

## Milton-McCabe Preserve Greenway

The Milton-McCabe Preserve Greenway Trail links the historic town of Milton with The Nature Conservancy's Edward H. McCabe Preserve. Beginning at the Milton Memorial Park boat launch, a canoe trail winds two miles down the Broadkill River to the preserve. There it joins a three-mile hiking trail system. A roadside parking area provides access to the hiking trails for non-canoeists.

### Canoeing the Broadkill River

The Broadkill River meanders eastward through the heart of Sussex County to the Delaware Bay. The Broadkill watershed possesses a remarkable natural heritage of forested uplands and lush wetlands. Some of Delaware's most distinctive habitats and plant species can be found here.



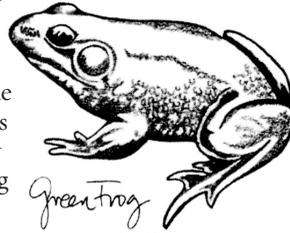
Canoeing along the Broadkill offers a unique perspective on this important river corridor. Mixed hardwood and cedar forests line the river banks, flanked by a mosaic of agricultural lands. Large red

maple, blackgum, sweetgum, loblolly pine, and occasional Atlantic white cedars overhang the river banks. Their brilliant fall foliage is a delight, and streamside forests serve important ecological functions — providing wildlife habitat, filtering storm water runoff and stabilizing riverbanks with vast root systems.

Keen eyes will pick out large-mouth bass, bluegill and, in the spring, migrating river herring as these surface-feeding fish seek out insects. The majestic great blue heron (pictured on the cover), with its pale blue-gray color, sharp bill, long legs and six-foot wing span, is hard to miss as it glides above the river. In spring and early summer, watch for the golden head and breast of the prothonotary warbler perching on riverbank tree limbs.

Close to the preserve, the character of the river landscape begins to shift. Freshwater tidal marshes and scrub-shrub wetlands form broad transition zones between the river and its forested banks. The globally rare seaside alder is found here. While in flower in autumn, seaside alder is readily discernible from its common associate, smooth alder. Most of the world's population of seaside alder are found on the Delmarva Peninsula.

In spring, listen for the distinctive croak of the green frog, twanging like a loose banjo string. This frog depends on shallow freshwater habitats along the Broadkill.



Approximately two miles downriver of the put-in at Milton Memorial Park, look for the McCabe Preserve canoe dock on the south side of the river. Please tie your boat up and come ashore.

### Hiking the McCabe Preserve

Just minutes from Milton, The Nature Conservancy's Edward H. McCabe Preserve is a pastoral 143-acre refuge. It was donated in 1993 by Constance P. McCabe, who wanted the property be maintained in its natural state in perpetuity, as a memorial to her husband and grandson. The Conservancy manages the preserve as a natural area, ensuring the long-term viability of native flora and fauna.

This biologically rich preserve is home to the globally-rare seaside alder, the state-rare bluejoint reedgrass and saltmarsh bulrush, forested wetlands, upland forests, and a host of migratory songbirds and other wildlife. Some of the preserve's natural features are highlighted in this brochure.

**Upland Forests:** Virtually all upland forests on Delmarva, including those on the McCabe Preserve, have been altered by a history of logging. From its head at the parking area, the hiking trail winds its way through a young forest of tightly packed red maple, sweet gum, tulip tree, American beech and loblolly pine on sandy coastal plain soil. The Conservancy's land managers strive to restore the preserve's ecological integrity by allowing these woods to return to mature forest over time.

## What is The Nature Conservancy?

The Nature Conservancy is a leading international nonprofit conservation organization, dedicated to preserving plants, animals, and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth, by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.

Since its inception in 1951, the Conservancy and its one million members have helped protect more than 117 million acres around the world, including more than 28,000 acres Delaware.

Today, the Delaware Chapter owns and manages the Edward H. McCabe Preserve and five other natural area preserves around the state, totaling more than 6,000 acres.

