

Walking in the Woods

Lifebridge Sanctuary is situated on 95 acres of woodland at the northern end of the Shawangunk Ridge, with spectacular views of the Catskill Mountains visible from several points along our lovely hiking trails. Boots are recommended as the trails can be muddy and rocky, and sure footing is important.

*Do not hike alone, take a buddy.
When walking the trail, sign the hiking log.*

Ruby Heart Lookout Trail

RED trail markers. **Easy – about 10 minutes one-way – 0.3 mile.**

The trail begins below the apple trees near the Sanctuary dining room. Follow the lane down the hill, passing a couple of side trails to the right around Frog Pond. Cross the inlet to Frog Pond, past another side trail to the right around the pond, along the lane through the fern-filled forest. The trail to Ruby Heart Lookout turns right off the old lane. After winding through the woods, you will cross a dirt road (private). Look for the **RED** trail markers on trees across the road – This is Ruby Heart Lookout. Enjoy the naturally formed seats of quartz conglomerate that made the area famous. The "Million Dollar View" here looks across the Rondout Valley to the Catskill Mountains.

Long Pond Trail – **RED** trail markers.

Moderate (short steep hill) – about 10 minutes one-way – 0.3 mile, or 0.6 mile loop.

The trail begins from the gazebo at the upper edge of the Sanctuary parking lot and follows the old carriage road into the woods. After about 100 yards, turn right following the **RED** trail markers. After a steep descent, you will eventually see Long Pond on your left, and perhaps a great blue heron. Walk around the end of the pond over the berm past the edge of our property and continue through the woods. You will come to follow an old lane where the

Ruby Heart Lookout Trail turns to the left. You may turn around and return the way you came, or follow the red trail to Ruby Heart Lookout, or continue straight ahead along the lane past Frog Pond and up the hill to the Sanctuary building.

Yellow Trail – **YELLOW** trail markers.

Moderate – about 20 minutes – 0.6 mile loop.

The trail begins from the gazebo at the upper edge of the Sanctuary parking lot and follows the old carriage road into the woods. Several hundred yards later, the **YELLOW** marked trail veers to the left, then left again at a four-way trail intersection onto an old logging road. The trail passes above the Labyrinth and garden to the driveway of the gardener's cottage. Walk past the garden back to the gazebo to complete the loop.

Blue Trail – **BLUE** trail markers.

Strenuous – about 35 minutes – 1.1 mile.

The trail begins from the gazebo at the upper edge of the Sanctuary parking lot and follows the old carriage road into the woods. Several hundred yards later, the **BLUE** loop is reached. The old carriage road continues with one leg of the blue loop, while the Yellow Trail veers to the left with the other leg of the Blue Trail to a four-way trail intersection. Here the Yellow Trail turns left, the White Oak Walk turns right, and the Blue Trail continues straight. Proceed through the woods and then steeply uphill. Once on the ridge, the trail gradually curves to the right and follows an old logging road **to an overlook high above the valley**. Continue along the property line downhill to the large white oak where the White Oak Walk ends at the Blue Trail. Continue straight, occasionally curving up and down through the woods and back to the old carriage road. Turn right onto the old road back to the gazebo.

White Oak Walk

WHITE trail markers. **Moderate – about 15 minutes one-way – 0.3 mile.**

Begin by following the Yellow Trail from either end to the four-way trail intersection with the Blue Trail. Here begins the White Oak Walk with **WHITE** trail markers. Curve around the wetland past Chestnut Spring (unmarked) following the old logging road uphill to a clearing with a large white oak tree in the center. White Oak Walk ends on the far side of the tree at the Blue loop trail.

