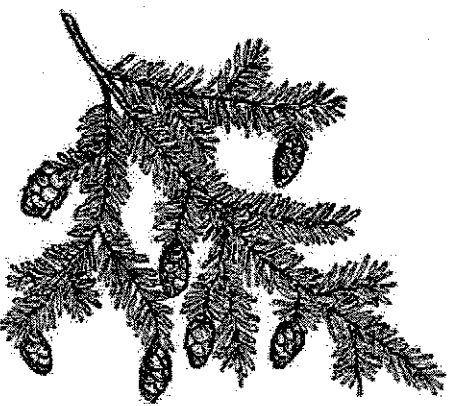


Directions

How to get to the Kimball Wildlife Forest

The Kimball Wildlife Forest is located off Route 11 in Gifford, New Hampshire. From I-93, take Exit 20 (Route 11) East. The trailhead and parking area are on the right side of Route 11 approximately 3 miles past the Laconia Airport.

From Alton, take Route 11 west. The trailhead and parking area will be on the left side of Route 11 approximately 13 miles from the traffic circle at the intersection of Route 11 and 28.

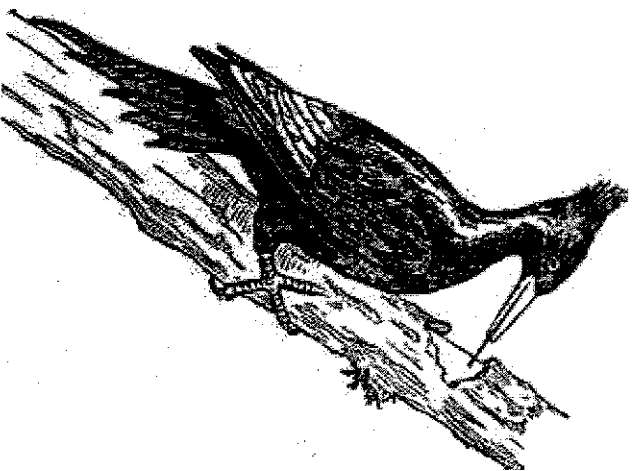


Trail Guide

Kimball Wildlife Forest

Lockes Hill

Trail Guide



Gifford, New Hampshire

Kimball History

The property known as Lockes Hill was once the estate of Benjamin Kimball, a successful Concord businessman who became president of the Boston and Montreal Railroad in 1895. While traveling in Germany, Kimball was so inspired by the castles along the Rhine River he built a castle on Lockes Hill overlooking Lake Winnepesaukee. The location was chosen for the glorious panoramic view.

The castle was constructed between 1897 and 1899. Some of the stone used in the castle was quarried from the south side of Lockes Hill and hauled by teams of oxen and horses. The old quarry sites and tote roads are still visible along the Quarry Trail.

The property consisted of approximately 280 acres and was used by Ben Kimball until his death in 1920. The property passed to his wife and then to his daughter-in-law, Charlotte. She spent summers at the castle until her death in 1960.

Charlotte Kimball established a trust for the land that stipulates that the property be utilized for the study and enjoyment of wildlife habitat. In 1981, the Town of Gifford was appointed trustee of the property by the State Attorney General. The castle is now privately owned.

The natural resources of the Kimball Wildlife Forest are managed for education, recreation, wildlife, and timber. Timber harvests are designed to enhance wildlife habitat, protect water quality and aesthetic values, and provide a sustainable supply of wood products. The Kimball Wildlife Forest is a certified Tree Farm.

Visitor Information

The Kimball Wildlife Forest is open daily, free of charge, to the public from sunrise to sunset.

This is a passive use area. Hiking, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing are permitted; camping, fires, overnight parking and motorized vehicles are not.

All pets must be kept on a short leash and controlled at all times.

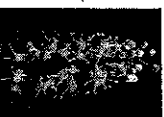
Please carry out what you carry in to the benefit of all.

The Kimball Wildlife Forest is a habitat demonstration area of 280 acres maintained by the Town of Gifford with assistance from the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension for the purpose of increasing public awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the relationships between wildlife and their forested habitats.

For additional information about the Kimball Wildlife Forest, please contact:

Gifford Board of Selectmen
Town Hall
47 Cherry Valley Road
Gifford, NH 03249
(603) 527-4700

If you become lost on the trail or need assistance in any way, please call "911".



Trail Information

The trail system, which includes the Lakeview and Quarry Trails, is marked with blue rectangles. Together, the trails form a loop that begins and ends at the trailhead parking area accessed from Route 11, and connecting at the Lockes Hill beacon. There are interpretive stations along the trails that will help you to better understand the natural history of the Kimball Wildlife Forest.

