

About This Property

Consider how remote and novel that [Gowing's Swamp]. Beneath it is a quaking bed of sphagnum, and in it grow . . . plants which scarcely a citizen of Concord ever sees. It would be as novel to them to stand there as in a conservatory, or in Greenland . . . —Henry David Thoreau, August 30, 1856

This smaller bog-within-a-bog, or a quaking bog, is historically known as Thoreau's Bog in honor of Henry David Thoreau's scientific and philosophical interest in the site. He referenced Gowing's Swamp in 37 entries in his *Journal*, in *Walden*, and in his essay "Walking."

The bog formed when plants that lived on the edges of the pond began moving out deeper into the water as the subarctic climate warmed. Their thick tangle of roots, along with sphagnum moss, built up over many years, forming a layer strong enough to support the weight of small mammals.

Features of Note

- The trail head is located at the Playscape at Ripley, a nature park for all ages and abilities.
- Gowing's Swamp lies in a kettle hole that depends solely on rainwater for its recharge. The swamp lacks the nutrients required by more common wetland plants and organisms.
- The bog's extreme acidity, combined with low mineral and nutrient availability and a protective topography that favors a cool microclimate, accounts for a locally rare and thriving community of northern and bog-loving plants. These include pitcher-plant, bog rosemary, pale laurel, small and large cranberries, and black spruce.
- Due to the glacial carving of the Gowing's Swamp landscape, an unusual number of vernal pools coexist in a relatively small area. These include Gowing's Swamp itself and three other pools. All four pools provide critical habitat for amphibians and certain aquatic invertebrates, such as fairy shrimp.

Learn more:
www.svtweb.org/GowingsSwamp

Trail Policies and Regulations

These policies apply to SVT properties on the map. Properties owned by other entities have their own posted policies.

The following are prohibited:

- Motorized vehicles
- Hunting or trapping
- Camping
- Bicycling
- Fires
- Disposing of trash or yard waste
- Cutting or removing plants



Dog walkers:

- Pick up and dispose of dog waste.
- Keep dogs on trails.
- Keep dogs out of ponds/streams/vernal pools.
- Put dogs on a leash when other hikers approach.

See our full dog-walking policy on the trail head kiosk.

Directions

With mapping software, search for this address:
120 Meriam Road, Concord, MA

From the center of Concord, take Route 62 East and follow 1.5 mile. Turn right onto Old Bedford Road and continue 0.3 mile. Turn right on Meriam Road and continue to the parking area for the Playscape at Ripley.

Support SVT

SVT protects open spaces and natural areas in 36 communities around the Sudbury, Assabet, and Concord Rivers. We care for thousands of acres of land that provide habitat for native wildlife, and we maintain more than 60 miles of trails for public enjoyment.

SVT relies upon the support of our members to be successful.

Join Us! Help protect these lands forever.
www.svtweb.org

Gowing's Swamp Trail Map



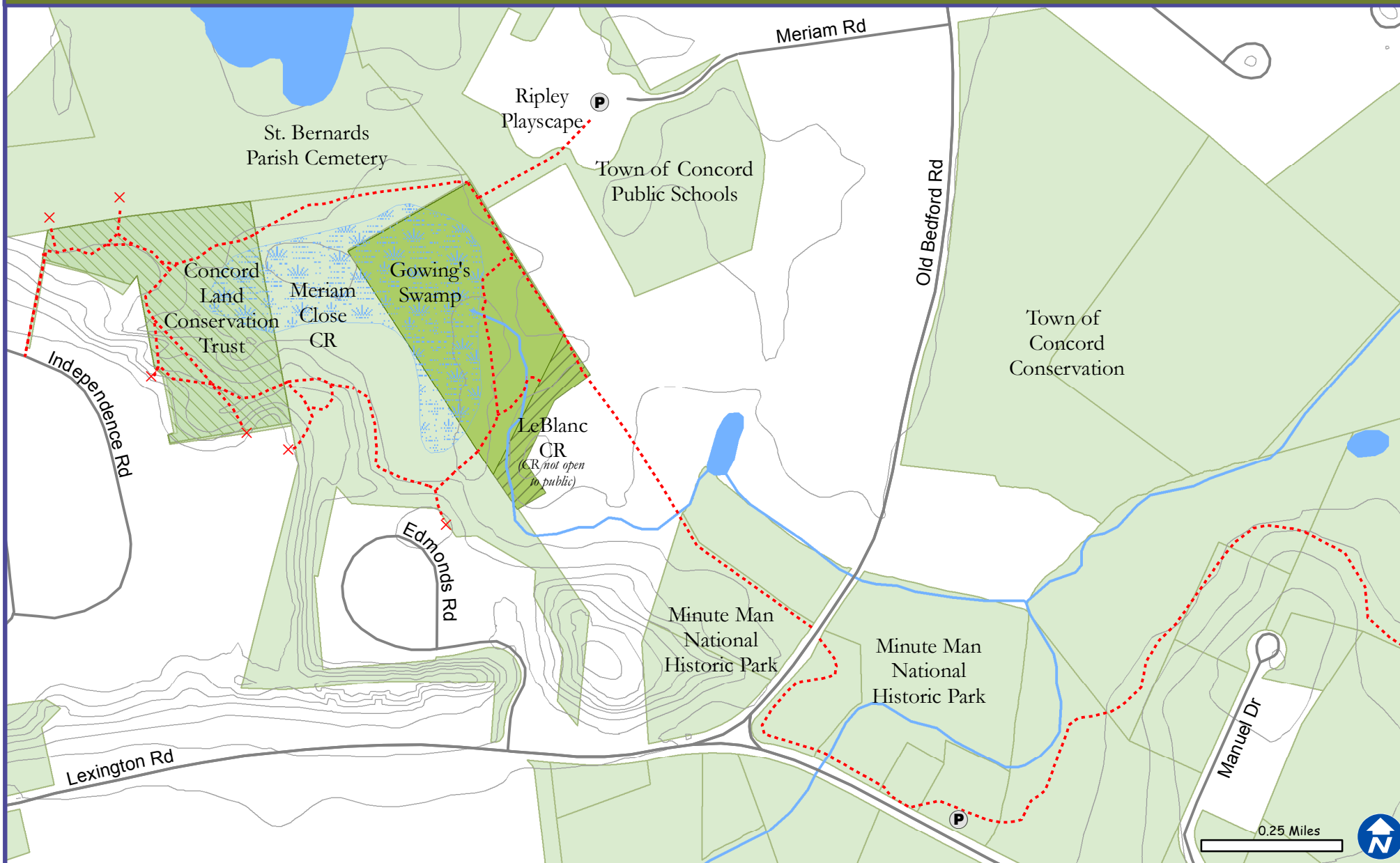
CONCORD

This map includes trails that cross properties owned and managed by The Town of Concord, Concord Land Conservation Trust, Minute Man National Historic Park, and private owners.



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www.svtweb.org
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GOWING'S SWAMP, CONCORD



- | | | | | | |
|---------|---------|------------|------|--------|-------------|
| Parking | Trail | Water Body | Road | SVT CR | Other Owner |
| Bridge | Private | Wetland | SVT | CLCT | |

Love open spaces? Support SVT!

Sudbury Valley Trustees is a nonprofit conservation organization that protects land for the benefit of people and wildlife. Help us keep these trails open for all to enjoy.

Join or Donate today! www.svtweb.org

Map produced by Sudbury Valley Trustees. Data Provided by Office of Geographic and Environmental Information (MassGIS), Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. This Map should be used for reference only. Boundary lines are approximate.



How to
Get Here

