



Stauffer's Marsh Nature Preserve

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Back Creek Valley • Berkeley County, WV

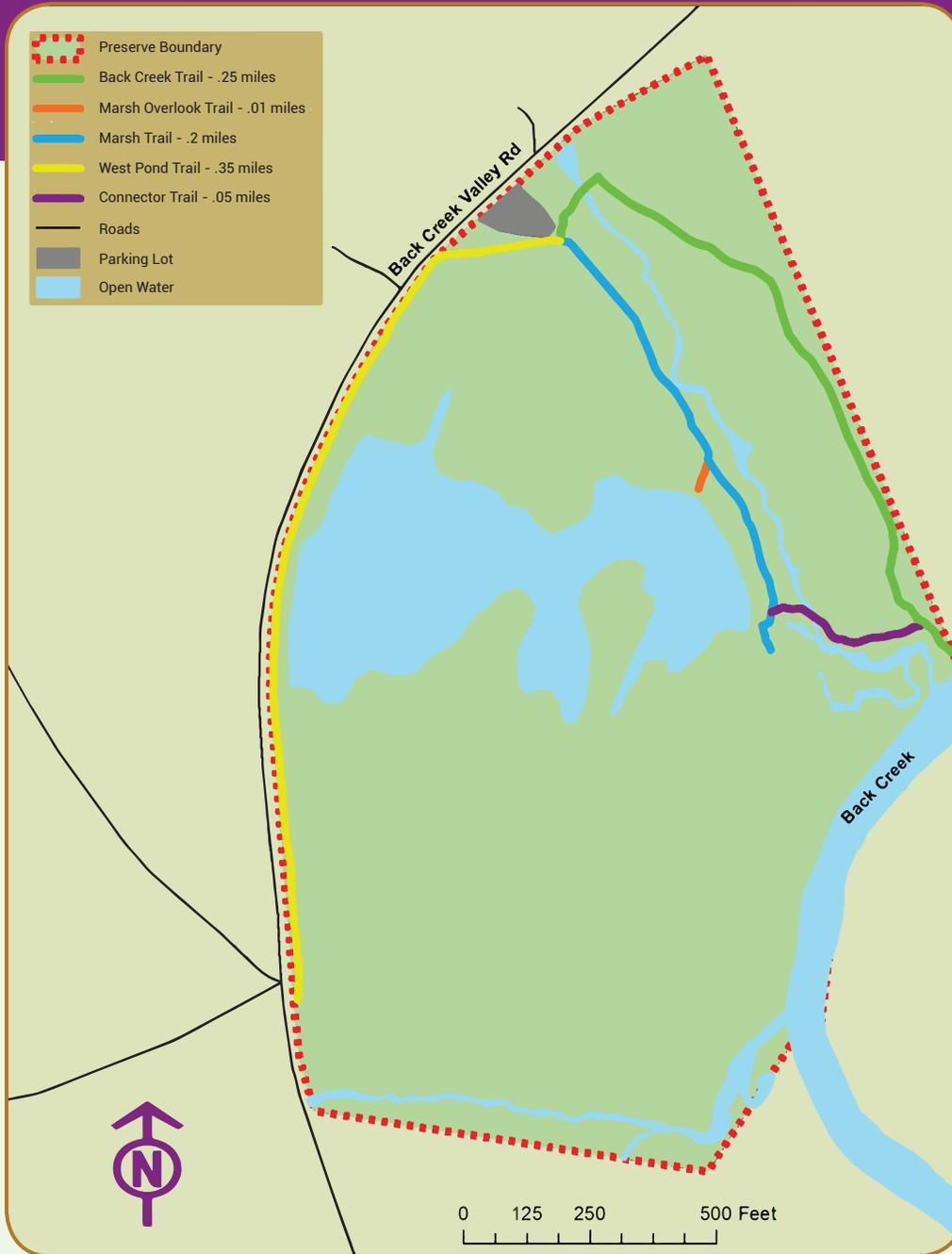


Photo By: Wil Hershberger, Nature Images and Sounds ©



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Enjoy Stauffer's Marsh Nature Preserve!

