

SCOTT'S LANDING



Scott's Landing was obviously once a farm though its hay rake and other implements have now moved to the historical society. The shore was the site of a ferry landing dating back as far as 1792. Even before that, more than three thousand years ago, the Native Americans had a very important settlement here. They called it Eggemoggin, "Where the fish weirs are".

Self-Guided Nature Trail

Look for **10 Points of Interest** signs along the trail.

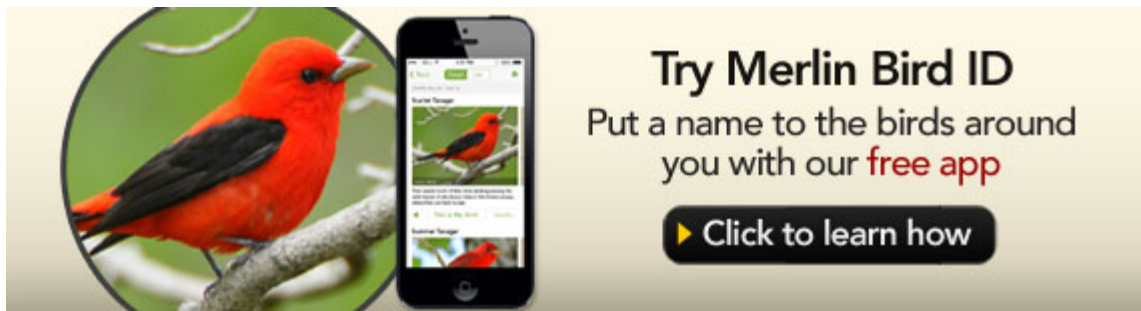
#1 Point of Interest

With its wide variety of habitats, Scotts Landing is richly endowed with plant and animal species. Fringing the edge of the parking area are many shrubs, including hawthorn, called thorn-apple for its thorns, Virginia roses, and wild-raisin, a shiny-leaved viburnum, pictured here with Spear-marked black, a day-flying moth that is very common in some summers.



You will want to check also the *deeri*Nature Species Almanac for other choices as you explore our trails.

In the taller bushes and trees you might see tiny warblers that always arrive here at the end of May when we have an annual festival called Wings, Waves, and Woods to welcome them. You may want to use your web browser to call up the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology site if you do not have a good bird app. See www.birds.cornell.edu or download their free app, see below.



#2 Point of Interest

The many shrubs here indicate that the land was once cleared. Indeed the farm was established by early settler William Eaton and the Scotts bought it from him. Likewise, spreading branches completely encircling the trunks of the large spruces on either side of the trail tell you that formerly they grew in open pastures.



Notice the litter of spruce cone scales at the base of those trees. Red squirrels throw down the cones and open them for the seeds. They usually choose a vantage point from which to keep an eye out for predators while they eat, creating these middens.



Speckled alders (above) are common here; that tells you that the habitat is damp and the soil is poorly drained. Among the spring wild flowers is trout lily (below), uncommon on Deer Isle

and an indicator of rich soil. Did the presence of these wildflowers encourage the Eatons and the Scotts to farm here?



In the bushes you are likely to hear Song Sparrows. They are short-distance migrants, and are among the first birds to come back here in spring. Blackbirds and Hermit Thrushes are also among these early arrivals. Catbirds sing often in this habitat, and you might hear the beautiful songs of the thrushes in the early spring evenings.

#3 Point of Interest

Here you have the option to turn left to follow a trail to the 1807 dock or to turn right and the trail leads to Old Ferry Road and the foundation remnants of the Scott farmstead. Continue right for only some twenty yards and then up the rise, bearing left.



The shrubs here are a prime habitat for spring bird watching. In the fields you will find blueberries and flame-red wood lilies (above) in the summer. Scott's Landing is also a good spot for watching butterflies. On a warm day in any month you might see Mourning Cloaks, black ones with a yellow edge, named for Victorian mourning tradition. Introduced and plain white, Cabbage White butterflies are now our most common species, among the first and last of the season. When lilacs around the Island bloom, you will see Tiger Swallowtails on them. Tiny pale blue butterflies are Azures. They will be seen when the blooms are on the shadbush pictured here below.



#4 Point of Interest



The glacier left a ridge of rubble here, forming the moraine ridge down which the trail leads to the site of a past dock and store. The wild cherries, sumac, Virginia rose and other shrubs and young trees here are prime habitat for Chestnut-sided warblers and Common Yellowthroat. Come here in April at about 8 PM, just after sunset when the first stars come out, and you can watch the displays of Woodcock. The male birds make a funny electric sound, “pzeent, pzeent” as they turn about on their display ground. They fly in spirals up in the air, showing off for the females, making a sweet whistling sound with their tail feathers before plummeting back to the ground with a liquid warble.

