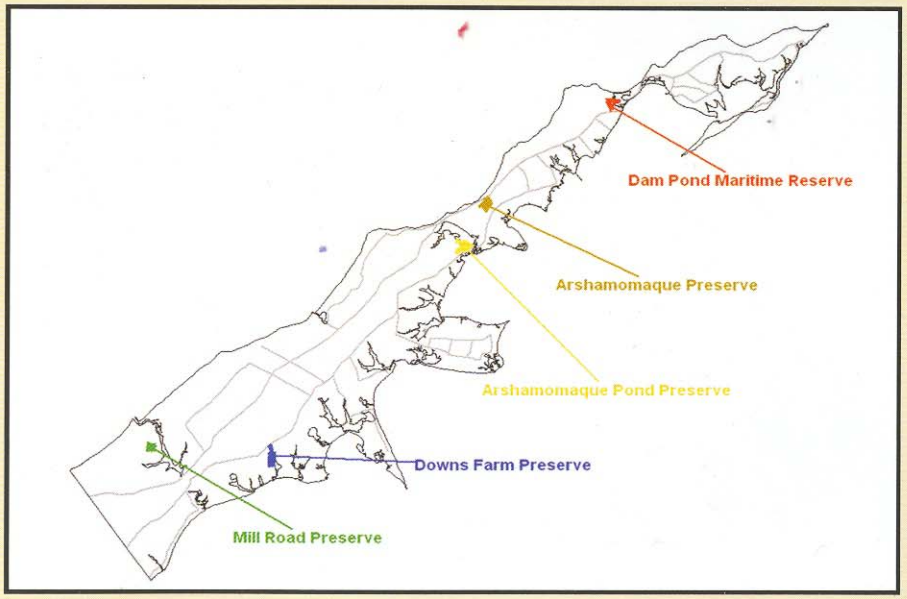
Welcome to Mill Road Preserve:

The Town of Southold purchased this 27-acre parcel in 2002. The preserve includes approximately 9 acres of flat, old-field shrubland/grasslands and 18 acres of mature woodland.

Site History:

The Mill Road Preserve is located in an area known as "Cox's Neck" after Samuel Cox, who had constructed a tidal mill on Mattituck Inlet in 1821. This was one of the earliest tidal mills in the country and was operated by incoming and out going tides until around 1902.



Help protect and maintain the natural beauty and wildlife habitat of the area.

Please:

Stay on designated trails.

Take nothing but pictures, leave nothing but footprints.

Leash your dog.

Check carefully for ticks after your walk.

Educational content provided by the Marine Program of:
Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
of Suffolk County

Cornell Cooperative Extension provides equal program and employment opportunities.

The Mill Road Preserve is open to the public year-round from dawn to dusk.

MILL ROAD

Mattituck N.Y.

Town of Southold

PO Box 1179
Southold N.Y. 11971
631-765-1800
http://southoldtown.northfork.net

Trail Guide

PRESERVE

Habitat and Wildlife:

The trail head of the preserve opens into the old-field successional shrubland/grassland community. The majority of the old-field community is dominated by little bluestem grass, goldenrods and asters, and northern bayberry. Eastern red cedars are found scattered throughout this area and a small stand of black locust trees have become established in the northern end of this community. The old-field community provides a variety of food sources, with the grasses and forbs (perennial herbs) providing seeds for bobwhite quail and several varieties of songbirds. Evidence of whitetail deer bedding down in some of the higher grasses can be found throughout the preserve.

The majority of the Mill Road Preserve is woodland. The forest at this site is a classic example of an American beech forest. The American beeches are the dominant species of tree in the preserve, but they are especially dense toward the property's northern boundary. American beeches stand out from oaks and other hardwoods due to their smooth, grayish-green bark and papery, large-toothed leaves. Another characteristic of a beech forest is the presence of the parasitic plant, beech-drop. This plant does not use sunlight to make it's food, but rather, it taps into the beeches root system and uses the food that the tree stores in its roots to grow and reproduce. Another characteristic of a mature, old-growth forest is the minimal amount of plants growing in the understory. Due to the thick canopy of the dominant trees, a limited amount of light penetrates to the forest floor. Few plants can tolerate this shaded condition, so the understory in an old, undistrubed forest is typically open. Squirrels, mice and deer are common in the woodland as there is an abundant supply of nuts to be eaten. There are several old dead trees that show evidence of woodpecker activity and include holes hollowed out for nests. In the morning, snakes may be seen basking in the sun before starting their hunt for rodents, insects and amphibians.

Site Map

Key:

Blue Trail — Preserve

Red Trail — i = Trail Head

For more information about this and other recreational opportunities in the Town of Southold, please contact:

Town of Southold
PO Box 1179
Southold NY 11971

631-765-1800
or:
http://southoldtown.northfork.net

TOWN OF SOUTHOLD SUFFOLK COUNTY, NEW YORK