Fall in Massachusetts is one of the best times to get outside and explore the beauty of our state’s natural resources. The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) invites you and your family to make the most of the season. From crisp air and colorful foliage to festive events, our fall programs offer something for everyone. Enjoy scenic hikes, story walks, and nature-based interpretive programs, or dive into the spirit of the season with Halloween-themed adventures and family-friendly activities.

Don’t forget to check out the [2025 Interactive Fall Foliage Map](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/fall-foliage-season-in-the-parks#west-(mid-october)-) — a great tool for locals and visitors to track foliage across the state. Simply select a date to see which DCR parks are approaching, at, or past peak color. Many parks also highlight scenic overlooks, trails, and picnic areas perfect for a fall outing.

Lace up your hiking boots, grab your costume or your curiosity, and scroll down for program details — or visit the DCR [website](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-state-parks-programs-and-events) to see the full list of fall programming!

**Fall Program Highlights by Date**

**October Events**

**October 9 & 24**

* **Fall Foliage Foray**  
  **Blue Hills Reservation** – Houghton’s Pond Visitor Center, 840 Hillside Street, Milton  
  2 – 3 p.m.  
   See autumn’s red blaze (and yellow and orange too!) on a lovely, one-mile stroll around Houghton's pond and learn how plants and trees get ready for the cold.Meet at the Houghton’s Pond Visitor Center (840 Hillside St., Milton).

**October 12**

* [**Autumnal Tints Presentation & Walk**](https://www.mass.gov/doc/walden-pond-sr-october-programs-0/download)**Walden Pond State Reservation**, 915 Walden Street, Concord  
  12 p.m.  
  Presentation in the Visitor Center by historian Richard Smith about Thoreau's essay "Autumnal Tints" and a 1/2 mile guided walk to look at some trees from the essay in their autumn pageantry.
* [Guided Walk To Dam Day](https://www.mass.gov/doc/wachusett-watershed-events/download)

Wachusett Dam, Sunday, October 12, 9 a.m. Guided Walk to Dam Day

A guided 1 mile walk along the North Dike to the Wachusett Dam. This open hillside walk offers interesting views and points of interest. Explore the area when you reach the dam and return at your own pace. The walkway across the dam will be open for walking from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Meet at Gate 39 – the intersection of South Meadow Road and Route 110 in Clinton.

* [Explore Quabbin Park via the East Gate Trail and the Goodnough Dike](https://www.mass.gov/doc/quabbin-visitor-center-events/download)

Saturday, October 18, 2025, 11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Join us for a 4.2-mile hike that will feature the scenic view from the road at the top of the Goodnough Dike. We will be walking on a mix of foot paths, forest roads, and paved roads. The hike is mostly flat except for walking up and down the road to the Dike. Hike begins at the East Gate parking area. The parking area is located on the north side of Rt. 9 in Ware, across from the Quabbin Park Cemetery. Please dress appropriately for the weather and bring water. Dogs are not allowed. Registration Required. Meet at Quabbin Reservoir, East Gate entrance, Rt. 9 Ware

**October 23**

* [**Annual Pumpkin Parade**](https://neponset.org/event/annual-pumpkin-parade/)**Pope John Paul II Park**, Hallet Street, Dorchester  
  5:30 – 7:30 p.m.  
  Join the Neponset Greenway Council, DCR, and NepRWA for an evening of music, games, candy, hot chocolate, and more. Wear your best Halloween costume and bring a decorated or carved pumpkin for a chance at a special treat. Candles will be provided. This is a free event, and no registration is required. [Annual Pumpkin Parade – Neponset River Watershed Association](https://neponset.org/event/annual-pumpkin-parade/)
* **Fall Adaptive Small Group Hiking**  
  **Halibut Point State Park**, 4 Gott Avenue, Rockport

10 a.m. – 1 p.m.  
Join DCR's Universal Access Program for accessible small group hiking at Halibut Point State Park! During this program, run by our partner Waypoint Adventure, you will see stunning ocean views, eat lunch, and connect with new people. You will benefit from a selection of adaptive equipment, receive instruction to meet any learning style, and be encouraged to reach your individual goals.   

