

ORANGE TRIANGLE TRAIL, WEPAWAUG CONSERVATION AREA, & KOWAL NATURE PRESERVE

Orange, CT

The Orange Triangle Trail crosses land owned by the Orange Land Trust, the Town of Orange and the Interservice Clubs of New Haven, Inc., the owners of Camp Cedarcrest. The trail follows the course of the Wepawaug River through the Kowal Nature Preserve, the Howard D. Brooks Wepawaug Conservation Area, Camp Cedarcrest, the Whitney Tract, and the Ravine. The trail is maintained by the Conservation Commission.

The trail is best started from the Wepawaug Conservation Area parking lot off Mapledale Road. The orange triangle blazes lead through a majestic hemlock forest to a bridge over the Wepawaug River. Just before that, there is an opportunity to turn left onto the red-blazed trail to the Kowal Nature Preserve (donated to the Orange Land Trust by John Kowal, a fondly remembered former mailman) to Surrey Drive. The trail across the bridge leads to the blue and yellow trails which both lead to the end of Riverside Drive. Continuing to follow the Orange Triangle trail leads through Camp Cedarcrest, which serves primarily as a day camp for disadvantaged children from New Haven. The trail winds over rocky and treed knolls, past the Cedarcrest buildings, and through a relatively young forest with a few old stalwarts. The stone walls remind one that this used to be farm land.

At the Whitney Tract there is another hemlock forest, then the trail along the Wepawaug crosses over into the ravine. In the years since the last Ice Age the Wepawaug has eroded the overburden to expose Devonian rocks that are 200 million years old and created a ravine which could be dammed. To cross the ravine, carefully walk down the side of Derby Avenue. Before electricity, this stretch of the Wepawaug was the industrial center of Orange with a water-power turning grist and other types of mills. On the east bank of the river is the remains of the foundation of an old mill which manufactured cloth for Union uniforms during the Civil War. The building burned in the late 1890's. The flume, which cut through solid rock and directed water to an overshot water wheel, can still be seen. The return to the parking lot requires reversing your steps or walking back along Mapledale Road.

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The Wepawaug River at the site of an old dam. Photo by Ed Tucker, Orange Conservation Commission



Directions and Parking:

The Wepawaug Conservation Area parking lot is located on Mapledale Road which can be accessed either via Derby Road (Route 34) or Orange Center Road (Route 152). Both roads can be reached via the Wilbur Cross Parkway.

Limited street parking is also available on Green Circle off Derby Road (34), at the end of Riverside Drive, or at the end of Surrey Drive.

Permitted Activities:

This property is for passive use only. No wheeled vehicles are permitted. No picnicking is available. The trail is for hiking only. During the summer season when Camp Cedarcrest is in session, please do not disrupt camp activities. Dogs are permitted on leash. Please bag and remove any dog waste.

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Orange, Connecticut



P Parking

Town Boundary

Wetlands

Water Bodies

Open Space - All Types

Rivers and Streams

Interstate or Parkway

Local Route

Trails

Streets

The trails are blazed as shown in blue (B), red (R), and yellow (Y). The Orange Triangle Trail is blazed orange (O).