

JESSICA KIRBY MEMORIAL TRAILS

The Jessica Kirby Tract donated by the Kirby Family Trust
247 Lovejoy Road, Loudon NH

Parking for the Jessica Kirby Trails is located at the Lovejoy Trails parking lot at 234 Lovejoy Road, a short walking distance of 200 feet away. No parking is allowed near the Jessica Kirby kiosk or within the entrance trail.

In 2022, the Kirby Family Trust graciously donated to the Town of Loudon a 15-acre tract of land in memory of their daughter Jessica Kirby, specifying that walking trails be created on the property. Volunteers for the Conservation Commission's Trails Subcommittee began development in 2022 and opened it to the public in November 2023.

Once part of a large farm, the woodlot now known as the Jessica Kirby Tract abutted fields which were subject to seasonal flooding from the Hunting Swamp and another wetland to the west. To drain water so that crops could be grown, farmers dug a large ditch, starting from the wetland and just beyond the fields, and a smaller ditch within the woodlot, allowing water from the fields to flow into the Pine Island Brook.

The entrance to the trails passes through the open field, bordered by houses and property boundary signs, and continues through an opening in the woods. From there, over a mile and a half of walking trails through woodland and open areas can be accessed. A picnic table sits near the main footbridge, and many blueberry bushes can be found all along the Aqua and Pink Trails.

Volunteers for the Conservation Commission Trails Subcommittee donated over 700 man-hours to the construction of the trails and footbridges. Approximately 61% of the material costs were paid with federal American Recovery Plan (Covid-19) funds. 27% of the costs were donated by individuals, and 12% came from the Conservation Commission budget. A second bridge over another section of the large ditch is planned to be constructed in the spring of 2024. Benches on some trails will be added, as well.

The Conservation Commission and its Trails Subcommittee would like to thank Sandra Blanchard, Russ Pearl, David Ives, and others for their donations to the trail development.