To become a member of The Nature Conservancy, please send a check for \$25.00 to: 100 West 10th Street, Suite 1107, Wilmington, DE 19801.

*Illustrations generously donated by Judy Francis, Chris Bennett, & Johns Hopkins University Press.*



SAVING THE LAST GREAT PLACES ON EARTH

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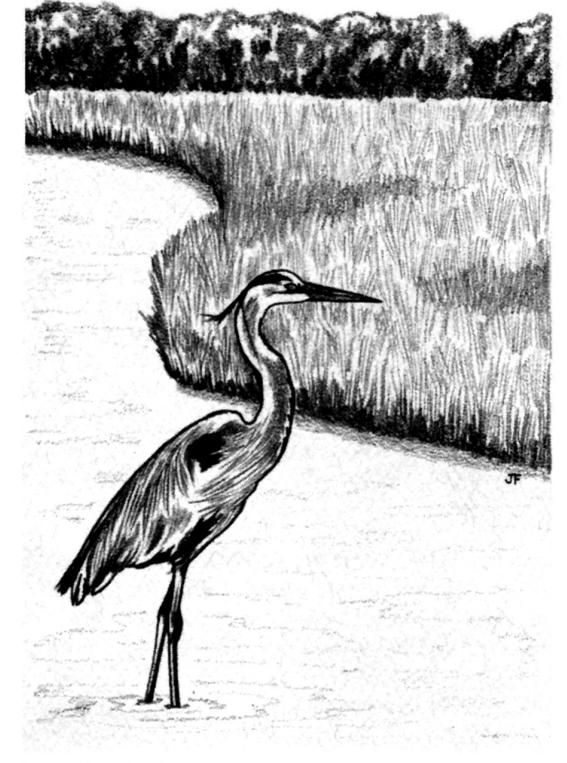


SAVING THE LAST GREAT PLACES ON EARTH

*Explore nature by canoe or on foot at the*

## Town of Milton-Edward H. McCabe Preserve and Greenway Trail

*Milton, Delaware*



**Swamp forests:** Closer to the river, narrow bottomland swamp forests occur along the base of slopes. **Red maple, black gum, and loblolly pine** survive the wet and oxygen-deprived swamp soils by growing on mounded hummocks. Long prized and logged for its durability,

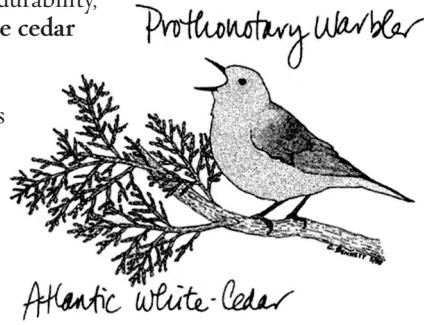
**Atlantic white cedar**

is identified by its reddish brown, fibrous trunk, conical crown and evergreen scale-like leaves. The swamp understory harbors fragrant **bayberry bushes**, spectacular spring-blooming **wild azaleas**, and **sweet pepperbush**, whose delicately-scented, five-petaled white flowers bloom in late summer.

**Reforestation area:** Prior to the Conservancy's ownership, material dredged from the river channel was deposited in a five-acre clearing. In 1996, Conservancy staff and volunteers planted this field with more than 2,000 native tree seedlings, including **red and white oaks, green ash, and black gum**. Larger **black cherry** trees, indicative of earlier habitats, can be found near the center. **Field sparrows** move about saplings and shrubs while **rufous-sided towhees**, with their distinctive "drink your teeeeee" song, frequent trees at the forest edge. Reforestation improves habitat for many migratory songbirds and buffers sensitive wetlands from runoff.