This 45.7 acre nature preserve, owned and operated by the Potomac Valley Audubon Society (PVAS) and with an easement held by the USDA, has been restored as a wetland and set aside as special place for those who appreciate the natural world and seek to learn from it.



Photo By: Ellen Murphy

The Stauffer's Marsh Story

Formerly marshy farmland, most of the preserve property was entered into a permanent conservation easement in the mid 1990s through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wetland Reserve Program. At that time, USDA restored it as a wetland. This was the first wetland restoration project in the state of West Virginia.

The property was donated to the Potomac Valley Audubon Society in the summer of 2011 by Stauffer Miller and his wife Elinor, of Charlottesville, VA. Mr. Miller is a native of Inwood, WV. The Millers had owned the property since 1999 and had maintained it as a nature preserve on their own.

The mission of the preserve is to protect the land forever from future development and to fulfill the Millers' wish that it be maintained to provide habitat for wetland bird species in particular, and serve as a place to help educate the public about the importance of wetlands. Birders, hikers, and photographers are welcome at the preserve any time between dawn and dusk each day.



Photo By: Wil Hershberger, Nature Images and Sounds ©

Wander the Trails

The property includes shallow ponds, many of which dry up in the summer, marshy areas, woods and edge lands, and about 780 feet of Back Creek frontage. PVAS is currently working to eradicate invasive plant species on the property, while replacing them with native species.

This rich diverse habitat makes Stauffer's Marsh especially attractive to birds, and it is a favorite spot for many local birders. To date, some 150 species of birds have been identified there, including species migrating through the marsh. To view and print the entire list, visit www.potomacaudubon.org/stauffer.

Many of the preserve's ponds and marshy areas are easily viewed from the road. The Marsh Overlook trail leads directly to the marsh where diverse animal life can be viewed including many species of birds, amphibians, reptiles, insects and mammals who call the marsh home. The Back Creek Trail ambles past a meadow and leads down to Back Creek.

Enjoy your visit!

Location & Directions

Stauffer's Marsh is located on Back Creek Valley Road outside Hedgesville, WV.

If you are using GPS, the parking lot at the preserve is across from 4069 Back Creek Valley Road, Hedgesville, WV.

Directions from Hedgesville and points west are as follows: Take Route 9 to Back Creek Valley Road south for 10.5 miles to the village of Shanghai. In Shanghai, from the intersection with Hampshire Grade Road and Tub Run Hollow Road, continue following Back Creek Valley Road south for another ½ mile. The preserve will be on your left, on the east side of the road.

From Martinsburg: Take King Street west over I-81 to Tuscarora Pike (County Route 15). Follow Tuscarora Pike about 10 miles over North Mountain and across Back Creek into Shanghai (it becomes County Route 18 at the intersection with Poor House Road). In Shanghai, turn south onto Back Creek Valley Road and follow it ½ mile to the preserve on your left, on the east side of the road.

From Charles Town: Take Route 51 west about 16.6 miles to Route 45. Turn left on Route 45 and follow it 2.5 miles into Glengary. At Glengary, turn right onto Back Creek Valley Road (County Route 7). Follow Back Creek Valley Road 4.2 miles to the preserve, on your right, on the east side of the road.

There is a graveled parking area at the entrance to the preserve.

Please Help Us Keep the Preserve Clean and Safe!

- Please be sure to carry out any trash and leave the preserve as you found it.
- Because of the potential for injury and damage to the environment, the use of ATV's or other motorized vehicles and horseback riding cannot be permitted on the property.
- For the safety and comfort of other visitors and to help protect sensitive habitats, please leave dogs at home.
- Because forest fires can be devastating, camping and campfires cannot be permitted.
- If you smoke, be very careful for the same reason.
- For liability reasons, possession or use of alcohol cannot be permitted.
- We encourage observation of plants and animals; we discourage collecting.
- For safety reasons, hunting cannot be not permitted.