

PRESERVE CONTACTS



The Nature Conservancy
Protecting nature. Preserving life.™

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FUNDING ASSISTANCE

This guide was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnerships Program, Environmental Stewardship Fund, under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation. The grant was awarded through the South Mountain Partnership with management oversight of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy.



Cumberland County is a partner of the South Mountain Partnership, an alliance of organizations working to preserve and enhance the cultural and natural assets of the South Mountain Landscape in Central Pennsylvania. To learn more, visit www.southmountainpartnership.org



SOUTH MOUNTAIN
PARTNERSHIP



MOUNT HOLLY MARSH PRESERVE

TRAIL MAP & GUIDE



CUMBERLAND COUNTY, PA

HISTORY

The Mount Holly Marsh Preserve was acquired in 1992 by The Nature Conservancy with the assistance of the Holly Gap Committee, a group of local community members who raised funds to permanently preserve the land. Today, the property is owned by Cumberland County and managed in cooperation with The Nature Conservancy.

The area now called the Mount Holly Marsh Preserve has a long and fascinating history. The lands were believed to be utilized early on in American history by the iron industry to support nearby furnaces and forges. In the 1800's, the lands were owned by the Mount Holly Paper Company. During this period, Mountain Creek was dammed to supply water and generate power for the nearby paper mills. In 1863, Confederate soldiers passed through the Holly Gap on their way to defeat in Gettysburg and raided many of the paper companies to supply the government in Richmond.

Around the year 1901, the area was transformed into the famous Mount Holly Gap Park, a summer resort. The resort was owned by Patricio Russ, principal stockholder in the Carlisle and Mount Holly Railway. People would come from miles away and ride the "Trolley to Holly" and enjoy the many recreational activities at the park. The resort boasted a dance hall, concerts, bowling, boating, hiking, ball fields and even a roller coaster and ferris wheel. The nearby springs also offered cold, clear water, which prominent physicians touted for its medicinal qualities.

Mount Holly Gap Park prospered for nearly fifteen years before experiencing a decrease in visitors with the advent of the automobile and eventually closed in 1917.

Today, there is very little evidence of the preserve's rich history. The dam on Mountain Creek was breached in the late 1980's but the earthen wall and foundations of the spillway still remain.

RECREATION

The Mount Holly Marsh Preserve is a perfect spot for hikers and nature lovers. Primary activities within the preserve include hiking and the observation of birds, plants and other wildlife. The preserve features approximately 7 miles of trails ranging from easy to difficult.

Hunting is permitted in accordance with Pennsylvania Game Commission regulations. Fishing is permitted along Mountain Creek. Mountain Creek has been designated an "approved trout waters" and is stocked by the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission.



ECOLOGY

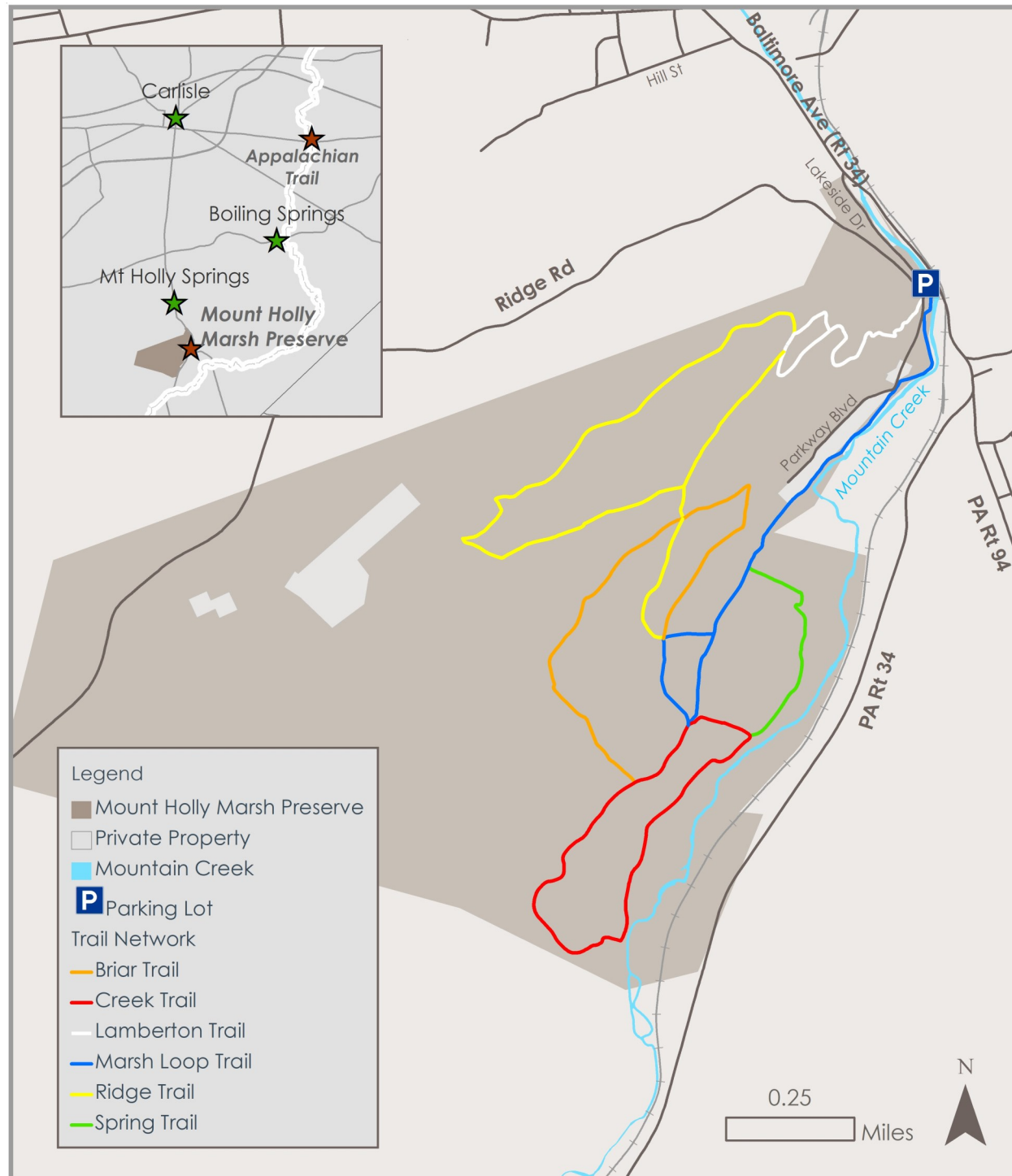
The Mount Holly Marsh Preserve is a 900+ acre natural area along the rocky slopes of the South Mountain. The preserve consists of a 700 acre upland forest and a 200 acre marsh preserve.

