

About Charlestown Reserve

Charlestown is named after a handful of residential homes and a one-room schoolhouse. Charles Hovies (1898-1972) acquired three abandoned farms on this site in 1943 and established apple and peach orchards. In 1958, he married Harriet Mathison, and also planted Christmas trees and groves of beech, tulip poplar, black locust, and persimmon. Following Charles's death, Harriet remained on the farm and sold 203 acres to the County in 1981. She retained 12 acres around the house for herself, which she deeded to the County in 1989 with a clause granting her a life-right to the property. After she passed away in 2000, the County acquired additional acreage, now totaling 269 acres. Serving as an island of green in the area north of Interstate 78, the land has been held in trust as a conservation area.

Adjacent state land adds additional area where plants can thrive and animals can roam.



Red-tailed Hawk

The Hunterdon County Division of Parks & Recreation is dedicated to preserving open space and natural resources, providing safe parks and facilities, and offering educational and recreational opportunities, all contributing to an enhanced quality of life for present and future generations.

Charlestown Reserve

Location: Charlestown Reserve is located at 40 Charlestown Road, Hampton 08827 (Bethlehem Township). The park is open from sunrise to sunset. No restroom facilities are available.

Directions from the Clinton Area:

From the junction with Interstate 78, travel north on Route 31 for approximately 6 miles. In Glen Gardner, make a left at the second traffic light onto Glen Manor Road. Proceed to the end of the road. Turn left onto Black Brook Road and then make the first right onto Mullin Lane. At the end of Mullin Lane, make a left onto Route 635 (also known as Charlestown Rd). The entrance to the reserve is on the right.

Directions from the Bloomsbury Area:

Take Interstate 78 east to exit 12. From exit 12, travel north on Route 635 (also known as Charlestown Rd). Proceed on Route 635 for approximately 4.5 miles to the park. The parking lot will be on the left-hand side.



Gray Fox

Recreational Opportunities

Charlestown offers a moderate-grade hiking trail. The trailhead is located at the right corner of the parking lot. The trail starts with a moderate climb up a hillside and eventually intersects with an old field road. The old road meanders through the park and loops back on itself. Mountain biking is permitted within the park, but horseback riding is prohibited.

Wildlife & Habitat

The main habitat at Charlestown is second generation oak-hickory forest. Along the trail are stone walls, which provide evidence of Charlestown's agrarian past. Today, these stone walls provide habitat for snakes and small mammals such as chipmunks.

The rocky hillsides and other secluded areas of Charlestown provide a haven for Hunterdon County's more reclusive mammals. Gray Fox evidence, such as scat and tracks, has been found.

The preserve also supports a wide range of woodland bird species. Tufted Titmice and Black-capped Chickadees are common sights. Red-tailed Hawks and Turkey Vultures can usually be seen flying above. Wild Turkeys take advantage of the large supply of acorns and other nuts. Woodpeckers, such as Downy or Red-bellied Woodpeckers, can be seen and heard drilling the trees.

Hunting

Hunting is permitted to control the deer population. Hunters must obtain a special permit issued by the Division. Visitors between September and February are strongly encouraged to wear blaze orange or confine visits to Sundays.

(Revised 11/2019)

It is the policy of the County to provide reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities upon advance notice of need. Persons requiring accommodations should make a request at least two weeks prior to program attendance.

With the exception of park properties with reservable facilities, all properties are "carry in / carry out" and trash/recycling receptacles are not provided. Please plan accordingly and do not leave any trash/recyclables behind.

