

## Town of Sprague Letterboxes

### Mukluk Series

#### #1: "Bobcat"

Moderate distance (1 hour round trip); one small hill

Placed: February 8, 2007

Revised, with thanks to Flutterby, May 15, 2007



Your Mukluk hosts have never personally seen a bobcat in the Mukluk Preserve, but others have spotted them in the area, and as you're walking up by the ridge line, you can imagine them going about their discreet, dignified bobcat business.

**To get to the Mukluk Preserve:** From Rt. 207 in Baltic going towards Franklin, take Holton Road which is a dead end road, and go 8/10 mile to the old sign on the right that says "Mukluk Skeet Club." This is the entrance to the Mukluk Preserve, owned by the Town of Sprague and maintained by the Sprague Conservation Commission. Go down this dirt road, which is passable most of the year; in muddy or snow conditions you will need a 4x4; otherwise any car will do the trick. (Please use common sense in bad conditions—people HAVE gotten stuck here!)

You will see a big sign that notifies visitors that we are conducting lead remediation (removal) on the property, and to stay out of the 16-acre area in which we will be working. This area is clearly marked by a yellow fence and signs.

**Notice: From May to July there will be lead remediation personnel at the front of the park. Please be patient on the access road.**

The dirt road you are on is a right of way to other property beyond ours; the Mukluk Preserve begins in 7/10 of a mile at a fork in the road. Keep right/straight at this fork and go up a hill. You will see yellow fencing to your left as well as an old skeet range, and a small cabin on the right. Park here off the road by the small cabin..

**COMPASS:** You will probably need a compass for this walk (unless you're good at knowing which direction you're facing).

Start by walking east on the same dirt road towards the Shetucket River. The road is wide and easy to follow. It curves to the left in about 5 minutes at a large 4-trunked pine on the left hand side; to the right you will see an open field beyond the roadside brush.

A brisk 15-minute walk will take you through a hemlock grove with pink surveyor tape around some trees on the left, and you will end up at an orange gate with a Stop sign. Take a left at the gate and go NE up the trail to the ridge overlooking the river. Go west (left) along the ridge; the river will be way below, on your right. Pretty, huh?

On the ridge line, you will pass through 2 trees with orange survey tape on them. From the gray metal pipe in the ground by the trees walk 40 paces and take a compass reading of 240 degrees. Go 17 paces to a large 4-foot high stump. Go to the back of the stump where you will see an animal burrow, and from here take a reading of 135 degrees (SE) and walk 19 paces (stepping over lots of logs and things) to a smaller stump, about 8" high but pretty wide. To the left of this stump will be a crotched pine tree with a large branch lying in the crotch. From this small stump go 4 paces ahead to a small pile of logs, with other larger logs lying around it. At the base/root system of the (smallish) fallen tree on the top of the brush pile is an old, abandoned (hopefully!!) animal burrow. Remove the bark and branches to find the letterbox.

You may return the same way you came, or continue the Series and go to #2: Chipmunk Picnic. This will take about another hour. Follow the river ridge path, using either your infallible sense of direction or the Chipmunk Picnic Clues, to get to the picnic table near the access road (about half an hour and two stream crossings).

We would love to hear from you regarding how we can improve our letterboxes. Please write to [grants@ctsprague.org](mailto:grants@ctsprague.org) if you have any questions or suggestions.