



Self-Guiding Trails



Eleven self-guiding trails at Cape Cod National Seashore offer year-round opportunities to enjoy the natural and cultural features of the area.

Remain on designated trails to prevent damage, and reduce exposure to disease-carrying insects, poison ivy, and other natural risks. Observe trail conditions while walking, and be aware of tree roots, stumps, and other naturally-occurring hazards.

- ❖ Self-guiding trail folders with information on specific trail features are available at some trailheads.
- ❖ Plant identification labels along trails refer to *Common Trailside Plants* guidebook on sale at both visitor center bookstores.
- ❖ Flat-soled shoes, such as sneakers, are recommended.
- ❖ In hot weather it is advisable to carry drinking water, wear a hat, and use sunscreen and insect repellent.
- ❖ Boardwalks can be slippery when wet.
- ❖ Please remain on trails to protect sensitive resources.

- ❖ Wildflowers and other plant material, including saltmarsh plants, may not be picked. Limited quantities of edibles may be picked within the seashore. Check at visitor centers about regulations.
- ❖ Natural and archeological features are protected by federal law and must remain undisturbed.
- ❖ Pets and bicycles are prohibited on self-guiding trails year-round.
- ❖ Please do not litter.
- ❖ Taking, feeding, or harassing wildlife is prohibited.
- ❖ Ask for the park's accessibility folder.



Fort Hill Trail, Eastham

Length: One and one-half miles. One hour.

Location: Turn off Route 6 at the brown Fort Hill sign on Governor Prence Road in Eastham. Continue to parking area on left, across from the Captain Penniman House. The trail may also be accessed from Hemenway Landing, just north of Fort Hill on Route 6.

Features: This loop trail crosses open fields, connects with the Red Maple Swamp Trail (see below), and offers spectacular vistas of Nauset Marsh and Nauset Spit. **Conditions:** Easy; solid surface; some log steps on slopes; seasonal restrooms near Hemenway Landing.

Red Maple Swamp Trail, Eastham



Length: One-half mile. Thirty minutes.

Location: Enter this trail from the Fort Hill Trail or Hemenway landing. (See above.)

Features: Boardwalk sections of this trail meander through the heart of the Red Maple Swamp. This setting is most colorful in the fall.

Conditions: Easy; seasonal restrooms near Hemenway Landing. A wheelchair-accessible portion of boardwalk can be reached via Hemenway Landing, just north of Fort Hill on Route 6.



Buttonbush Trail, Eastham

Length: One-fourth mile. Fifteen minutes.

Location: Adjacent to Salt Pond Visitor Center amphitheater, off Route 6.

Features: This loop trail, which includes guide rope, text in braille and large print, involves all the senses as it winds through forest, crosses over the Buttonbush Pond on a boardwalk bridge, and traverses formerly cultivated areas.

Conditions: Easy; some log steps on the second half of the trail; moderate grade; restrooms at visitor center.



Nauset Marsh Trail, Eastham



Length: One mile. One hour.

Location: Adjacent to Salt Pond Visitor Center amphitheater, off Route 6.

Features: This trail winds along the edge of Salt Pond and Nauset Marsh, crosses fields, and returns to the Salt Pond Visitor Center through a recovering forest. There are several spectacular vistas along the way.

Conditions: Easy; some log steps; moderate grade; use caution when crossing the bike trail; restrooms at visitor center. Sections may be submerged at highest tides. Check at visitor center for current conditions.

A trail extension leads to Doane Picnic Area and Coast Guard Beach. Extension is one mile each way.

Doane Trail, Eastham

Length: One-half mile. Thirty minutes.

Location: Doane Picnic area, one mile east of Salt Pond Visitor Center on Nauset Road (leading to Coast Guard beach). Look for brown signs.

Features: This paved, wheelchair-accessible loop trail with interpretive text winds through an emerging pine and oak forest, and offers vistas of Nauset Marsh. A picnic area is adjacent to the parking area. **Conditions:** Easy; wheelchair accessible grade (also good for strollers); seasonal restrooms.



Atlantic White Cedar Swamp Trail, Wellfleet

Length: One and one-fourth miles. One hour.

Location: At stop light, turn east off Route 6 into the Marconi Station Area, South Wellfleet. Follow brown signs to the Marconi Site and White Cedar Swamp.

