The Middle Moors contains many visible clues about Nantucket’s long and interesting geologic history. During the last glacial era, approximately 70,000 years ago, all of New England was covered by a thick ice sheet. The northern extent of this advancing ice. As the glacier advanced towards this area, it picked up and carried the boulders, rocks, gravel and loose soils with which it came in contact. Acting like a giant bulldozer, it deposited this glacial till onto the exposed land just ahead. These deposits formed terminal moraines in this area, extending westward to the cliffs along Nantucket’s north shore and then onward to Tuckernuck, Muskeget, Martha’s Vineyard, the Elizabeth, Islands, Block Island (Rhode Island) and eventually Long Island (New York).

The Middle Moors was an important site for the Native American population that occupied the island until the early 1800’s. During the warmer seasons, they spent their time along the coastal shoreline, taking advantage of Nantucket’s abundant fish populations and shellfish beds. In the harsh winter months, they retreated to more protected, inland locations such as the Middle Moors. Arrow heads from this era of Nantucket’s history are frequently found on the unvegetated, exposed soils bordering trails and roads in this area following heavy rain storms. The first church on Nantucket, whose constituents included mostly Christianized Native Americans, was located just east of the Middle Bog. Many natural features and geographic locations within the Middle Moors area are still referred to by Native American names, including Wigeon Pond, the Pont Ponds, Shawdema Hill, and Tawpawdew Pond.

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The Foundation’s Middle Moors properties contain diverse vegetation communities that support many species of wildlife and plants that occur on the property. This area also has an interesting geologic, agricultural and cultural history that has influenced the landscape observed here today. Under the Foundation’s ownership and management, this area will continue to be protected as valuable open space, as well as provide passive recreation, scientific research, and educational opportunities for the public to learn from and enjoy.

Please note that there are no public buildings, restroom facilities, water fountains or telephones available on the property.

Hunting is permitted during designated seasons by properly licensed hunters.

Motorized vehicle, dirt bike, and ATV access beyond the parking area is not permitted.

Please stay on the established trails in order to minimize soil erosion, damage to rare plants and potential exposure to ticks.

Camping and all commercial activities are prohibited.

All pets must be well behaved and under the control of their owner.

Enjoy your visit!
Please consider recycling this brochure by returning it to the box at the beginning of the trail. Thank you!

Property Access & Regulations

From the Milestone Rotary, take Milestone Road east towards Siasconset for approximately 5 miles. A parking lot is available along the north edge of the Milestone Road at Milestone #5, approxim ately 700 feet east of the Tom Neevers Road intersection. A walking trail starts from here and meanders through the Serengeti heading northwest. A high point approximately ½ mile from the parking area, locally nicknamed “Kilimanjaro,” provides views of the Middle Moors, the Milestone Cranberry Bog, Sconset village, conservation lands to the south of the Milestone Road, and the distant Atlantic Ocean.

The Serengeti walking trails are open to the public from sunrise to sunset.

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The southern portion of this vast area contains over 4,000 acres of protected land in the Middle Moors, likely due to the constant sheep grazing that occurred during the 1700s and 1800s. Grazing eliminated taller shrubs and trees, allowing low stature heathland and grassland plants to establish themselves without direct competition for sunlight and nutrients. Heathland and grassland vegetation communities are priority habitats for conservation because they support high concentrations of rare and endangered species. The northern harrier—a rare bird of prey formerly known as the marsh hawk—hunts over grassy plains and shrublands for small mammals and songbirds, its preferred prey species. Several species of rare mammals, including the chain-dotted geometer, barren's dagger moth, the chain-dotted geometer, the chain-dotted geometer, and the chain-dotted geometer, inhabit this area.

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