**Pre-registration required**: [waypoint-adventure.jumbula.com](http://waypoint-adventure.jumbula.com/). Registration ends October 20.

**October 25 & 26**

* [**Magical Halloween Castle**](https://www.bostoncentral.com/events/seasonalfun/p79482.php)**Fort Independence at Castle Island**, Day Boulevard, South Boston  
  12 – 4 p.m.  
  Fort Independence becomes a family-friendly Halloween adventure with your choice of scary or spooky (not scary) tours through the castle, plus popcorn and treats. We loved seeing all the costumes that came through the gates. [Magical Halloween Castle | ciasite](https://www.castleisland8.com/magical-halloween-castle)

**October 31**

* [**Wildlife Costume Day**](https://greatfallsdiscoverycenter.org/calendar/wildlife-costume-day/)**Great Falls Discovery Center**, 2 Avenue A, Turners Falls  
  10 a.m. – 6 p.m.  
  Happy Halloween! Here’s your chance to become an animal! Stop by the Center to show us your wildlife-themed Halloween costume. Take a selfie with our Moose. Enjoy a treat at the welcome desk. Don’t forget to stop by the Center before the annual Turners Falls Rag Shag Parade begins. The parade starts at 5 p.m. at the nearby 2nd Street parking lot and ends at Unity Park. Sponsored by the  Montague Parks and Recreation Department. Meet at the welcome desk.

**Ongoing & Recurring Programs (Sept – Nov)**

[**StoryWalk: Why Do Leaves Change Color?**](https://www.mass.gov/doc/walden-pond-sr-october-programs-0/download)

**Walden Pond State Reservation**, 915 Walden Street, Concord  
Self-guided | 1/2 mile accessible trail

StoryWalk, "Why do leaves change color?", Self guided 1/2 mile hike on accessible trail (1 mile round trip). Great for families, strollers, and wheelchairs. Runs through November.

[**Birding for Beginners**](https://www.mass.gov/doc/harold-parker-sf-fall-programs/download)

**Harold Parker State Forest**, 305 Middleton Road, North Andover  
  
Fridays – Sept 28, Oct 3, Oct 10 | 9 – 10 a.m.  
Watch and listen for birds near Stearns Pond. For all ages. Meet at Headquarters Lot Kiosk

[**Southeastern MA Adult Walking Club**](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/dcr-southeastern-massachusetts-walking-club)

The DCR Southeastern Massachusetts Adult Walking Club meets most weekends for social recreational walks. This club is open to people 16 years of age and older and there is no fee to join. New walkers are always welcome. Come for one or come for all! Check the listing for more info on upcoming walks.

[**Explore the Blackstone River Valley Hiking Series**](https://www.mass.gov/doc/blackstone-river-valley-recreational-hike-series-september-october/download)

Various parks: [Explore the Blackstone River Valley Hiking Series](https://www.mass.gov/doc/blackstone-river-valley-recreational-hike-series-september-october/download). The hikes are each Sunday from 2 to 4 p.m. Appropriate for ages 12 and up. Distance and terrain vary, check the specific hike listings for details.

[**Off the Beaten Path Hike**](https://www.mass.gov/doc/mt-tom-sr-sepemberoctober-programs/download)

**Mt. Tom State Reservation**, 125 Reservation Road, HolyokeA  
Mondays | 9 – 11 a.m.  
 Each week a different trail: Beau Bridges, NET, Nonotock, Quarry Trail, and more. Moderate ability, 2-3 miles. Discover local nature and history along the way. Ages 8 and up. Wear clothing for weather, sturdy shoes. Bring water, snack, insect repellant.