Charlestown Reserve

Trail Map and Guide



Red-bellied Woodpecker

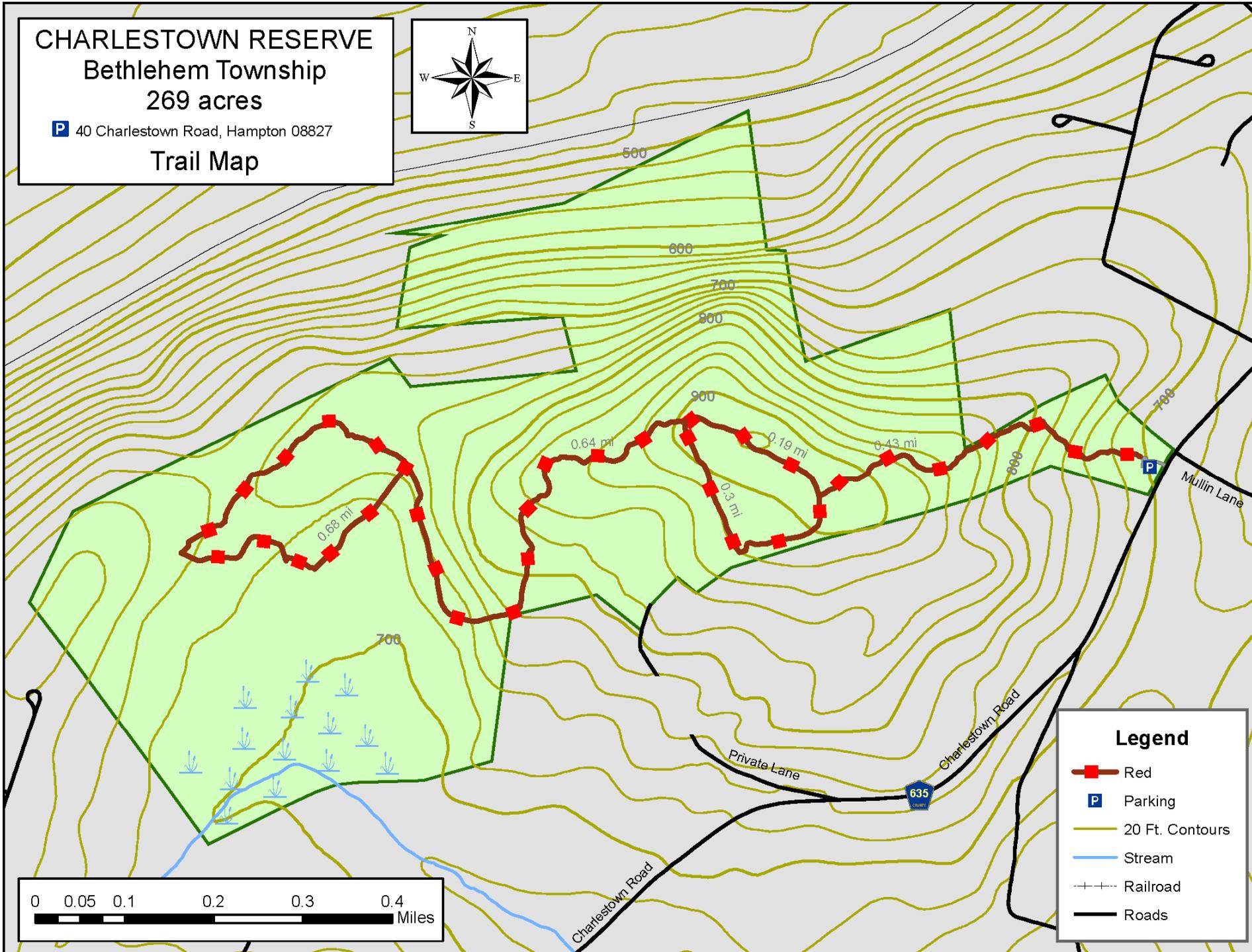


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Office Hours:
Monday to Friday 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM

SUMMARY OF RULES AND REGULATIONS



The rules and regulations governing use of facilities or properties administered by the Hunterdon County Division of Parks and Recreation are promulgated in accordance with provisions of the N.J. Statutes Title 40:32-7.12, which reads as follows:

"The Board of Chosen Freeholders may by resolution make, alter, amend, and repeal rules and regulations for the supervision, regulation and control of all activities carried on, conducted, sponsored, arranged, or provided for in connection with a public golf course or other county recreational, playground, or public entertainment facility, and for the protection of property, and may prescribe and enforce fines and penalties for the violation of any such rule or regulation."

These rules and regulations have been promulgated for the protection of our patrons and for the facilities and natural resources administered by the Hunterdon County Division of Parks and Recreation.

Permits: A fully executed Facility Use Permit, issued by the County of Hunterdon for any activity, shall authorize the activity only insofar as it may be performed in strict accordance with the terms and conditions thereof. The State of NJ, County of Hunterdon, or the local municipality may require additional permits.

Prohibited Acts: The violation of any Municipal, State, or Federal law. Advertising, solicitation, ice skating, ice fishing, any other on-ice activities, downhill skiing, bathing, fuel-powered modeled aircraft, the release of any animal, explosives of any kind, poisons of any kind, after-hours use, alcohol without a permit in a non-designated area, controlled dangerous substances, weapons, posting of signage, inappropriate attire, and climbing on, or rappelling from any cliff, rock face, or boulder, with or without the use of specialized equipment.

Regulated Activity: The sale of merchandise, aviation, boating, cross-country skiing, bicycling, and sledding. Battery-powered modeled aircraft and horses must be in designated areas, dogs must be restrained with a leash not exceeding six feet, pet waste must be removed, camping/fires are by permit only. All groups of 15 or more must obtain a permit for use of any Park area.

Prohibited Acts for the Protection of Property: No person shall make, excavate on, destroy, paint, fill in, cut, remove or tamper with any property, organic or inorganic.

Prohibited Acts for the Protection of Natural Resources: No person shall disturb wildlife or vegetation in any manner. No person shall pollute waters, litter, dump debris, or release helium balloons in any property. It is illegal to remove any natural resource from, or introduce any plant material, bulbs, or seeds to any property without a proper permit or license.

Prohibited Acts for the Protection of People: No person shall obstruct a county employee/official, interfere with a visitor, conduct any unsafe act, or cause a hazardous condition.

Vehicles: All the provisions of the NJ State Motor Vehicle Act apply. Vehicles are not allowed in unauthorized areas. Parking is allowed in designated areas only. **ATVs, dirt bikes, and snowmobiles are prohibited on County Park lands.**

Enforcement: The rules and regulations of the County shall be enforced by duly authorized Rangers or representatives of the County under the provision of N.J.S.A. 40:32-2, thru 40:32-7.13. Any person who enters into a County Park for any purpose whatsoever has a duty and is presumed to be aware of the provisions of these rules and regulations governing the use of the facilities and properties administered by the Hunterdon County Division of Parks & Recreation.

Penalties: Any person violating any of the provisions of these regulations shall, upon conviction before a court or other adjudicative body of jurisdiction, be liable for the replacement, repair or restoration of damaged property, if any, and shall pay a penalty of not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) or other amount in the discretion of the court or other adjudicative body, or may be sentenced to imprisonment in the County jail for the term not exceeding ninety (90) days, or both, provided that this section shall not supersede any applicable penalty provision for specific offenses, which may be set forth in the New Jersey Code of Criminal Justice, N.J.S.A. 2C:1-1, et seq., or in any other applicable state or federal law.

NOTE: County Park Rangers of the Division of Parks and Recreation have the authority to issue summons and make arrests for violations of rules and regulations governing the use of facilities and properties administered by the Division of Parks and Recreation. This is only a summary of the rules and regulations. Rules applying to special conditions, activities, or situations may be supplemental to these rules and regulations. When special rules apply, they will be posted at affected areas. The complete text of regulations is available for inspection at the Park administration office in Clinton Township during regular business hours.