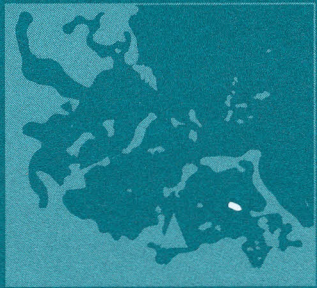


Bumpkin Island
Button Island
Calf Island
Deer Island
Gallops Island
Georges Island
Grave Island
The Graves
Great Brewster Island
Green Island
Hangman Island
Langlee Island
Little Brewster Island
Little Calf Island
Long Island
Lovells Island
Middle Brewster Island
Moon Island
Nut Island
Outer Brewster Island
Peddocks Island
Raccoon Island
Ragged Island
Rainford Island
Sabbath Island
Sheet Island
Slate Island
Spectacle Island
Thompson Island
World's End

EXPLORING

Bumpkin Island

A SELF-GUIDED TOUR



WELCOME TO BUMPKIN ISLAND . . . Measuring 35 acres in size, Bumpkin Island, in Hingham Bay, lies just off the town of Hull. Initially formed by a glacier over 15,000 years ago as a hill called a drumlin, the island now consists of a central upland surrounded by a rock-strewn shoreline. A sandspit extends from its eastern end toward Sunset Point in Hull. Following the glacier's retreat and the rise in sea-level that followed, groups of Native Americans migrated seasonally to the harbor islands. They harvested the bay's abundant fish, oysters and clams, and left behind trash deposits called 'middens' that contained shells, bone fragments and other pieces of domestic refuse. Wild fruits were also gathered on the islands, and later, corn, beans and squash were cultivated on them as well.

Bumpkin Island became part of the town of Weymouth in 1637. It was subsequently sold to Samuel Ward who, in 1681, bequeathed it to Harvard College. For the next two centuries it was leased by Harvard to tenant farmers who harvested hay and grew fruits and vegetables. Previously called Round Island, Pumpkin Island and Bomkin Island, it became known as Bumpkin Island by the 19th century. In 1900, Albert Burrage, a Boston philanthropist, leased the island from Harvard and constructed a large facility for children with physical disabilities. When the United States entered World War I, Burrage transferred his lease to the federal government. Fifty-six buildings were constructed on the island and a naval training station established that graduated a total of nearly 15,000 seamen. Abandoned after World War I, Bumpkin became part of the Boston Harbor Islands State Park in 1973.

This self-guided tour begins at the shade shelter, proceeds clockwise around the western end of the island, and concludes at the island's outdoor exhibit area. It takes about 45 minutes to complete. The numbers in this brochure correspond to the brown numbered posts along the trails. In recent years, a population of dog ticks has flourished on the island. By keeping to the road and mown paths, they are usually avoided.

1 SALT-SPRAY ROSE

Salt-spray Rose (*Rosa rugosa*) is one of the most fragrant and useful plants growing on the harbor islands. Brought to America from China in the 18th century, it is a bristly, upright shrub that produces deep pink or white flowers throughout the summer. Its fruits, called hips, are tasty and rich in vitamin-C. They can be used to make Rose Hip Jam and Rose Hip Tea, two New England favorites.

Continue on the trail that parallels the water's edge.

2 GRAPE ISLAND/SLATE ISLAND

Looking out toward the water from this vantage point you'll see Grape Island on the right and Slate Island to its left. Grape, Bumpkin and most of the other harbor islands are drumlins, hills formed by the last glacier that became partly submerged as it melted and sea-level rose. Slate Island, however, has a different geologic past: it lacks the covering of the debris brought here by the glacier, and is instead an exposed outcropping of Cambridge argillite, the layered, slate-like stone that makes up the bedrock of the entire Harbor region. As early as the 17th century,

slate was quarried on the island and used for building foundations and for gravestones.

The shorelines of Hingham and Weymouth (with the high-rise condos) are visible behind the islands. Grape Island is accessible by the Park's water taxi; camping is permitted.

3 BAYBERRY

Colonists used the fragrant leaves of this shrub as a seasoning and as the source of a yellow dye for cloth. The waxy berries, an important food for migrating birds in the fall, were used for making bayberry candles. Using the traditional method, over 10 pounds of berries were required to make a single candle.

Continue around the island, keeping to the left at the fork in the path.



