

Plymsbury Wildlife Management Area

General Description

Plymsbury Wildlife Management Area is a 1,857-acre parcel owned by the State of Vermont and managed by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department. The WMA has 1,569 acres in the town of Shrewsbury and 288 acres in the town of Plymouth. The central portion of Plymsbury WMA can be accessed from the Old Plymouth Road near North Shrewsbury. The northern portion can be accessed from the Old CCC Road. The WMA is bordered on the north and east by Coolidge State Forest.

History

Only crumbling rock walls and small remnant fields remain as evidence of the several farms that were active in the Great Roaring Brook basin. The remains of an old mill adjacent to Great Roaring Brook are a reminder of past logging that occurred throughout the area. A logging camp existed at the intersection of Grouse Hill Road and the Old Plymouth Road as late as the 1950's.

The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department purchased the land for Plymsbury WMA in 1974 with Land and Water Conservation Funds. Plymsbury was acquired by the Agency of Environmental Conservation (now the Agency of Natural Resources) as a 2,800-acre parcel from a group of real estate investors. It was subsequently divided between the Vermont Forests, Parks, & Recreation Department and the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department to be administered as the Plymsbury Block of Coolidge State Forest and the Plymsbury Wildlife Management Area. Ken Fisher donated an adjacent parcel of 65 acres to the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department in 1978.

Habitat Features

The gentle terrain in the basin features a low-lying 40-acre wooded swamp in the north central portion of the WMA and several other smaller dispersed swamps of spruce-fir-tamarack and alder. Surrounding the swamp are some 1,000 acres of hardwoods, 500 acres of mixed growth and 50 acres of openings and remnant fields. The hardwoods are composed of beech, yellow and white birch, red and sugar maple. The softwoods are dominated by spruce and fir. There are also aspens, tamaracks and apple trees on the property. Two forested ridges transect the area in a northeasterly direction and range up to 2,360 feet.

Two major watercourses drain the WMA. Great Roaring Brook flows southeasterly out of the swamp and has several beaver impoundments along its length. Tinker Brook traverses the northeast corner of Plymsbury WMA and also flows southeasterly. There are numerous small feeder streams.

Common Fish and Wildlife

Mammals Plymsbury WMA, in addition to Tiny Pond WMA and Coolidge State Forest (west of Route 100), comprise the Coolidge West Management Unit. These

lands connect other habitat for black bears between the north and south sections of the Green Mountain National Forest. Plymsbury WMA offers important food sources for bears such as beechnuts, blackberries and raspberries; thus bear tracks, droppings and bark scarring may be seen on the WMA. White-tailed deer are common throughout the area. Beaver, mink, muskrat and raccoon can be found along Great Roaring Brook and in its associated wetlands, as well as along other brooks in the area.

A variety of other mammals inhabit the area. Snowshoe hare prefer early successional wood where browse is easier to reach and cover is abundant. Bobcat populations are known to fluctuate in response to the boom and bust of hare populations, which are the cat's main prey. Coyotes, foxes and fishers are more opportunistic eaters; therefore, their populations are less likely to fluctuate due to a single prey type.

Birds Plymsbury WMA is rich in bird life and has excellent bird watching. Many different species of songbirds, waterfowl and raptors are present throughout the WMA. In the wetlands there are wood, black and mallard ducks, hooded mergansers and belted kingfishers. Open fields and early successional woods host a variety of species including woodcock, ruffed grouse, wild turkey, eastern kingbird, chestnut-sided warbler, northern flicker, tree swallow, eastern bluebird, veery, cedar waxwing, common yellowthroat, white-throated sparrow, winter wren and many others.

