



Area SP4 BENNETT'S POND STATE PARK



Looking Across Bennett's Pond from SW Side

Size: 460 acres

ACCESS/PARKING: Bennett's Farm Road, 0.7 miles from Route 7, at parking lot on north side of road; also from Pine Mountain and Hemlock Hills open space trails. There are approximately 12 parking spaces. [GPS Address: 600 Bennett's Farm Road]

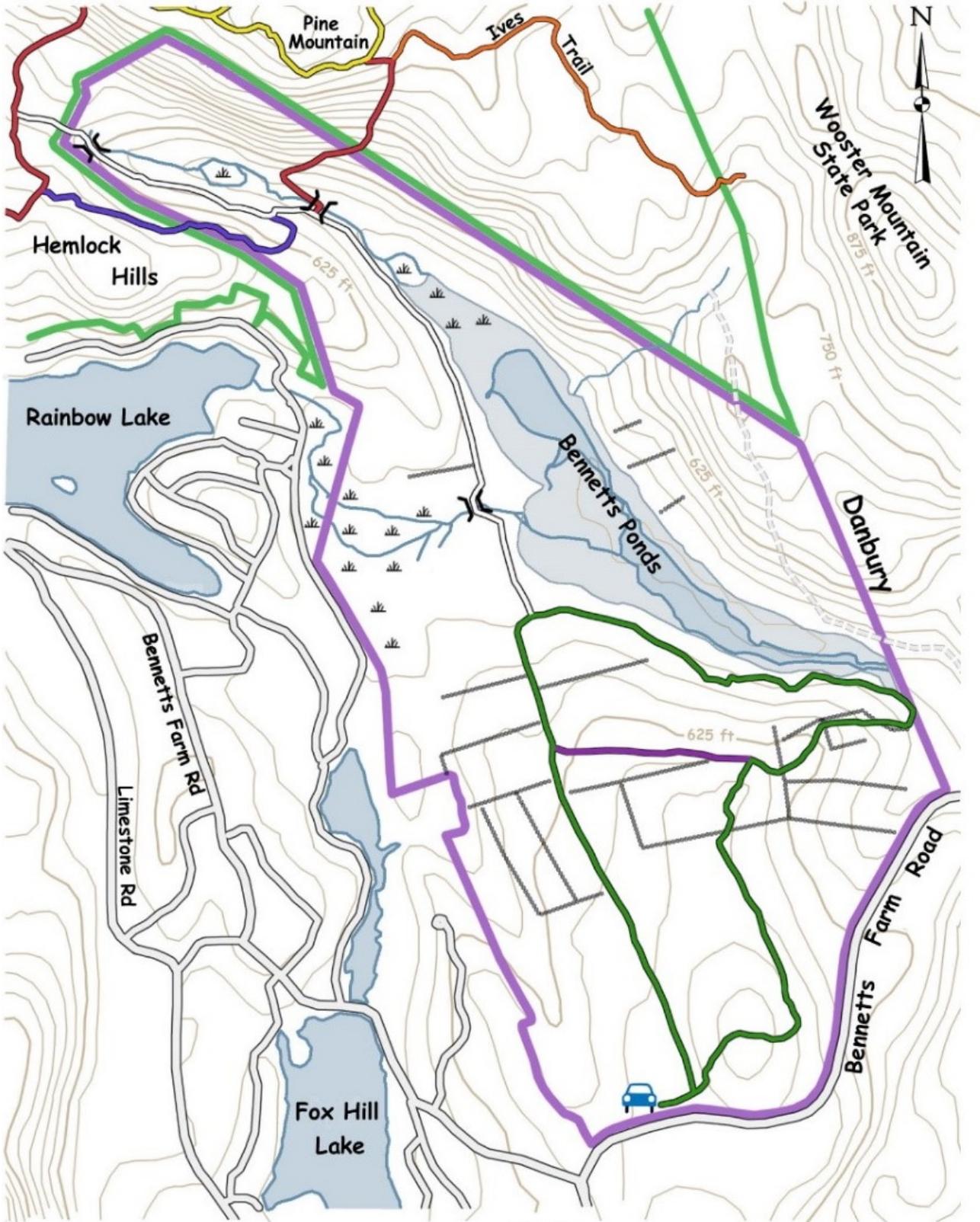
DIFFICULTY: Easy to difficult, depending on route selected. 5 miles of marked pathways.

FEATURES: The terrain is varied, from the site of a former estate and inn, to the 70-acre Bennett's Pond, meadows, woodlands, wetlands, and steep ridges. Marble deposits underlie parts of the property, creating buffered soils that support endangered and rare plant species. The pond is part of the headwaters of the Saugatuck River, drinking water for much of Fairfield County. It supports an active colony of beavers and provides nesting habitat for several species of waterfowl. Vernal pools are home to rare and endangered amphibian species. Trails include:

- The green trail (easy) this loop offers access to the former inn site and a beautiful easterly overlook, a 7-acre meadow, and Bennett's Pond.
- The white trail (easy) leads from the green trail to the north, crossing a bridge over the Saugatuck River and continuing north along the pond to a tussock-sedge marsh. This trail offers clear views of the pond and its wildlife and beautiful views of Pine and Wooster Mountains. The trail crosses two other footbridges over a spring-fed stream, ascends through a stunning rock amphitheater and intersects with the Hemlock Hills-Pine Mountain trail (marked with red paint blazes).
- The red trail (difficult) ascends steeply to the Pine Mountain trail system, crossing on a footbridge from the white trail. The trail starts along an old logging road, then becomes steep and follows a seasonal stream. Toward the top of the ridge, it intersects with the Ives Trail and then meets the yellow-blazed Pine Mountain trail. This goes to the highest point in Ridgefield and the Pine Mountain overlook. After passing the overlook, look for the red-blazed trail junction that leads west to return to the parking lot via the white trail.
- The blue trail (moderate) climbs the ridge to the west of the white trail and then levels out with views of Pine Mountain, passing by a glacial erratic called Haystack Rock and ends at the red-blazed Hemlock Hills-Pine Mountain trail. Turn east to return to the parking lot via the white trail.
- The purple trail (easy) is a short cutoff for the green trail. It crosses through forest planted when the property was run as a nursery.



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Legend

0.25 mile

- | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------|--|--------|--|------------|--|----------|
| | Open Space | | Trails | | Woods road | | Wetlands |
| | State | | | | Bridge | | |
| | Stonewalls | | | | | | |



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