

# Doggin' Massachusetts

The 100 Best Places  
To Hike With Your Dog  
In The Bay State

DOUG GELBERT

*illustrations by*

ANDREW CHESWORTH



CRUDEN BAY BOOKS



*There is always a new trail to look forward to...*

**DOGGIN' MASSACHUSETTS: THE 100 BEST PLACES TO  
HIKE WITH YOUR DOG IN THE BAY STATE**

Copyright 2009 by Cruden Bay Books

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage and retrieval system without permission in writing from the Publisher.

Cruden Bay Books  
PO Box 467  
Montchanin, DE 19710  
[www.hikewithyourdog.com](http://www.hikewithyourdog.com)

International Standard Book Number 978-0-9815346-9-5

Manufactured in the United States of America

*“Dogs are our link to paradise...to sit with a dog on a hillside  
on a glorious afternoon is to be back in Eden,  
where doing nothing was not boring - it was peace.”  
- Milan Kundera*

## *Ahead On The Trail*

No Dogs!	13
The 100 Best Places To Hike With Your Dog	14
Index To Parks, Trails And Open Space	147

### *Also...*

Hiking With Your Dog	5
Outfitting Your Dog For A Hike	9
Low Impact Hiking With Your Dog	12

## Introduction

Massachusetts can be a great place to hike with your dog. Within a short drive your canine adventurer can be climbing hills that leave him panting, trotting on some of the most historic grounds in America, exploring the estates of America's wealthiest families or circling lakes for miles and never lose sight of the water.

I have selected what I consider to be the 100 best places to take your dog for an outing in Massachusetts and ranked them according to subjective criteria including the variety of hikes available, opportunities for canine swimming and pleasure of the walks. The rankings include a mix of parks that feature long walks and parks that contain short walks. Did I miss your favorite? Let us know at [www.hikewithyourdog.com](http://www.hikewithyourdog.com).

For dog owners it is important to realize that not all parks are open to our best trail companions (see page 13 for a list of parks that do not allow dogs). It is sometimes hard to believe but not everyone loves dogs. We are, in fact, in the minority when compared with our non-dog owning neighbors.

So when visiting a park always keep your dog under control and clean up any messes and we can all expect our great parks to remain open to our dogs. And maybe some others will see the light as well. *Remember, every time you go out with your dog you are an ambassador for all dog owners.*

Grab that leash and hit the trail - you won't be able to wipe the wag off your dog's tail!

DBG

# *Hiking With Your Dog*

So you want to start hiking with your dog. Hiking with your dog can be a fascinating way to explore the Bay State from a canine perspective. Some things to consider:

## **Dog's Health**

Hiking can be a wonderful preventative for any number of physical and behavioral disorders. One in every three dogs is overweight and running up trails and leaping through streams is great exercise to help keep pounds off. Hiking can also relieve boredom in a dog's routine and calm dogs prone to destructive habits. And hiking with your dog strengthens the overall owner/dog bond.

## **Breed of Dog**

All dogs enjoy the new scents and sights of a trail. But some dogs are better suited to hiking than others. If you don't as yet have a hiking companion, select a breed that matches your interests. Do you look forward to an entire afternoon's hiking? You'll need a dog bred to keep up with such a pace, such as a retriever or a spaniel. Is a half-hour enough walking for you? It may not be for an energetic dog like a border collie. If you already have a hiking friend, tailor your plans to his abilities.

## **Conditioning**

Just like humans, dogs need to be acclimated to the task at hand. An inactive dog cannot be expected to bounce from the easy chair in the den to complete a 3-hour hike. You must also be physically able to restrain your dog if confronted with distractions on the trail (like a scampering squirrel or a pack of joggers). Have your dog checked by a veterinarian before significantly increasing his activity level.

## **Weather**

Hot humid summers do not do dogs any favors. With no sweat glands and only panting available to disperse body heat, dogs are much more susceptible to heat stroke than we are. Unusually rapid panting and/or a bright red tongue are signs of heat exhaustion in your pet.

Always carry enough water for your hike. Even days that don't seem too warm can cause discomfort in dark-coated dogs if the sun is shining brightly. In cold weather, short-coated breeds may require additional attention.