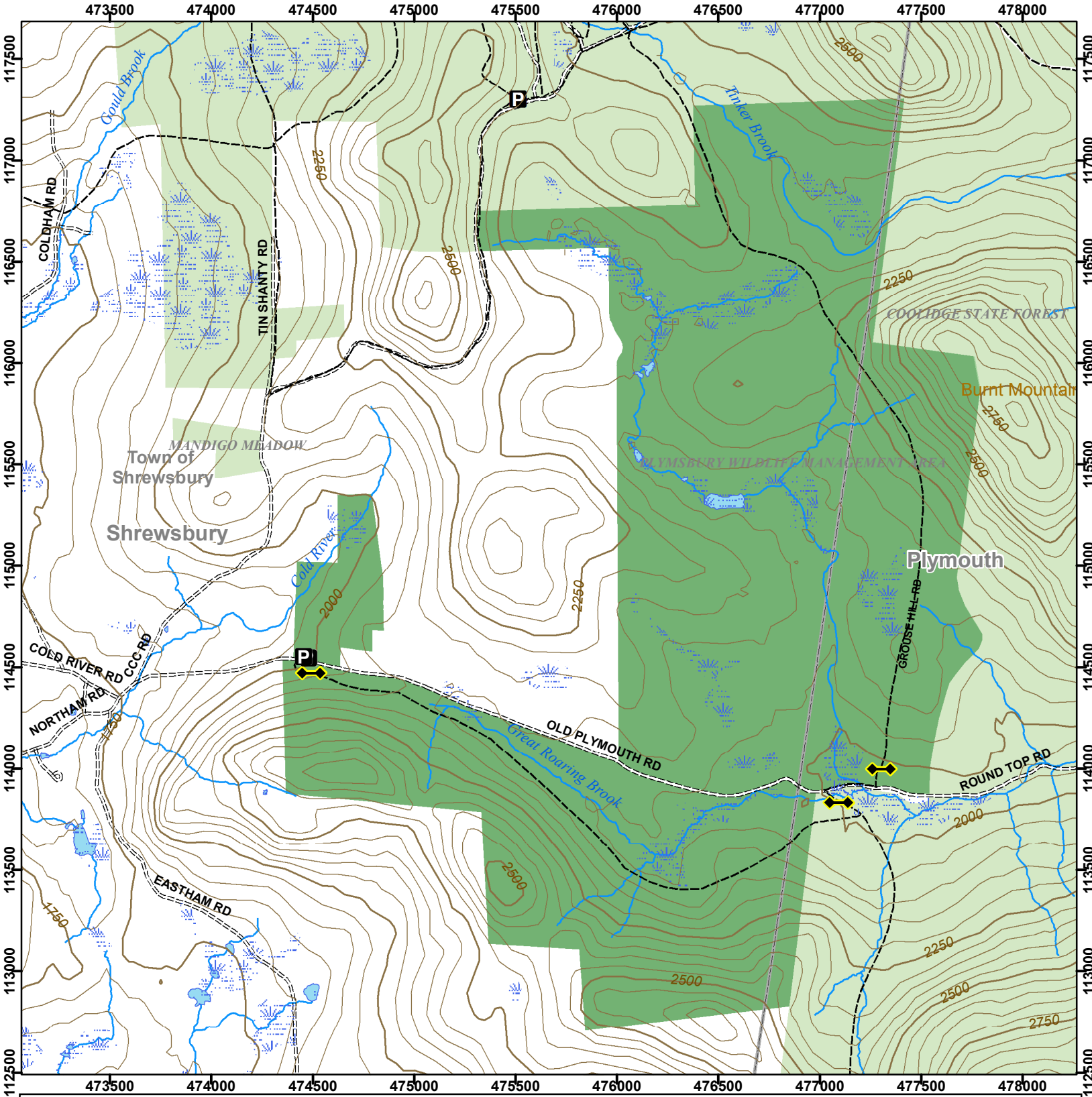
The mature forest contains ovenbirds, blackburnian warbler, hairy woodpecker, common raven, northern parula, wood thrush and red-breasted nuthatch to name a few. Some raptors that inhabit Plymsbury WMA are sharp-shinned, broad-winged and red-tailed hawks, northern goshawk and barred owl. For a complete list of the birds that can be found on this WMA, please contact the Pittsford Fish & Wildlife office.

Reptiles and Amphibians Vernal pools are an ideal place to spot amphibians, especially in the spring. Some species such as wood frogs, spring peepers and spotted salamanders breed in vernal pools and are often found in their vicinity. Other species such as green, leopard and pickerel frogs prefer shallow emergent marshes or swamps. Red-backed salamander and red eft will hide under logs or rocks. Gartersnakes can be found throughout the Plymsbury WMA.

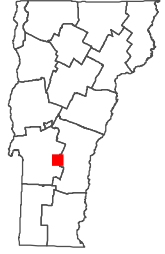
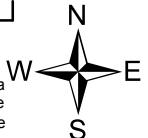
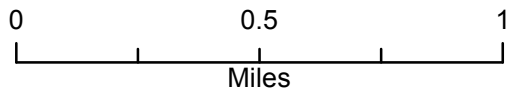
Fish Great Roaring and Tinker Brooks contain a variety of fish species including brook, brown, and occasionally rainbow trout. In addition, there are sculpins, common suckers, creek chub, blacknose and longnose dace.



Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department Plymbury Wildlife Management Area



Plymbury WMA: 1,857 acres



- Wildlife Management Area
- Other Public Land
- Private with Public Access
- Wildlife Viewing Areas
- Car-top Access
- P Parking
- Boat Ramp
- ◇ Gate
- Designated Camp Site During Big Game Seasons Only

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