

Station 11: Tidal Basin

At low tide this portion of Cross River is reduced to extensive mud flats. Lobstermen set traps in the deep channel. The mud flats support an abundance of softshelled clams, marine worms, and small crustaceans. It is a favorite feeding area for wading birds.

Station 12: Forest Fires

Forest fires are rare in Maine, but they do occur. A wildfire consumed most vegetation here in the 1940s, sparing a few of the older trees. After about ten years, the area was covered with thousands of young pine and oak. Competition for moisture, nutrients and sunlight allows only the most vigorous to survive, as evidenced by the many dead and stunted trees.

Station 13: Stone Walls

The rural, self-sufficient lifestyle before the mid-19th century industrial revolution demanded vast amounts of acreage and cleared land for survival. The average house burned four acres of wood a year for heat and cooking. Cleared land was essential for crops and livestock; for instance, each cow needed an acre of grazing land. At first, tree stumps and brush served to fence in and protect livestock. Later on, stones and boulders were added, resulting in the stonewalls we find today. Often four feet and higher, stone walls frequently also delineated property boundaries.

Station 14: Rotting Trees

Old forests contain many dead and dying trees. Standing dead trees, called “snags,” provide homes and food for forest dwellers. On the ground they are home for numerous insects and are torn

apart by bears, raccoons and skunks in search of grubs. Finally, they rot and enrich the soil with nutrients and organic matter to continue the natural life cycle.

Station 15: Ledges

This ledge is covered with a fern, common or rock polypody (*polypodium virginianum*). This fern grows in rock crevices with almost no soil. During dry periods, it will shrivel up, but will revive with the next rainfall.

Station 16: Hutchins House Foundation

The stone house foundation marks the Hutchins family homestead. The timber-framed house was probably built about 1790, but it is likely that the foundation was also the site of a pre-Revolutionary log house. It was dismantled about 1915, its lumber recycled for the Welsh farm’s icehouse. The Hutchins family owned the whole eastern tip of the “Dover” peninsula, about 70 acres. Usually a farm family had a half dozen cattle, oxen (the tractor of that day), sheep, and pigs. Since water was hauled by hand in buckets, the well was fairly nearby, about 200 feet southwest of the house.

Station 17: “Foreign Invaders”

European settlement introduced many strange plants, animals and diseases. Some were beneficial. But a few still cause a great deal of mischief, such as bittersweet, white pine blister rust, and burning bush. Bittersweet is a climbing vine, sometimes choking to death young trees. White pine blister rust devastates young pine trees; and burning bush has spread throughout the forest, crowding out native vegetation. In the late summer, it is easily recognized by its bright red foliage and red berries.

TREE QUIZ

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

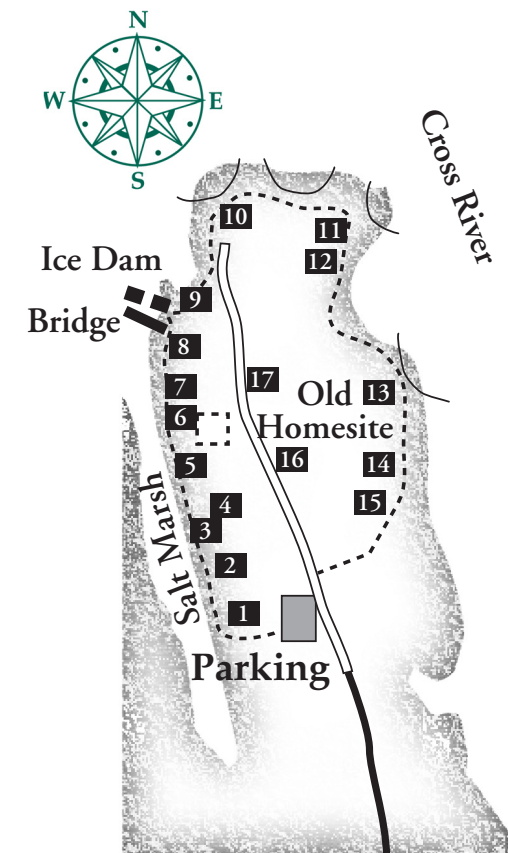
Above, you may want to test your knowledge by filling in the blank spaces next to the letter with the name of each tree.

Answers to Tree Quiz
A-Red Pine; B-White Birch; C-Red Spruce;
D-White pine; E-Red Maple; F- Hemlock;
G-Red Oak; H-Ash; I-Balsam Fir; J- Aspen;
K-Beech; L-Apple; M- Striped Maple

Revised February 2007

OVENS MOUTH EAST

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 OVENS MOUTH EAST

We invite you to tour this 40-acre preserve and observe its special qualities. From the parking lot, walking clockwise, follow the numbers on the map and the corresponding numbers marked on the trail. Also note the trees 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 clockwise from the parking area, you will encounter numbers 1 through 17, 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 M mounted on or near trees. You may want to test your knowledge by filling in the blank spaces on the last page with the name of each tree. You can check your answers on the same page in this brochure. And now, have fun.

