

# Suggested Hikes, Rides and Paddles!

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## Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve

131 Waquoit Hwy, East Falmouth, MA 02536, (508) 457-0495

To help you plan your visit to DCR's Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, we offer the following suggested experiences that we think you might enjoy.

- **“Introductory”** are short and appropriate for most users, including families with children.
- **“Signature”** are recommended trail experiences. These may be longer or more difficult but highlight some of the best park features.

For a safe and enjoyable park experience please review the **Things to Know Before You Go** section at the end of this document. Download a map before you go:  
<https://www.mass.gov/doc/waquoit-bay-national-estuarine-research-reserve-trail-map/download>

### Introductory Hike

#### Nature Trail, from the Visitor Center

**Trailhead:** Park at the Visitor Center **Lat/Long:** 41.582443, -70.524451

**Distance:** 0.4 miles **Difficulty:** Easy

**Brief Description:** From the visitor center this trail explores the natural environment of the area. Maps available at the visitor center or  
<http://www.waquoitbayreserve.org/wp-content/uploads/HQlayout2013v4.jpg>

### Introductory Hike

#### Dead Neck Trail

**Trailhead:** South Cape Beach State Park, 668 Great Oak Road, Mashpee, MA 02649  
**Lat/Long:** 41.55335, -70.50048

**Distance:** 1.5 miles **Difficulty:** Moderate

**Brief Description:** Follow the short boardwalk to this trail leading through coastal dune habitat. The trail runs along the shoreline of a brackish pond with abundant wildlife, including osprey and waterfowl. Return along the beach front with views of Martha's Vineyard and shore birds in the summer.

# Signature Hike

## Quashnet River Trail

**Trailhead:** Martin Road, Falmouth **Lat/Long:** 41.59230, -70.50821

**Distance:** 1.7 or 2.8 mile loops **Difficulty:** Moderate

**Brief Description:** This is a wooded trail along the Quashnet River. There are loop options of 1.75 miles or 2.8 miles. Map available here: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/waquoit-bay-national-estuarine-research-reserve-trail-map/download>

## Things to Know Before You Go

- **Time, distance, difficulty.** The 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. Bring sunblock. Wear appropriate and sturdy footwear.
- **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** may not be available on site. Bring plenty!
- **Stay on designated trails.** Follow painted blazes and signs if available. Generally, 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 your group size to 12 people or fewer to lessen impacts.
- **Carry-in, carry-out all trash and personal belongings.** Follow the Leave No Trace outdoor ethics. [More information here.](#)
- **Know which parks are pet friendly.** Dogs are not permitted in DCR Water Supply Protection areas (such as Quabbin and Wachusett Reservoirs) and certain state parks. Always keep your dog leashed, 10-foot maximum. Always pick up after your dog and dispose of waste properly. [Complete guidelines here.](#)
- **Be aware of hunting seasons.** Wear blaze orange when appropriate. [More information here.](#)
- **Wear a bicycle helmet** while biking. Riders age 16 and under must wear a helmet. It is the law. [More information here.](#)

- **Wear your PFD** while boating. A Personal Flotation Device (PFD), or life preserver, must be worn by boaters age 12 and under; and canoeists/kayakers from Sept. 15-May 15. [More information here.](#)
  - **Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers.** Prevent the transport of nuisance species. Clean all recreational equipment. It is the law. [More information here.](#)
  - **Be aware some trails may not be well marked, and some may not be identified on a trail map.**
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The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) oversees over 450,000 acres of state parks, forests, beaches, bike trails, parkways, watershed lands, and dams across the Commonwealth. DCR's mission is to: *Protect, promote and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural and recreational resources for the well-being of all.*