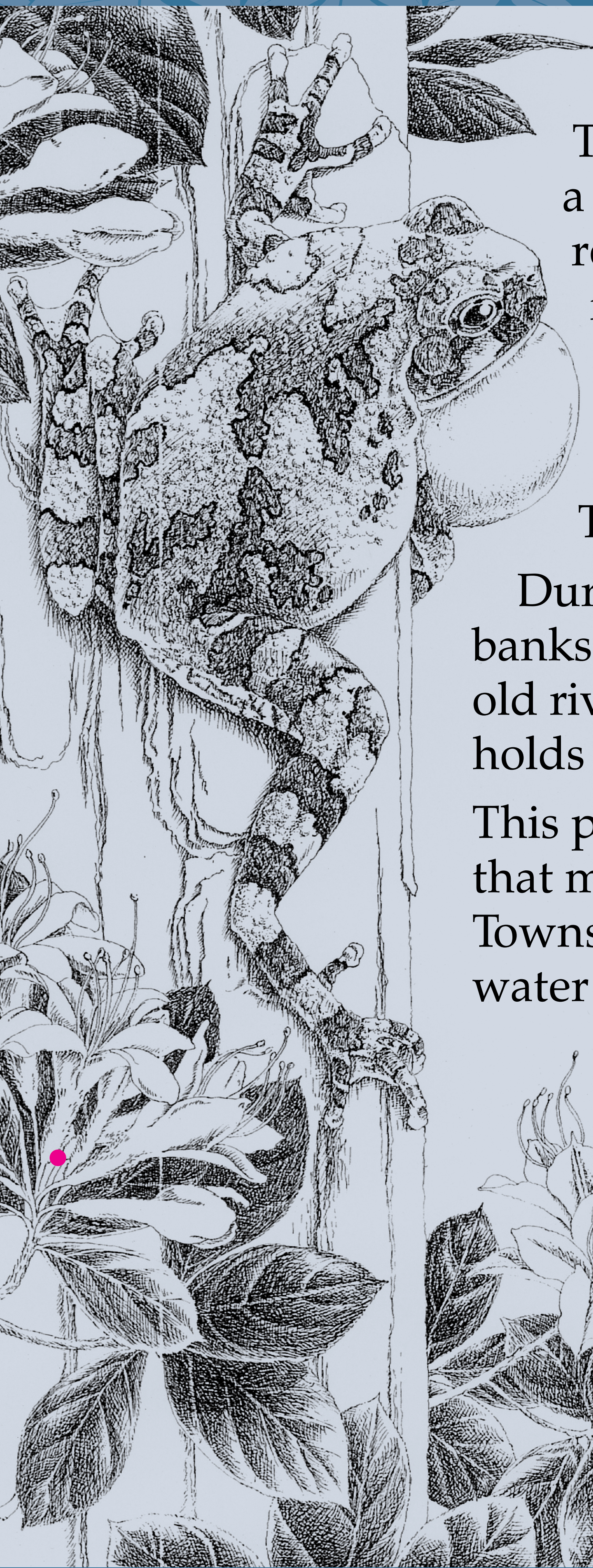


Lamprey River Floodplain



The Lamprey River overflows its banks almost every year and floods a large portion of the lowlands in this area. Some of the amphibians, reptiles, birds, and small mammals that live here depend on the flooding for food and reproduction. Certain trees and plants, which have adapted to the extremes of the water flow, thrive here. As the river recedes, a large amount of the floodwater is slowly absorbed into the ground, recharging the underground aquifers. These aquifers provide water for our use throughout the year.

During this flooding, the river can rearrange itself as it wears down the banks forming a new channel for the main river to flow through. The old river channel then becomes an oxbow, slough, or vernal pool that holds water certain times of the year and provides a haven for wildlife.

