

Self-Guiding Nature Trails

There are eleven self-guiding nature trails at Cape Cod National Seashore that are open year round. Individual self-guiding trail folders (with information on specific natural and historic features) are available at some trailheads. Trailside plant identification panels may be referenced in the *Common Trailside Plants* guidebook on sale at park headquarters or either 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.
- * Watch out for POISON IVY and TICKS. Stay to the center of trails. (There are no poisonous snakes on Cape Cod.)
- * Wildflowers and other plant material may not be picked. Limited quantities of edibles may be picked within the Seashore.

- * Natural and archeological features are protected by federal law and must remain undisturbed.
- * Feeding or harassing wildlife is prohibited.
- * Pets and bicycles are prohibited from self-guiding trails year-round.
- * *Please do not litter.*
- * Ask for a copy of the park's accessibility folder.



EASTHAM

Fort Hill Trail

Length: One and one-half miles. Allow at least one hour for the entire walk.
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 trail crosses open fields, connects with the Red Maple Swamp trail, and offers spectacular vistas of Nauset Marsh and Nauset Spit as it loops back to its starting point.
Conditions: Moderate walking difficulty; solid surface; some log steps on slopes; seasonal restrooms.

Red Maple Swamp Trail



Length: One-half mile. Allow a minimum of thirty minutes.
Location: Entrances to this trail feed from the Fort Hill Trail. (See above.)
Features: Boardwalk sections of this trail loop through the heart of the Red Maple Swamp. This setting is most colorful in the fall.

Conditions: Moderate walking difficulty; CAUTION: Tree roots are prevalent on some sections.
A wheelchair-accessible portion of boardwalk can be reached via Hemenway Landing, just north of Fort Hill on Route 6. Construction is in progress to extend the accessible boardwalk throughout the trail.



Buttonbush Trail

Length: One-fourth mile. Allow thirty minutes (longer if blindfolds are used).
Location: Adjacent to Salt Pond Visitor Center amphitheater, off Route 6, Eastham.
Features: This trail involves all the senses as it winds through forest, crosses over the Buttonbush Pond on a boardwalk bridge,

and traverses formerly cultivated areas, while looping back to the starting point. Special Features: Guide rope, texts in Braille, and large print.
Conditions: Easy; some log steps on the second half of the trail; moderate grade; restrooms at visitor center.

Nauset Marsh Trail



Length: One mile. Allow one hour to walk this trail leisurely.
Location: Adjacent to Salt Pond Visitor Center amphitheater, off Route 6, Eastham.
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.

Doane Trail

Length: One-half mile. Allow 45 minutes to complete this trail.
Location: One mile east from Salt Pond Visitor Center in Eastham via Doane and Nauset Roads (leading to Coast Guard beach), at the picnic area marked by brown signs.

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



WELLFLEET

Atlantic White Cedar Swamp



Length: One and one-fourth miles. Allow one hour to walk this trail.

Location: At stoplight, 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 award winning trail descends through a stunted oak and pine forest into a mature woodland, leads to a boardwalk that loops through the

picturesque Atlantic White Cedar Swamp, and returns via 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



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

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 lot. (Keep water view on your left after leaving Route 6.)

Features: This trail rambles along sandy stretches between the elevated heights of Great Island and Great Beach Hill.

Its higher elevations punctuate spectacular vistas which peak out from an emerging, 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 lot.

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 are advisable; seasonal restrooms.

TRURO

Pamet Cranberry Bog Trail

Length: One mile roundtrip. Additional overlook spur one-quarter mile.

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

Features: This area was once a commercial cranberry bog that was abandoned about 1960. The area still retains many characteristics of cranberry cultivation which can be seen along the pathway that leads through a former bog. No cranberries remain.

Conditions: Moderate; many log steps; overlook spur has steep grade; one-eighth mile boardwalk section.

Small's Swamp Trail

Length: Three-fourths mile loop.

Location: Turn right off route 6 (north) at the Pilgrim Heights area sign off Route 6 in North Truro. Walk begins at the interpretive shelter.

Features: Early farmers sought to make a living on the fragile Cape Cod landscape. Gradually, the soil gave out and farms were abandoned.

Eventually, 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 lot.

Pilgrim Spring Trail

Length: Three-fourths mile loop.

Location: Turn right (north) at the Pilgrim Heights area sign in North Truro. Walk begins at the interpretive shelter and ends at the restrooms at the adjacent parking lot.

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 adjacent parking lot.

PROVINCETOWN

Beech Forest Trail



Length: One mile total loop (pond loop three-fourths mile, extensions loop one-fourth mile)

Location: Turn right (north) at traffic light on Route 6 onto Race Point Road. Proceed approximately one-half mile to the Beech Forest parking lot on left.

Features: This trail provides walkers an in-depth journey into the heart of the picturesque beech forest.

The trail skirts the shallow Beech Forest Pond, and hugs dunes that are gradually engulfing parts of the forest.

Conditions: Easy; extension loops has steep log steps; mostly soft sand; picnic area and seasonal restrooms at trailhead; access to Province Lands bicycle trail from parking lot.