

POWDERMILL NATURE RESERVE

RECREATION GUIDE



Nature Center Hours

**April – October**      **November – March**  
Tue – Sat | 9 am – 4:30 pm    Wed – Sat | 9 am – 4:30 pm  
Sun | Noon – 4:30 pm        Sun | Noon – 4:30 pm

**POWDERMILL NATURE RESERVE**  
1795 ROUTE 381 | RECTOR, PA 15677  
CARNEGIE MNH.ORG/POWDERMILL



About Powdermill Nature Reserve

Powdermill Nature Reserve, the environmental research center of Carnegie Museum of Natural History, has been dedicated to research, education, and conservation since 1956. It serves as a site for scientists, students, and families to explore the natural world.

A variety of public education programs serve children and adults throughout the year. Researchers from around the world visit Powdermill to conduct diverse scientific studies in various fields including botany, entomology, herpetology, and ornithology.



Recreational Activities

**Visiting the Nature Center:** Admission is free! The nature center contains exhibits highlighting local wildlife and an indoor Marsh Machine. Visit the front desk staff to inquire about family-friendly activities and natural phenomena. Take a self-guided tour of the Gold LEED certified Nature Center and browse the gift shop filled with nature-themed items.

**Hiking:** Powdermill Nature Reserve offers more than four miles of scenic woodland trails of varying terrain. Before hiking, make sure you have proper footwear, appropriate clothing, and other necessities. Be mindful of ticks and poison ivy. Nature can be surprising, and personal safety is your responsibility. Leashed dogs are welcome. Bicycles and motorized vehicles are not permitted on the trails. Sugar Camp and Porcupine Ridge Trails are closed during regular firearms deer hunting season.

**Garden Strolling:** See beautiful native plants in bloom from spring to fall! Visit our various outdoor gardens and woodland pathway to see how different plants, insects, and other wildlife adapt in different habitats. For more information about the garden plants, visit the Virtual Garden Timeline at [virtualgarden.powdermill.org](http://virtualgarden.powdermill.org).

**Picnicking:** Covered picnic areas are located behind the Nature Center and at the vista of Porcupine Ridge Trail. Other picnic tables can be found along the trail systems and Nature Center building. Drinking water, modern restrooms, public Wi-Fi, and recycling bins are available inside the Nature Center.

**Permitted Deer Hunting:** Permits to hunt deer on established sections of Powdermill property are allotted to a limited number of hunters in a lottery-based system. See [powdermill.org](http://powdermill.org) for more details. Pennsylvania Game Commission rules and regulations apply. Firearms are not permitted in public areas. Respect other people who use the trails during hunting season.

Protect Our Nature Reserve

Please be respectful of other visitors and surrounding wildlife, always clean up after yourself and your companions, and leave nature how you find it. Fishing, camping, unauthorized firearms, bus idling, smoking, and alcohol are prohibited.

Amenities & Places of Interest

Barb's Country Store located in Rector (3 miles north) is a small shop with a lunch deli. The nearest gas stations, restaurants, grocery stores, and shopping areas are in Ligonier (8 miles north) and Donegal (10 miles south). Latrobe (19 miles) is west on US Route 30. Flight 93 National Memorial (28 miles) is located east on US Route 30.

Explore Linn Run State Park (4 miles), Forbes State Forest (9 miles), Laurel Mountain State Park (15 miles), Laurel Ridge State Park (20 miles) to the north; and Kooser State Park (13 miles), Hidden Valley Resort (13 miles), Seven Springs Mountain Resort (16 miles), Laurel Hill State Park (20 miles), Fallingwater (24 miles), Ohiopyle State Park (28 miles), and Kentuck Knob (30 miles) to the south.

Educational Programs

Powdermill hosts summer camps, field trips, and public hikes. Visit [powdermill.org](http://powdermill.org) and our Facebook page for the latest activities and more information.

The Powdermill Avian Research Center hosts professional bird banding and Motus (radio tracking) workshops throughout the year. For more information, visit [powdermillarc.org](http://powdermillarc.org).



Accessibility

Powdermill Nature Reserve welcomes all visitors. We work to assist visitors with disabilities in obtaining reasonable and appropriate accommodations. Please note that requests for accommodations at Powdermill Nature Reserve should be made at least two weeks prior to your visit. For specific questions about accessibility, please call 724.593.6105 or 724.593.4070.

In an Emergency

Please call 911. Cellular reception is limited. A landline phone, first aid kit, and Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) are available inside the Powdermill Nature Center.