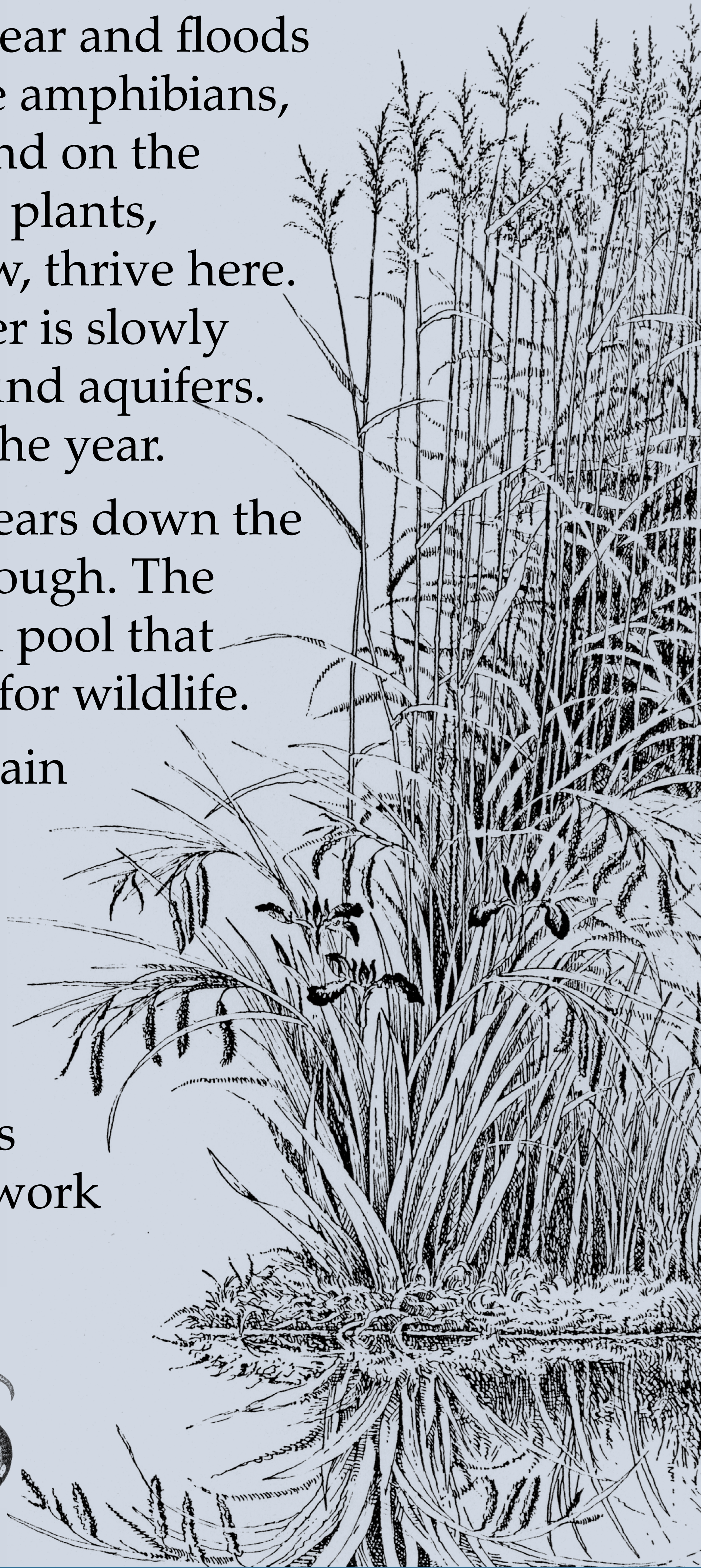
This portion of the Lamprey is vital as an important floodplain that many living creatures are tied to, including humans. Towns downstream use the river as a source of drinking water and the pulse of the floodplains help keep it clean.

The Lamprey has been designated a National Wild and Scenic River. The designation helps to preserve important areas like this and provides support so the towns can work together on river related issues.

Please tread lightly. Do your part to keep the river clean and protect the wildlife habitat in the area.