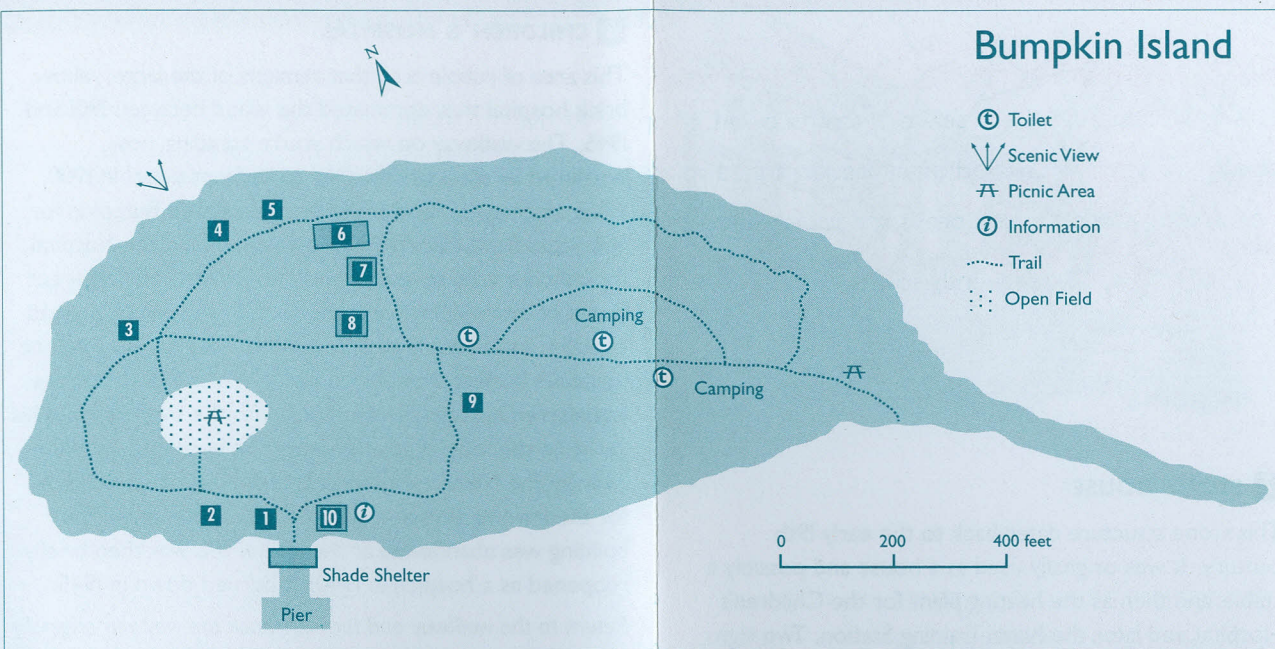
4 NORTHERN VISTA

From here, the four heads of Peddock's Island seem to extend to the right of the distant buildings of downtown Boston, 8 miles away as the gull flies. At its eastern (right) end Peddock's is separated by the waters of Hull Gut from Windmill Point at the end of the Nantasket peninsula. To the right of the tall cedar tree, as you look beyond Hull and the condos of Spinnaker (once Hog) Island, Great Brewster's large eroded cliff is visible.

5 STAGHORN SUMAC

The shrub growing on both sides of the trail is the furry-stemmed Staghorn Sumac. Named because of its resemblance to a deer's velvety antlers, it is a close relative of both Poison Ivy and Poison Sumac, but lacks the oil that causes skin irritation. The plant's fuzzy, red berries can be harvested in midsummer and used to make a cold drink called sumac-ade. Staghorn Sumac is considered a pioneer species on the harbor islands, so-called because it is among the first plants to return to an area disturbed by fire,

Bumpkin Island



construction or cultivation. On parts of the island, the sumacs have reached maturity and are beginning to die off.



6 MESS HALL

In 1917, when the United States Navy used Bumpkin as a training facility, 56 temporary wooden buildings all but covered the island. The masonry walls you're looking at were part of the Naval Training Station's mess hall. The dining room had a terrazzo floor and reputedly fed the island's 1,800 residents "Michigan-style" at a single seating. Quaking Aspens now surround it, while Red Raspberries, Sow Thistle, High-bush Cranberry and POISON IVY cover its walls. During World War I, crew members from several German vessels sought refuge in Boston Harbor. When the United States entered the war, they were incarcerated first on Gallops' Island and then later here on Bumpkin.

