

Hellen Creek Hemlock Preserve, Calvert County



Hellen Creek Hemlock preserve harbors part of an isolated stand of eastern Canadian hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), which is the southern-most stand in the coastal plain of the eastern U.S. The stand is probably a relict community left behind by the last glaciers some 15,000 years ago. Some species found here are more characteristic of the Appalachian forest in western Maryland. For example, the deer mouse (*Peromyscus maniculatus*) and climbing fern (*Lygodium palmatum*) are unusual on the coastal plain and

commonly associated with hemlocks further north. There is a variety of landscapes at this preserve, such as upland woods, steep bluffs, ravines, and marsh. This diverse topography provides habitat for many species of wildlife. More than 50 different kinds of birds make their home at Hellen Creek, including pileated woodpeckers, kingfishers, and bald eagles. The main tree here, hemlock, has soft, blunt, dark-green needles. Other types of trees include red maple, black locust, beech, hickory, tulip-tree, and many kinds of oaks. The understory features American holly, mountain laurel, sassafras,

dogwood, and Hercules' club. Ferns are plentiful, and blooms of cardinal flower and marsh mallow can be found near the marsh. Trailing arbutus grows on the bluff.

Protection of Hellen Creek Hemlock preserve started in 1957 with land donated by Mr. and Mrs. Chandler S. Robbins. It was preserved primarily for its protection of eastern hemlock in the coastal plain, as well as its rich birdlife. 67 acres have been protected since the

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A sweeping shot of the beautiful Hellen Creek.

beginning of its preservation.

The preserve is slated for transfer to Cove Point Natural Heritage Trust, which owns land and has its office adjacent to the preserve, and has been managing the preserve since the Conservancy's Board of Trustees approved the transfer plan in 2006.

Directions (GPS Coordinates: 38°22'35.0"N 76°27'33.2"W)

From Washington: Take Route 4 south to Prince Frederick. Continue past Prince Frederick about 12 miles to Lusby. Turn right onto Sollers Road. Travel approximately 2 miles and then turn left onto Mill Bridge Road. The preserve is about 1 mile on the right.

Visiting

- No facilities, trails or convenient parking
- Close to D.C.

Contact

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For more information:

www.nature.org/Maryland