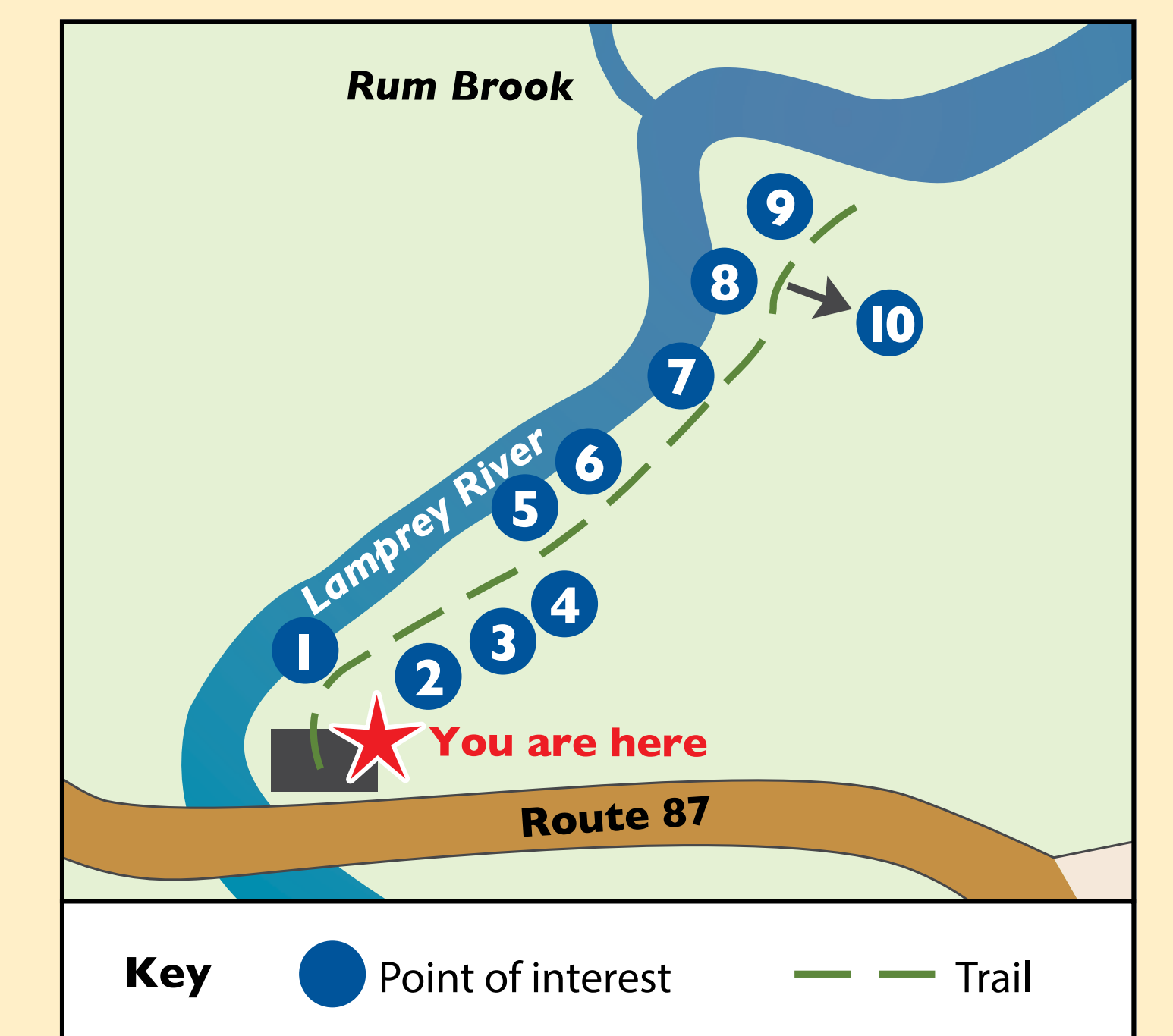


Artist: David M. Carroll



Guide to the Floodplain Trail Sign Posts

- 1 Floodplain shrubs, such as **silky dogwood**, **arrowwood viburnum**, and **sweet pepperbush** have adaptations that allow them to withstand flooding. They help to provide shade, erosion control, and habitat.
- 2 The depressions along the sides of the river are called **vernal pools** and are essential to fairy shrimp and certain frogs and salamanders that have adapted to temporary, fish-free waters.
- 3 Flood plain trees include **black cherry**, **silver maple**, **American hornbeam**, **red maple**, **American elm**, **hemlock**, and **shagbark hickory**. The roots of these trees help to prevent erosion, the canopy offers shade to the land and river, and the seeds, nuts, and berries of these trees are valuable food for wildlife.
- 4 Many different kinds of ferns thrive in the wet soil here including **lady, sensitive, interrupted, New York, and royal**. Before the ferns unfurl and trees blossom in late spring, bouquets of spring wildflowers emerge and bloom. Along the trail you'll find trout lily, trillium, spring beauty, wood anemone, dwarf ginger, and bellwort.
- 5 Standing **dead trees** provide homes to wood ducks, chickadees, woodpeckers, and other animals that nest in tree cavities. The **fallen trees** provide cover for salamanders, chipmunks, and the weasels that hunt for them. As the trees decay they return important nutrients to the soil and water.
- 6 The **log jams** that spread across the river here might seem messy and bothersome to paddlers, but they are important to many river dwellers. Fish and turtles use the jams to hide from predators and feed on the insects that live there. River otters and minks catch fish near the logs, while other mammals such as bobcats and raccoons use them to cross the river.
- 7 The **silver maple trees** that you see here are well adapted to the floodplains. Their wide spreading roots help to protect the tree when other trees might topple. Even when the silver maples fall, they can continue to grow in an almost horizontal position.



