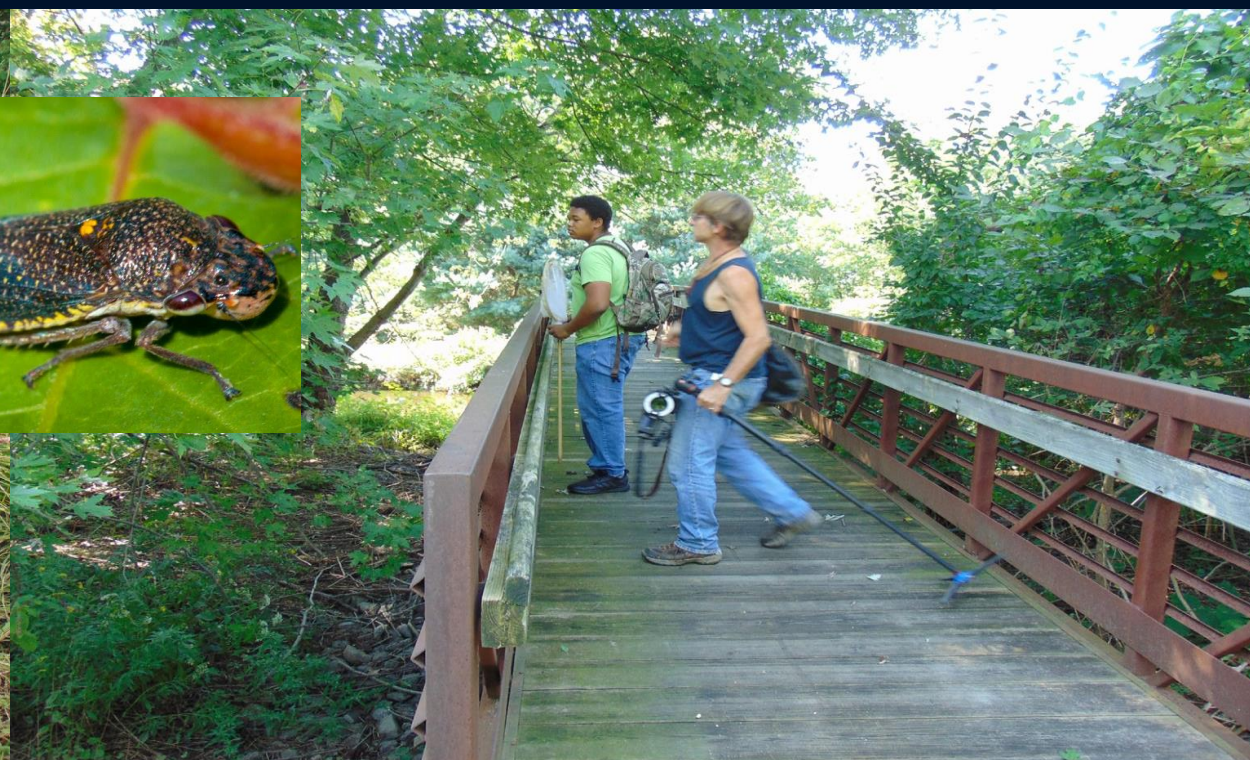
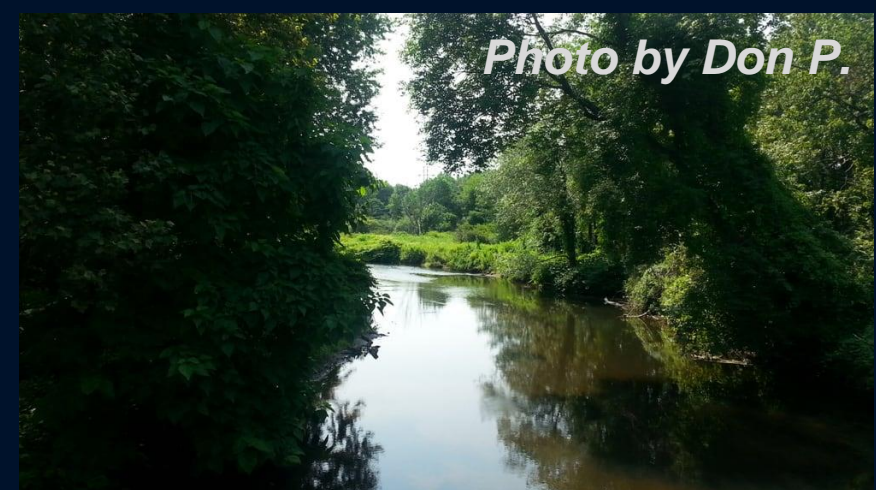




LAUREL MARSH TRAIL

part of the Hockanum River Linear Park



Fauna and features of Laurel Marsh Trail. From left to right: Brown Hooded Owlet (*Cucullia convexipennis*) larva feeding on goldenrod, habitat restoration trail poster, Speckled Sharpshooter Froghopper (*Paraulacizes irrorata*), bridge over Hockanum River, and Pure Gold Green Sweat Bee (*Augochlora pura*).

