

The Appleton Preserve is a 124-acre woodland along the St. George River in Appleton. A one-mile trail provides visitors with an excellent opportunity to experience the many natural features of the property and to learn about forestry practices. The preserve is open to the public, free of charge. The Georges River Land Trust acquired the property in 2006 with financial assistance from the Land for Maine's Future program.

The preserve offers high quality wildlife habitats along the river, a floodplain forest, open wetlands, and upland forests dominated by conifers. Plant diversity is high with more than 200 species of vascular plants in seven different community types. The most dominant community type is the hemlock forest, which includes small patches of Red Maple Sensitive Fern Swamp in low-lying riparian zones.

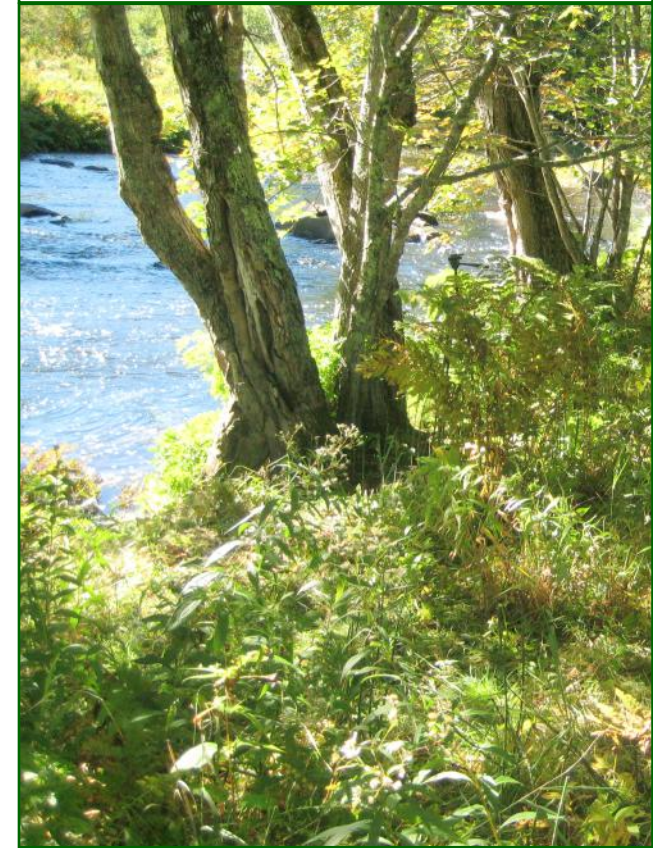
The upper portion of the property, near Route 131, is a heavily used deer wintering area, while the riparian corridor along the St. George River is considered important wading bird habitat by the state. Rare species found in this section of the river include the yellow lampmussel and the brook floater fresh water mussel.

#### DIRECTIONS TO THE PROPERTY

From the intersection of Routes 131 and 105 (Camden Road) in Appleton, go east on Route 105 for ½ mile. Parking for the Appleton Preserve is available at the ME Inland Fisheries & Wildlife gravel lot on the right, just before the bridge across the St. George River.

# APPLETON PRESERVE

Route 105/Camden Road, Appleton, ME



## GEORGES RIVER LAND TRUST

Our mission is to conserve the ecosystems and traditional heritage of the Georges River watershed region through permanent land protection, stewardship, education, and outdoor experiences.

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## Appleton Forestry Trail

### SELF-GUIDED TOUR OF A DEMONSTRATION FOREST

The primary management objective for the Appleton Preserve is to protect wildlife habitat and natural features while offering appropriate recreational access to the public. Georges River Land Trust also emphasizes conservation of the traditional heritage of the region, which includes protecting working lands (farms, forests, waterfronts) and providing educational opportunities for the community. To this end, a secondary management objective for the Appleton Preserve is to demonstrate responsible and sustainable forest management techniques with public education as a major component of forestry-related activities. Parts of the preserve have been harvested for timber and the forest is in various stages of regenerating.

Please use this guide as you explore the demonstration forest.

