and Skyline Drive in Arlington.

Legend

- Parking
- Entry point
- Numbered sign
- Feature
- Geology loop
- Farm / Wetland loop
- ACROSS Lexington
- Conservation trail
- Other trail
- Street
- Stream
- 10 ft contour
- Water body
- Conservation land
- Other open space



Meadow Restoration at Joyce Miller's Meadow

UPDATE: June 2018

The Conservation Division and Conservation Stewards completed the ecological restoration of Joyce Miller's Meadow in June 2018!

The project began in 2016 and involved the removal of approximately 3 acres of dense understory to re-open the former meadow. Joyce Miller's Meadow is Town conservation land situated adjacent to the Arlington Great Meadows and accessible via the Minuteman Commuter Bikeway.

The project — which improved the site for both wildlife habitat and enhanced recreation — was funded by the Community Preservation Act through a vote by Town Meeting 2015.

The project involved selective removal of both native and non-native trees and shrubs; removal methods included both tree and brush cutting as well as herbicide use on invasive species.

Additionally, the Conservation Division partnered with [Grassroots Wildlife Conservation](#) (GWC) — a Concord-based non-profit organization — to re-introduce several species of sandplain wildflowers once native to Lexington at the site. Volunteers from the Lexington Conservation Stewards worked with GWC staff to propagate these wildflowers in pots over the winter 2017-2016 and 2017-2018; a portion of the plants were installed in late August 2017 and the remaining flowers scheduled for installation in late summer 2018. One of the species, New England Blazing Star, is a state-listed *species of special concern*. Wildflower restoration work on the site will be ongoing.

Joyce Miller's Meadow — classified as sandplain grassland or shrubland by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program — evolved through a regime of periodic fire and boasts abundant populations of little blue stem grass, scrub oak, haircap moss and lowbush blueberry; the Conservation Division is currently researching the practicality and potential for using prescribed fire to manage the site in the future.





Before





After

Sandplain Wildflower Restoration

In 2016, the Lexington Conservation Division began a multi-year native wildflower restoration project aimed at enhancing sandplain grassland habitat in Lexington while providing important food resources for native insects, butterflies, and other pollinator species.

The Conservation Division has partnered with [Grassroots Wildlife Conservation](#) (GWC), a Concord-based non-profit organization, on the project; GWC is providing technical expertise as well as the wildflower seed for the project.

The highlight of GWC's work will be the propagation of [New England Blazing Star](#), a state-listed species of special concern. New England Blazing Star was once common to this area but is no longer found in Lexington.

In 2016, GWC planted approximately 275 sq. ft. of wildflowers, including New England Blazing Star, [wild lupine](#), [yellow wild indigo](#), and [butterfly milkweed](#) on the summit of Whipple Hill; Lexington's Girl Scout Troop 71659 assisted with this project.

GWC has also established several areas of sandplain wildflowers at Joyce Miller's Meadow and will continue work at the site through 2018 as part of the Conservation Division's Conservation Meadow Preservation Program.

Read GWC's [Restoration Proposal](#)

