

## Post 9 - Sheep Wall

In the Past New England was home to the Algonquian Indians. Before the European settlements, the various tribes of Indians hunted, fished and farmed the land. When the European settlers arrived they began a systematic destruction of the environment to provide for established communities. This resulted in a clash of two civilizations that led to King's Phillip's war. The war destroyed many towns and killed many Indians. Leominster would have never survived as a settlement, if not for Chief Sholan who brokered a deal with the settlers to lease them land for farming. They built large rock walls to retain their livestock like sheep in secure, shaded areas. This sheep wall is one of only a few still found in Leominster.

## Post 10 - Hemlock Grove

Hemlock trees like the ones in this grove are relatively rare in New England. Hemlocks are one of the few evergreen trees that are capable of growing in shade unlike pines which shed their needles if there is not enough sunlight (notice the pines towering above and the lack of needles at their center and lower branches). Hemlocks and its tannin were useful to the Native Americans for treating leather.



**Hemlock Forest**



# Samoset Middle School

Welcome to your outdoor classroom! If you look around and observe you may be able to notice animals and plants in their natural habitat. This trail's purpose is to provide guidance so you can enjoy the environment and learn at the same time.

Happy Trails!

**Brochure by Andrew Pothier  
Troop 11 Leominster**

**BSA Eagle Project 2012**

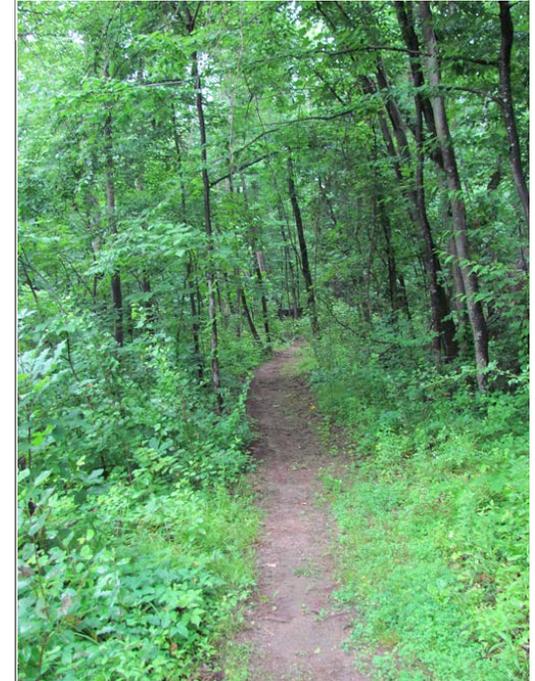
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**City of  
Leominster**

## Samoset Middle School Trail Outdoor Classroom



Brochure by Andrew Pothier  
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### Post 1 - Wet Meadow

The wet meadow is a unique habitat. The soil remains very moist most of the year even though standing water may dry out during the summer months. The thick cover provides a perfect home to a wide variety of mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians in a very small area. If you quietly watch and observe, you will notice a lot of activity within the meadow.



This Wet Meadow is one of only 2 that exist in Leominster.

### Post 2 - Ginkgo Biloba

Ginkgos are an ancient species of tree that originally appeared in the Permian Period, some 250 to 300 million years ago and flourished during the Jurassic and Cretaceous. The dinosaur extinction event however weakened them and due to cultivation of the tree only this one species remains.

### Post 3 - Invasive Species

Oriental Bitter Sweet is an invasive species. Invasive species are not native to this area and have been introduced by humans on accident or on purpose as a control. They often find a niche in the environment and drive native species out. The Oriental Bitter Sweet is hard to destroy and the only way is to attack the roots or use strong pesticides.

Oriental Bitter Sweet is very destructive to native birds as the berries provide food in the winter when food is scarce, however the berries will dehydrate and kill them.

### Post 4 - White Pine & Concord Grape

Out of all the trees in New England's history none has been more influential than the white pine. It was used as a meeting place for the Indians of the five Iroquois tribes. They met under the tree because of the tree's unique five branch growth pattern. The tree was used by settlers for ship building as the large straight trunk was perfect timber to make the masts of sailing ships. This made New England the center for trade and ship building in the Colonies. Concord grape vines grow in among the trees.

### Post 5 - Red Oak and Fungus

The Northern Red Oak is a very important tree found in northern forests. It is a fast growing, sturdy tree that produces large amounts of acorns. The tree is attractive as a nesting site for large numbers of small mammals and birds. The seedlings and acorns provide food for elk, deer, moose and rabbits as well as birds and small mammals. Native Americans harvested the nuts for food for the winter. A Turkey fungus growing on a tree stump at the base of the Northern Red Oak recycles dead and dying plant matter to the forest. This fungus grows six years after a tree dies or is cut down and can be used as a marker to determine when the tree died.

### Post 6 - Dead Fall

Every thing dies sooner or later and the forest is no different. Trees die for certain reasons such as disease, natural disasters, human logging, or old age. The tree won't necessarily fall immediately rather decomposers will eat away at the roots and base and the weight of the tree will bring it down.

Dead fall renews the forest by recycling the materials necessary to continue the trees in forest. It also allows natural growth to replace the dead trees. The dead trees also act as a new natural habitat for the animals. Deadfall is an environmental remediation.

### Post 7 - Northern & Southern Forest

There are two forests that merge in and around Leominster; they are the Northern forest and the Southern forest. The Northern forest contains vibrant oaks, maples and pines. These trees have rough bark with ridges that run vertically on the trunk to prevent bark splitting in very cold weather. Southern trees like the Beech have very smooth bark and are becoming more common in this area due to milder winters and climate change at the expense of the trees of the Northern forest.

### Post 8 - Storm Damage

To the newcomer, the 2008 ice storm looks devastating to the forest. But a closer look shows the trees still growing, just sideways. Although they were bent by heavy ice, they still are alive and battling for sunlight with each other. The opening in the canopy also provides an opportunity for seedlings to grow.



The 2008 Ice Storm bent trees of all sizes