## **Trail Hazards**

Dogs won't get poison ivy but they can transfer it to you. Some trails are littered with small pieces of broken glass that can slice a dog's paws. Nasty thorns can also blanket trails that we in shoes may never notice. At the beach beware of sand spurs that can often be present in scrubby, sandy areas.

## **Ticks**

You won't be able to spend much time in the New England woods without encountering ticks. All are nasty but the deer tick - no bigger than a pin head - carries with it the spectre of Lyme disease. Lyme disease attacks a dog's joints and makes walking painful. The tick needs to be embedded in the skin to transmit Lyme disease. It takes 4-6 hours for a tick to become embedded and another 24-48 hours to transmit Lyme disease bacteria.

When hiking, walk in the middle of trails away from tall grass and bushes. And when the summer sun fades away don't stop thinking about ticks - they remain active any time the temperature is above 30 degrees. By checking your dog - and yourself - thoroughly after each walk you can help avoid Lyme disease. Ticks tend to congregate on your dog's ears, between the toes and around the neck and head.

## **Water**

Surface water, including fast-flowing streams, is likely to be infested with a microscopic protozoa called *Giardia*, waiting to wreak havoc on a dog's intestinal system. The most common symptom is crippling diarrhea. Algae, pollutants and contaminants can all be in streams, ponds and puddles. If possible, carry fresh water for your dog on the trail - your dog can even learn to drink happily from a squirt bottle.

At the beach, cool sea water will be tempting for your dog but try to limit any drinking as much as possible. Again, have plenty of fresh water available for your dog to drink instead.

## **Rattlesnakes and Copperheads, etc.**

Rattlesnakes and their close cousins, copperheads, are not particularly aggressive animals but you should treat any venomous snake with respect and keep your distance. A rattler's colors may vary but they are recognized by the namesake rattle on the tail and a diamond-shaped head. Unless cornered or teased by humans or dogs, a rattlesnake will crawl away and avoid striking. Avoid placing your hand in unexamined rocky areas and crevasses and try and keep your dog from doing so as well. Stick to the trail and out of high grass where you can't see well. If you hear a nearby rattle, stop immediately and hold your dog back. Identify where the snake is and slowly back away.

If you or your dog is bitten, do not panic but get to a hospital or veterinarian with as little physical movement as possible. Wrap between the bite and the heart. Rattlesnakes might give "dry bites" where no poison is injected, but you should always check with a doctor after a bite even if you feel fine.



## **Black Bears**

Are you likely to see a bear while out hiking with your dog? No, it's not likely. It is, however, quite a thrill if you are fortunate enough to spot a black bear on the trail - from a distance.

Black bear attacks are incredibly rare. In the year 2000 a hiker was killed by a black bear in Great Smoky National Park and it was the first deadly bear attack in the 66-year history of America's most popular

national park. It was the first EVER in the southeastern United States. In all of North America only 43 black bear mauling deaths have ever been recorded (through 1999).

Most problems with black bears occur near a campground (like the above incident) where bears have learned to forage for unprotected food. On the trail bears will typically see you and leave the area. What should you do if you encounter a black bear? Experts agree on three important things:

- 1) *Never run. A bear will outrun you, outclimb you, outswim you. Don't look like prey.*
- 2) *Never get between a female bear and a cub who may be nearby feeding.*
- 3) *Leave a bear an escape route.*

If the bear is at least 15 feet away and notices you make sure you keep your dog close and calm. If a bear stands on its hind legs or comes closer it may just be trying to get a better view or smell to evaluate the situation. Wave your arms and make noise to scare the bear away. Most bears will quickly leave the area.

If you encounter a black bear at close range, stand upright and make yourself appear as large a foe as possible. Avoid direct eye contact and speak in a calm, assertive and assuring voice as you back up slowly and out of danger.

## **Porcupines**

Porcupines are easy for a curious dog to catch and that makes them among the most dangerous animals you may meet because an embedded quill is not only painful but can cause infection if not properly removed.

