



2014 Launching Series-Leavenworth Preserve (called Plumb Brook Preserve until 2015)

Pilgrim Trail Cul-de-sac

Planted by Two Adventuring Ladies

Hike time: 1 hour

Hike length: 1-2 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 Leavenworth Preserve 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.

Directions:

From Woodbury's North Main St. (Rt. 6), just past the Garden Center, turn left onto Quassuk Road, go past Woodbury's EMS, continue on Quassuk Rd. and turn right onto Arrowhead Way. Take first right onto Pilgrim Trail to the cul-de-sac at the end. A small pull off parking is on the left. Please don't block neighbors' driveways!

Clues:

After parking at Leavenworth Preserve look for a Flanders Nature Center & Land Trust kiosk. Walk past the kiosk and you will see a large rock with a yellow blaze painted on it. You are on the yellow trail.

In 2015 Plumb Brook Preserve was renamed the Leavenworth Preserve to honor Frederick "Dick" Leavenworth, a lifelong conservationist. Dick is one of the founders of the Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition, Chair of the Woodbury Conservation Commission, and dedicated Flanders volunteer and friend who has worked tirelessly to help protect the area's natural resources.

This trail has small streams and several areas that can be muddy in the spring or after a heavy rain. We suggest appropriate footwear and bug spray so that you can enjoy the hike.

Notice how wide this trail is. You are walking on a former logging road, one of several found on this 126 acre parcel of land. You may notice unmarked side trails. Stay on the trail with the yellow blazes. Watch for chipmunks scurrying on the rocks to your left. Listen to the many birds.

Do you see Mt.-Laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*)? This is the Connecticut State Flower.

Straight ahead of you will be two wooden arrows; a white arrow points to the right, a yellow arrow points to the left. You will come back to this point. TURN TO THE RIGHT following the logging road with the white blazes on trees.

There are deep tracks in the mud on parts of this trail. Look for foot prints – especially prints left by deer. You may also notice Christmas Ferns. They are a bit darker green than most of the local ferns. If you look closely you may notice that their pinnae are shaped a bit like a Christmas stocking. This gave *Polystichum acrostichoides* its more manageable common name – Christmas Fern.

You will soon make a left turn. The logging road is blocked by some small logs and a rock. You should see a yellow diamond shaped sign that tells you that if you continued straight you would be leaving Flanders' land. You should also see a tree marked with white blazes which shows that you need to make a left turn and a white arrow pointing to the left. There are several markers here because the white trail leaves a logging road and becomes a narrow trail that will wind through the woods.

Be sure to make this left turn.

As you go down the hill you will see several blazes indicating right turns. You will need to find your own path across a small stream at the bottom of the hill.

After a sharp right turn, you will pass through a stone wall. Stop and look to your left. You will see a large three sister tree (a tree with 3 trunks) that is approximately 34 feet off the trail. You will find a letterbox hidden here.

Use your stamp to imprint our log book. Then use our stamp to mark your log book. This is not a letter stamp. Make sure you have carefully sealed the plastic bags before you replace this letterbox or the log book could be ruined.

Go back to the trail, turn left and continue on your way. Notice the boulder with a white blaze on it. Soon you will come to blazes and painted wooden arrows announcing a left turn. The white trail ends. You will be back on an old logging road and a yellow trail.

You will pass under a tree that overhangs the trail.

After the trail makes a gentle curve to the left, look carefully. You will see a yellow blaze on a tree on your right, then one on your left and then a third one on your right. Stop at this blaze. Opposite it, (on your left) there will be an unmarked trail headed up a bank and toward a clearing. If you have gone too far, there will be a small stream passing under the yellow trail in a cement culvert. Enter this unmarked trail. About 100 feet off the yellow trail, in the area between the unmarked trail and the brook, you will find a fire ring and a letterbox. Notice that there is no sign that this fire ring has been used recently. People now know that lighting a fire in the woods, even a very small fire in a fire ring, is dangerous. One spark could start a forest fire.

Use our stamp to mark your log book and your passport. Use your stamp to mark your log book. Write the date and your trail name. Replace everything in the letterbox, seal it and tuck it back under the rocks.

Return to the yellow trail, turn left and follow the blazes. Do you see signs that water has come rushing down this hill?

Soon you will return to that first junction of the white and yellow trails. The white trail that you explored will now go to your left. Do you see signs that tell you to turn to the right in order to follow the yellow trail? Follow the yellow trail which will bring you back to your car.



CHECK LIST FOR THE LEAVENWORTH PRESERVE

Did you see:

Chipmunks _____

Mountain Laurel _____

Birch trees _____

Christmas Ferns _____

Deer prints _____

Other foot prints _____

A boulder with a white blaze on it _____

A three sister tree _____

Evidence of previous rushing water _____