Continue along the trail and bear right onto the grassy path. Proceed up the hill to the stone house.



7 STONE HOUSE

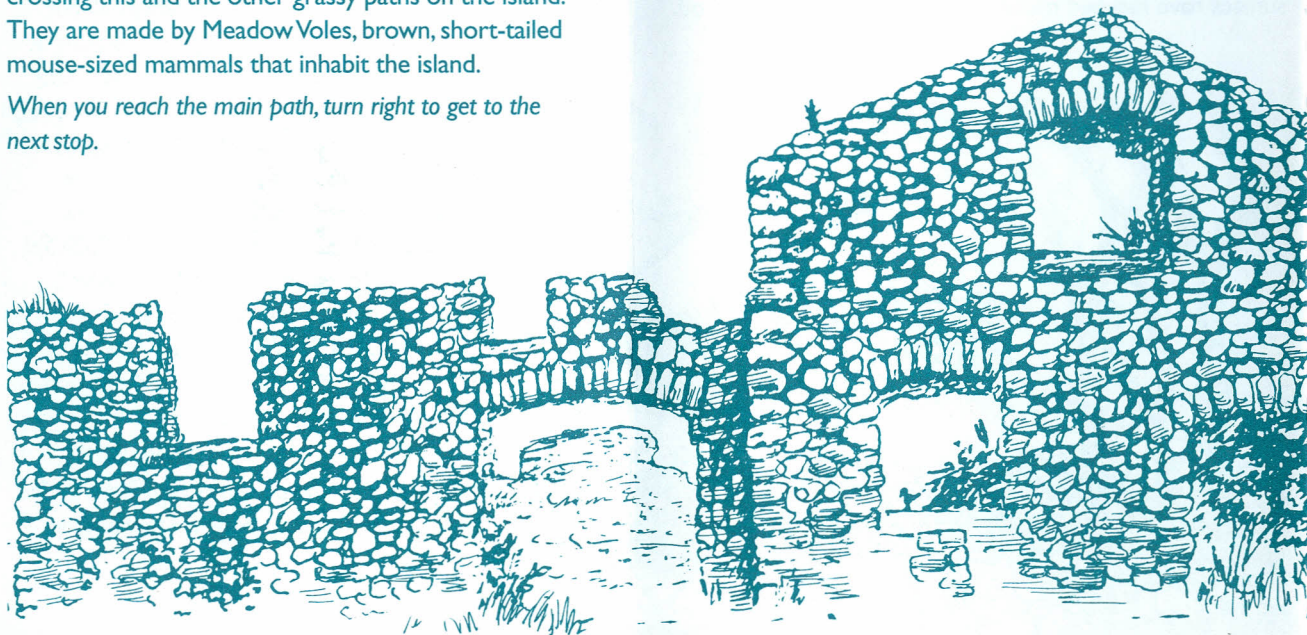
This stone structure dates back to the early 19th century. It was originally used as a house and possibly a stable, and then as the heating plant for the Children's Hospital, and later, the Naval Training Station. Two signs of human activity are still evident: the ornamental barberry shrubs and the large apple tree. Notice the roundness of the stones that make up the building: they are called beach cobbles and were rounded at the sea's edge by the constant rolling motion of the waves. Continue around the building's left side and then up the hill on the grassy path. You may find narrow ruts crossing this and the other grassy paths on the island. They are made by Meadow Voles, brown, short-tailed mouse-sized mammals that inhabit the island.

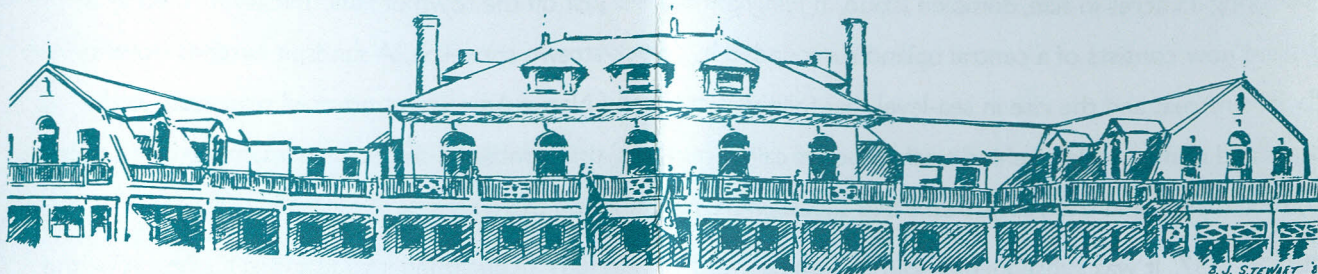
When you reach the main path, turn right to get to the next stop.