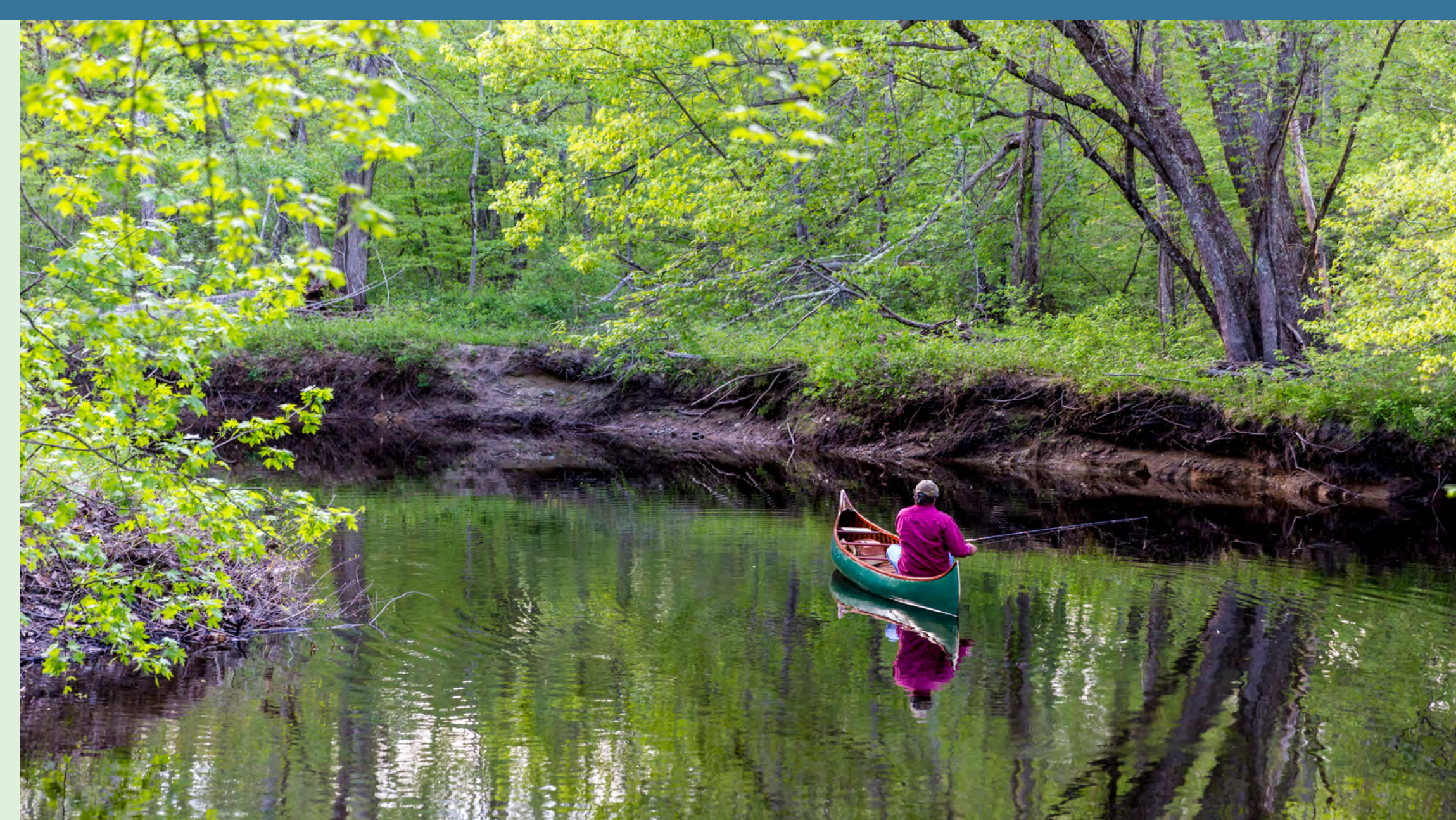
