

Suggested MassParks Hikes and Rides!

Beartown State Forest

69 Blue Hill Road., P.O. Box 97, Monterey, MA 01245, (413) 528-0904

To help you plan your visit to Beartown State Forest, we offer the following suggested hike and ride routes that we think visitors might enjoy. **Introductory hikes or rides** are relatively short and appropriate for most users, including families with children. **Signature hikes and rides** are recommended trail experiences that may be longer or more difficult, but that highlight some of the best features of the forest. Find the trails below <https://www.mass.gov/doc/beartown-state-forest-trail-map/download>. For a safe and enjoyable park experience please review the *Things to Know Before Your Go* guidance at the end of this document.

Signature Mountain Bike

Beartown Mountain & Mt. Wilcox Trails

Trailhead: Begin at the boat launch parking area off Benedict Pond Road, **Lat/Long:** 42.202625, -73.288889

Distance: 11 mile loop, **Difficulty:** Difficult

Brief Description: *Grab a trail map! These multi-use (non-motorized) trails runs about 11.0 miles through rugged mountain terrain. From the main parking area, take Benedict Pond Road north, cross Stoney Brook bridge and look for Beartown Mountain Trail with blue blazes on your left. This trail runs about 6 miles along the western edge of the Forest passing other intersections and interesting natural features along the way. At the trail's northern end, turn left onto an unmade forest road, and left onto Benedict Pond Rd. After crossing over West Brook bridge, turn right onto Mt. Wilcox Trail. This travels about 4.5 miles through the heart of the State Forest near the summit of Mt Wilcox. At the southern end, the Mt. Wilcox Trail runs together with Turkey Trail for about 750ft. Turn left at Benedict Pond Rd and follow for 2.0 miles back to the parking area. Alternatively, turn left at Old Beartown Mountain Rd and right at Old Campground Road ending at the parking area.*

Introductory Hike

Benedict Pond Loop

Trailhead: Begin at the boat launch parking area off Benedict Pond Road, **Lat/Long:** 42.202625, -73.288889

Distance: 1.7 miles, **Difficulty:** Moderate

Brief Description: *This rolling trail circles the beautiful 35-acre Benedict Pond through laurel, cedar and hardwood forests. Follow blue blazes and signs, especially at the intersections with the Appalachian Trail and in the campground. A self-guided brochure*

is available here: <http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/dcr/parks/trails/beartown-benedict-pond.pdf>

Signature Hike

Lookout Trail to Vista View

Trailhead: Begin at the boat launch parking area off Benedict Pond Road, **Lat/Long:** 42.202625, -73.288889

Distance: 3.5 miles round trip, **Difficulty:** Moderate

Brief Description: *From the parking area, hike left through the picnic area, cross the Benedict Pond Dam, to the campground and follow the Pond Loop Trail signs turning left at your first intersection. Follow signs for Mt Wilcox Trail, stay left towards Beartown Mountain Trail. At Benedict Pond Road, turn right and then left on the Lookout Trail. Climb to the vista with sweeping views of the South Taconic Mountains and Catskills in the distance. Return the same way or via another route. Adequate winter backcountry supplies required, warm footwear, traction devices and hiking poles are recommended.*

Signature Hike

Pond Loop Trail & The Ledges (AT)

Trailhead: Begin at the boat launch parking area off Benedict Pond Road, **Lat/Long:** 42.202625, -73.288889

Distance: 3.2 miles round trip, **Difficulty:** Moderate

Brief Description: *From the main parking area, take the Pond Loop Trail to your right, after ¼ mile connect with the Appalachian Trail (AT) (White Blazes) and head left/north continuing around the pond. Once you reach Old Beartown Mountain Rd, stay left go over the wooden bridge and immediately turn right onto the AT heading north toward the ledges. After a moderate climb, the trail levels, off, crosses a small foot bridge and spectacular mountain views open up to the south. Follow the AT back down to Old Beartown Mountain Rd and stay right continuing around Benedict Pond on the loop trail. Adequate winter backcountry supplies required, warm footwear, traction devices and hiking poles are recommended.*

Things to Remember:

- **Time, distance, difficulty:** average hiker pace is estimated at 1.5 miles per hour. Most distances are round-trip. Plan conservatively, start early. Be aware of weather and sunset. Trail difficulty ratings based on ruggedness and gradient are **easy, moderate, or difficult**.
- **Wear weather appropriate clothing**, layer for temperature changes. Appropriate footwear is a must. Trails can be wet.
- **Parking at trailheads:** Parking fees may apply. Space may be limited. Be courteous to avoid blocking in others. Do not leave valuables in your car.

- **Bring a map, and share your plans with someone.**
- **Drinking water** is usually not available. Bring plenty! Trailside sources should be treated.
- **Stay on designated trails:** Follow painted blazes and signs if available. Double blazes indicate an intersection or direction change.
- **Pace & group size:** keep your group together; hike only as fast as your group's slowest hiker or rider. Limit group size to 12 people or fewer to lessen impacts.
- **Carry-in, carry-out all trash:** Leave No Trace outdoor ethics are strongly encouraged. For more information visit <http://www.lnt.org/programs/principles.php>
- **Pets are generally permitted** on 10-foot maximum leash and under control at all times. Please clean up after your pet and dispose of all waste outside of park. Be aware of local park rules and that not all users appreciate encountering pets, even when friendly.
- **Be aware that some trails are not well marked.**
- **Be aware of hunting seasons** and wear blaze orange when appropriate. For season info visit: <https://www.mass.gov/outdoor-recreation-safety-tips>