# Outfitting Your Dog For A Hike

These are the basics for taking your dog on a hike:

▶ **Collar**

It should not be so loose as to come off but you should be able to slide your flat hand under the collar.

▶ **Identification Tags**

Get one with your veterinarian's phone number as well.

▶ **Bandanna**


Can help distinguish him from game in hunting season.

▶ **Leash**


Leather lasts forever but if there's water in your dog's future, consider quick-drying nylon.

▶ **Water**

Carry 8 ounces for every hour of hiking.

 *I want my dog to help carry water, snacks and other supplies on the trail. Where do I start?*

To select an appropriate dog pack measure your dog's girth around the rib cage. A dog pack should fit securely without hindering the dog's ability to walk normally.

 *Will my dog wear a pack?*

Wearing a dog pack is no more obtrusive than wearing a collar, although some dogs will take to a pack easier than others. Introduce the pack by draping a towel over your dog's back in the house and then having your dog wear an empty pack on short walks. Progressively add some crumpled newspaper and then bits of clothing. Fill the pack with treats and reward your dog from the stash. Soon your dog will associate the dog pack with an outdoor adventure and will eagerly look forward to wearing it.

**🐾 *How much weight can I put into a dog pack?***

Many dog packs are sold by weight recommendations. A healthy, well-conditioned dog can comfortably carry 25% to 33% of its body weight. Breeds prone to back problems or hip dysplasia should not wear dog packs. Consult your veterinarian before stuffing the pouches with gear.


**🐾 *How does a dog wear a pack?***

The pack, typically with cargo pouches on either side, should ride as close to the shoulders as possible without limiting movement. The straps that hold the dog pack in place should be situated where they will not cause chafing.

**🐾 *What are good things to put in a dog pack?***

Low density items such as food and poop bags are good choices. Ice cold bottles of water can cool your dog down on hot days. Don't put anything in a dog pack that can break. Dogs will bang the pack on rocks and trees as they wiggle through tight spots in the trail. Dogs also like to lie down in creeks and other wet spots so seal items in plastic bags. A good use for dog packs when on day hikes around Massachusetts is trail maintenance - your dog can pack out trash left by inconsiderate visitors before you.



 *Are dog booties a good idea?*

Dog booties can be an asset, especially for the occasional canine hiker whose paw pads have not become toughened. In some places, there may be broken glass. Hiking boots for dogs are designed to prevent pads from cracking while trotting across rough surfaces. Used in winter, dog booties provide warmth and keep ice balls from forming between toe pads when hiking through snow.

 *What should a doggie first aid kit include?*

Even when taking short hikes it is a good idea to have some basics available for emergencies:









- ▶ 4" square gauze pads
- ▶ cling type bandaging tapes
- ▶ topical wound disinfectant cream
- ▶ tweezers
- ▶ insect repellent - no reason to leave your dog unprotected against mosquitoes and yellow flies
- ▶ veterinarian's phone number

## *The Other End Of The Leash*

Leash laws are like speed limits - everyone seems to have a private interpretation of their validity. Some dog owners never go outside with an unleashed dog; others treat the laws as suggestions or disregard them completely. It is not the purpose of this book to tell dog owners where to go to evade the leash laws or reveal the parks where rangers will look the other way at an unleashed dog. Nor is it the business of this book to preach vigilant adherence to the leash laws. Nothing written in a book is going to change people's behavior with regard to leash laws. So this will be the last time leash laws are mentioned, save occasionally when we point out the parks where dogs are welcomed off leash.

## Low Impact Hiking With Your Dog

Every time you hike with your dog on the trail you are an ambassador for all dog owners. Some people you meet won't believe in your right to take a dog on the trail. Be friendly to all and make the best impression you can by practicing low impact hiking with your dog:

-  Pack out everything you pack in.
-  Do not leave dog scat on the trail; if you haven't brought plastic bags for poop removal bury it away from the trail and topical water sources.
-  Hike only where dogs are allowed.
-  Stay on the trail.
-  Do not allow your dog to chase wildlife.
-  Step off the trail and wait with your dog while horses and other hikers pass.
-  Do not allow your dog to bark - people are enjoying the trail for serenity.
-  *Have as much fun on your hike as your dog does.*

