



10.

The small spur trail on the right just before the marsh leads to a small stream, with dramatic rock outcroppings on both sides of the stream.

Continue along a flat section of trail, with the Mohawk Salt Marsh on the right. The area in front of the salt marsh is sometimes wet, a suitable habitat for the shrub called Sweet Pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*). This medium-sized shrub (up to 10 feet) is readily identified in mid-summer by its fragrant white blossoms and at other times by the remaining seed capsules, which resemble peppercorns.



11. 11.

12. On your left, notice the beautiful ledge covered with ferns and rock tripe, and the remnants of an old stone wall at the base of the ledge. Just beyond marker 12 bear left to follow the main trail. The trail now goes gradually uphill through a stone wall.

13. A Mockernut Hickory (*Carya tomentosa*) is marked here on the left. On the left side of the trail, you will see Sassafras trees (*Sassafras albidum*). The bark on the younger trees has a bright green cast. Sassafras, named by the native Americans, has aromatic roots with bark that was used as a type of tea. Leaves can be three different shapes: oval, two tipped (lobed), and three tipped (lobed). On the right you will see more Common Witch Hazel (see #3)



14. At this marker, on the right and in the path, you will see examples of pudding stone, a conglomerate rock made up of small pebbles held together with iron oxide, lime and silica. The name is derived from its resemblance to tapioca pudding with raisins.



12.

Keep following the trail, which curves to the left. When you reach a triangular trail junction, bear right at the arrow to rejoin the main trail and return to the park entrance.



14.



COHASSET
CONSERVATION
TRUST

Cohasset Conservation Trust
PO Box 314, Cohasset MA 02025

cohassetconservationtrust.org

We hope you have enjoyed your walk. To learn more about the Trust and our properties, please visit our website.



GREAT BREWSTER WOODS & DEAN'S MEADOW



COHASSET
CONSERVATION
TRUST

DETAILED TRAIL GUIDE



Aerial view of Great Brewster Woods & Dean's Meadow. Little Harbor and Beach Street are on the left. Town Hall is in the lower left. Atlantic Avenue is on the right.

HISTORY

Great Brewster Woods, consisting of eighteen acres, was given to the Cohasset Conservation Trust in 1985 by the Great Brewster Corporation, whose owners, Edgar Hill, Walter Railsback, Raymond Remick, and George McLaughlin, were all Cohasset residents.

An additional parcel of seven acres, known as Dean's Meadow, was donated in 1992 by Helen Dean. Together, these gifts protect almost 26 acres of forest in the heart of Cohasset.

ENTRANCE

The entrance to Great Brewster Woods is at the end of Great Brewster Trail off Highland Avenue between the Town Hall and St. Stephen's Church.

Parking for 2-3 vehicles is available just before the trailhead on the left. Additional parking is available in the Town Hall parking lot and the Town Parking Lot located behind the Village shops.



THE TRAIL – *Please dress appropriately and take precautions to protect yourself against ticks, mosquitos and poison ivy.*

The walking path, clearly marked with yellow trail markers, makes a roughly one-mile loop through a woodland ecosystem containing many plants and features typical of southern New England.



The first part of the trail leads behind houses on Stevens Lane, then continues past old stone walls and ledge (one of which, off a short side trail on the left, offers views of Little Harbor over the Mohawk Salt Marsh) and follows a gradual downhill slope. The trail then follows a loop, turning right through a break in a stone wall and then left through Dean's Meadow, then left again through another stone wall, past a small brook (just off the trail on the right) and the Mohawk salt marsh. It then turns left again, running uphill to rejoin the main trail back towards the beginning.



1.

Begin at the Entrance located at the end of Great Brewster Trail off Highland Avenue. Look for the first marker where the trail bears right at the main trail. **The numbers in the narrative and the photographs correspond to the numbered trail markers.**

1. On the left, across from the *Welcome to Great Brewster Woods* sign is a White Pine (*Pinus strobus*).

2. Here you can see a Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*) on the right and White Oak (*Quercus alba*) on the left.

