A World of Nature

The woods on both sides of the reservation are home to numerous animal species, including several endangered and threatened species, such as the Timber rattlesnake and Eastern copperhead. Biodiversity in this region is one of the most diverse in the country.

The scenery before you is a product of a variety of forces. Geology, climate, soil, fires, burning, and farming have all shaped the delicate harmony of life and land we see today. A diversity of wildlife find suitable habitat-food, water, shelter and space-among the trees, shrubs and flowers of the reservation. The habit and the season of the year play a large role in determining where you will most likely find wildlife. Nature is our patient and ever-changing reminder of the beauty of the natural world and its creatures.

Ponds and Marshes
The Wet and Wild

The freshwater wetlands of the reservation are teeming with life. There is a rich variety of wetlands from the salt marshes of the barrier islands to the fresh waters of small ponds. Look for the common pitcher plants, which have traps with slippery walls to supplement their diet in this acidic and nutrient-poor environment.

The Meadow
A Pioneer

Imagine the Blue Hills Reservation cleared for fields and pastures without competitors for soil and water. Imagine the meadows where the Bluebells, which now blanket the reservation, once thrived. Look for the remnants of the original fields, still winding throughout the Blue Hills.

The Forests
Of Oak and Hickories

Today, oaks and Hickories abound throughout the Blue Hills. Particularly on south facing slopes. Prior to the 1950s, the once mighty American chestnut dominated the woodland canopy. The chestnut blight, a devastating fungus from China, reduced the American chestnut population to zero. Today, oaks and Hickories are an important habitantion for box, oak, turkey, mice and songbirds.

A Precious Resource...
Preserving Open Space for Public Use

Today the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) strives to maintain a legacy for the future. It is a legacy we can hand to our children— if we care for it today.

The Blue Hills Reservation encompasses over 7000 acres, providing the largest open space within 10 miles of Boston. More than 125 miles of trails weave through the natural fabric of forest and ponds, hills and wetlands. Hikers can count 22 hills in the Blue Hills chain with Great Blue Hill noted as the highest landmark at 635 feet above sea level. The trails of the Blue Hills lead the park's most beautiful areas, inviting you to explore the subtle and richness of the woodlands. Park visitors can enjoy numerous outdoor activities including hiking, biking, horseback riding, kayaking and canoeing.

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The Blue Hills Reservation Trail Map and Guide

The Blue Hills Reservation is a fragiles ecosystem under heavy use. We ask you to extend special respect to the policing of this area.

Carry out all trash.

Stay on marked trails to prevent erosion.

Leave plants and animals undisturbed.

Keep pets on a leash at all times.

Comply with all fire restrictions.

Enjoying the Reservation

The Blue Hills Reservation Headquarters is located at 695 Hillside Street in Milton, MA 02186. Please call (617) 698-5840. For information about current events, call DCR at (617) 698-3030.

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