## No Dogs

Before we get started on the best places to take your dog, let's get out of the way some of the trails that do not allow dogs:

Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary  
- *Easthampton*

Ashumet Holly Wildlife  
Sanctuary - *East Falmouth*

Assabet River National Wildlife  
Refuge - *Marlboro*

Bartholomew's Cobble - *Sheffield*

Boston Harbor Islands National  
Park - *Boston*

Boston Nature Center - *Mattapan*

Broadmoor Wildlife Sanctuary  
- *Natick*

Chase Woodlands - *Dover*

Crane Wildlife Refuge - *Ipswich*

Crane Meadows Wildlife Refuge  
- *Pittsfield*

Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary  
- *Marshfield*

Goose Pond Reservation - *Lee*

Great Meadows National Wildlife  
Refuge - *Sudbury*

High Ledges Wildlife Sanctuary  
- *Shelburne*

Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary  
- *Topsfield*

Moose Hill Wildlife Sanctuary - *Sharon*

North Hill Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary  
- *Duxbury*

Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge  
- *Harvard*

Parker River National Wildlife Refuge  
- *Newburyport*

Pleasant Valley Wildlife Sanctuary  
- *Lenox*

Stony Brook Wildlife Sanctuary  
- *Norfolk*

Tower Hill Botanic Garden - *Boylston*

Wachusett Meadow Wildlife  
Sanctuary - *Princeton*

Wachusett Reservoir - *Boylston*

Walden Pond - *Concord*

Weir River Farm - *Hingham*



**O.K., not great but not too bad. Let's forget about these and move on to some of the great places where we CAN take our dogs on Massachusetts trails...**

# I Mount Greylock Reservation

## The Park

Mount Greylock, at 3,491 feet, is the highest point in southern New England. Known geologically as a monadnock, or isolated hill, it has long attracted attention. Jeremiah Wilbur gouged the first trail to the summit around 1800 and in 1831 students from Williams College constructed the first observatory tower that poked above the trees on the top.

Throughout the 1800s trees were removed from the slopes to power local industry and as landslides and forest fires became more frequent public conservation efforts began to stir. A cadre of 42 concerned citizens formed the Greylock Park Association in 1885 to purchase 400 acres around the summit and on June 20, 1898 the Massachusetts Legislature passed a law creating the Greylock State Reservation, the first state park in the Commonwealth.

## The Walks

At Mount Greylock you can hike longer with your dog (more than 70 miles of trails), higher with your dog (some canine hikes will gain over 2,000 feet in elevation) and see more of New England's oldest trees (200+ years old) than any place in the Commonwealth. Nascent canine hikers can drive to the summit when the auto road is open and loop around on the *Overlook Trail* and *Appalachian Trail*. This sampler covers over two miles and still delivers plenty of ups and downs to complement the famous multi-state views.

For serious canine hikers there are several long-distance options to tag the summit. One of the wildest but most scenic trails on the mountain is the Thunderbolt that picks up 2,175 feet in less than two miles. The steep, twisting route was constructed in 1934 as a ski trail and named after a famous roller-

## Berkshire

Phone Number  
- (413) 499-4262

Website  
- [www.mass.gov/dcr/parks/western/mgry.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/parks/western/mgry.htm)

Admission Fee  
- Parking fee at summit only

Park Hours  
- Sunrise to dusk

Directions  
- *Adams*; Accessed from the north just west of North Adams on Notch Road, from the south in Lanesborough from Route 7 on North Main Street. Look for brown signs.

### *Bonus*

The 107th Company of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) lived and worked on the mountain during 1933-41. Their camp was located at the site of the present-day campground on Sperry Road.

One of their first projects was the construction on the summit of Bascom Lodge. Designed by Pittsfield architect Joseph McArthur Vance, it embodies the rustic style then in vogue, designed to blend in with the landscape using native materials of stone (Greylock schist) and lumber (red spruce and oak).

The lodge is named for John Bascom, an early commissioner of Mount Greylock who dedicated the mountain in 1906 thusly: "Greylock, our daily pleasure, our constant symbol, our ever renewed inspiration, for all who have fellowship with Nature."

coaster at Revere Beach near Boston because both gave such an unforgettable ride. Today your dog can hike where many a past major downhill championship race was contested.

