

About Brush Mountain Conservation Area

Brush Mountain Conservation Area is a 46 acre town-owned historical and recreation area with a trail to the top of the mountain; the trail is a small section of the New England Trail (NET) and is blazed white. After a fairly level beginning as it passes the Calvin Swan Homestead Site, the last quarter-mile is a steeper gradient to the top of Brush Mountain.

The top of Brush Mountain is a rocky outcropping, reached after approximately 0.6 miles. At the property boundary, the trail continues southwest on a newly opened section of the NET over the ridge and connects to Old Wendell Road.



More information about this trail and others is available online at www.northfieldmass.org/trails

The brochure and the website are courtesy of the Northfield Open Space Committee

Additional historical information can be found at the Dickinson Memorial Library

Other Northfield Trails

<u>Alderbrook Meadow</u> : A short, handicapped accessible loop trail to a beaver pond located on Rte 63, approx. 1.5 miles south of the village center.	loop length: .5 miles elevation gain: 50 feet
<u>Alexander Hill Trails</u> - A network of trails for hiking and skiing is located in the Northfield State Forest at the top of Alexander Hill Rd.	loop length: 3.2 miles elevation gain: 280 feet mostly blue blazes
<u>Bald Hills Loop</u> - A loop off of the New England Trail; trailhead shared with Brush Mountain/ Town forest trail on Gulf Rd. Start north on the white-blazed NET and soon take the blue-blazed trail to the left. Turn right when the blue trail rejoins the	loop length: 1.6 miles elevation gain: 360 feet blue, white blazes
<u>Town Forest Trail</u> - A town-owned 150-acre conservation and recreation area with a loop trail. Trailhead at the Brush Mountain kiosk and parking area.	Loop length: 2.2 miles elevation gain: 250 feet mostly yellow blazes
<u>Coller Cemetery Trails</u> - A network of trails for hiking and skiing located in the Northfield State forest off the end of Coller Cemetery Rd. One trail is described here—check the trail-head kiosk for more about the other trails	Loop length: 3.1 miles elevation gain: 220 feet mostly blue blazes
<u>Hobo Falls Trail</u> : A picturesque falls. From the trailhead on Old Wendell Rd., follow the road south for 0.4 miles, then turn left off the road at the Hobo Falls sign	out & back: 1.1 miles elevation gain: 240 feet Northfield trail signs
<u>King Philip's Hill</u> - A loop trail on a town-owned historic bluff overlooking the Connecticut River. The trail goes up to the river bank, then stays level until the steep, narrow down at the end.	loop length: 0.6 miles elevation gain: 80 feet white blazes
<u>Mill Brook Wetlands</u> - An extensive wetland and wildlife area, with a circumference trail on private property near the center of the village. Park at the golf course; trailhead south of the parking lot.	loop length: 1.5 miles elevation gain: 180 feet white blazes
<u>New England Trail</u> - A national scenic trail, with an interesting section in Northfield.	Multiple sections white blazes
<u>Satan's Kingdom</u> - A large wildlife management area with an old forestry road. The trail goes to the top of the ridge, where there is a view of Northfield village across the valley.	out & back: 3.0 miles elevation gain: 580 feet