Lakeview Trail

0.65 miles, walking time 30 minutes, with moderate to steep terrain

This trail begins at the trailhead parking lot in a mixed forest of softwoods and hardwoods, including a fair amount of hemlock trees, which will increase in number as you ascend. The trail ascends Lockes Hill by a series of switchbacks with many rocks in the trail that can be used as stepping stones. In spring, you are likely to see the blooms of Canada mayflower, wild sarsaparilla, and starflower, all common wildflowers of the northern woodlands. The forest is also home to many common woodland birds, including year-round residents: black-capped chickadee, both white and red-breasted nuthatches, and several species of woodpeckers.

As you get closer to the top, notice the large boulders that start to appear. These boulders were deposited by glacial activity thousands of years ago.

Shortly before the top, you will reach "The Glade." This opening was cut to create a wildlife habitat opening and also to access a spectacular view of Lake Winnepesaukee and the Ossipee Mountains. You are encouraged to step off the trail and into the opening to enjoy the best views.

After the Glade the trail ascends more gradually to the powerline right-of-way at the top, where there is a spur trail to a view. This low shrubby opening is great for many bird species and is a logical place to look for warblers in the spring. The blueberries, which can be found directly under the powerline, provide food for many birds and mammals. Blueberries need full sun to thrive; notice how abruptly they stop growing at the line of trees surrounding the powerline. This open area also has maple and oak stump sprouts which are eaten by deer.

The Lakeview Trail meets the Quarry Trail at the Lockes Hill beacon, the largest utility pole at the top of the hill with the light on top.

Quarry Trail

1.15 miles, walking time 45 minutes, moderate terrain.

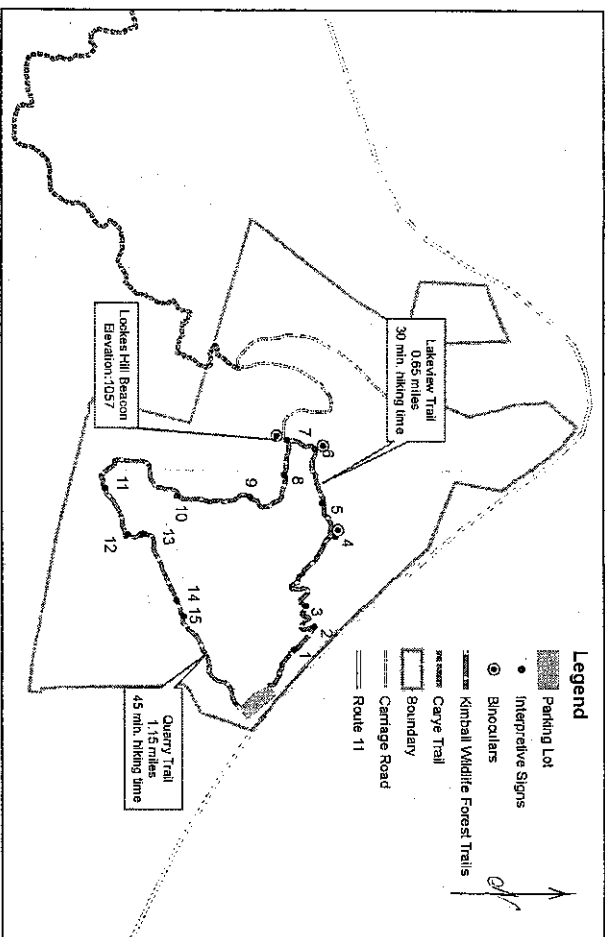
The Quarry Trail begins from the far side of the trailhead parking lot and immediately follows an old logging road to an open log landing area. After the landing, the trail is clearly marked with blue rectangles.

As you hike up the trail, notice the damage on your right—the bent tree tops and the hundreds of broken and downed trees on the ground—caused on this hillside by the Ice Storm of 1998.

Shortly after the ice storm slope you will come to a rectangular pool. This pool is actually part of an old quarry site where stones were cut to build the castle. The quarry pool is now used in springtime as a breeding site by amphibian and invertebrate species. Unfortunately, one of the invertebrates that makes use of this pool is the mosquito! Understory plants around the pool and brook include many species of ferns, jewelweed, hobbleshush, and a variety of asters.

Trail Information

The trail system starts approximately one hundred feet from the entrance to the parking area off Route 11. The trail is marked by blue rectangles with interpretive stations indicated by numbers.



After the quarry, the trail ascends through a lush hardwood forest with maples predominating. You'll soon come to a small gravel and ledge rise which will bring you up to the oak plateau.

Contrast the forest of the ridge with the forest just down the hillside. The plateau, with its thinner, drier soil, can't support the lush forest that you saw below. Instead, there are more oaks, hemlocks and fewer understory plants.

The trail follows the ridge and ascends gradually moving between dense stands of hemlock and more open hardwoods. Close to the top there are many

rocky outcroppings which are frequently used by porcupine for dens. It's a much more open habitat, called an "oak savannah," that was created by a fire many years ago. There are occasional views at these outcroppings.

When you reach the powerline right-of-way and the Lockes Hill beacon (the largest utility pole at the top of the hill with the light on top,) there is a short spur trail to your left that takes you to a nice view of the Belknap Mountains. The beacon is also the junction of the Lakeview Trail.