



The 2014 Launching Series-Whittemore Sanctuary: View of the Lake

Route 64, Middlebury, Ct

Planted by Two Adventuring Ladies

Hike time: 1 hour and 45 minutes

Hike length: 2 miles

Introduction:

Note: This is one of the eight Launching Series letterboxes originally posted only on the Flanders Nature Center & Land Trust website when created by The Two Adventuring Ladies in the summer of 2014. It was brought to Flanders' attention that a letterboxer had posted "add-ons" to the Launching Series on both Atlas Quest and Letterboxing North America. Many of these add-ons begin by using wording identical to the Flanders Launching Series hikes. Because the posted letterboxes used the same titles as those on the Flanders website, the Two Adventuring Ladies have posted all the Flanders Launching Series hikes with new titles. All Flanders hikes will have clue sheets with the Flanders Logo and include a checklist for young hikers. We hope this helps avoid confusion. Flanders is thrilled that the trails are being discovered by so many letterboxers!

A map of Whittemore Sanctuary and its location can be downloaded at:

http://www.flandersnaturecenter.org/flanders_places/hiking_trail_maps.html

The 2014 Launching Series is a set of eight letterboxing trails created to spread the word about the family friendly properties with trails at Flanders Nature Center & Land Trust. The clues for this letterbox are written so that first time letterboxers will be successful and this positive experience will leave them eager to hike more trails and find more letterboxes. Since we expect families to be hiking with children, we have added a few questions and comments to keep everyone engaged. One of the letterboxes on each trail will contain a rubber stamp for a letter: F, L, A, N, D, E, R or S.

Additional letterboxing hikes are planned for the properties at Flanders Nature Center & Land Trust.

Flanders has created a passport to use when hiking the trails planted by the Two Adventuring Ladies. Anyone who hikes twelve of Flanders' letterboxing trails should go to the Flanders Nature Center & Land Trust office, present their passport with the twelve letter stamps from those trails and sign their Trail Name on our poster of Successful Flanders Letterboxers. They will receive a prize. The office is open Monday-Friday from 9 until 4.

The Flanders Passport and all the trails with hidden letter stamps can be downloaded at:

<http://www.flandersnaturecenter.org/letterboxing.html>

Dogs are allowed on the trails but must be leashed.

You may not see all the plants and animals that we mention. You will see many things that the Two Adventuring Ladies have not mentioned. The observations for the 2014 Launching Series were made in the summer.

We wish you good luck on your hunt.

Clues:

This would be a nice time to take a light weight picnic. There are picnic tables on the trail.

Park in the Flanders lot off Rte. 64. Check to be sure you have a map and then begin to follow the trail to the right of the kiosk. Soon you will see the white trail bearing to the right. Do not take the white trail. Take the trail bearing to the left that has a boardwalk crossing a wet area.

Just before you are on the boardwalk, look for a small wooden sign on your right directing you to the bog. You do not go to the bog on this hike, but you start out in that direction. By the time you get to the top of the hill you should have spotted blazes on trees and know that you are on the blue trail. Two Adventuring Ladies saw two trees with blue blazes. How many did you see?

While you climb the hill, look carefully at the ferns. There are several different kinds. By the end of this hike you may have spotted 5 (or more) varieties of ferns.

Continue walking until you get to the pond. Can you spot the man-made feature in the pond? Can you find where you are on the map? Look for turtles. Look and listen for frogs. If you stay very still, you may see dragonflies and damselflies. Dragonflies rest with wings outstretched. The smaller damselfly rests with its wings folded up over its back.

Notice the small trail to the right of the pond. This is the green trail on your map. Whenever you see a trail junction, you should stop and review your map. You will often see unmarked trails that are not on your map. Always look around you. Look for trail blazes and read the letterboxing clues.

Bear left (if you are facing the pond) on the blue trail. Continue until you come to a stone wall. Before passing through the opening in the wall, stop. Follow the wall to your left. After the break in the wall and approximately 24 feet from the trail, you will find a letterbox in the wall.

Use our stamp to mark your log book and your stamp to mark ours. Replace everything in the plastic bags and the container. Then slip the letterbox back into the stone wall.

Return to the trail. Continue into the clearing with a rock ledge on the left. This is a nice place to take a break and notice what is around you. Look at the tree that has spread its roots out along the side of the ledge. Read the plaque on the ledge. Try to find *Pinus strobus* or White pine near the wall. How do you know you have found it? The needles are in clusters. Count the needles in one cluster. If you found a tree with five long needles in each cluster, you found a white pine. W-h-i-t-e has 5 letters and *Pinus strobus* has 5 needles in a cluster.

Continue along the blue trail, past two unmarked trails to your right and into "a major intersection." There will be a trail map nailed to a post. This map is slightly different than the one you are carrying, but both correctly identify all trails. Your choices are: yellow straight ahead, blue continuing to the left, and an unmarked trail to your right. If you look at the map you brought with you, this wide unmarked trail is labeled Old East West Road. Take this trail.

Notice there is a red trail that crosses your "old road." Continue straight to another trail junction with a trail map nailed to a tree. There is an unmarked trail straight ahead and if you look carefully you will see a diamond shaped sign on a tree. This is a Flanders boundary marker, which tells a hiker that if you pass it you will be leaving Flanders' property. Find the binoculars on the map that you brought. Use the key to find out what the binocular symbol means. This is where you are headed. Can you figure out which trail to take to get to the

viewing area? If you look carefully, you will see white blazes on trees to your left and to your right. Turn left down a hill.

When you get to the top of the hill you will see two downed trees on the right at the entrance to an unmarked trail. Follow this trail to the viewing area. Use the map to learn the name of the lake in front of you. Look at the ground and find the flat log that looks like a bench without legs. Looking toward the water, stand at the end of the bench and turn 90 degrees to your right. About 40 feet off the trail you will see a 3 to 4 foot stump that is split in two. At the base of that stump, under some leaves, you will find a letterbox.

This letterbox contains the letter D, so be sure to stamp your passport as well as your logbook and our log book. After you replace the box, return to the main trail, turn left and head back down the hill.

At the next trail junction, look around you. You have been here before. Look at the map to figure out which trail will take you back to the parking lot. It is the white trail which is straight ahead of you. As you hike, look for a tall rock ledge on your left. Continue walking until you come to a large outcropping of rock closer to the left edge of the trail. Stop. Look for a tall tree that shows a lot of damage on the trunk. It is just ahead of you and on your left. Leave the trail and walk between the two boulders closest to the damaged tree. You will be walking in a small "alley" between the boulders. You will have to scramble past a few v-shaped saplings growing there. In a crevice in the boulder now on your right, you will find a letterbox.

After you do the stamping and replace the letterbox with care, continue on the white trail to return to the parking lot. You will cross a boardwalk. Keep looking for ferns. How many kinds did you find?



CHECK LIST FOR THE WHITTEMORE SANCTUARY:

VIEW OF A LAKE

Did you see, hear or count:

A wooden sign pointing to the bog _____

A man-made object in the pond _____

A turtle _____

A frog _____

A dragonfly _____

A damselfly _____

Little white pine trees _____

Mt. Laurel (We did not point this out, but there is lots of it) _____

Lake Quassapaug _____

How many different kinds of fern did you see? _____