Issue

- Rich in biodiversity, centrally located in CT, and an important connective part of the Hockanum River Linear Park, the Laurel Marsh Trail has potential to be a much more valuable resource to local and regional communities.
- Relatively unknown to the public, the park has had problems with vandalism, illegal dumping and significant alien plant invasions including Japanese knotweed, Multi-flora rose, Buckthorn, Phragmites etc.
- High voltage powerlines, the odoriferous town landfill and waste water treatment plants impact the public's perceptions.

Floral & Faunal Surveys

- Conducted seven walking surveys taking pictures & recording species
- Between 9/30/18 – 3/2/19
- Fall asters and goldenrods well represented
- Major fungi year due to high rainfall
- We will continue survey visits to compile spring and summer species



Clockwise from upper left: Fly amanita (*Amanita muscaria*), Monarch caterpillar (*Danaus plexippus*), Showy Aster (*Eurybia spectabilis*) with Common Eastern Bumblebee (*Bombus impatiens*) & Turkeytail (*Trametes versicolor*).

Project Goals

By conducting multiple species surveys over the seasons and showcasing the park's biodiversity, we hope to make it more attractive to hikers, birders, families and school groups. Our goals are:

1. Develop a working list of floral and faunal species to document the biodiversity present.
2. Create trail guides (printed and online) that hikers can use to identify species encountered.
3. Produce an internet-based interactive trail map of the Laurel Marsh Trail that the public can access with their cell phones while hiking.

Trail Guides

- Warren used Track Kit smartphone GPS App to take waypoints
- Focused on diversity in the various ecosystems
- Photos by D. Cappaert
- Visitors will see laminated trail posters inside trailhead kiosk with updated species lists
- When completed the interactive trail map will be posted at Google Maps



(Upper right) Current damaged trail species list to be replaced & (lower left) current vandalized kiosk to be repaired

Internet-based Interactive Trail Map

We are developing an interactive trail map using Track Kit & Google Maps to mark points of interest along the trail loop with stories and pictures that the public can access using their cell phones. This interactive map will highlight the following:

Common plants & animals IDs: special focus on trees (using bark), shrubs, ferns, & insects

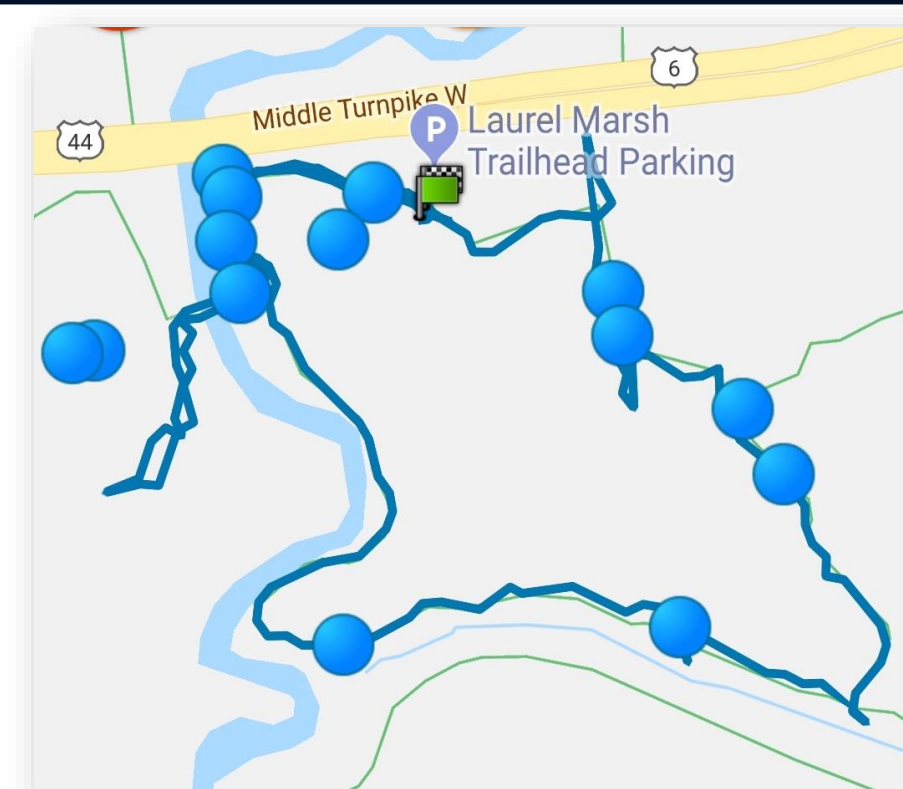
Invasive species IDs

Hockanum River ecology & history

Children sensory tour of plants and natural objects they can touch, smell, taste & hear

Water quality testing opportunities

Winter animal tracks



Screenshot of the track and waypoints in Track Kit to be used to create an interactive map. The waypoints are linked with pop-up info & pictures.

Next Steps

Dedicated volunteers are working to remove alien invasive species and restore native plant communities but there is a need for additional resources to be provided by Manchester and the State of Connecticut to repair and enhance entry way signage & seating as well as the extensive boardwalk system that allows access to the extensive flood plain ecosystem. We will work further with all stakeholders to help make this park a more valued and utilized recreational and educational resource.

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