

## Kalousdian Wildlife Sanctuary

**Summary:** A half-hour exploration of the sanctuary includes a rarely-afforded peek at an outcropping of the gneissic bedrock underlying Stow. A trail cleared in the 80s may be hard to locate, but the general absence of underbrush allows for continued access.

**Trailhead Location:** Off-street parking for several cars is available on the west side of Hudson Road, in a sandy area bordered by large boulders just south of Billadelle Road. The property straddles Hudson Road to the east of the parking area, with the bulk of the property lying to the west.

**Geology:** The land rises about 45 feet above the surrounding terrain. There is an interesting rock outcropping at the top. This exposure, part of a geological fault line that runs through Stow, provides an opportunity to view a strike and dip exposure of foliated bedrock called the Nashoba Formation. The light to medium gray gneissic rock underlies most of the town of Stow and is visible in scattered sites like this one. The hill is a glacial moraine, which covers all but the exposed bedrock at the top. To the west and east lies the modern floodplain of the Assabet River.

**History:** Mr. Vohan Kalousdian purchased the land in 1940 from the Lamson family, which did occasional logging of the land. Very little disturbance of the property has occurred since that time. The forest is thus very mature without dense underbrush in most areas. A vernal pond supporting annual salamander populations lies on the northeast corner near Hudson Road.

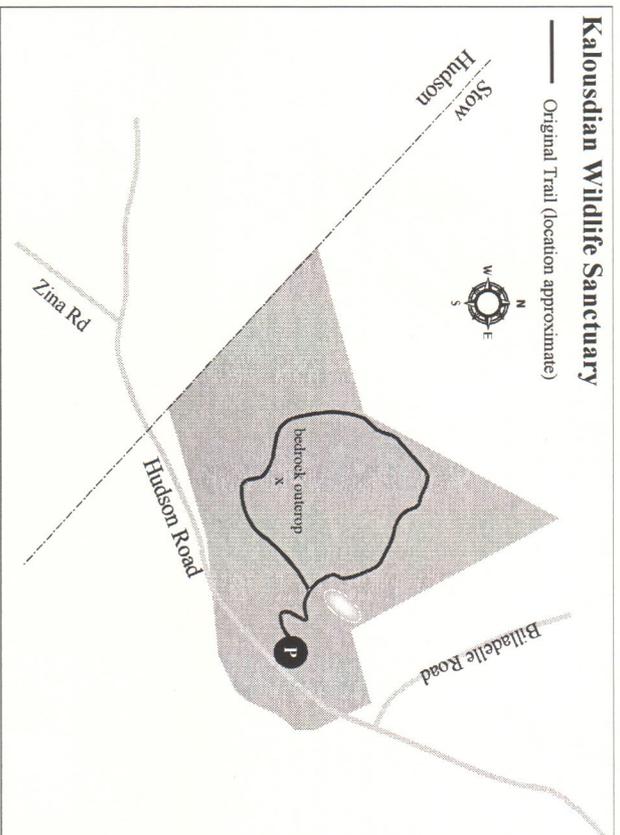
Around 1950, Hudson Road was moved over onto Mr. Kalousdian's land and widened. The original 20 foot wide roadway, bordered by stone walls, lies just to the east side of Hudson Road at the rim of the Assabet River's floodplain.

Mr. Kalousdian, a US war veteran of World War II in Europe, was for many years with the Hudson Highway Department. He was an avid birdwatcher, and in 1989, offered the land in Stow (20 acres) for conservation purposes. With a combined effort by the Organization for the Assabet River (OAR), the Massachusetts Audubon Society and the Stow Conservation Commission, the land was taken over by OAR for permanent protection. The Town holds a conservation restriction. Mr. Kalousdian passed away in 1990. Tanya Friedman cleared and mapped a trail as part of a Girl Scout project in the 1980s.

**Nature to look for:** The wetland/floodplain to the west contains many native wetland species, including the tiny fingernail clam. The wetland is somewhat isolated and represents an area not affected by the many invasive species expanding in Massachusetts.

It is pleasant to have been to a place the way a river went.

Henry David Thoreau (1817—1862)



Why dost thou gaze upon the sky?  
O that I were yon spangled sphere!  
Then every star should be an eye,  
To wander o'er thy beauties here.

Sir Thomas Moore (1478 – 1535)