



## Lower Slade Brook Quest

### Hanover, New Hampshire

Physical Difficulty: Easy

Special Features: Natural

Walking Conditions: Trail

Duration: 1:00

Season: May-Nov

Bring: Field Guide (optional), Pencil (for scavenger hunt)

**To get there:** Follow Route 10 north of Hanover to River Rd. Turn left onto River Rd. and drive 0.6 miles. The trailhead will be on your right, just past Purling Brooks Dr. There is limited parking at the trailhead, or on the shoulder across from the trailhead.

### Overview:

The Jim and Evalyn Hornig Natural Area at Lower Slade Brook is a 36-acre woodland owned by the Hanover Conservancy. This natural area offers a quiet and easy walk with beautiful views of the brook and lovely waterfalls. From the headwaters on Moose Mountain to its mouth at River Road on the Connecticut River, Slade Brook has banks that are undeveloped and graced by a convenient hiking trail. The Hanover Conservancy's conservation of this property in 2005 ensures that Lower Slade Brook will always be a pristine environment for people to enjoy and where the native flora and fauna can flourish. This Quest includes a scavenger hunt; see what you can find along the way.

### Clues:

Three large rocks guard a narrow path,  
Winding through the trees.  
Look right and watch the brook sail by,  
And leaves dance through the breeze.

Welcome to the Slade Brook trail!  
Come and start your quest.  
Look about for animals,  
You never know where they may rest!

Walk along the leaf-strewn path.  
Listen for the brook.  
Can you hear the rush of water?  
Go and have a look.

Soon the trail begins to widen,  
The brook meanders and bends.  
Water cascades over ancient rocks,  
To the Connecticut River where it ends.

As you continue along the trail,  
think about the trees.  
They absorb carbon dioxide,  
And make oxygen for you and me.

As the climate changes,  
Forests play an important role.  
The more that we protect them,  
The more carbon they can store.

Once you've finished your upward climb,  
The trail will flatten out.  
Look down to the right at the mucky floodplain.  
See the far brook winding about?

One of the reasons this forest was conserved,  
Was to keep the water clean.  
Trees help soak up pollutants and heavy rains,  
Keeping this natural area pristine.

Further along is a muddy spot,  
Usually wet, not dry.  
Look out for tracks of animals,  
Who like you have wandered by.

As you walk among the hemlocks,  
Note the decaying stumps on the ground.  
Look to the right for hidden houses,  
Can you hear any neighborhood sounds?

Before you continue on your way,  
Check around for a woodpecker's mark.  
Where hungry birds have searched for snacks,  
And hammered at the bark.

Soon you'll reach a pretty sight,  
Where the brook ends its slow crawl,  
And plummets down over great big rocks,  
A beautiful waterfall!

If you look a little closer,  
You'll find that there may be,  
Several smaller rushing falls.  
How many do you see?

Don't linger at this site too long.  
You'll come back for another look.  
Follow the trail and stay to the left,  
As the path turns away from the brook.

Soon you'll walk right through a tree,  
That's been cut to help you pass.  
Continue on – you're getting there,  
Notice there's no grass.

Uphill you go farther from the stream,  
Past trees all in a line.  
The trail goes up and to right,  
Don't slip on the needles of pine.

Once again the trail flattens out,  
There are trees both short and tall.  
Birches, oaks, maples and more,  
The color is beautiful in the Fall.

A small green sign will mark the end,  
Of the Hanover Conservancy land.  
When you reach it, turn around,  
And give yourself a hand!

Retrace your steps back to the falls.  
Sit on the bench and take a rest.  
Reflect on what you've learned,  
And how conserving forests is the best.

From the bench look down to your right,  
And walk down to the brook.  
Perhaps you'll see a salamander,  
Hidden in a shady nook?

Now turn and look back toward the trail,  
As you stand among hemlocks divine.  
On the ground are two big mossy rocks,  
And the reward for your time.

Find the rock with a cubby hole,  
And reach your hand inside.  
Surprise! You've found your prize at last.  
Don't forget to re-hide.

Now your quest is winding down.  
Walk back the way you first came.  
Keep your eyes out for wildlife  
Did you finish the scavenger hunt game?

We hope you liked the Slade Brook trail,  
And enjoyed your nature walk.  
Come again and bring a friend,  
(But don't tell them about the rock!)

## Did you see...

- A chipmunk
- A squirrel
- A bird
- A salamander
- A red eft
- A water strider
- A spider web
- An animal track
- A brightly-colored mushroom
- A gall
- A fern
- A bird nest
- Animal scat
- An acorn
- A pinecone
- A rotting stump
- A hole in the ground made by a furry friend
- A baby tree
- A tree with woodpecker holes
- A tree with a twisted trunk
- A vernal pool
- Something you had never seen before

Other sightings or comments:

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This Quest was created by Sarah McPeck and Kay Torrey in 2011, updated by the Hanover Conservancy in 2020.

**Other things to do nearby:** Check out Wilson's Landing a mile south of River Road on Route 10.

**Please be a good steward of the land: leave it better than you found it and pack out any trash you find.**



Valley Quest is a collection of treasure hunts that share and teach the natural gems and cultural heritage of the Upper Valley with children, families, adults, and visitors. It is a program of Vital Communities, a regional nonprofit working to engage citizens, organizations, and communities in creating solutions to our region's challenges. Learn more at [vitalcommunities.org](http://vitalcommunities.org).

Have a suggestion, question, comment, or idea for us? We'd love to hear from you. Reach us at [valleyquest@vitalcommunities.org](mailto:valleyquest@vitalcommunities.org) or 802-291-9100.