In 1844 Ralph Waldo Emerson urged his friend Henry David Thoreau to climb Mount Greylock, a place he described as "a serious mountain." Thoreau took the route that today is the *Bellows Pipe Trail*, so-called for the wind gusts that are forced through the notch, and wrote about his experiences in *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*.

If there is one must-do major canine hike in the Berkshires it is probably The Hopper. Surrounded on three sides by steep slopes, this unique valley studded with old-growth red spruce has been designated a National Natural Landmark. An 11-mile loop includes the *Hopper Trail*, the *Mt. Prospect Trail* and the *Money Brook Trail* and tags the summits of Mt. Prospect, Mt. Williams and Greylock.

*Trail Sense:* There is a detailed map and the trails are signed and blazed.

### **Dog Friendliness**

Dogs are allowed on the trails and in the campground.

### **Traffic**

This is the trademark park in Western Massachusetts and is visited accordingly; all-terrain vehicles are prohibited.

### **Canine Swimming**

There are plenty of streams coursing down the slopes of Mount Greylock but swimming is not a strong feature of these canine hikes.

### **Trail Time**

A full day to a full weekend.

## 2

# Ravenswood Park

### The Park

At the age of 12 Samuel Elwell Sawyer went into trade in Gloucester, eventually parlaying a local start with a dry goods dealer into a successful career as a Boston-based international merchant. His prominence, however did not match his success. Irascible and difficult to approach, few appreciated that he had funded the town library and clock tower. He bought up many parcels of land south of town - many that were his family's ancestral lands dating to the early 1700s - and dreamed of creating a woodland park to rival anything in Boston. A fire delayed his plans but after he died in 1889 his will stipulated that a park "be laid out handsomely with drive-ways and pleasant rural walks," to be named Ravenswood, thought to be for the castle in Sir Walter Scott's *The Bride of Lammermoor*.

### The Walks

There are no more becoming trails to hike with your dog in Massachusetts than those in Ravenswood Park. Wide and well-maintained, the former carriage paths will delight any level of canine hiker. Wooded throughout, the 10-mile trail system is decorated with Chevy-sized glacial erratics and rolls up and down past stands of large hemlocks. The backbone of that trail system is the historic *Old Salem Road* that was once the main conduit between Salem and Gloucester but was largely abandoned after the early 1800s.

### Essex

Phone Number  
- (978) 526-8687

Website  
- [www.thetrustees.org/pages/357\\_ravenswood\\_park.cfm](http://www.thetrustees.org/pages/357_ravenswood_park.cfm)

Admission Fee  
- None

Park Hours  
- Sunrise to sunset

Directions  
- *Gloucester*; From Route 128, take Exit 14 (Route 133) and follow east towards Gloucester for 3 miles until it dead ends into Route 127. Turn right onto Route 127 and follow for 2 miles to entrance and parking area on the right.

### *Bonus*

It wasn't long after relocating to Boston with his pharmaceutical company that Maine accountant Mason Walton saw his health deteriorate. Fearing tuberculosis, he sought a salt water cure but he was too frail to crew for any ship. Instead he pitched a tent in these woods and began to live among nature.

Soon he had built a cabin close to Old Salem Road and acquired the nickname the "Hermit of Gloucester."

Walton was hardly a recluse, however. He would eventually entertain dozens of visitors daily to listen to him espouse the simple life. He wrote articles for 19th century magazines and even published a book.

The Walton cabin is now gone but a plaque marks the spot where the "hermit" lived for 33 years.

The *Ledge Hill Trail* scrambles to an abandoned quarry and along the way your dog will catch a splendid view of Gloucester Harbor. The dominant natural feature at Ravenswood is the Great Magnolia Swamp, the northernmost stand of this showy tree in the country. Discovered in 1806, many specimens of the native Sweetbay magnolia were plundered from these woods before they were protected. When in bloom the mountain laurel and pink Lady Slippers and deep green ferns transform the property into a garden painting.