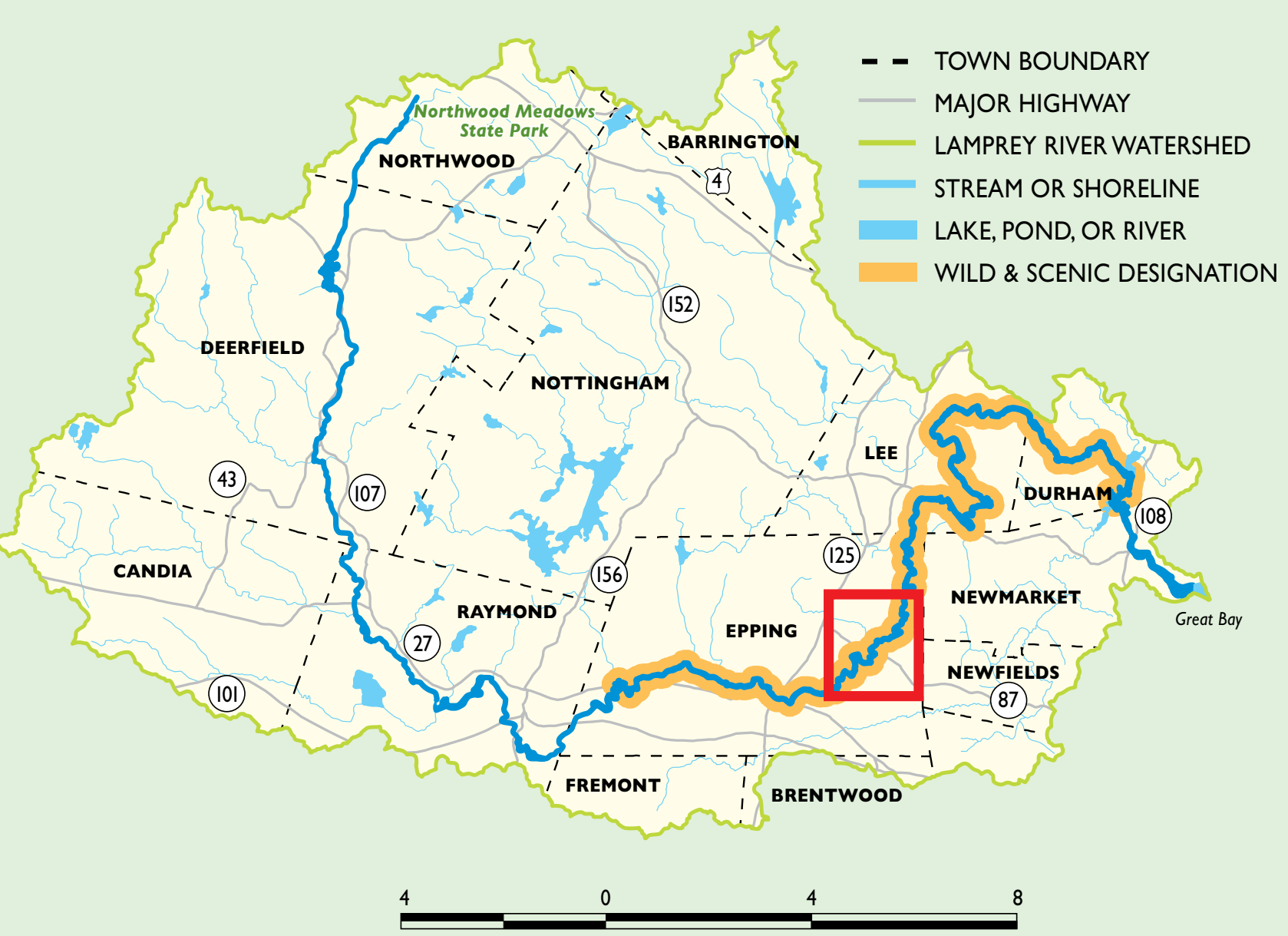
wood turtle