[**Meadow Meander**](https://www.mass.gov/doc/mohawk-trail-sf-septemberoctober-programs-1/download)

**Mohawk Trail State Forest**, Cold River Road, Charlemont  
Saturdays & Sundays | 1 – 3 p.m.  
A moderate, 3-mile hike to the beautiful meadows. Discover the rich biodiversity within this forest ecosystem. For adults and older children. Bring water and a snack, hiking poles. Meet at the Group Camp Site.

[**Hawk Watch**](https://www.mass.gov/doc/mt-tom-sr-sepemberoctober-programs/download)

**Mt. Tom State Reservation**, 125 Reservation Road, Holyoke

Ongoing | 10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Hawks are on the move south for fall migration. A great opportunity to witness this natural wonder over Mt. Tom. Drop-in, stay for five minutes or an hour. Have binoculars? Bring them too. Meet at Bray Tower.

[**Hawks Over the Mountain**](https://www.mass.gov/doc/wachusett-mt-sr-septemberoctober-programs-2/download)

**Wachusett Mountain State Reservation**, 345 Mountain Road, Princeton  
Saturdays & Sundays | 11 – 11:30 a.m.  
Wachusett Mountain is one of the best places in the northeast to witness the fall migration of hawks. Learn the basics of hawk identification and (hopefully) admire the hawks as they go by. Meet at the Wachusett Mountain Visitor Center (345 Mountain Road; Princeton, MA 01541). Meet on the Summit by the Fire Tower. Appropriate for ages 5 and up.

[**Fall Foliage Guided Hike**](https://www.mass.gov/doc/mt-holyoke-range-sp-septemberoctober-programs-0/download)

**Mt. Holyoke Range State Park**, 1500 West Street, Amherst  
Saturdays | 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Guided hike follows a challenging, but fun trail. Explore New England’s world class fall foliage while discovering the meaning of color in our natural world. A moderate to advanced hike over rocky terrain for 3-4 miles. Advanced registration required, please call: 413-253-2883.  
Challenging 3–4 mile hike. Ages 12 and up.  
**Advance registration required**: Call (413) 253-2883

**Family Adventures**

[**Kids’ Mansion Tour**](https://www.mass.gov/doc/borderland-ames-mansion-tours/download)

**Borderland State Park**, 259 Massapoag Avenue, North EastonA  
Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays | 2 p.m.

Meet at the Ames Mansion. Step back in time and explore the first floor of the historic Ames Mansion. Free guided tours are offered throughout the week. Tours are thirty minutes long, first floor only. Accessible. Advance registration required. Visit <https://tinyurl.com/Bordtour> to register.

**Kidleidoscope (Milton)**

**Blue Hills Reservation**, Houghton’s Pond Visitor Center, 840 Hillside Street, Milton  
Fridays | 10 – 11 a.m.

Join us for a nature crafts and nature facts! Each week we will feature a different nature theme, story, and craft. Suitable for ages 3-6 accompanied by a guardian.

[**Kidleidoscope (Uxbridge)**](https://www.mass.gov/doc/blackstone-river-canal-hsp-septemberoctober-programs-0/download)

**Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park**, 287 Oak Street, Uxbridge  
Fridays | 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.  
Join us for a nature crafts and nature facts! Each week we will features a different nature theme, story, and craft. Suitable for ages 3-6 accompanied by a guardian.

**Fall Birding Walk**

Halibut Point State Park, 4 Gott Avenue, Rockport  
Sunday October 19 | 8 – 10 a.m.

Start your morning strolling on our seaside treasure with Fall birding basics.  Watch and listen for various species in the field, woodland, and ocean edges. Bring binoculars if you have them.  For all ages.

**Notes**

* All programs are **free unless otherwise noted**. Parking Fees may apply.
* Many programs are accessible or offer adaptive equipment.
* Call ahead or visit Mass.gov/DCR for updates, weather cancellations, or registration details.
* Bring appropriate gear: water, sturdy shoes, costumes, or binoculars, depending on the event.