The ridge top is dominated by pitch pine and chestnut oak with an under story of huckleberry, blueberry and mountain laurel. In the valley, where several springs feed into a marshy area, you will find black ash, red maple, winterberry, spice bush, holly and poison sumac.

The preserve is inhabited by a great variety of wildlife including:

- Painted and snapping turtles
- Muskrats
- Minks
- Northern copperhead snakes
- Turkey
- White tail deer
- Mallards
- Wood ducks
- Canada geese
- Great blue herons
- American woodcock

TRAIL & LOCATION MAP



TRAIL INFORMATION

Marsh Loop Trail is approximately 2.2 miles (out and back) and is marked with blue blazes. The Marsh Loop begins at the parking area and is the starting point for the park's trail network. Follow this trail to connect with the Spring, Creek, Briar and Ridge Trails. For an easy hike, try this trail.

Lamberton Trail is about 1 mile (out and back) of steep, rocky terrain marked with a white blaze. This trail is best left to more experienced hikers. The Lamberton Trail begins near the parking area.

Spring Trail is about 0.5* mile long (one way) and marked with green blazes. Take this easy path to view the bountiful, bubbling spring.

Creek Trail is about 1.4* miles (loop) in length and is indicated with red blazes. For an easy to moderate hike, try this scenic trail.

Briar Trail is about 1.2* miles (one way) and is marked with orange blazes. Hikers who want a moderate challenge should try this trail.

Ridge Trail is about 2.2* miles (out and back) of moderate to steep, wooded terrain marked with yellow blazes. Hikers who want more of a challenge should take this trail.

*Mileage stated does not include the distance to get to the designated trail via the Marsh Loop Trail.

Trail Tips

- In wet seasons, portions of the marsh preserve may be inundated with water, as the area is a natural wetland. During these times, some trails may be unsuitable for hiking.
- Cumberland County embraces the Leave No Trace code of ethics that promotes the responsible use and enjoyment of the outdoors. To learn more visit www.LNT.org.

PLAN YOUR VISIT

The Cumberland Valley and South Mountain region offer a variety of unique experiences and outdoor opportunities to round out any trip. After exploring the Mount Holly Marsh Preserve visit one of these locations for more outdoor fun!

- Appalachian Trail & AT Museum
- Children's Lake in Boiling Springs
- Cumberland Valley Rail Trail
- Colonel Denning State Park
- Conodoguinet Creek Water Trail
- Kings Gap Environmental Education Center
- Michaux State Forest
- Pine Grove Furnace State Park
- Waggoner's Gap Hawk Watch
- Yellow Breeches Creek Water Trail

For information on these locations and more things to see and do visit:



DIRECTIONS

The entrance to the preserve is located off the 100 Block of S. Baltimore Avenue/PA Route 34. Address for parking lot: 1 Lakeside Drive Mount Holly Springs, Pennsylvania 17065

From Carlisle – Travel south on Route 34 through Mount Holly Springs, about 6 miles. You will pass the former Deer Lodge Restaurant on the right. Immediately after Deer Lodge, turn right onto a gravel road at the "Smokey the Bear" Fire Danger sign. The road will follow Mountain Creek for approximately 1/8 mile. The parking lot for the preserve is located on the left.

From Shippensburg or Harrisburg – Take Interstate 81 to Exit 47A (Hanover Street/Route 34) and then follow Carlisle directions.