

1. **Tree Farm Sign** – The New York State Tree Farm Program was founded to encourage private landowners to practice sound forest management principles with their forest resource.
2. **Scotch Pine (*Pinus Sylvestris*)**, in the distance you will see a few **Scotch Pines** with an orange-colored bark on the top half of the trunk. The **Scotch Pine** is a European conifer that took on some significance in this country with the advent of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), as it was one of the species widely planted as part of the Corps work. A poor matching of seed source was responsible for the poor form seen in most **Scotch Pine** in this region.
3. **Red Pine (*Pinus Resinosa*)**, this species was also widely planted by the CCC with much better results than **Scotch Pine**. Its straight form makes it desirable for use as telephone poles, though it has other qualities that make it useful in the building trade. It requires ample sun to regenerate itself, which makes it susceptible to being shaded out in forest stands.
4. **Blue lupine**, to your left is the plant that provides the **Karner Blue butterfly** the necessary habitat to further its species. The **Karner Blue** lays its eggs (brood?) on the stem of the lupine, in addition to utilizing the lupine as its sole food source. PLEASE do not touch or disturb these plants, they are crucial to the **Karner Blue's** survival.
5. **Jack Pine (*Pinus Banksiana*)**, this pine is the most widely distributed pine species in Canada, and its presence in New York is due to its having been introduced through planting, as opposed to natural regeneration.
6. **Sugar Maple (*Acer Saccharum*)**, across the street, this tree has stood watch over this spot for an estimated 150 years. Known for its sap which, boiled down, becomes syrup, this tree is also a favorite in the furniture making industry because of its white wood and beautiful grain.
7. **Pin Oak (*Quercus Palustris*)**, is a commercial species in the Midwestern United States, but is used as an ornamental in our area.
8. **Delegan Pond dam and Delegan Pond**– the earthen dam that you just walked over was first constructed around the 1870's to provide a water source for the livestock of the Old Gick farm. It was most likely constructed of earth and timbers, with concrete added at least four times since the 1930's. The pond is shallow and finds its headwaters in the Miller Swamp, located south of Rte. 50, with its terminus in the Snook Kill which, in turn, flows into the Hudson. The Delegan Brook that flows from this pond supports a variety of aquatic life, including *brook trout*, and the threatened *hog nose snake* and *blandings turtle*.
9. **White Pine (*Pinus Strobes*)**, **Norway Spruce (*Picea Abies*)**, there are two ways by which tree species are established in a particular location; via natural regeneration, as in the case of the **White Pine**, or by being introduced by planting, quite likely the manner by which the **Norway Spruce** got here.
10. On your right is a **duck blind**, used to observe and, perhaps, photograph water fowl on the pond.
11. **White Oak (*Quercus Alba*)**, this species grows well on a variety of sites, and its acorns are a favorite food source for a variety of wildlife, most notably deer, squirrels and wild eastern turkey. It's wood is hard and strong, and is used for many purposes, including wine barrels.
12. **Common reed (*Phragmites australis*)**, this wetland plant species is an invasive grass species which alters the structure and function of diverse marsh ecosystems. When their populations become too dense, they actually decrease the biodiversity of the wetland.
13. **Charles Baker Environmental Pavilion** was built as outdoor education center and named for Mr. Baker who served for a time as Camp Director of Camp Saratoga.
14. **Eastern Hemlock (*Tsuga Canadensis*)**, this coniferous or “cone-bearing” species prefers moist sites, and can thrive in very dense forest stands due to its high tolerance for shade conditions. The wood is weak, but popular with farmers who like to have hemlock logs sawn up into boards and available when necessary to replace broken barn siding, or to create a low cost fence for pastures and the like.
