



## Suggested Hike



**Recommended Easy Trail:** Start at the end of Nature's Way at the sign and kiosk. Enter the woods on the short White Trail. When the White Trail joins the Yellow Trail, bear left toward the Orange Trail loop. Take a right turn onto the Orange Trail loop. Follow the Orange Trail for approximately a ½ mile. When the Orange Trail rejoins the Yellow Trail, go left onto the Yellow Trail, back to the White Trail. Take a right onto the White Trail back to the parking lot.

**The WOODwide Web:** One fascinating aspect of forests is how trees share resources with each other through a network of fungi. Fungi form an underground web called mycelium, made up of tiny thread-like fibers. These mycelial fibers connect with tree roots, creating a vast underground network sometimes called the "WOODwide web." This network allows trees and plants to share water, nutrients, and even chemical signals. In dense, shady forests, young trees (called saplings) may not get enough sunlight to produce sufficient food through photosynthesis. These saplings can receive nutrients and sugars from older, more established trees through the mycorrhizal network. The fungi benefit as well by receiving sugars and other carbohydrates from the trees, forming a mutually beneficial relationship. It is amazing how trees and fungi work together to support the entire forest ecosystem? This relationship is vital for the health and resilience of the forest, helping to maintain biodiversity and allowing trees to thrive even in challenging conditions.



### Contact Us

Have an idea we should consider? Want to join our active team? Reach out to us via the contact information below:

Email: [Pelhampathways@gmail.com](mailto:Pelhampathways@gmail.com).

Web: [Pelhampathways.com](http://Pelhampathways.com)

*Community Trail Coalition Presents*

## LITTLE ISLAND POND CONSERVATION AREA



End of Nature's Way  
(At Sign and Kiosk)  
Pelham, NH 03076  
Park open dawn to dusk

**Welcome to Little Island Pond Conservation Area** (1,158 + 444 =1,602)

Little Island Pond Conservation Area is a hidden gem. This peaceful 21.5-acre woodland offers almost a mile of trails, including the easy and scenic Orange Trail loop. It's a perfect spot for anyone looking to connect with nature. This area is mostly covered in trees, with a few spots of shrubby wetlands. The Town of Pelham acquired the land with help from the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP). It adds value to the town by offering recreation, natural buffers for nearby neighborhoods, and a chance to see how forests are managed.

**Forest Types and Management** Little Island Pond Conservation Area mainly consists of white pine trees, mixed with some hardwoods, and wetlands. The soil here is great for growing white pine trees. To keep the forest healthy, it's important to vary the age of the trees and give them enough space to grow. The forest floor is already full of young white pines that will grow quickly after a harvest.

Stone walls found throughout the property remind us that this land was once used for farming, likely for grazing animals in the 1800s and early 1900s.



**Soils, Terrain, and Water** The property has well-drained, sandy soils that are good for growing white pine and oak trees. The rolling landscape slopes gently, mostly toward Little Island Pond. Two small streams run through the area, one in the northwest corner and another along the southern and eastern edges. These streams, along with two vernal pools (temporary pools of water), provide important habitat for wildlife and help control floods.

**Eastern White Pine Tree:** The eastern white pine is the most common pine tree in New Hampshire .It covers more than 500,000 acres of New Hampshire forests and plays a vital role in our economy. These trees have tall, straight trunks that can be 3 to 4 feet wide and soar up to 100 feet high. The tree's cones, which are a yellowish-brown color, can grow up to 6 to 8 inches long. Some of these trees are older than our grandparents, living up to 200 years, with a few even reaching the remarkable age of 450 years! They are the largest conifer trees in the Northeast. Eastern white pines are essential for wildlife. Many birds, such as bald eagles, great blue herons, and ospreys, build their nests in these trees. The trees are also home to animals that live in tree cavities, and they provide food for a variety of wildlife, including deer, rabbits, hares, songbirds, and small mammals.

**Pine Tree Pollination:** Pine trees are fascinating, with a unique pollination process. Unlike many plants that rely on birds or insects, pine trees utilize the wind for pollination. The male pine cones, which are located lower on the tree, release pollen into the air. This pollen, equipped with two air sacs, floats upwards toward the female cones at the top of the tree. When the pollen lands in a female cone, fertilization occurs, leading to the development of seeds. These seeds are protected within the female cone, which remains closed until conditions are favorable for seed dispersal.



*Male White Pine Cone*



*Female White Pine Cone*

**White Pine Needle Damage (WPND):** However, white pine forests are currently facing a challenge. A disease called "white pine needle damage" (WPND) causes the needles to turn yellow and fall off, especially during the growing season. This weakens the trees by reducing their ability to photosynthesize, which is how they make food. The problem has been getting worse due to warmer, wetter springs. Fortunately, good forest management practices are helping to protect these trees. By reducing the number of trees in areas affected by the disease, the remaining trees can become healthier and more resilient. Here in Pelham, all our conservation lands have a forest management plan, and the UNH Cooperative Extension Foresters are doing excellent work educating our community on how to care for these vital trees.

## Natural Wonders Cont.

### "The Mighty Bald Eagle: America's Majestic Bird"

The bald eagle has been a symbol of the United States since 1782! It was picked because of its strength, beauty, and long life. You can see it on the Great Seal of the United States, where it's holding an olive branch (for peace) and arrows (for strength). You can also find it on the back of U.S. coins!



Sadly, bald eagles almost disappeared in the mid-1900s because they lost their homes, were hunted, and ate food that had harmful chemicals like DDT in it. But thanks to people protecting them and stopping the use of bad chemicals, bald eagles have made a big comeback. They are still protected today, and in New Hampshire, there were 109 pairs of bald eagles in 2023!