**Tidal marsh and scrub-shrub wetlands:**

Excellent examples of the Broadkill's marsh and scrub-shrub wetlands can be seen on the preserve where the forests meet the river. Emergent tidal marshes are regularly flooded, creating diverse habitats dominated by flowering herbs and sedges, including **marsh mallow, arrow arum,**



*Prothonotary Warbler*

*Atlantic white cedar*



*Pickerel-Weed*

**pickerel-weed, broad-leaved arrowhead and tearthumb.** Moving away from the river's edge, a subtle rise in elevation finds emergent marsh transitioning into scrub-shrub wetlands. **Seaside and common alder, small red maple, arrowwood, and buttonbush** characterize these dense, wet thickets.

**Greenway Trail Guidelines**

**For a fun and safe canoe trip, please:**

- Wear life preservers.
- Watch for motorized boats and other vessels. The Broadkill River is a much-used waterway, especially on weekends.
- Avoid the center of the river, which is the channel used by motorized boats.
- For both safety and health, do not swim in this stretch of the Broadkill River.
- Use the canoe dock at the Edward McCabe Preserve to tie up canoes and to explore the adjacent uplands. Do not land canoes at private boat docks.
- The Broadkill River is tidal. For information on daily tides, contact the Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife at (302) 739-3486 or at [www.dnrec.state.de.us](http://www.dnrec.state.de.us).

The McCabe Preserve is open to the public daily from dawn to dusk.

**When visiting the McCabe Preserve:**

- Take precautions against ticks, mosquitoes, chiggers, and sunburn. Watch for poison ivy.
- Stay on marked trails.
- Motorized vehicles, ATVs, bicycles, horses, alcohol and firearms are prohibited.
- Leave your pets at home. This preserve is a protected wildlife area for native plants and animals.
- Remove all litter from the preserve.
- Do not feed or disturb wildlife.
- No hunting, trapping, fishing, picking or removal of plants, animals or other artifacts is permitted.
- No swimming, camping, smoking, or fires are allowed.

**DIRECTIONS**

**To the Canoe Trail Put-in at the Milton Memorial Park:**

The canoe trail parking area and put-in is located at the Milton Memorial Park in the Town of Milton, in Sussex County, Delaware. A kiosk with information about the greenway and the McCabe Preserve is located near the boat ramp.

**From the Wilmington Area (approx. 1.5 hours):** Follow Route 1 South, past Milford. Bear right on Route 5, heading south toward Milton. Route 5 turns into Union Street as it approaches the town. Follow Union Street into Milton. Turn left onto Chandler Street. Take first right into the parking area.

**From the Rehoboth Beach area (approx. 20-30 minutes):** Take Route 1 North approximately 3 miles. Turn left on Road 88. Turn right at the intersection with Federal Street (Route 5). Follow Federal Street into Milton, around a sharp bend to the left. Turn right onto Chandler Street. Take first right into the parking area.

**From the Washington/Baltimore area (approx 2.5 hours):** Take U.S. 50 East across the Bay Bridge. Turn left on Maryland Route 404 East. Before Bridgeville, DE, turn

left on Route 16 heading northeast toward Greenwood. Follow Route 16 past Route 13 and Route 113 until you reach Milton. Turn right on Union Street (Route 5) and follow into the town. Turn left onto Chandler Street. Take first right into the parking area.

**To the Hiking Trail at The Nature Conservancy's Edward H. McCabe Preserve:**

The head of the hiking trail at The Nature Conservancy's Edward H. McCabe Preserve is located east of Milton on Road 257. Canoeists can access the hiking trail loop from the river via the canoe trail originating in Milton.

**From the town of Milton (10 min.):** From Chandler Street, turn left on Federal Street (Route 5) and go south for 0.3 mile, following the sharp bend to the right at the center of town. Turn left on Wharton Street (turns into Atlantic Street). Follow for 1.5 miles. Turn left on Road 257. Follow for 0.6 mile and look for the preserve parking area on your left.

**From Route 1 (approx. 5 minutes):** Take Road 258 (immediately south of bridge over Broadkill River) west. Take first right onto Road 257. Follow 2.9 miles and look for preserve parking area on your right.