Station 1: Old-Field Pine

Eastern white pine is Maine's state tree. It is also found from the Great Lakes to north-eastern Canada and south into Tennessee. Some grow more than 200 feet tall and six feet in diameter and may live 400 years. In early Colonial days, agents of the English kings designated the best Eastern white pine for the British Navy and it became a hanging offense to cut them. Doors and window frames and furniture are made from white pine wood. Coastal Maine was cleared for agriculture during the 17th and 18th Centuries. In the 1900's abandoned fields quickly seeded to white pine. This process continues today and accounts for the name "old-field pine." This stand of trees dates to the 1930s. Trees were thinned about 20 years ago and again during the winter of 2000-01.

Station 2: Salt Water Marsh

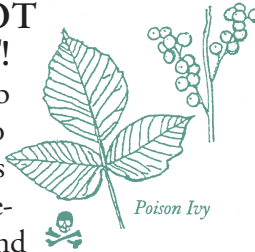
During the warmer months, the salt marsh is green and vibrant, but at other times it may appear a frozen expanse of ice and snow, or stubble, matted brown grass and mud. Great blue herons and other wading birds feed in the shallows. Pools (salt pannes) in the high marsh serve as breeding grounds for insects and feeding areas for resident fish such as mummichogs and sticklebacks. In the channels, black ducks feed year-round.

Two types of grass, cord grass and salt hay, dominate the marsh. Tall and coarse, cord grass is found in the lower portions of the marsh. Salt hay forms meadows of short grass on flat or gently sloping plateaus. Near the high water mark black grass contrasts in dense stands with salt hay. Sea lavender and seaside goldenrod stand out in the late summer.

Station 3: Poison Ivy

DANGER: DO NOT TOUCH THIS PLANT!

Poison ivy is a low shrub that can climb trees to considerable height. It is easily recognized by its three-lobed, mostly shiny leaves and white bunches of berries. Leaves turn reddish in late summer. Exposure may result in painful itching blisters.



Station 4: Forest Succession

On a clear day, the small clearing here is bright and sunny. Many young forest plants thrive in direct sun, such as white pine, spruces, firs, birches, raspberries and blueberries. The succulent vegetation and berries attract

insects, birds, deer, rabbits and other small creatures. Nearly 80 percent of birds live and feed within 200 feet of forest openings. A forest, over time, becomes a mosaic of small openings and patches of mature trees. Foresters can aid this process by carefully creating small openings and retaining groups of older trees.

Station 5: Snags

Dead and standing trees are called "snags." In an unmanaged forest, trees die and remain standing for many years. They provide homes for cavity-nesting birds, squirrels and raccoons. Insect larvae, ants and adult insects feed in the decaying wood and, in turn, provide food for woodpeckers.

Station 6: Woodland Bog

The soil here is saturated during most of the year. The most common plant here is sensitive fern. The spores are located within dark brown, bead-like structures. The other fern here is evergreen wood fern. Its leaves are more dissected so it looks more frilly.

Station 7: Red Pine

Red pine is also known as "Norway pine." Red pine was, along with eastern white pine, the most important lumber-producing tree throughout New England and the Great Lakes. It grows tall and straight to a maximum of 120 feet and four feet in diameter.

Station 8: The Ice Dam

A stone dam was constructed in late 1879 by Giles Tibbetts and William Decker to contain fresh water for an ice pond. They also built an icehouse beside the pond. Ice was the source of refrigeration in the 1800s, and there was a

big business in cutting ice from lakes and ponds, storing it in insulated buildings and shipping it south in coastal schooners. The larger ice companies quickly drove the smaller ones out of business and the dam was breached, allowing saltwater to again flow in and out of the marsh beyond. The strong currents and tight quarters in Ovens Mouth might also have been a discouragement. Today, knotweed hangs from dam rocks and surrounding ledges. The narrow channel provides habitat for common periwinkles, barnacles and other fauna in the soft sediments.

Station 9: Matriarch Pine

Sometimes called "old-field pine," matriarch pine belongs to a group of ancient trees that stood in fields and pastures of the 18th and 19th 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.

Station 10: Peninsula Point

The narrow channel resembles the narrow opening of a Dutch oven that widens to the broad bay — the oven — to the east — hence the name Ovens Mouth. The forest here resembles the virgin forest prior to European settlement. In about a hundred years or so, all 140 acres of the preserve will look like the forest around you. With the incoming and outgoing tides, currents reach 10 knots, so be careful near the shore.

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.