

Station 10: Sandy Beach

The small cove below offers a haven for many marine organisms found in habitats associated with sheltered environments. Salt marsh grasses fringe much of the cove; sand and substrata provide shelter for burrowing invertebrates such as clams and marine worms. Ledges and isolated rocks are draped with rockweed and beyond the cove is Sheepscoot Bay.

Station 11: Rock Tripe

Rock tripe, a lichen, grows on the rock ledge behind this sign. Lichens are actually structures made up of two organisms growing together, a fungus and algal. The algal species found in lichens occur on their own in nature, but this is not true of fungi. Lichens are found in all types of environments, typically growing on rocks or trees. They get all their moisture and nutrients from the air. Macrolichens are larger and more three-dimensional. An excellent example of macrolichens is the rock tripe. When the air is dry, rock tripe is dry and brittle. Crustose lichens are also common in the preserve. They grow closely clinging to rocks and tree bark and look like flakes of paint.

Station 12: The Maine Woods of Today

Forests found on the Maine coast are a result of human activity since arrival of European settlers in the early 17th and 18th Century. Before that time, fewer, but much larger trees dominated the area. Forests were a mixture of several species, varying by location as a result of soils, moisture and "aspect" (on the sunny or shady side of slopes). Trees were cut for wooden ships, home construction, firewood and the many wooden tools used by early settlers. Trees here today are primarily red spruce, seeded in

after the land was no longer farmed about 100 years ago. Being short-lived, drought, insects and disease decimate them, but shade-tolerant spruce and balsam fir seedlings thrive on the forest floor, assuring a healthy forest in future years.

Station 13: Vista with View of Seal Rocks

On a clear day and at low tide, one often can spot harbor seals sunbathing on a ledge in the Sheepscoot River. They are easily recognized by the unaided eye with their tan coloration, but a good pair of binoculars helps.

Station 14: The Sheepscoot Bay

Looking south into the Sheepscoot River we see several small islands. The tree-covered islands straight ahead or Ram Islands with the larger Isle of Springs behind and just to the left. Sawyers Island lies to the left, Westport, McMahan and Georgetown Islands across the river to the right. Ospreys have made an excellent recovery in Maine. There is a nest on Ram Island and one on the navigational marker to the left of Ram Island.

Station 15: Matriarch Pine

Sometimes called "old-field pine," matriarch pine belongs to a group of ancient trees that stood in fields and pastures of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Many are over 200 years old. We recognize them today by their massive and often multiple trunks and huge branches reaching nearly to the ground.

PROPERTY USE

BRLT properties are open to the public year-round, free of charge, for quiet, low impact activities. Overnight camping and fires are not allowed. Please keep dogs under control and carry out all litter. Parties greater than 10 are requested to obtain permission. Commercial use is not permitted.

TREE QUIZ

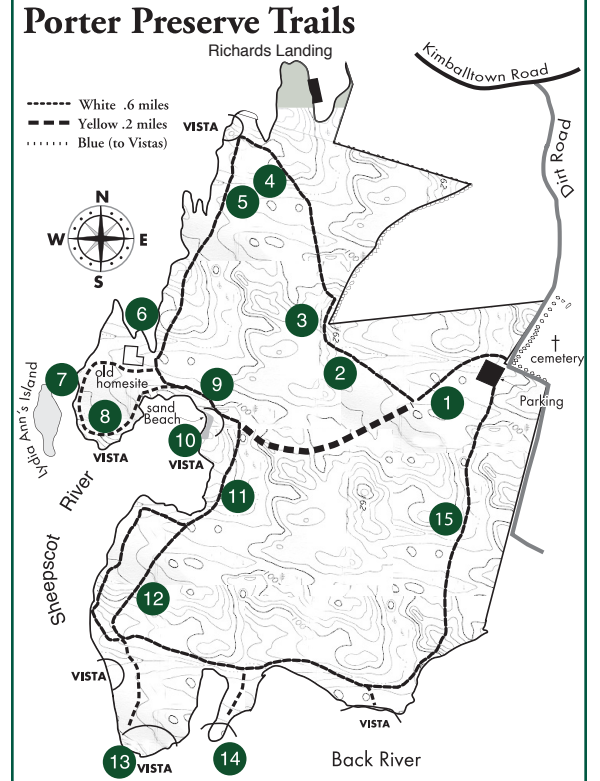
- A: _____
- B: _____
- C: _____
- D: _____
- E: _____
- F: _____
- G: _____
- H: _____
- I: _____
- J: _____
- K: _____
- L: _____
- M: _____
- N: _____
- O: _____
- P: _____

Above, you may want to test your knowledge by filling in the blank spaces next to the letter with the name of each tree.

Answers to Tree Quiz
 A-Red Spruce; B-White Birch; C-Red Oak;
 D-Winterberry; E-Quaking Aspen; F-Northern Bayberry;
 G-Balsam Fir; H-Dwarf Juniper; I-Red Maple;
 J-Huckleberry; K-White Pine; L-Mountain Ash;
 M-Meadow Sweet; N-Horsechestnut; O-Fire Cherry;
 P-Bigtooth Aspen

Revised February 2007

PORTER DISCOVERY TRAIL Self Guided Tour by the Numbers



The Boothbay region is known for its spectacular natural beauty, rocky shores, coastal islands, and river corridors. Since 1980, the Boothbay Region Land Trust has preserved the beauty of the Boothbay region by conserving land for the benefit and enjoyment of the residents and visitors in the Boothbay region.