Ecological Diversity

One of the reasons for the Lamprey River's Wild and Scenic designation is its outstanding ecological diversity and quality. This map shows extensive wetlands along the river, a major contributor to ecological health and clean water.

Site Map



Fishing on the Lamprey River. Credit: Jerry Monkman, Ecophotography.com

Please use caution.

From here downstream to Wadleigh Falls (NH Route 152) is one of the wilder stretches of the Lamprey River. It contains lots of in-stream wood that shapes the channel and is critical for aquatic organisms, including fish. Paddlers can expect frequent downed trees and log jams. Some of these require maneuvering to avoid; others must be portaged. All can pose a risk to paddlers at various flow conditions.

For more information about vernal pools, dead trees, instream wood, and river animals, visit www.LampreyRiver.org and type your request into the search box.

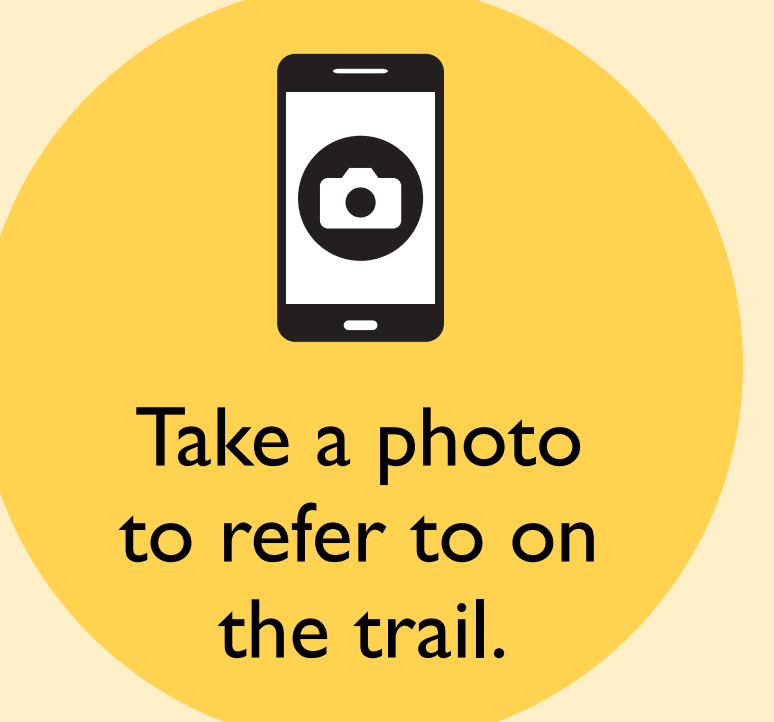


www.LampreyRiver.org



The cardinal flower is found along river shorelines. Credit: S. Petersen

- 8 **Stranded branches, brush, and logs** were left behind when flood waters receded. These piles are good hiding places for mice, which are important food for owls, hawks, foxes, and coyotes. The next spring, the piles are moved by high water to other spots downstream.
- 9 The depression or wet area that you see here was once the **old river channel**. Many years ago the river changed its course and it now travels a different route. It is likely to have moved when the bridge was first built to cross the river. This old channel goes all the way back to the bridge. In other places along the river, beaver activity has caused the river to change course.
- 10 This site is where the previous landowner brought in fill to build a house and driveway too close to the wetlands and without proper permits. Work was undertaken to remove the gravel and restore the wetland. Wetland plants, some of which were planted, including **spirea**, **speckled alder**, **silky dogwood**, **nannyberry viburnum**, and **many sedges**, are growing well as the site continues to recover.



National Wild and Scenic Rivers System

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National Park Service



Lamprey River Advisory Committee



Epping Conservation Commission



New Hampshire Rivers Management and Protection Program