

Boston Harbor Islands - Coast Guide Site Descriptions

From the *Massachusetts Coast Guide to Boston & the North Shore* published by the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM)



The Boston Harbor Islands National Park includes 34 islands situated within Boston Harbor and inner Massachusetts Bay. The islands are rich in natural and cultural resources and are managed by a 13-member partnership that includes the National Park Service and other public and private entities. Specifically, 17 of the islands are managed as a unique state park with six islands staffed and open for daily public use, operated by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR).

From May 1st through Columbus Day, resident Park Interpreters provide ongoing educational programs and special events.

Ferry service is available to the islands from Boston and the South Shore throughout the summer season. Park boats also regularly serve several islands in the park. Visitor services information can be found on the web at www.bostonislands.com or by calling (617) 223-8666.

Some of the islands are:

Bumpkin Island - The island's slate and shell beaches and open fields provide a relaxing atmosphere. One group and 10 individual campsites are available on this 35-acre island.

Gallops Island - This 16-acre island has picnic areas, hiking paths, scenic views, and a swimming beach. The island housed a maritime radio school during World War II, remnants of which are still visible.

George's Island - This 30-acre island features Fort Warren, a National Historic Landmark. Park Rangers offer guided tours and special programs from May through October. The island has large picnic areas, a snack bar, and an information booth. A free water taxi to the other islands departs from the pier at George's Island on a frequent schedule.

Grape Island - Wild blackberries, bayberries, and rose hips proliferate on this 50-acre island, providing food for a wide variety of birds. Amenities include picnic areas, one group and 10 individual campsites, and many wooded trails.

Little Brewster Island - This 4-acre rocky island is home to Boston Light, the first lighthouse site and the last staffed lighthouse in America.

Lovell's Island - Visitors to this 62-acre island can enjoy exploring the remains of Fort Standish. The island also offers picnic areas, trails, scenic overlooks, 11 campsites, and a swimming beach.

Peddock's Island - At 188 acres, Peddock's is one of the largest, most diverse islands in the harbor. The island's East Head contains the remains of Fort Andrews. The island has 10 campsites, trails, and a visitor center with educational displays.

Thompson Island - This 157-acre island has rolling hills and salt marshes, conference facilities, and a middle school. Access is available by special arrangement.

Two peninsulas that are part of the park are:

Deer Island - This 210-acre site with 4.6 miles of trail is home to Boston's state-of-the-art wastewater treatment facility and boasts spectacular views of the city and the harbor. Pre-arranged guided tours are available.

World's End - Olmsted-designed paths and plantings accentuate the hilltop views, open meadows, rocky shores, and marshes of the 244-acre World's End.

Photo: Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PLEASE NOTE: *Despite extensive quality control efforts, individual ownership of all parcels has not been independently verified. CZM makes no representations or warranties with respect to the definitiveness of the private or public ownership data presented in the Coast Guide. All issues related to questions of ownership of coastal property should be investigated at the local Registry of Deeds. In addition, while information about parking and available facilities for each site was checked in 2000, changes may have occurred since that time. Please look for parking signs and check with site owners for updated information as necessary.*



DEER ISLAND: TOURS AVAILABLE