BOOTHBAY REGION LAND TRUST

1 Oak Street • P. O. Box 183
 Boothbay Harbor, Maine
 (207) 633-4818
 brlt@bbrlt.org
 www.bbrlt.org

WELCOME TO PORTER PRESERVE

We invite you to tour this 21-acre preserve and observe its special qualities. From the parking lot, walk counter-clockwise, follow the numbers on the map and the corresponding numbers marked on the trail. Also note the plants marked with capital letters along the trail. At the end of your tour, you might want to test yourself on what you've learned. (See last page)

Proceeding counter-clockwise from the parking area, you will encounter numbers 1 through 15, mounted on wooden stakes. Numbers correspond to short narratives in these pages. Secondly, we have identified trees near the trail. And finally, you will note the capital letters A through P mounted on or near trees and plants. You may want to test your knowledge by filling in the blank spaces on the last page with the name of each. You can check your answers on the same page in this brochure. And now, have fun.

Station 1: Sunny Forest Opening

Forest plant life requires soil, moisture and sun. This small opening in the woods offers all three. Here, old trees died and decayed, releasing nutrients into the soil. Plentiful sunlight encouraged the establishment of spruce, fir and pine seedling growth in great numbers, taking advantage of sun, moisture and nutrients. Only about 100 trees per acre will ever grow to maturity, while many thousands will not survive fierce competition. Here we have "released" a small number of the best saplings by removing all others in a ten-foot radius. In a managed forest, these would become high value crop trees in 50 to 60 years.

Station 2: Rock Polypody

These ferns growing on the rocks are called rock polypody. There are actually two very similar species of polypody in Maine. The ones here are the common polypody (*Polypodium virginianum*). These ferns are remarkable in that they can grow with little or no soil, typically found growing in rock crevices where few other plants could survive. In times of drought, these ferns curl up and look dead, but revive with the next rain or fog, becoming green, and unfurling to their original shape.

Station 3: Stone Walls

Stone walls in New England are a familiar and integral part of the wooded landscape. They represent an activity, which is all but lost in the region, but still serves many useful purposes. Built mostly between 1750 and 1850, the stone walls' principal function was to hold stone piles generated by farmers from the field, and later became a barrier for cows and other livestock. Usually frost heaving and surface erosion brought stones to the surface during winter and these were picked up by hand, or with the help of oxen and draft horses in the spring. They were stacked to take up less space on the edges of fields and along property boundaries. This process left behind the stone walls we see today. Now, stone walls demarcate property lines and provide habitats for plants and creatures that otherwise might not exist.

Station 4: The Dooryard Garden

Nearby is a cellar hole of a house once occupied by a Lewis family in the late 19th Century. Their garden was probably located here in an area of deep soil. The produce was mainly

root vegetables, such as beets, onions, potatoes (usually the biggest crop) and turnips. The usual above-ground crops were squashes, corn, beans, and cabbages. If plentiful, the crops would have gone to livestock as well as the family. The Lewises would have gathered wild blueberries and cranberries to augment what they grew. Supplies they couldn't grow or catch themselves, such as molasses, flour and saleratus (baking powder), they bought from the S.G. Hodgdon store.

Station 5: Uprooted Oak Tree

This old oak is a good example of how plants react to disasters for survival. Growing on shallow soil over ledge, it uprooted many years ago, but a few roots remained alive to sustain the tree. Some of the branches turned toward the sun and grew into miniature trees along the entire length of the trunk.

Station 6: The House Foundation at Porter Point

The cellar hole marks the location of a house built by Giles Dunton of North Boothbay in 1870 for Lydia Ann Lewis and her husband Elbridge Lewis. Lydia Ann was born a Barter about a mile above her 1870 house site. Elbridge was a fisherman whose fishing forebears lived on Damariscove Island and later Barters Island. Elbridge probably fished for S.G. Hodgdon of Hodgdon Island who actually owned the house and property while the Lewises lived there. The house became a summer home in 1907 for the Hull family. In the 1930s the Porters, also summer residents, bought the property, and the house finally fell down a few decades ago. In 1983, the Porter family deeded 19 acres to the Boothbay Region Land Trust.

Station 7: Lydia Ann's Island

Common Eider Ducks, Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls can be seen on the island throughout the year. Double-crested Cormorants are numerous during the summer months. In August one may see Bonaparte's Gulls and Common Terns. Greater Yellowlegs and Spotted Sandpipers are common during migration. The island in winter hosts an array of sea ducks, an occasional Common Loon as well as Purple Sandpipers.

Station 8: The Dooryard Fishflakes

The dominant feature on this rocky ledge was most likely "fishflakes" at the time the Lewises lived here. Fishflakes were waist-high drying racks spread over flat ground whereon fish were placed and turned to dry in the wind and sun. In some places they covered several acres and probably added a characteristic odor to the air as car or truck exhaust does today.

Station 9: The Well

One of the most important decisions for choosing the location of a house is a source of fresh water. No doubt before building, Lydia Ann and Elbridge Lewis noted that fresh water trickled into the cove or gathered in a certain wet spot. They would have dug a well down to bedrock, assured themselves of its volume and potability and rocked it up to forestall its filling in again. It was either fenced to keep out livestock, or it might have been covered by a wooden platform. Water could have been drawn by a pulley or well sweep (a pivoted pole), or simply by a bucket and a rope.