*Trail Sense:* There are many trail junctions and some of the trail segments can be quite lengthy so take advantage of the park map and pay attention.

### **Dog Friendliness**

Dogs are welcome to ramble off-leash past the parking lot.

### **Traffic**

Bikes can use some trails outside of March and April.

### **Canine Swimming**

Dogs should be kept out of the park's water but down the street a dog itching for a swim can enjoy the Atlantic Ocean from a small sandy/rocky beach in Stage Fort Park from September 16 to April 30.

### **Trail Time**

Hours on tap for your dog.



*For a swim in Gloucester hike your dog to Stage Fort Park below Ravenswood.*

# 3 Noanet Woodlands

## The Park

This land was cleared for settlement and industry early in the 19th century. Samuel Fisher, Jr. used Noanet Brook to operate a sawmill, producing lumber to raise the blossoming town of Dedham. Later, the Dover Union Iron Company installed a large rolling and slitting mill that made barrel hoops, wheel rims, nail plates, and nail rods from forged iron.

In 1923, Amelia Peabody purchased Mill Farm on Dedham Street and for the next six decades she shaped the Noanet Woodlands of today. She bequeathed the original land for the 695-acre park in 1984.

## The Walks

You can't get there from here. Noanet Woodlands is a paradise for trail dogs; Caryl Park doesn't allow dogs. There is no parking for Noanet Woodlands, you have to park in Caryl Park. You can't get there from here. It can be confusing to newcomers but dogs are allowed on the trail/road from the parking lot that leads into the woodlands. Alternately you can park be-

## Norfolk

Phone Number  
- (508) 785-0339

Website  
- [www.thetrustees.org/pages/341\\_noanet\\_woodlands.cfm](http://www.thetrustees.org/pages/341_noanet_woodlands.cfm)

Admission Fee  
- None

Park Hours  
- Sunrise to sunset

Directions  
- *Dover*; From Dover Center, take Dedham Street east .6 mile to Caryl Park entrance and parking on right.



*Sooner or later every canine hiker here makes their way to Noanet Peak.*

### *Bonus*

Today the mill pond is postcard worthy, nestled into a peaceful sylvan setting. But this was a serious industrial site 150 years ago. The dam stood 24 feet high and the mill was powered by a mammoth 36-foot overshot waterwheel. A flood destroyed the dam in 1876 but Amelia Peabody rebuilt it in 1954 to restore the pond, without the hustle and bustle of the mill.

hind the ballfields and enter the woodlands back there. Just don't let your dog stray off that golden path.

This is flat-out one of the best places in Massachusetts to hike with your dog. The trails are wide and paw-friendly dirt and, especially in the early going, woodchips. There may be more dogs than people in the Noanet Woodlands at any given time and leashes are as seldom seen as unhappy canine hikers.

There are 17 miles of trails packed into the park, with the most common destination being the modest 387-foot Noanet Peak. Many routes lead to the open, rocky summit with its one-way view straight into downtown Boston. Most involve only modest exertion save for a short, steep final surge to the top.

*Trail Sense:* Even those with a heart for exploring will want to have a map in hand in the Noanet Woodlands the first time - and you are best advised to print one ahead of time. The three main trails are blazed (red, yellow and blue) and about 40 of the main trail junctions are numbered. That much is good; but without a map it won't mean much under the expanse of trees. Also there are many, many more trail junctions that aren't marked.

### **Dog Friendliness**

Caryl Park (the part with the tennis courts and ball fields) does not allow dogs; part of the woodlands are also Caryl Park but signs indicate when you have reached the tail-friendly confines of the Noanet Woodlands.

### **Traffic**

Bikes are restricted to designated trails and banned completely in the muddy spring. Most of the other trailusers are likely to be walking dogs.

### **Canine Swimming**

Not really; dogs are forbidden in the mill ponds where there are dangerous drop-offs.

### **Trail Time**

Budget a minimum of an hour in the Noanet Woodlands since it takes a fair walk just to get into the trail system from the parking lot. Once here, your dog will want many more hours.

