



Welcome to the Craigville Memorial Nature Trail!

This trail was developed by Rev. Myron Fowell in 1972 for Craigville's 100th anniversary. It was rejuvenated by the Fowell family in 1979 but has been essentially dormant until 2022 when volunteers brought it back to life for Craigville's 150th anniversary. The trail is a living memorial to past residents and friends of Craigville.

Keep in mind that nature is constantly changing. At times during the year some plants may be quite visible; in other seasons you may not see them at all.

Safety Warnings: Be aware of poison ivy. Be aware of ticks, which can possibly carry Lyme Disease and other infections Always do a tick check after hiking on this trail.

Plant Identification Markers

1. **Poison Ivy:** Growing at the base of this tree, and vining upwards, is poison ivy. Do not touch it. Identified by its regular sets of three leaves and sometimes shiny leaf surface, one can remember it by the old saying, "Leaves of three, let it be." Poison ivy produces the oil urushiol that is an irritant to the skin and can cause itchy bumps and rash. Be very careful with clothes and shoes that have brushed or touched poison ivy as the oil can transfer from them on to your skin.
2. **Green Briar**—This plant plays a large part in the forest understory and is an important food source to overwintering birds in our area. Birds like the northern cardinal depend on green briar berries during the late winter and early spring when other food is less available, and its green leaves provide food for deer and rabbits.
3. **Holly Bush/Fox Grape**—Observed in June of 2022, the fox grape plant is a vine that climbs and holds on with its curly tendrils and is growing on and around the holly bush. Holly is a shrub with sharp, poky leaves that can grow also as a tree that produces red berries that are an attractive bird food. Birds eat the berries and fly off to drop the seeds throughout the forest where the seeds germinate and produce more holly bushes.
4. **Wood Fern/Debris Piles**—Ferns like to grow in cool, moist areas. A primitive plant that was present even in dinosaur times, ferns reproduce from spores rather than seeds. Spores are found in small dot-like packets called sori, on the underside of fern leaves, where seasonally, the spores drop off to start new fern plans. The debris piles seen here are lawn waste that was dumped previously in this area when it was not being maintained. It has been left here as it is decomposing into the forested area, and will eventually become soil to provide nutrients to plants here. It is also providing cover for small organisms that call the forest home. In general, lawn debris should never be dumped in the forest and should find its way to a compost pile near you.

5. **Cranberry Bog/Mosquito Ditch** – This is a good spot to think back 150 years to the founding of modern Craigville. For 10,000 years or more, these lands were home to the Wampanoag people.” In 1872, people of the “Christian Connection” purchased the Perry Farm to house a summer camp meeting. Atop “Christian Hill” they erected a large tent as worship space they called the Tabernacle.” Craigville Village emerged as a mixture of tent sites and small cottages. To the west were cranberry bogs. Here we see a mosquito ditch that edges the cranberry bog. Over the years, trees grew, and the bog was replaced by forest land. This trail was once the main entrance to the village as wagons crossed the Chiquaquett /Centerville River.
6. **Pitch Pine Tree**—On the right is a young conifer called a Pitch Pine. Conifers like this pine tree are EVERGREEN, meaning they keep their leaves or needles all year long. They reproduce by pinecones—small male pollen cones that produce yellow pollen that drifts on the air and can cause allergies for some people, and the female seed-bearing cones that can carry many seeds. Many animals and birds depend on these seeds for food.
7. **Ferns in the Cranberry Bog Ditch**—Ferns like to grow in areas where there is ample moisture. These ones are growing in the old cranberry bog ditch, and provide shade and cover for small animals that pass through this area.
8. **Pink Lady Slipper**—This seasonal orchid was observed here by the trail in June 2022. Present in varying numbers, from very common to rarer at various places on Cape Cod, the pink lady slipper is a bright and exciting flower to discover on the trail. It lives in cooperation with a fungus in the soil that helps provide nutrients to the lady slipper as it begins its growth, and later will take nutrients from the lady slipper once it is able to produce its own nutrients.
9. **White Oak** –The white oak tree growing here is deciduous, meaning it drops its leaves in the winter and grows new leaves in the spring. It produces delicious, nutritious acorns, which are a staple food for local forest animals and birds who depend on oaks for food, as well as helping distribute acorns and helping grow new oak trees.
10. **Lichen**—Lichen grows on trees here. A great example of a symbiotic relationship, lichen is made up of two different organisms that work together to survive. Algae is the green part of the lichen that performs photosynthesis and makes energy for the plant to grow. Fungus is the structural part that basically provides the “home” for the algae, and holds on to the branch or rock where the lichen lives. Healthy forests include lichen, as lichen can only grow in relatively clean air. It grows on living trees, and on dead trees.
11. **On right, Bush with Pink Flowers**
12. **Pepperbush** is also part of the understory of this forest, providing cover for small animals who pass through this area or who live locally in this area.

13. **Moss** is a slow growing, ancient plant. This large area of moss has formed over many years and is quite delicate. It dries up when moisture is not present, and is ready to go right into action when the moss becomes wet. It is important not to walk on or break the moss up as it takes moss many years to grow large and healthy like this bunch of moss has.
14. **Dead Trees** are an important part of the forest ecosystem. When trees fall, they become homes to many kinds of life. Lichen can continue to live on a dead tree, but many other organisms will make a home in, under, or around a dead tree. Fungus, insects, worms, salamanders, small mammals, and other plants can all call a dead tree home. And, as decomposers like worms, insects, and fungus break down the dead tree, its nutrients become more available to help feed other forms of life or to help grow new plants.
15. **Birch Tree and Ferns** -- This is the only birch on our trail today. It is a deciduous tree that loses its leaves in the winter, characterized by beautiful white bark and leaves that are thin and move easily in the wind. This birch provides a piece of our forest canopy that provides shade and shelter for smaller plants or animals that depend on the canopy for their survival. This birch happens to be surrounded by ferns.
16. **Yucca**—Here we see one of the new non-native plants on the Craigville Nature Trail. Yucca, a shrub in the agave family, has fibrous pointy leaves and is not native to Cape Cod.
17. **Cow Wheat and Pines**—Cow wheat is a wildflower that often grows near pine trees.
18. **Lady Slippers**—Here are more lady slippers, such as those observed earlier in this hike. Visible flowers and leaves in June 2022 tell us that this orchid flower is present although may remain unrecognized at other parts of the year when it is not flowering.
19. **Ghost Pipes**—On the left is a large patch of ghost pipes. This plant is white and lacks chlorophyll, yet it is a plant and not a fungus. Ghost pipes do this by attaching to tree roots through mycorrhizal fungus that helps them get nutrients from the tree roots.
20. **Outdoor Chapel**—This is the last stop on our nature trail. Please take this time to stop and consider the following.
 - A. Craigville’s nature trail is a precious and educational opportunity for you, your family, and friends.
 - B. What are three things you noticed while you passed through the various stops on the trail.
 - C. How does the slow and methodical contemplation of nature and plants on this trail help your relationship with the outdoors, with Craigville, yourself, and God?
 - D. If you want to help maintain the trail or contribute to its growth and ongoing projects, please contact the Craigville Retreat Center.