15. **American Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*)**, this hardwood species is of lower value but is plentiful due to its ability to regenerate itself. As with **Eastern Hemlock** it is very shade tolerant.
16. Looking ahead slightly to the right, you'll see a large **White Pine** that was struck and killed by lightning a few years back. Lightning strikes are most always a death sentence to a tree, since they damage the tree's cambium (lying just beneath the bark) which holds the xylem and phloem, (essentially the tree's arteries and veins). If the tree survives the strike, it may still succumb because insects and disease can now enter the exposed area where the bark was damaged.
17. **Lady Slipper**, upon blooming in the summertime, this beautiful wild orchid flower at your feet adds nice contrast to the towering trees that surround it.
18. **Cabin Area** – a number of local service clubs including Rotary, Kiwanis and Lions contributed to the construction of these cabins and the dining hall across the pond.
19. **Black Birch (*Betula Nigra*)**, regeneration is immediately in front of you. This species is a moderate shade tolerant, meaning it requires at least some partial sunlight to establish itself. When this pine stand was harvested about 1990, some of the openings created in the forest canopy were of sufficient size to allow in much needed sunlight for this species to gain a foothold.
20. One stem of this multi stem **white pine** was struck by lightning a few years ago, as evidenced by the scar running up the side of the tree. Unlike the lightning strike you saw previously, this tree will probably survive since the damaged cambium is only in the one affected stem. Of course, the threat of disease and insect infestation is still quite real.
21. **Northern Red Oak (*Quercus Rubra*)**, one of the most valuable tree species at the Camp, has a moderate tolerance to shade conditions, thus needs some canopy openings to establish itself. This stem had a twin which was harvested some time ago. If you look at the stump you'll see a new **Red Oak** stem sprouting.
22. **Jack Pine (*Pinus Banksiana*) Stand**, this small cluster of **Jack Pines** give a better representation of what the species looks like in nature than the one you saw near the parking lot. Both **Jack Pine** and **Pitch Pine**, which you'll see at the next stop, are unique in that they often thrive after fire. Their cones require high heat to open and release their seeds, so they are two of the first species to reclaim a site after fire.
23. **Pitch Pine (*Pinus Rigida*)**, you just learned something about this species' cones, it's also good to know that **Pitch Pine** can grow on most any site, regardless of how harsh the growing conditions are. It's an important component to forest types associated with **Blue Lupine** and the **Karner Blue Butterfly**. In front of the **Pitch Pine** is a young, healthy **Hard Maple** (sugar maple) which should continue to thrive and eventually assume a dominant position in the forest canopy. The four canopy positions are: dominant (receiving sunlight on the top and all sides of the tree's crown), co-dominant (receiving sunlight on the top and partially on the sides of the tree's crown), intermediate (receiving sunlight only on the top of the tree's crown), and suppressed (receiving no direct sunlight).
24. **Skidder damage** – the base of this tree was damaged during a timber harvest, as the harvested trees being dragged behind the skidder rubbed up against this tree, peeling away some bark. Although these trees are damaged, they are generally left behind to serve as “bumper trees” for subsequent harvests.
25. **Lean-to area** – this area was a combined effort of an Eagle Scout project from BSA Troop 24, and the Town of Wilton, and can accommodate approximately 28 guests for overnight camping. It is actively used today.
26. **Chapel** - on this site in 1965 this chapel was built and dedicated to the memory of a long time member of the *Saratogian* staff,