8 CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

This area of rubble is all that remains of the large, yellow brick hospital that dominated the island between 1901 and 1945. The walkway on which you're standing, now bordered by spruces, once led to its front door. In 1900, Albert Burrage, a local philanthropist, leased Bumpkin for 500 years from Harvard University, and built this hospital for children with severe physical disabilities. The different floors of the building were connected with ramps instead of stairs, and as many as 145 patients lived here during the hospital's busiest summers. During World War I, Burrage transferred his island lease, along with the ownership of his yacht, to the federal government. The hospital was taken over by the Navy and used as an Administration Building for the training station it established on Bumpkin. The building was abandoned at the end of the war, then briefly reopened as a hospital in 1940. It burned down in 1945.

Return to the walkway and turn left, back the way you originally came. You can continue along this paved road, which runs down the center of Bumpkin, to the island's camping area and then to its southern shoreline. To continue on this tour, take the first path to the right which will take you to the next stop and then back to the pier.



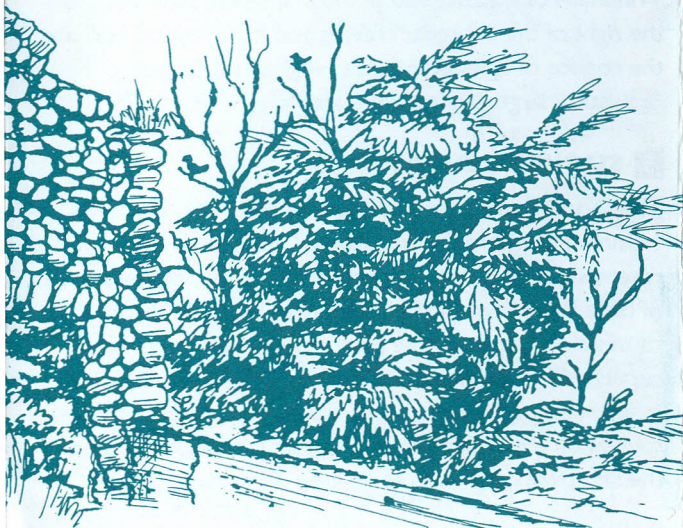


9 SOUTHERN VISTA

Centuries ago, Bumpkin Island was connected to the mainland by a sandspit extending from its eastern end to Sunset Point in Hull, visible to your left. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, large steamers carried passengers from along the Massachusetts coast past the Point to the casinos, hotels and amusements that lined Hull's Nantasket Beach. To your right are the tree-lined drumlins of World's End, a 250-acre park designed by Frederick Law Olmsted in 1886. Managed by the Trustees of Reservations, it is open daily to the public. Further to the right is Hingham Harbor and its four small islands: Sarah, Ragged, Langlee and Button.

As you continue down the path, look for dewberries. They grow on shrubs with prickly stems, and when ripe in mid-summer resemble blackberries.

The last stop on the tour is the island's outdoor exhibit area, located next to the Pump House, a small stone building just above the pier.



10 PUMP HOUSE

The stone building adjacent to the outdoor exhibit area was erected on the foundation of the waiting room for the ferry that served the Children's Hospital around the turn of the century. When the Navy occupied Bumpkin during World War I, the building was renovated as a pump house to supply salt water to the island's fire hydrants. It now serves as a residence for Bumpkin's summer staff. Please visit the outdoor exhibit area located next to the pump house. It features photographs and artifacts from Bumpkin's past as well as information on the island's natural history.



Meadow Vole drawing by Alfred Godin from his "Wild Mammals of New England." Other illustrations by Bryant Stewart and Margie Coffin.

We hope you enjoyed your walk around Bumpkin Island and that you'll visit and explore some of the Park's other islands as well.

If you do not wish to keep this brochure, please recycle it in the box in the shade shelter for others to use.



Massachusetts Department of
Environmental Management

Boston Harbor Islands
National Recreation Area
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