**Nearest Hospital** (19 miles)  
Excelsa Health Latrobe Hospital  
121 West 2nd Avenue  
Latrobe, PA 15650      Phone: 724-537-1000

POWDERMILL NATURE CENTER TRAILS AND GARDENS





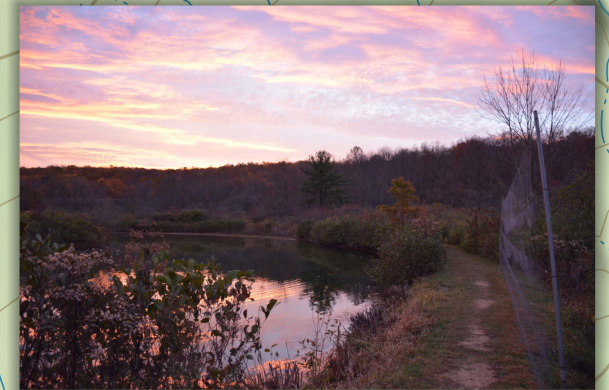


# POWDERMILL NATURE RESERVE TRAIL MAP



**POWDERMILL  
NATURE  
CENTER  
(YOU ARE HERE)**

The bird banding station at the Powdermill Avian Research Center (PARC) has been operating since 1961 and has captured and processed over 750,000 birds. Additionally, PARC conducts research on avian perception of glass, tracking birds using radio telemetry, and other avian research projects. This area of Powdermill Nature Reserve consists of 10 hectares (25 acres) of fields, hedgerows, ponds, wetlands, and streams that offer a unique opportunity for avian research. The PARC area is not open to the public, but visits may be arranged by appointment. For more information, please visit [powdermillarc.org](http://powdermillarc.org).



## Trail Information

**Black Birch Trail (0.5 miles | 0.8 km)** is an easy, level hike with plenty of benches and pleasant creek side views of Powdermill Run. Completed in 1985, this trail is named for the black birch trees scattered throughout the area, which was once part of an old farm field.

**Woodland Path (400 feet | 120 m)** is a short, ADA-accessible gravel trail that was added in 2014. In the springtime, native wildflowers can be found growing along the path.

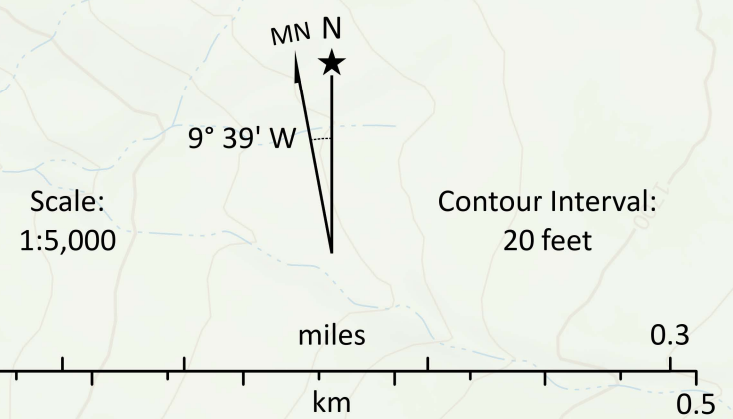
**Sugar Camp Trail (1.1 miles | 1.7 km)** is a moderate loop hike with gradual slopes. Completed in 2005 by the Student Conservation Association, this trail is named for the maple syrup orchard that once operated nearby. Many maple syrup camps scattered the area in late 1800s and early 1900s. In the early 1900s this hillside was also dug for coal by hand, and fragments of coal can be found on parts of the trail.

**Porcupine Ridge Trail (1.4 miles | 2.3 km)** is a more difficult hike over steep slopes and rocky terrain that was completed in 2016. Accessed via Sugar Camp Trail, this combined 3.1 mile out-and-back trek travels through rich woodlands, past an old farmstead, across Powdermill Run, and through a tornado blowdown research area. The vertical ascent equals the height of the Washington Monument and finishes with a spectacular overlook of Laurel Mountain. This trail is named for the presence of porcupines in the area.

In 2012, this section of the Porcupine Ridge Trail experienced a tornado that significantly damaged the forest canopy. Now this area is part of an ongoing research project.



Mileage Marker	Trail	Trail Spur	State Route
Bridge	Bench	Paved Road	Unpaved Road
		Gate	
Trail Head	Vista		
Picnic Area	Picnic Pavilion		
Parking	Building		
Stream	PNR Boundary		
Intermittent Stream	Pond		
Index Contour	Contour		



Porcupine Ridge Trail overlook