Follow the Moraine Ridge to the narrow trail leading to the right through the shrubs to the beach.

#5 Point of Interest



The trail through shrubs such as speckled alder, winterberry - our native holly pictured above - and bayberry, leads past the remains of a stone wall put here by a past farmer.

#6 Point of Interest

Note the lines of small holes in the apple tree trunk (below) made by generations of Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers. Interestingly, they were not drilling for sap for themselves but the wells attract insects on which the sapsuckers will then dine.



Here is a fine interpretive sign at site of the archeological dig. When IHT acquired the property, archeologists came and ran a field school, scientifically examining the shell middens here.



There had been signs that people were digging the area illegally. When that happens the information about our heritage is lost forever.

Step out onto the beach. When those ancient members of the encampment whose artifacts were uncovered in the dig lived here, the high tide mark was substantially farther out. The water level has risen substantially since then.



Look to your left at the prominent rock outcrop. The rock is Ellsworth Schist, a layered metamorphic rock forming the bedrock of northwestern Deer Isle.

#7 Point of Interest

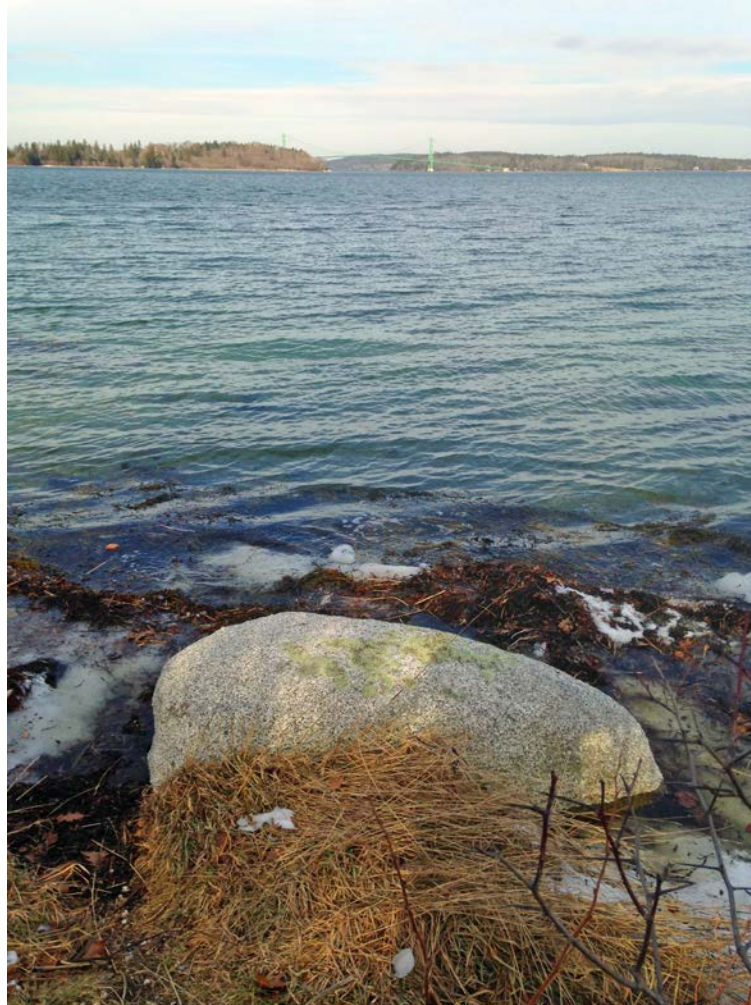


Behind the beach is a marsh – a wetland with non-woody vegetation. Because we hear spring peepers and wood frogs calling from it in early spring, we know that it is not salty. The tall grass-like plants are mainly rushes and sedges, the latter identified by their triangular stems (think Sedge-Wedge and Rush-Round). In the snow (photo above) or on the beach or through the vegetation you can see game trails where deer, fox, or other animals regularly come out for a drink or venture onto the beach.

In the intertidal zone you can find knotted wrack (below), the rockweed species that is more common in sheltered waters.



Overhead you may see an Osprey or Bald Eagle. Both nest on or near Carney Island on the other side of Causeway Beach. Common waterbirds include Herring Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Double-crested Cormorant, and in winter Common Loon and Eider ducks.



At the far end of the beach is a boulder that is clearly not like anything around it. A closer look reveals that there is no pink in this granite so we know it is not part of the Stonington formation. Could it be that it is from across the Reach? It looks just like the bedrock of Sedgwick—Sedgwick granite. The Reach, by the way, takes its name from the fact that sailors can navigate the passage in either direction, coming or going, with the sail on a reach, i.e. out across the beam of the vessel.