Just beyond, on the right, notice the oak tree that has grown into itself. This is an example of a 'coppiced' tree, an indicator that this land was once cleared. When a hardwood tree is cut down, the roots remain alive and respond by sprouting. Eventually these sprouts grow to be tree size. Sometimes, these sprouts and branches grow into each other. Look along the trail for other coppiced trees that have two, three or more trunks.

3. A Black Tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*) is marked here on the left. This native tree has an interesting horizontal branching habit.

As you move along the trail, on the right you will see Common Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*), a multi-stemmed shrub that flowers in the fall with clusters of spidery yellow blossoms. Its medicinal properties were discovered by the native Americans, who made liniment from its bark. An extract from this aromatic bark is sold in stores today for the treatment of bruises, bites and muscular stiffness.

4. Here take note of two stone walls which meet at a corner. All the stone walls on the property indicate that these woods were cleared and used for farming and grazing during colonial times. Many of the walls also represent property borders.

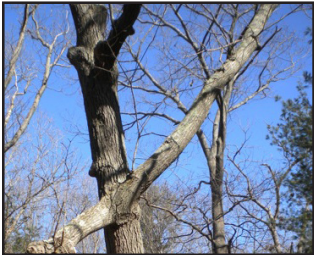
Also in this area you will notice club mosses (*Lycopodium*), which trail along the ground and resemble small evergreen trees. These primitive plants reproduce by spores and increase in numbers by creeping rootstalks that grow along the surface of the ground. One runner can be up to one mile long. During the time of the dinosaurs these types of plants grew as tall as trees. Today they exist as very slow growing colonies that are protected in many States.

5. As you reach the bottom of the hill, and after the marker, you will cross a small stream (may be dry in the summer). After the stream, on the right, you will see some Highbush Blueberry shrubs (*Vaccinium corymbosum*), which does not bloom profusely or set abundant fruit in the shade.

1.



2.



4.



7.



8.



9.



9.

6. On the ground on the left, you will see a small evergreen groundcover with dark shiny leaves called wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*). Its fruit is a bright red berry. Oils extracted from these berries are used to flavor medicines, teas, and gum but are not edible.

7. At this trail junction, the main trail goes straight while the short trail to the left leads to a ledge from which you will have a seasonal view over the salt marsh called The Mohawk towards Little Harbor (pictured in spring).

Continuing straight downhill on the main trail, you will pass a section of exposed ledge on the left covered by a leafy lichen called rock tripe. Lichens are primitive organisms made up of a fungus and a photosynthesizing algae. These plants start growing on bare rock, creating microhabitats that enable other plants to take hold.

8. At the next trail junction turn right through a gap in the stone wall into Dean's Meadow. Just before the stone wall and further along the path on the right are examples of native holly (*Ilex opaca*). Its shiny evergreen leaves have sharp spines. The holly belongs to a group of plants, called dioecious, which need both a female plant and a nearby male pollen-producing plant to reproduce. Notice the red berries on the female holly plants.

9. At marker number 9 you will make a sharp left. On the right before you turn is a grove of American Beech trees (*Fagus grandifolia*) which have smooth gray bark. The shallow roots of these trees have a tendency to create groves of large single trees surrounded by a thicket of younger, smaller trees. Look for the parent tree in the middle.

The #9 marker is on another coppiced tree on the left. The path straight ahead leads into a wetlands area that is difficult to walk and dead ends on a private way.

As you continue you will see a group of sun-loving junipers (*Juniperus virginiana*) growing in this once open spot. The wood from these evergreens is used to line cedar closets.

10. The trail now curves left through another stone wall. Just past the stone wall, on the left, is an American Hophornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*).

11. The path now goes gradually downhill and to another stone wall where an American Beech tree (*Fagus Grandifolia*) is marked. The short trail to the left before the beech tree rejoins the trail you were on earlier.