Mr. Lanfere. Wilton resident and former town councilman Larry Gordon designed the memorial.

27. **Trunk cracks**, also known as frost cracks, are radial separations of bark and wood. They are initiated with old wounds believed to be formed at the death of a root or branch. When this old wound is subjected to stresses from drying, wind or temperature extremes, the internal crack develops outward.
28. **Red Maple (*Acer Rubrum*)**, this species grows on a variety of sites from swamps to uplands. It has gained in popularity in the wood products industry, and has always been a popular food source for deer.
29. **Nature Center** – built in 1972 in honor of CPL Richard J. Warren who died in the Vietnam War. Richard’s father was a long term council executive with the Twin Rivers Boy Scout Council. Due to deteriorating structural integrity and concerns for visitors’ safety, the center was taken down. Plans are in place to rebuild in the future.
30. **Black Oak (*Quercus Velutina*)**, this large *black oak* has grown well on this site as the sandy, well drained soil provides ideal growing conditions. Though not as valuable a species as *red oak*, it is nonetheless popular in the wood products industry.
31. Young *beech* and *serviceberry (*amelanchier sp.*)* near *Aspen* stump. *Aspens* are called pioneer species because they, like *White Birch* and *Black Cherry*, are the first trees that will move into a site that had been occupied by grass or shrub species. Eventually these species, which are intolerant of shade, will yield to climax forest species, which are capable of regenerating themselves within their own shade, as you see around you.
32. This large *White Pine* is surrounded by young hardwood regeneration and by a young, soft maple (*Red Maple*) in front, as well as a *White Oak* in the distance (left-leaning trunk). The majority of mixed hardwood/softwood stands like this will eventually become mostly hardwood stands, since some of the hardwood species have a greater shade tolerance than the softwood species. As a result, the hardwood species will have the most success over time regenerating themselves. You will also notice how straight the *White Pine* is compared with the *White Oak* in the distance. Pines are geotropic, growing vertically from the ground regardless of their orientation to the sun. Hardwoods are phototropic, and will bend and twist their way towards the available sunlight. The dominant *White Pine* is overshadowing the suppressed *White Oak*.

33. **Cornell Hill Fire Tower at Camp Saratoga** is the newest addition to the Camp Saratoga landscape. First erected in 1924 on the Luther Forest property in Stillwater, NY, as part of the State’s forest fire control efforts, it was named *Cornell Hill* in honor of Thomas Luther’s alma mater, Cornell University. It was operated as a fire tower until 1970, at which point New York State ceased fire observation from it. It was sold to the Luther/Mackay family in 1976, and remained in place until 2010, at which point it was disassembled, refurbished and rebuilt on the *Camp Saratoga* site. The cabin is a re-creation of the living quarters utilized by the fire observers. Thomas Luther’s role in securing the *Camp Saratoga* property for the Boy Scouts in 1930, for use as a summer camp, is the reason the fire tower fits so well here. *Camp Saratoga* operated as a Boy Scout Camp from 1930 – 2000, at which point it was sold to the Nature Conservancy, and subsequently to the State of New York. The Town of Wilton purchased an additional 24 acres to protect endangered species, and provide environmental education as well as passive recreation.

The **Wilton Rotary Club** hopes you enjoyed this brief journey into our local natural world, and encourages you to support the **Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park** and its approximate 2000 acres of protected land, as it works to further its mission of conservation, environmental education, and outdoor recreation. Thanks for stopping by!

If you would like to learn more about Rotary or Camp Saratoga, please visit us at:

www.wiltonrotary.com

www.wiltonpreserve.org

Lumber supplies graciously donated by:



Rotary Club of Wilton Centennial Trail Guide

In 2005, Rotary Clubs around the world completed service projects to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of Rotary International. The Wilton Rotary Club created an interactive walking trail here at Camp Saratoga to promote the opportunities for environmental education and outdoor recreation available at the Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park. Please find the first trail marker by the Tree Farm sign and continue from there in numerical order. The trail is less than a mile long and appropriate for adults and children. We hope you enjoy your walk!

Camp Saratoga – a search by the local Boy Scout Council in the late 1920’s for a property that could provide both a weekend and summer camp experience led Tom Luther to the property on which you now stand. The Twin Rivers Council’s decision to consolidate its properties led to the sale of Camp Saratoga to The Nature Conservancy, which in turn sold it to the State. The property is host for many species of trees, flora, fauna, birds, animals, insects, fungi, bacteria; the most notable of these is the blue lupine which provides food and habitat for the endangered species, *The Karner Blue butterfly*. We hope this guide and short walk will help you familiarize yourself with some of the species that call Camp Saratoga home.

