

1 Smooth Hummocks Coastal Preserve



Walking time: 30 to 60+ minutes

Parking: roadside

Ideal for: dog walkers, experienced mountain bikers



Property Guide

One of the unique and treasured geographic features of Nantucket is the sandplain grassland, an open grassy expanse similar to the great plains of the Midwest, but different in that it is an endangered ecosystem of rare plants and animals. You might be surprised to learn that Nantucket, Tuckernuck and parts of Martha's Vineyard together represent over ninety percent of the sandplain grasslands on earth.

You might also be surprised to know that a large part of our work at the Nantucket Land Bank is spent maintaining this amazing and rare natural resource which supports voles, mice and the raptors which feed on them, such as the endangered short-eared owl and the rare northern harrier. This area is also an ideal habitat for several endangered plant species such as sandplain blue-eyed grass, Nantucket shadbush, broom crowberry, and sandplain flax.

This habitat could be overrun, in time, by scrub oak, pitch pine and other successional plant species. Such plants have traditionally been kept at bay by spontaneous brush fires, farming by indigenous populations and grazing. Today, with no widespread farming or grazing, in order to maintain the sandplain grasslands, the Land Bank and others carry out prescribed burning and mowing in the spring and fall. These actions, while time-consuming and elaborate, greatly help to maintain a rare global habitat for the low-growing plants that thrive in full sun and the nutrient-poor soils of the area. Other organizations on the burn team include, Massachusetts Audubon Society and the Nantucket Land Council.

Directions: From Hummock Pond Road, take a left onto Bartlett Farm Road and follow it past Bartlett Farm onto a dirt road. Take your next right and then a left. Park anywhere along this dirt road which leads to Ladies Beach for a view of this area.

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Enjoying Nantucket Safely

The Nantucket Land Bank accepts no liability due to injury resulting from use of this map or its properties. In other words, you use these trails and recreational areas at your own risk. Follow these tips in order to ensure your use of Land Bank properties is safe and enjoyable:

Dress Appropriately

On trails, wear hiking shoes or boots. In the summer, employ light clothing that provides protection from the sun. In the winter, multiple layers that wick moisture will keep you warm and dry.

Check for Ticks

Nantucket has one of the highest rates of tick-borne diseases in the world. So follow these simple tips. Stay on the trail and avoid tall grasses, shrubs and hanging branches. Wear boots with socks and long pants when possible (tucking your pants into your socks may look geeky, but it will keep ticks from reaching your skin.) Check your family for ticks daily. Be advised that a deer tick nymph is often only the size of a crumb.

Avoid Poison Ivy

Learn to identify and avoid the three shiny leaves and white berries associated with poison ivy. It is one of the most pervasive plants on Nantucket, found near beaches, on wooded trails, near wetlands and moors.

Use Sunscreen

Wear sunscreen and protective clothing to keep from being burned by the powerful summer sun. Some Land Bank trails are rather long and provide little shade, so plan accordingly.

Hydrate Properly

It's often surprising how quickly one can become dehydrated when walking in the moors or on the beach. So bring water with you and drink often.

Hunting Season

Most Land Bank properties are open to hunting in season. Hikers are encouraged to wear bright clothing and keep pets on a leash. The best time to enjoy Land Bank properties during hunting season is on Sundays when hunting is not allowed. Hikers are asked to report any hunting remains that are not properly disposed of to the Land Bank office.

Vehicle Access

Please note that not all of the dirt roads and passable trails are maintained on a regular basis and some may only be traversable with four-wheel drive vehicles. Even with four-wheel drive, you may need to reduce tire pressure on particularly sandy patches. A sticker is required for driving on beaches.

Cell Phones

Bring a cell phone in case you get lost.

Pack In, Pack Out

In most cases, there are no trash receptacles provided at these properties, so please help keep our beaches clean by taking everything that you brought to the beach with you when you leave.

Pet Owners

Keeping our properties and beaches clean by cleaning up after your pet is greatly appreciated.

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