

The Spencer-Rice Preserve is actually comprised of two parcels, one of which is protected by a conservation easement and the second one having been purchased outright. It is this second parcel that rails have been developed on. The 16-acre parcel was purchased at a generous below market price from the Estate of Caroline B. Rice in the spring of 2001.

*T*he funding for the property was overwhelmingly approved in the preceding year's town vote as part of a multi-property, open space protection initiative. Following this funding effort, the town financiers were pleasantly surprised when the State of Connecticut confirmed the natural resource value of the property by acting favorably on a grant request and awarding the town \$450,000 to partially reimburse our expenditure.

The features valued by the town and state largely rest on the dense forested hillside and its relationship to Bryant's Brook in the valley below.

Sugar maple, several oak species and red cedar dominate the forest. The understory has telltale features of excess deer browsing in that it essentially lacks shrub species and consists mostly of maple saplings.

The trail system of the Preserve links this parcel to eight acres owned by the Wilton Land Conservation Trust to the south. Combined the two properties offer a gentle walk with peaceful wood land views, streamside walking and in the springtime, the opportunity to observe a vernal pool.



**Directions:** From Wilton Center go south on Rt 7. Turn left (east) onto Sharp Hill Rd. Take next right onto Raymond Lane. Park entrance is up the hill 500' on the right.

**Acreage:** ±16

**Parking:** Presently, parking is along side Raymond Lane.

**Access:** Trail head off of Raymond Lane.

**Trails:** Distance not known.

**Ownership:** Town of Wilton with conservation easements granted to the Wilton Land Conservation Trust & the State of Connecticut