Brush Mountain Trail

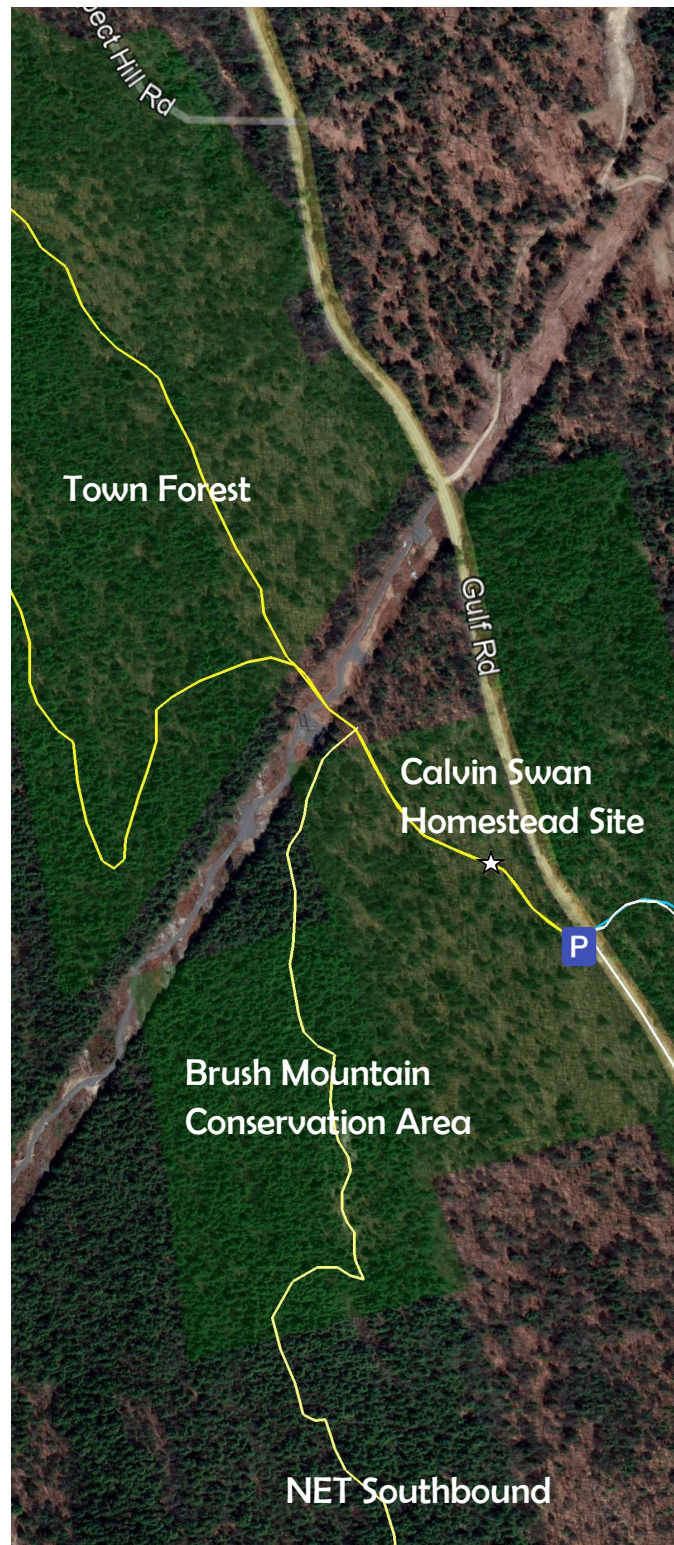


Length: 0.8 miles out and back
Elevation gain: 250 feet

Calvin Swan Homestead



Calvin Swan (1799-1875), a free black man, and his family had a homestead and sawmill here. You can see cellar holes and a spring not far from the trailhead. Calvin was a well-respected man at a time when African Americans were not well integrated into white society. Here he purchased land, served on the school board, and helped found the mountain chapter of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society. Swan helped build some of the homes on Main Street Northfield, and was able to establish his own sawmill and carpentry business.



Native American History

On the shore of the glacial Lake Hitchcock (12,000 BP), these hills are part of a larger sacred landscape that was especially significant to Native Americans as the home of Hobomok (Hobomac), a giant spirit-being who slept under the hills and when called upon slew the giant beaver whose body became Wequamps (Mt. Sugarloaf).

Established Native paths, including part of the Gulf Road, led colonists to Squakheag. Later called Northfield, this area was long the northernmost outpost of European colonization (1673-1775), and at the southernmost range of the Abenaki.

Normally uplands are used by Native Americans for hunting and as a source of quartz; however, the presence of Hobomac may have curtailed some of these activities on Brush Mountain. His presence under the mountain was indicated by his breath coming out of the ground, melting snow even in the dead of winter. These deep holes were also hibernacula for rattlesnakes at that time, although they have been eradicated since.