

## Shade Swamp Sanctuary Blue Trail 1.3 miles



Shade Swamp Shelter is listed on the NRHP

Shade Swamp's sanctuary 1934- 1960



The Shade Swamp Sanctuary, Blue Trail takes you by structures built in 1934 by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) during the Great Depression. Parking (41° 42' 15.40" N 72° 51' 33.33" W) is next to the Shade Swamp Shelter, a post-and-beam structure that was placed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) on September 1986. In the first 0.1 miles of the Blue Trail you will pass by a number of abandoned cages from an old zoo that was also built by the CCC. It was designed as a sanctuary for endangered or injured native birds and animals. Since it was called a sanctuary, people in the 1930's brought non-native species in a hope for a better home. The zoo was offered monkeys, alligators, and parrots for a number of years. The zoo was abandoned in the 1960's. The trail also takes you to a ridge that was part of a glacial deposit that blocked the southern flow of the Farmington River and created a large lake, 2,000 years ago.

Most of the hike is on 1.3 rolling miles of trail across glacial terrain, which is also good for bird watching. The trail starts behind the Shade Swamp Shelter and shortly comes to a "T" junction. Turn left and then a quick right to discover the remains of the zoo cages. This is a wide trail, hence the double line on the satellite map. A short distance past the last cage, you pass by the "T" junction of your return trail. There are a number of other trails that cross, but continue straight and you should find a blue blaze or number. The only 90° left turn is the "T" junction near the end. At 0.3 miles you will cross a short but narrow bridge (1 foot wide). At 0.5 miles you will ascend a glacial deposit and a junction with the short loop on this ridge. Bear to the left and continue to ascend to the top. 12,000 years ago you would have had a great view of a large glacial lake. (note the hike for the Farmington Flats Loop). The Blue Trail now starts to descend and return to the last junction. The trail follows this ridge back heading southwest. At 1.1 miles, it bends to your right (northwest), descending slightly. Avoid any unmarked trails that cross and ascend to your left.

The link for the original Blue Trail map: <http://www.farmington-ct.org/home/showdocument?id=30>

A link to 5 photos on the Blue Trail <http://www.ctmq.org/shade-swamp-sanctuary/>

A link to the CCC [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civilian\\_Conservation\\_Corps](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civilian_Conservation_Corps)

A link to New England's biggest glacial lakes: <http://www.wesleyan.edu/ctgeology/Glacial/GlacialGeology.html>