FOREST BATHING

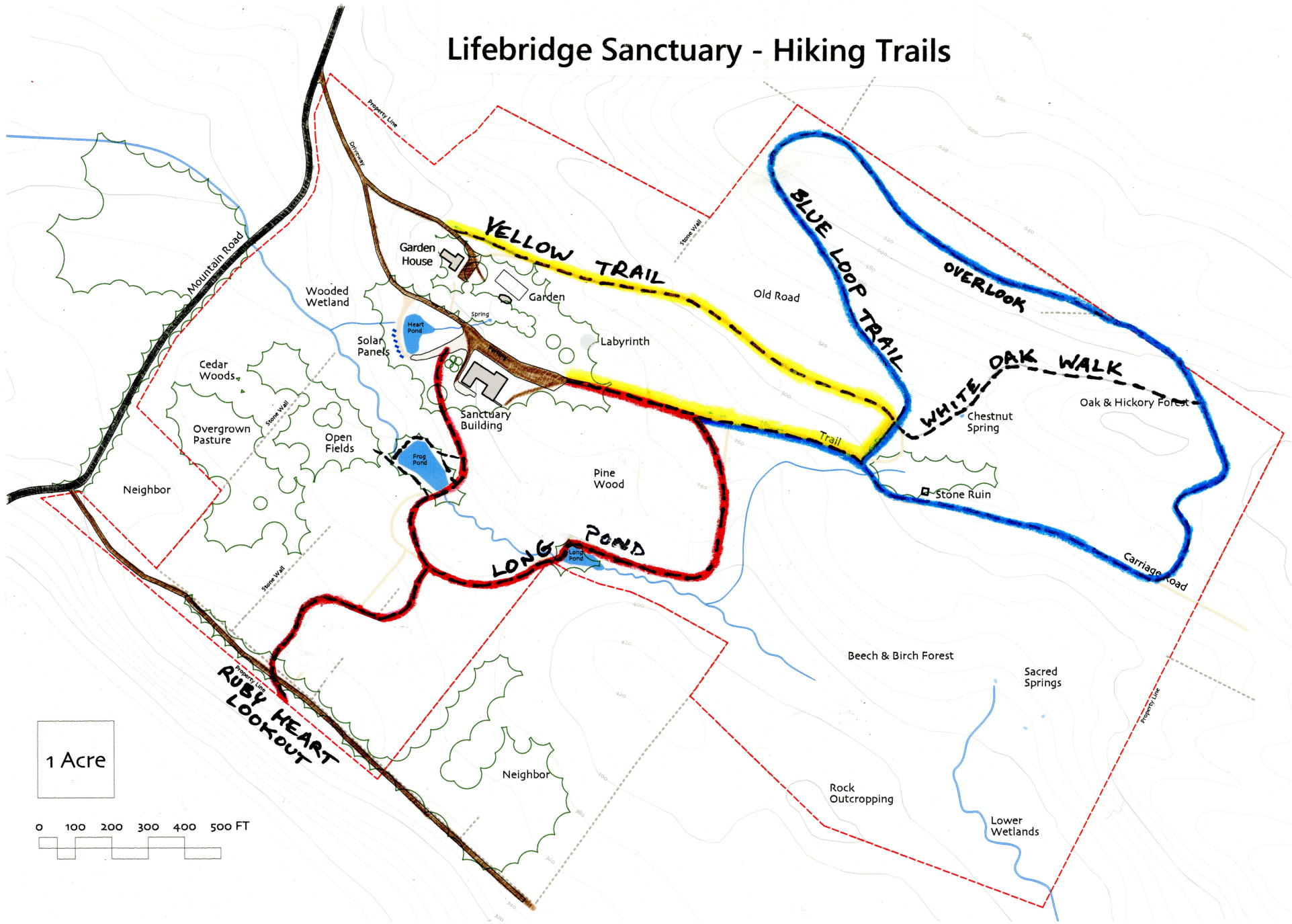
The concept of "Forest Bathing", known in Japan as "shinrin-yoku," is the practice of immersing yourself in nature to improve your well-being, enhance relaxation and alertness. It is becoming increasingly popular with spas, retreat centers and parks. Participants go into the woods for a slow, mindful walk to contemplate nature with all the senses, an activity which research has shown lowers blood pressure, heart rates and stress hormones.

A recent report done for the National Parks Service looked at ways to experience "mindfulness and spirituality" in nature. Forest bathers have commented: "We go for a mindful walk, very slow in pace, like a walking meditation. The whole idea is to become super aware of the senses. A lot of the time, people have so much going on, they've got sensory overload, they have to shut it down."

Lifebridge's trail system provides easy access to forest bathing points with benches, overlooks and ponds. Take a moment to reflect, recharge and refresh, immersing yourself in the beauty of nature.

Ticks are common in the Hudson Valley, so it is important to take precautions while in the forest. Detailed guidelines are available.

Lifebridge Sanctuary - Hiking Trails



1 Acre