#8 Point of Interest

Northern Harriers can be seen cruising low over the field here to catch the meadow voles. Red fox and coyotes both hunt here as well. Our native wood lilies grow between this path and Old Ferry Road.

Along the wall are white spruce (below), with cones that are longer than wide and their new needles have a bluish cast.



Sometimes called skunk spruce, white spruce can give off the smell of cat urine. Note in some of the trees the bushy growths of what is called Witches' Broom. A variety of organisms can cause the infected plant to respond with this growth.

Also along the wall you will also find a variety of fern species, including sensitive, cinnamon, and interrupted ferns.



Sensitive fern (above) is a small fern with a separate fruiting stalk that looks like a stick of BB shot and is one of the first to be frosted in the fall.



Cinnamon fiddleheads (above) emerging in spring look as if they have been dusted with a rather furry cinnamon and sugar mixture and traces of this fuzz remain on the stems most of the summer.



The cinnamon fern fruiting stalks (above) are red-brown single spires.

Interrupted ferns (below) are almost the twin of cinnamon ferns—similar in both size and shape—but their leafy fronds are interrupted along their length with pendant knots of dark fruiting bodies.



Follow the field edge and stone wall.

#9 Point of Interest

At the foot of the meadow, the shrubby wetland of winterberry and speckled alder usually supports several pairs of nesting woodcock. The field and its edges form a patchy habitat that is ideal for woodcock. They use the openings for display and feed by probing for worms in the soft earth of the swamp. Like many other members of the sandpiper family, one male probably mates with several females which then nest alone.

From this spot you can see several species of hardwoods. Two old Yellow Birch (below) are still surviving on the bridge side of the trail. When they were young, the Scott family was farming here.



Alone on the Ferry Road side of the trail stands a Red Oak (below), the predominant oak of the Island, often used in ship building.



Do not continue to the Moraine Ridge trail, but bear left, passing the red oak, to the signpost which points in one direction to the farmstead by Old Ferry Road. Follow the trail in the other direction to an alley of poplars.

#10 Point of Interest



Follow the path through the line of aspens. This is a remnant of the portion of Old Ferry Road that formerly led from the farmstead to the 1807 Store and now joins the preserve's loop trail. The poplar (big-toothed aspen) trees tell us that this land was once more open than it is today. Notice that there are few poplar seedlings in the understory. Poplars are not tolerant of shade and will be replaced in time by oak and spruce growing up beneath them. The poplars here seem quite similar to one another—it is quite likely that they are all natural clones. Groves of clones can cover a very large area, perhaps more than a mile.



What look like paint spots on the tree trunks here are lichens. There are often as many as thirty different kinds of lichens growing on our trees. You may have noticed that the aspens have the more obvious bark lichens and it is principally the spruces which have hanging thread-like lichens, the old man's beard. Parula warblers use the beard lichens to make their nests. Parulas are not quite as cooperative about letting you see them as are the Black-throated Green warblers you see in the spruces. The Parulas return a little later in the spring and often can be seen in the blooming shadbush and wild cherries.



On your return to the parking lot, take a moment to enjoy the vista framed by the stone. The sculptor visited Crotch Island, the source of the granite for the sculpture at the parking lot here at Scott's Landing. The site-specific work is titled *Deer Isle Project* and is part of the Schoodic International Sculpture Symposium. Funded through grants and contributions, the works produced by the biennial artist in residency program are then offered to communities in Eastern Maine to form a growing Downeast Sculpture Tour. In his artist statement Atilla Rath Geber of Caen, France, says he intended for this work to reflect the natural elements and respect for the surroundings.

As well as a close look at the present with whispers about future possibilities, a visit to Scott's Landing takes the visitor back in time.



Scott's Landing takes its name from the Scott family who for years tended the ferry crossing the Reach. The ferry landing photograph from the historical society archives shows what is now the Inn at Ferry Landing, the white house at the right. The little ferry could hold four cars and was skillfully towed across the Reach (by the boat you see at the left of the photograph) until the point where the ferry glided smoothly up to the loading ramp. There are still rock remnants of the wharf, which lies beyond the Scott's Landing Preserve.

We hope you have enjoyed your outing. Maps for all our preserves are available at the Island Heritage Trust Office in Heritage House in Sunset.

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**SELF-GUIDED NATURE TRAIL downloads for all our preserves
and The Nature Species Almanac download
and Nature Activities
available at
www.deerisle.com**

Text by Dr. Kenneth L. Crowell and Marnie Reed Crowell
with information from the series of **Walks and Talks**
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Photo Credits
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Deer Isle-Stonington Historical Society

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