Features: This trail descends through a stunted oak and pine forest into a mature woodland, leads to a boardwalk that winds through the picturesque Atlantic White Cedar Swamp, and returns via the historic “Wireless Road” (a sand road) to the starting location. **Conditions:** Moderate difficulty; some steep stairs; return route is one-half mile in soft sand; swamp portion of this trail is boardwalk; seasonal restrooms.

Great Island Trail, Wellfleet

Length: Three miles, one way, to Jeremy Point overlook (eight mile loop via Tavern Site). Allow three to five hours to explore Great Island.

Location: From Route 6, follow green signs to Wellfleet Center; turn left onto East Commercial Street (follow signs to Wellfleet Harbor); continue along the shoreline from town pier via Chequesset Neck Road to the Great Island parking area. (Keep water view on your left after leaving Route 6.)

** BEACH ACCESS VIA DESIGNATED TRAIL ONLY. Do not traverse dune to reach beach (enforced). * Stay on designated trails to protect fragile resources.*

Features: This trail follows sandy stretches between the elevated heights of Great Island and Great Beach Hill. Its higher elevations punctuate spectacular vistas which emerge from an even-aged, pitch-pine forest. Part of this trail leads to a colonial-era tavern site (no remains visible). Other sections skirt salt marsh embayments. A picnic area is adjacent to parking area. **Conditions:** The park’s most difficult trail; mostly soft sand; some log steps; portions are submerged at high tide; hats, sturdy footwear and drinking water advised; portable toilets.

CAUTION: Trail options can be confusing. Check tide table. Do not attempt to walk to Jeremy Point if the tide is rising.

Pamet Area Trails, Bearberry Hill Overlook, Truro

Length: One-half mile from parking area. Adjacent fire roads offer additional miles of walking opportunities.

Location: Take Truro Center/Pamet Roads exit off Route 6 in Truro. Proceed one and one-half miles on North Pamet Road to the end. Trail begins at the parking area adjacent to the Environmental Education Center (a youth hostel in summer).

Features: The Bearberry Hill overlook offers a spectacular view of the Pamet landscape, with sweeping views of the Atlantic and the undulating glacial terrain of the Pamet valley. The cultural landscape here includes a former commercial cranberry bog. Few cranberries remain, but the historic building from that era is visible in the distance. **Conditions:** Moderate difficulty; log steps; steep grade to overlook. No restrooms.

Small’s Swamp Trail, Truro

Length: Three-fourths mile loop. Thirty minutes.

Location: In North Truro, turn off Route 6 at the Pilgrim Heights area sign off Route 6. Walk begins at the covered shelter. Upon exiting the trail near the restrooms, proceed ahead across the parking area to your vehicle.

Features: Chosen by native people for living sites

for thousands of years for water, protection, and food sources, early-European settlers also sought to make a living on this fragile landscape. Gradually, the soil gave out, farms were abandoned, and the landscape began its slow recovery. The forest here now hides most, but not all, of the former land uses in this area. **Conditions:** Easy; some log steps; moderate grade; short boardwalk surface; picnic area and seasonal restrooms in adjacent parking area.

Pilgrim Spring Trail, Truro

Length: Three-fourths mile loop. Thirty minutes.

Location: In North Truro, turn right off Route 6 at the Pilgrim Heights area sign. Walk begins at the covered picnic shelter and ends at the restrooms at the adjacent parking area.

Features: Path leads to a site representative of where the Pilgrims drank their first fresh water in New England. This short loop trail winds through the recovering pine and oak forest, and passes a marker which commemorates the Pilgrim’s initial exploration of this area. **Conditions:** Easy; some log steps; moderate grade; picnic area and seasonal restrooms in parking area at end of trail.

Beech Forest Trail, Provincetown

Length: One mile total loop (pond loop three-fourths mile, extension loop one-fourth mile). One hour.

Location: In Provincetown, turn right off Route 6 at traffic light onto Race Point Road. Proceed approximately one-half mile to the Beech Forest parking area on left.

Features: This trail provides a journey into the heart of a picturesque beech forest, and offers great bird watching opportunities, especially in spring and fall. It skirts the shallow Beech Forest Pond. **Conditions:** Easy; extension loop has steep log steps; some soft sand; picnic area and seasonal restrooms at trailhead; Province Lands bicycle trail and designated pet trail are accessed from parking area.

Salt Pond Visitor Center, Route 6, Eastham, MA 02642 (508) 255 - 3421 (year round)

Province Lands Visitor Center, Race Point Road, Provincetown, MA 02657 (508) 487 - 1256 (May through October)