# 4 Martha's Vineyard

## The Park

Human habitation is thought to have begun on Martha's Vineyard before it was an island in the time before melting glaciers raised the level of the Atlantic Ocean. Some are convinced that the Norsemen visited here around 1000 A.D. and in 1524 Italian explorer Giovanni da Verrazzano is known to have sailed by and named the island Indians called Noepe, "Louisa." Other explorers gave the island a name but its enduring moniker came in 1602 from Batholomew Gosnold, who immortalized one of his young daughters and the wild grapes that grew in abundance.

## Barnstable

Phone Number  
- (508) 696-7400

Website  
- [www.mvol.com](http://www.mvol.com)

Admission Fee  
- None

Park Hours  
- Sunrise to sunset

Directions  
- Martha's Vineyard is reached by ferry from Woods Hole on the southwest tip of Cape Cod at the end of Route 28.

## The Walks

Just off the southern coast of Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard is an extremely dog-friendly resort destination. For canine hikers, the Sheriff's Meadow Foundation has conserved over 2,100 acres of land in more than 100 separate parcels. From these protected lands the Foundation has created eight sanctuaries open to the public, including dogwalkers. The largest trail system is at Cedar Tree Neck Sanctuary where two miles of paw-friendly trails visit hilly woodlands, secluded ponds and a small sandy beach.

For sheer dramatic scenery on a hike with your dog, there are few spots that can rival Gay's Head with its bluff and beaches. Smack in the middle of the island Correllus State Forest occupies over 5,100 acres, managed for passive recreation, on its 15 miles of bike paths. It was created in 1908 as the "Heath Hen Reserve," in an attempt to prevent the bird's extinction. Sadly, the last heath hen (an eastern subspecies of the prairie chicken) was seen in 1932.

*Trail Sense:* You can find a map when you need it and the Foundation properties are well-marked.

### *Bonus*

Colonial Martha's Vineyard was a vibrant place with butter churning from its inland farms and its ports a constant whirl of activity. However, British raiders during the American Revolution torched the towns and stole 10,000 sheep and 300 head of cattle from Patriot farms. The island economy was crippled until a small congregation of Methodists staged a religious camp meeting in 1835. Within 20 years the yearly retreat was drawing more than 10,000 attendees and Martha's Vineyard was reborn as a resort destination.

The tents from the camp meeting gave way to wooden cottages in Wesleyan Grove. Today more than 300 of these eclectic Victorian cottages remain clustered on the circular paths behind the main streets of Oak Bluffs. You and your dog can wander through the campground, placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979 on the Centennial of the historic Tabernacle, that served as the centerpiece of the camp meetings.

### **Dog Friendliness**

Dogs are welcome just about everywhere you really want to hike on Martha's Vineyard.

### **Traffic**

Of course the summer brings crowds everywhere on the island but in the off-season this is a canine hiker's paradise. Watch for bikes.

### **Canine Swimming**

Most of the beaches restrict dogs in the high season of summer so bring your water-loving dog after Labor Day.

### **Trail Time**

You can easily carve out a canine hike of several hours duration.



*Dogs ride for free on the ferries to Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket Island.*

# 5 Great Brook Farm State Park

## The Park

Great Brook Farm is studded with local flavor. American Indians were known to use sections of this land as sacred sites. In 1691 John Barrett built one of the first cloth-pulling mills in America here. It was later joined by a sawmill and a gristmill and an iron mill. Cellar holes from the dwellings of millworkers can still be readily observed from the trails. One, a garri-son where pioneers erected a stone house for protection from Indian at-tacks, is 15 feet deep.

In 1938 Farnham Smith bought a modest 8-acre farm here to raise Hol-stein cows. He slowly acquired adjoining land until he owned nearly 1,000 acres. In 1974, the land became part of the Massachusetts park system.

In 1987 Mark and Tamma Duffy leased part of the park and moved their 120-head herd of cows to Great Brook with the proviso that it operate as an interpretive farm park for the public.

