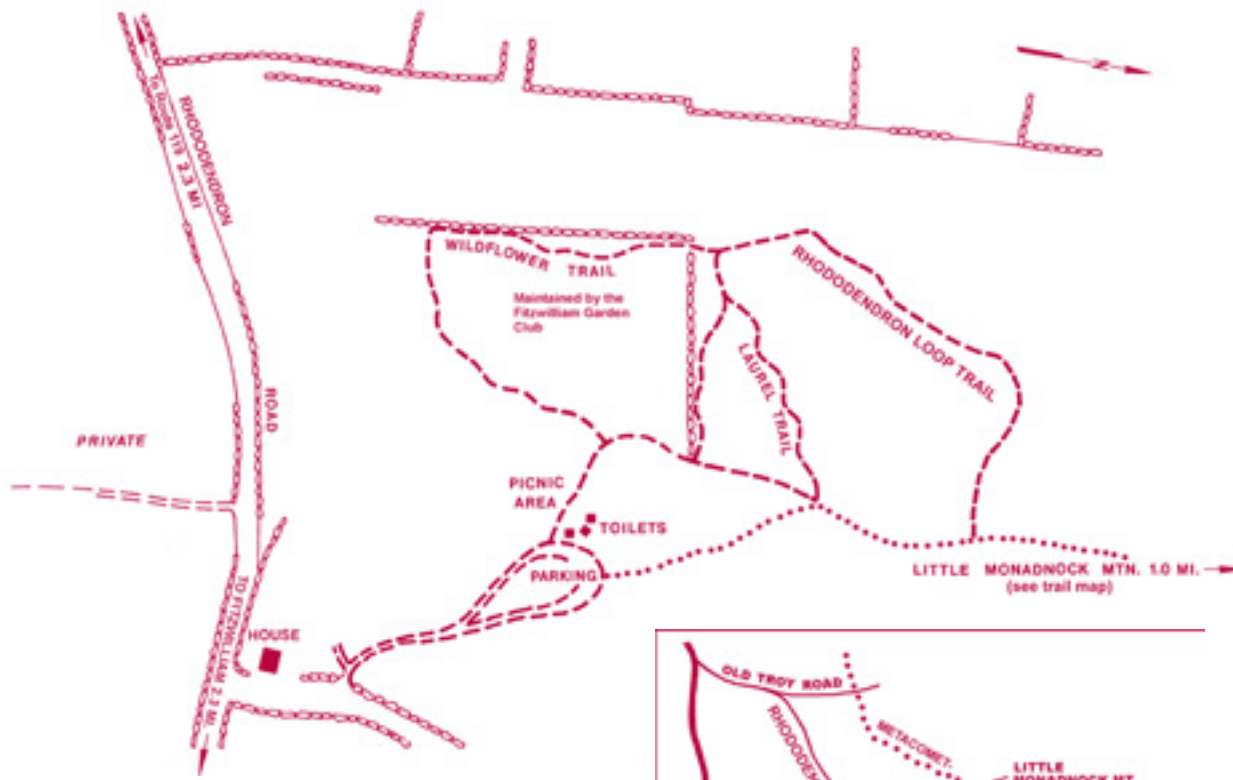


Rhododendron

State Park



- — — — — No Pets Permitted**
- • • • • Leashed Pets Permitted**

We endeavor to provide a safe and attractive environment within the limits of our mission to preserve and protect park resources. The necessary knowledge, skill, and equipment for a safe visit are your responsibility.
Please enjoy your visit to New Hampshire's State Parks and come back often!



**New Hampshire Division
of Parks and Recreation**

Rhododendron State Park...

named after the 16-acre grove of *Rhododendron Maximum*, is the focal point of the park located in Fitzwilliam, New Hampshire.

A 0.6 mile-long universally accessible trail encircles the grove, allowing visitors to observe close-up the fragrant clusters of pink blossoms as they burst into bloom in mid-July. A wildflower trail, maintained by the Fitzwilliam Garden Club, winds through the forest adjacent to the grove. From early spring to the first frost, wildflowers bloom throughout the 2,723 acre park. The last blooms in the fall are complemented by the forest's brilliant foliage. Visitors exploring the trails are often serenaded by song birds which live in the grove.

The rhododendron grove, which is the largest in northern New England, was damaged by heavy snows and ice during the winter of 1977. The Fitzwilliam Garden Club rehabilitated the grove. In 1982, the area was designated a National Natural Landmark.

Captain Samuel Patch...

established his homestead in Fitzwilliam on the land surrounding the rhododendron stand.

Entrepreneur Stephen Follansbee purchased the property in 1885. He sold bottled mineral water, potted rhododendrons and silica. His business enterprises brought public attention to the site for the first time.



Levi Fuller owned the Patch homestead in 1901 and planned to “lumber off” the property. Miss Mary Lee Ware of Boston and Rindge, NH heard of the impending threat to the rhododendrons and purchased the property. In 1903, she gave it to the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) with the stipulation that the rhododendron and pine forest “... be held as a reservation property protected and open to the public...forever.”

The AMC transferred the property to the New Hampshire Division of Parks and Recreation, which has operated the site since 1946 as the park system's only botanical park.

The family cottage, affectionately known as the “Old Patch Place,” was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980.

Rhododendron Maximum...

a member of the heath family, is a shade-tolerant species. They prefer the acid soils favored by hemlock and red maple. The plant's large leaves help it absorb light. During the winter, its leaves curl to preserve moisture and to droop to shed snow.



Several other members of the heath family, including mountain laurel, blueberries, trailing arbutus, and wintergreen can be found growing along the trails in the park.

The Little Monadnock Mountain Trail...

branches from the rhododendron grove loop and climbs for one mile where it joins the Metacomet-Monadnock (MM) Trail. There is a vista of Mt. Monadnock, Pack Monadnock, and North Pack Monadnock Mt. at the junction of the two trails. Turning south on the MM leads to the summit of Little Monadnock about a half mile away. The 117 mile-long MM connects the Metacomet Trail in Meridan, CT with the summit of Mt. Monadnock.

Rhododendron State Park is operated by the New Hampshire Division of Parks and Recreation, Department of Resources and Economic Development.

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