

Foss Woods

Foss Woods is the second largest undeveloped upland parcel in town. The town acquired this land in 1996. It consists of 15 acres of sloping woodland between Route 6A and the town-owned Old Colony Nature Pathway in the East End, near Mount Gilboa. It includes along its eastern edge a half-acre red maple/tupelo swamp. This was formed in a blowout depression in the old dunes. It has saturated soil owing to its intersection with the water table. Foss Woods is comprised mostly of the back slope of an old 60 ft high dune running along its southern edge. An old cart path runs from behind the Harbor Hotel to the old railroad right of way.

Directions: Foss Woods can be accessed from Snail Road & Mount Gilboa Road. Parking is found on the side of Snail Road

The original owner of the land was Eliphalet J. Foss, a Boston based painter and photographer of natural history. He bought the 137 acres in 1898 and in 1911 built a small summer home (Foss Camp). Foss Camp was used to entertain guests from Boston to as far away as Tokyo. One guest described her visit in the guest log as:

"...the happiest of weeks. So much good has come — the long talks on art, the sketching, the class criticisms with Charles Hawthorne, Webster and Brown. The sea bathing, all the delights of friends together— that's the best., friends together at Foss Woods."

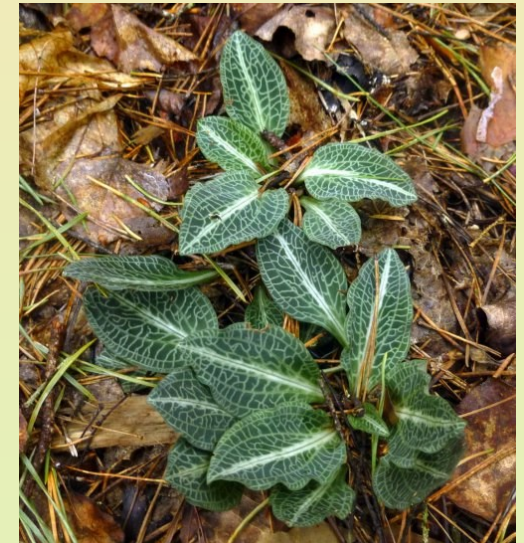
Some of his work can be seen at the Massachusetts Historical Society.

Charles W Hawthorne (mentioned in the above quotation) founded the Cape Cod School of Art in Provincetown in 1898. The Hawthorne Class Studio, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on 1978, and can still be found on 25 Miller Hill Road.

The Eastern Box Turtle (*Terrapene carolina*) and the Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*) also frequent in these woods. Foss woods is also rich in warblers and other birds.



The oldest pines are about 50 years old (about two feet in diameter at breast height).



The checkered rattlesnake orchid (*Goodyera tessellata*) can also be found in Foss Woods and is found in only one other location on Cape Cod.



