



Orange Trail - 1.3 Miles  
Yellow Trail - 1.7 Miles  
Red Trail - 1.3 Miles  
Blue Trail - 1.3 Miles



Location

0 500 Feet



## Arthur W. Butler Memorial Sanctuary Audio Tour Map

*Welcome to The Nature Conservancy's Arthur W. Butler Memorial Sanctuary. This written guide corresponds to the stops on the audio tour signs posted along the trail. If you have a Smartphone, simply scan the QR codes to listen to the tour.*

1. This 363-acre preserve is the first land owned by The Nature Conservancy anywhere in the world. From this start, the Conservancy grew to become the world's largest conservation organization, protecting over 119 million acres of land and 5000 miles of rivers worldwide. This moderate hike begins on the red trail and takes about two hours to complete.
2. The stone walls scattered within Butler Sanctuary are an important reminder of the area's agricultural history. The 19th century brought the abandonment of agriculture as people headed west in search of more fertile land. Barberry, an invasive species that displaces native plants and reduces wildlife habitat, once covered this area. Researchers have found forests with high density of barberry also have a higher number of deer ticks. Volunteers systematically removed barberry from this part of the preserve.
3. The Norway spruce and white pines found here were planted by Arthur Butler, an amateur astronomer and naturalist. On the left side of the trail is a deer enclosure that examines the impact of deer herbivory on forest health. Notice the difference between the understory inside vs. outside the enclosure. The glacial history of the area becomes visible through the rocky ridges and shallow bowls that characterize this landscape.
4. Flying squirrels are the most abundant squirrels in the area; however their nocturnal activity keeps them from visitors' view. Due to high deer browse, young trees and shrubs are missing from this area, as well as birds and other species that depend on this forest structure. To improve forest health and allow other wildlife to thrive, the Conservancy is reducing the deer population.
5. Ahead is a site where volunteers removed invasive barberry bushes. These bushes were left to create habitat for other species. Preserve neighbors, high school students, corporate employees, and a host of others have gotten their hands dirty and their feet muddy in support of the Conservancy. Visit us at [nature.org/easternnewyork](http://nature.org/easternnewyork) to learn how you can volunteer.
6. Continue down the red trail until it meets with the yellow. As you descend the trail, notice the change in vegetation. Ahead the trail follows along the edge of a red maple swamp. Skunk cabbage dominates the understory and the shrub layer consists of high bush blueberry, spicebush, and coastal pepperbush.
7. Most of the water in the preserve flows into the Croton Reservoir. Streams flowing south out of Butler regularly end up in Byram Lake, the drinking water supply for Mount Kisco. Bobcat, coyote, mink and weasel are among the wildlife found here.
8. The orange trail follows a stream and rejoins the yellow trail further uphill. The boulders seen on the yellow trail may seem out of place in the forest. The term 'glacial erratic' is used to describe them as they were deposited here by glaciers.
9. As you continue along the yellow trail, look for an old cellar foundation.
10. Here you enter an old hemlock stand. Many of these approximately 100 feet tall hemlock trees are now dead because of the hemlock woolly adelgid, an aggressive invasive forest pest that drains the sap in the needles of hemlocks. We predict over time that oak, hickory, and tulip poplar will dominate this forest, rather than the sugar maples and hemlocks that stand here today.
11. We now approaching our final stop -- the Robert J. Hammerschlag Hawkwatch. This site is a project between The Nature Conservancy and the Bedford Audubon Society. It is part of a network of hawk watching sites across the United States.
12. From the Hawkwatch, visitors look out over Westchester and Connecticut and on a clear day, you can see the north shore of Long Island and the Long Island Sound. From here professionals count migratory raptors leaving their summer feeding grounds in order to return to winter habitats. By September, osprey and broad-winged hawks are migrating. American kestrel, sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks peak shortly thereafter. Late October brings red-shouldered hawks and the beginning of peak red-tail migration. November gives the best chance for golden eagles, northern goshawk and rough-legged hawks. Bald eagles may be found anytime during the fall. To view the data from the Hawkwatch, search [www.hawkcunts.org](http://www.hawkcunts.org) for "Chestnut Ridge." (The season runs from August 15 through December 1.)

*We hope you enjoyed your visit to The Nature Conservancy's Arthur W. Butler Memorial Sanctuary. To learn more about The Nature Conservancy, visit us on the web at:  
[nature.org/easternnewyork](http://nature.org/easternnewyork).*