Bald eagles live in New Hampshire all year. They have babies in the spring and summer. These birds are huge! They can grow to be 3 ½ feet tall, and their wings can stretch out 6 to 8 feet wide. The boys weigh about 7 to 10 pounds, while the girls can weigh up to 14 pounds. When they're young, bald eagles are brown and white. As they grow older, they get their famous white heads and tails. Their strong beaks and feet turn bright yellow!

Bald eagles love to live near lakes, rivers, and ponds. They build big nests near the water and can live up to 30 years! They usually find a partner and stay with them for life. They reuse the same nest every year, too. In March, the female eagle lays up to three eggs, and both mom and dad take turns keeping them warm. After five weeks, the baby eagles hatch! Bald eagles eat mostly fish, but they also like small birds, turtles, and animals that have already died.

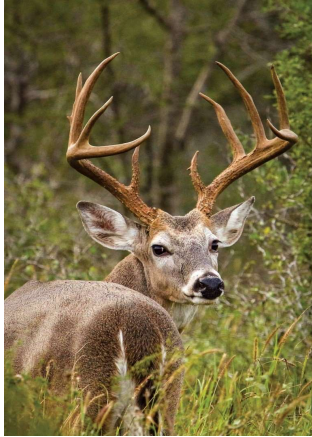
**Little Island Pond Wildlife and Biodiversity** This area is home to many different animals. The mix of uplands and wetlands supports various species, from frogs that stay in one spot to deer that move around. The flowing water, vernal pools, and dense forest offer food, shelter, and breeding grounds for animals like amphibians, reptiles, birds, and larger predators. The proximity to Little Island Pond and Peters Pond makes it a great spot for large birds like hawks and eagles to nest in the tall white pines.

**Landowner Goals and Management** The Town of Pelham is dedicated to keeping this area a multi-use conservation site, balancing timber management, wildlife habitat, water quality, and recreation. The town plans to harvest timber every 15 to 20 years to help the forest grow healthily while also earning some revenue. They are careful to protect the streams and wetlands by avoiding harvests during muddy seasons and maintaining buffers to keep the water clean. The town also maintains trails for activities like walking, biking, and snowmobiling.

**Recreational and Educational Value** Beyond timber and wildlife, the Little Island Pond Conservation Area is an educational resource. The trails left by logging have been repurposed for recreation, giving visitors a chance to explore the forest and see local wildlife up close.

**Conclusion** The Little Island Pond Conservation Area may be small, but it's a vital part of Pelham's natural landscape. Through careful management, it provides a place for recreation and wildlife while supporting the town's goals of sustainable forestry, water protection, and education. Whether you're looking for a peaceful walk in the woods or a chance to see New Hampshire's native species, this conservation area offers a slice of paradise at the end of Nature's Way.

# Natural Wonders of the Park



**Fun Facts About White-Tailed Deer:** White-tailed deer are amazing animals that live all over New Hampshire and especially here at Little Island Pond conservation Area! They get their name because they flash the white underside of their tails to warn others when they sense danger. Their bodies are tan or reddish-brown in the summer but turn grayish in the winter. New Hampshire is home to about 100,000 deer! That's a big jump from just 40,000 deer 40 years ago. You can find them in lots of places—farms, forests, mountains, suburbs, and even gardens. They are most active at dawn and dusk, and they usually stay within one square mile of their home.

**What Do Deer Eat?** In the summer, deer munch on green plants, but when fall comes, they love to snack on acorns, beechnuts, and corn. When winter hits, they switch to eating woody plants like twigs and buds from trees like birch and maple.

**Deer Antlers – Super Fast Growing Bone!** One of the coolest things about male deer, called bucks, is that they grow antlers—these are bones that shed and grow back every year! Antlers are the fastest-growing bones in the world, growing about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch every day! When the antlers are growing, they're covered in soft skin with fuzzy fur, called velvet. Velvet helps bring blood to the antlers while they grow.

## Fun Facts About White-Tailed Deer Continued:

Once they've reached their full size, the bucks rub the velvet off by scratching their antlers on trees. Bucks use their antlers to mark their territory and show who's boss by sparring with other bucks. Fun fact: once their antlers fall off in the winter, some animals like squirrels and mice like to chew on them because they're full of nutrients!

**Deer Babies (Fawns)** Deer mate in the fall, usually in November. Bucks can smell a female deer, called a doe, from about 150 feet away! In June, fawns are born. During the first year, a doe will have just one fawn, but after that, she can have two or even three babies at once!



**Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)** Sometimes deer can get a serious illness called Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). This disease can take a long time to show up but is always fatal. Symptoms include weight loss, drooling, and disorientation. It spreads through contact with sick deer or contaminated food. NH Fish and Game are trying to stop this by asking people not to feed deer and reminding hunters not to use urine-based deer lures.

# LITTLE ISLAND POND CONSERVATION AREA

TOWN OF PELHAM, NH  
 PELHAMWEB.COM/  
 FORESTRY-COMMITTEE



- PERMITTED**
- Walking
  - Bicycling - including e-bikes
  - XC Skiing and Snowshoeing
  - Pets (leashed)
  - Hunting (in-season and according to NH law)
  - Snowmobiling (only on designated trails)
- NOT PERMITTED**
- OHV
  - Camping
  - Fires
- Please carry out all trash

For mobile navigation, download the ESRI Field Maps app to your device and search for PELHAM TRAILS

Map by NRPC

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