## The Walks

Just about anything your dog's hiking heart desires is on the menu at Great Brook Farm. Is he looking to reconnect with his old farm dog ancestors? Try the *Lantern Loop* and interpretive trail around the corn and hayfields. Panting for an all-day-wear-me-out adventure? There are over 20 miles of

## Middlesex

Phone Number  
- (978) 369-6312

Website  
- [www.mass.gov/dcr/parks/northeast/gbfm.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/parks/northeast/gbfm.htm)

Admission Fee  
- \$2 parking fee

Park Hours  
- Dusk to dawn

Directions  
- *Carlisle*; From Route 128 take exit 31B. Follow Route 225 west for 8 miles to the Carlisle center rotary, then turn right on Lowell Street (following the sign to Chelmsford.) The Park entrance is two miles ahead on the right. The Park Office (984 Lowell Street) is just beyond the entrance, also on the right. Make a right hand turn onto North Road. Parking area is 1/2 mile down on the left.

### Bonus

There is no sweeter bonus for your dog in Massachusetts than a stop at the Great Brook Farm Ice Cream Stand after a hike.

The stand dishes out 60 flavors of ice cream produced from the farm's dairy herd. Great Brook Farm was once the home of Prospera, a Holstein heifer who produced 30,000 gallons of milk in her lifetime and in 1969 was the second-highest producing cow in North America. Her gravesite is on the farm, just past the parking area on North Road. The tasty offerings from the Ice Cream Stand are available from mid-April through Halloween.

wooded trails beyond the farm fields. Remember to toss in the *Heartbreak Ridge* above Tophet Swamp for that outing. Just after one of the most pleasant woodland strolls in eastern Massachusetts? Head down the *Pine Point Loop* around Meadow Pond. Does your dog desire a little cardio work? The twists and turns around Indian Hill are the answer.

However you craft your canine hiking day at great Brook expect roomy, well-maintained footpaths. The occasional glacial erratic helps decorate the historic, ecologically rich farmland as well.

*Trail Sense:* The trails, for the most part, are marked but there are many little trails and many intersections so a park map is mandatory and your best plan is to print one off the website ahead of time, if possible.

### **Dog Friendliness**

Dogs are welcome in Great Brook Farm State Park.

### **Traffic**

The main crush of visitors is at the Ice Cream Stand, petting zoo, barn tours, etc. The woodland trails are much less used. In the winter months the trails are groomed for cross-country skiing.

### **Canine Swimming**

Depending on the time of year, Meadow Pond can see vegetation along its banks but it is a reliable doggie swimming hole.

### **Trail Time**

Trips on the shorter trails can last less than an hour or you take up your dog's entire day here.

# 6 Notchview

## The Park

The earliest inhabitants of this land were the Mohican Indians who were run off their land in Albany, New York and relocated to Stockbridge in 1664. It would be another century before English settlers filtering out of eastern Massachusetts would force the Mohicans off this land as well. Remnants of the tribe today can be found in Wisconsin.

By the end of the 19th century the 3,000 acres that would become Notchview supported 20 homesteads. In 1920, Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Budd, who earned The Distinguished Service Cross for extraordinary heroism in France in World War I, met the widowed Helen Bly in London.

Mrs. Bly lived in a 250-acre estate on Route 9 she called Helenscourt. The two married and returned to the Berkshires where they set about consolidating the local farms and building the 3,000-acre estate Notchview.

After considering leaving the property to the Commonwealth or the Episcopal Church, Colonel Budd decided to bequeath his farm to The Trustees of Reservations. He died in 1965 and the park opened to the public in 1969.

## The Walks

Whatever you have in mind for hiking with your dog is on the menu at Notchview. There are more than 15 miles of paw-friendly hiking trails available. First time visitors can sample Notchview on the *Circuit Trail* that loops back through the middle of the property, ducks out of the trees for a quick view and finishes back at the Visitor Center. The 1.8-mile trail travels just

### Berkshire

Phone Number  
- (413) 684-0148

Website  
- [www.thetrustees.org/pages/345\\_notchview.cfm](http://www.thetrustees.org/pages/345_notchview.cfm)

Admission Fee  
- Yes, parking fee for non-Trustees members

Park Hours  
- Sunrise to sunset

Directions  
- *Windsor*; From the intersection of Route 8A and Route 9 in Windsor center, take Route 9 East. After one mile turn into the entrance on the left.