1. **Remnants of the Georges River Canal.** The canal was hand dug from Warren to Quantabacook Lake in Searsmont. Begun in 1793 by Charles Barrett, the canal was completed in the 1840s by General Henry Knox. Men using poles pushed barges along the canal, which was only three feet deep. The canal was abandoned in 1850. Better evidence of the canal can be seen along the GRLT canal trail between Ghent Road in Searsmont and Route 105 in North Appleton.
2. **Old apple trees.** Apple trees are very long lived, often living 150 years or more. Old apple trees in the Maine woods are usually evidence of an old farm or homestead. Because many small farms were abandoned due to industrialization, much of the farmland grew back to forests. Maine was 65 percent forested in the mid-1800s and is now 90 percent forested, the most heavily forested state in the nation by percentage of forest land.

3. **Abandoned field.** This field naturally reseeded to Eastern White Pine in the early 1990s. White pine loves sunlight; many old fields in Maine return to white pine when they are no longer maintained.
4. **Log landing.** The staging area of a logging operation is called a log landing. This area was used for that purpose in the winter of 2012-13. The landing is starting to reseed itself naturally to white pine because of the plentiful sunlight.
5. **Recent skidder trail.** A skidder is a tractor-like machine with cables used to drag out logs when harvesting timber. This area was selectively harvested in 2012-13, providing income to the land trust. Logging was located away from more sensitive areas and positioned to enhance wildlife habitat and natural regeneration within the harvest area. The trees that were left are now providing the seed for the natural reproduction that is occurring.
6. **Tree stand.** Newly reproducing forest areas provide food for wildlife. Hunters and others recognize this and love to use these areas for hunting, observing, and photographing wildlife.
7. **Shelterwood area.** Overstory trees that were left during the harvest are providing seeds for reproduction and, at the same time, they are providing partial shade to protect the new young pine from a damaging insect, the White Pine Weevil. This insect, which prefers full sunlight, severely deforms the young pine by feeding on the center stem (the leader).
8. **Old skidder trail.** The trail seen here dates from a harvest that took place around 1995. Notice the regrowth – with smaller trees under the bigger trees that were left in the overstory.
9. **Multistory forest.** This understory has been growing since 1990-95 and the overstory dates from about 1950.
10. **Riparian zone.** An area close to a stream or other body of water is called a riparian zone. In the winter when the snow is deep, deer use this area as a deer yard, which has a heavy overstory of softwood trees that catch much of the snow, making it easier for deer to maneuver. These areas often get over-browsed, so it is important to have young growth nearby for deer to eat.
11. **Seasonal stream.** In the spring this brook has brook trout in it, but during dry summers, the stream dries up.
12. **Old growth area.** From a forest management perspective, this stand contains valuable timber. Mature Eastern White Pine, the most valuable timber tree in Maine, are surrounded by old growth Eastern Hemlock that are also used for framing lumber. Balsam Fir are a much shorter-lived tree and are dying and falling out of the stand. Notice the fir on the ground and others that are dead and about to fall. Because of the thick canopy, little light reaches the ground, so new growth is sparse.
13. **American Beech tree.** This beech is infected with beech Nectria disease that is now infecting almost all beech trees in Maine. It causes cankers on the bark that slow the growth of the beech dramatically and eventually will kill the tree. Beech used to be a valuable tree in Maine for making furniture. It still is very valuable in Europe and other areas that aren't affected by this disease.
14. **Large Red Maple.** This maple has a lichen called lungwort growing on it. The lichen is an epiphytic lichen that doesn't harm the tree. It takes its food and water from the air and is said to be a sign of good air quality.
15. **Young diversified forest.** A timber harvest that took place in the 1990s created this younger forest.
16. **Ravine.** Created over centuries, this ravine carries water to the Georges River. It is surrounded by old growth Eastern Hemlock that serves as a deer wintering area.
17. **Skunk cabbage.** During the warmer months skunk cabbage can be found here. The plant dies when cold weather comes. Another, taller, plant that grows alongside streams and rivers is False Hellebore, which is also often commonly called skunk cabbage. These plants illustrate why all flora and fauna have scientific (Latin) names. Another example is the Red Maple, which in Maine is also called Soft Maple and White Maple.
18. **Yellow Birch.** This tree is located near water, its preferred habitat. Birch twigs taste like wintergreen. This commercially valuable species is usually used for flooring and furniture.
19. **Second growth hardwood stand.** This is another term for a young renewed forest of similar trees.
20. **Multiple-use trail.** This trail is used for snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, hunting, fishing, birding, and hiking.
21. **Bridge.** This new bridge was built by volunteers on the GRLT Trails Committee using materials donated by Viking Lumber. It replaces a failed culvert that overflowed during spring runoffs, resulting in erosion and sedimentation to the river.

