

# BISHOP ESTATE & DARLING HOUSE TRAILS

Woodbridge, CT

## Directions and Parking:

The main entrance to the trails and parking is located adjacent to the Darling House located at 1907 Litchfield Turnpike (Route 69).

## Permitted Activities:

This land is for passive recreational use only—no motorized vehicles are permitted. Dogs are permitted on leash. Please bag and pick up all dog waste. Hunting or trapping is prohibited.

## For more information about this location, contact:

Town of Woodbridge  
(203) 389-3400  
[www.woodbridge.org](http://www.woodbridge.org)

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*Mapping for this brochure has been produced by John Triana of the Regional Water Authority and Mike Walter, Woodbridge Trail Master.*

## South Central Regional Council of Governments

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This Woodbridge Town Property known as the Bishop Estate/Darling House trail is located on the Litchfield Turnpike. The house is now home to the Amity & Woodbridge Historical Society.

Thomas Darling (1720-1789) played a significant role in colonial Connecticut and counted such prominent citizens as Benjamin Franklin, Ezra Stiles, Roger Sherman, and Benedict Arnold among his friends and associates. He studied theology at Yale University in New Haven, CT, graduated in 1740, and was licensed to preach in 1743. During his years in New Haven he was a manufacturer, merchant, Justice of the Peace, and "entrepreneur." He ran a Rope Walk, helped set up the first printing press in New Haven, tried to establish a glass business, and was a deputy to the General

Assembly.

The Bishop Estate/Darling House is located just south of Lake Dawson (a Regional Water Authority Property) and just west of the West Rock Ridge State Park on the eastern border of Woodbridge. The trail also connects to a hike along the West Rock Ridge and then to the Regicides Trail (a CT Blue Blazed Trail). The Regicides Trail follows the path taken by three of the judges who imposed the death sentence on Charles I of England in 1649. These men - John Dixwell, William Goffe and Edward Whalley—fled England and for 3 years hid from prosecution in a rock cave (known as the Judge's Cave) on West Rock Ridge.

The Darling homestead is 160 acres of rolling meadow with surrounding woodlands. The trail includes numerous stone wall crossings and a bridge crossing over the West River.



*Photo by the Amity & Woodbridge Historical Society.*

*When Thomas Darling decided to leave New Haven to pursue a country squire's life, he hired Abiel Gray of West Hartford, CT to build his new home. Gray took two years (1772-1774) to complete the project. The Gambrel roofed structure is now on the National Register of Historic Places. Many of the interior's furnishings are Darling family pieces, as the house and grounds were owned by the family until 1973. The house can be viewed by appointment only.*