



Nantucket Conservation Foundation

Staycation Family Scavenger Hunt Fall 2020

Nantucket Conservation Foundation



Welcome! This scavenger hunt will introduce you to some of the Nantucket Conservation Foundation's conservation lands, teach you a few unique things about each site and provide you and your family with a chance to explore Nantucket together. If you complete all of the activities, you will be eligible for a prize!

Here are the details about completing the scavenger hunt:

- 1) You will be visiting 6 different Nantucket Conservation Foundation properties around Nantucket.
- 2) The properties can be visited in any order.
- 3) At each of the properties you will visit, there is a series of signs highlighting some fun facts and directions to the next sign.
- 4) At the last sign, take a picture of the sign or the view to prove you made it there.
- 5) **Due to Covid-19 there are no puzzle pieces for this scavenger hunt.**
- 6) Once you have visited all 6 properties, email us the pictures at info@nantucketconservation.org or give us a call at (508) 228-2884. We will put together a prize for each child in your family and have it ready outside the Foundation's office (118 Cliff Road, open Monday – Friday 8:30 – 4:30).

To get started- follow the directions below to each of the sites. Look for the Staycation Scavenger Hunt welcome sign and follow the directions from there. Have fun and happy exploring!



Nantucket Conservation Foundation

Squam Farm

Squam Farm is a secluded, but beautiful property hidden in the forests on the East side of Nantucket. Walking the looping trails here allows you to see the former pastures, hardwood forests, and swampy hollows of what was known as the ‘Nantucket Farm Belt’. This former farm has a long history with agriculture, most recently being the home to a managed sheep herd from 2005-2015. The sheep of Squam Farm were used in a grazing management research study for the Foundation and their impact on the landscape can still be seen, even if the sheep themselves have been moved off-island. Pastures in Squam are now maintained through rotational mowing by tractors. Together, Squam Farm and the adjacent Squam Swamp include 504 acres of protected land and hold some of the oldest trees on the island. Some trees are even 150 years old, which is ancient by Nantucket standards. Hardwoods like Tupelo, Hickory, Beech, Red Maple, and Sassafras all thrive in these richer soils deposited here by the glacier. The wet and swampy forests of Squam are home to many white tailed deer as seen by the crisscrossed game trails they leave behind. Enjoy your visit to this forested favorite and keep an eye out for wildlife!

Directions: From the Milestone Road Rotary, follow Milestone Road for approximately ¼ mile and turn left onto Polpis Road. Drive approximately 5 miles and take a left onto Quidnet Road. Take the first left onto a dirt road (unmarked, opposite several mailboxes) and follow this about a ½ mile to a fenced parking area on the right. Look for the Staycation Scavenger Hunt welcome sign in the red kiosk at the property entrance gate where the trail starts and follow the directions from here to the trail.

PLEASE BE AWARE OF TICKS WHEN VISITING THIS PROPERTY AND CHECK YOURSELF AFTER VISITING

Here are some things to look for while at Squam Farm-- check off as many as you can find!

- Deer tracks in the mud
- A Sassafras tree with 3 different types of leaves on the same branch
- Soft green moss on the ground
- A calling bird like a Blue Jay or Chickadee
- A bush with flowers on it
- Some goldenrod flowers in bloom
- A bird feather
- Ferns turning brown with the change of season
- Gray-green lichen that grows on the branches of trees, called “Old Man’s Beard”
- Litter (we hope that you don’t find any, but please collect and dispose of in the trash if you do- thank you!)



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The Nantucket Field Station

Established in the 1960s by the University of Massachusetts Boston as a place for students and researchers to come and study the ecology, history, and art of Nantucket, the Nantucket Field Station is a historic 110 acre property overlooking Nantucket Harbor and the amazing habitat of Folger's Marsh. In 2004, the Nantucket Conservation Foundation purchased the land to protect it from sale to developers and to allow continued UMass education and research to be supported on Nantucket. According to the amount and date of artifacts found on this property, the Wampanoags, the tribe of Native Americans that lived on Nantucket before it was settled in the early 1600's, have lived and fished here for thousands of years. It was extremely important for the sake of Nantucket's ecological well-being, educational value, and cultural history that the Foundation stepped forward to protect this land from being developed. The bluffs that face Nantucket harbor are being eroded away by wind and waves, particularly in the winter months; a trend that is only getting worse as sea levels rise and winter storms that batter Nantucket become stronger. The saltmarsh on this property is a beautiful and important part of adapting to sea level rise and maintaining the health of Nantucket harbor. The marsh also supports many of the fish, birds, and shellfish that Nantucket has become known for. Enjoy this beautiful little walk and appreciate the gift that this property is to our island's community.

Directions: From the Milestone Road Rotary, follow Milestone Road for approximately ¼ mile and turn left onto Polpis Road. Follow Polpis Road for approximately 3 miles and turn left at 180 Polpis Rd. (look for the Blue placard on the rock at the top of the hill). Follow the road for approximately 0.1 miles to the parking lot on the right hand side. Park here, look for the staycation welcome sign at the entrance gate and follow the directions from here.

PLEASE BE AWARE OF TICKS WHEN VISITING THIS PROPERTY AND CHECK YOURSELF AFTER VISITING

Here are a few things to look for while you are at the Nantucket Field Station-- check off as many as you can find!

- Berries on a bush or tree
- A white egret hunting in the marsh
- A blue sign that says UMass Boston
- Ducks or Gulls flying overhead
- A vine with grapes on it
- An Osprey pole
- A plant with thorns on it
- Litter (we hope that you don't find any, but please collect and dispose of in the trash if you do- thank you!)



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Norwood Farm

Norwood Farm is one of our newest access points to the vast trail system of the Middle Moors. Adjoined with the Land Bank's Beechwood Farm property, this 220 acres of conservation land starts along Polpis Rd. and expands from shrubby remnants of farmland and cranberry bogs to rolling kettle-hole wetlands filled with water lilies and vibrant summer ecosystems. From here, you can enter the largest contiguous swath of conservation land on the island, Nantucket's Middle Moors. The open grasslands are maintained by rotational mowing and supports some classic grassland and prairie species like Little Bluestem grass. St. Andrew's Cross, a State endangered plant can be found growing in the disturbed trails along this former farmland. Enjoy another walk through the former 'Nantucket Farm Belt' turned into valuable habitat for rare and endangered species and amazing walking trails for year-round enjoyment.

Directions: From the Milestone Road Rotary, follow Milestone Road for approximately ¼ mile, turn left onto Polpis Road and follow it for 3.5 miles (1/2 mile past Altar Rock Rd. on the right and just past the Land Bank Reyes Pond Property). Take the slight right next to the Chinese-style Gate and follow it 500ft and turn right at the sign post for the Scavenger Hunt. Stay left and head into the parking lot. Park here and look for the staycation welcome sign near the gate.

PLEASE BE AWARE OF TICKS WHEN VISITING THIS PROPERTY AND CHECK YOURSELF AFTER VISITING

Here are a few things to look for while you are at Norwood Farm- check off as many as you can find!

- A yellow goldenrod flower
- White water lilies floating on the pond
- A bird calling from the bushes
- A leaf from an oak tree
- A tree standing by itself
- Animal tracks along the path
- A flying bird
- A dragonfly
- Litter (we hope that you don't find any, but please collect and dispose of in the trash if you do- thank you!)



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Sanford Farm

Sanford Farm is one of the most popular properties for seasonal and year-round visitors to enjoy a walk, hike, or bike on conservation land. Combined with Ram Pasture & the Woods, this 780 property is often cited as a regular spot to visit when people return to the island due to its location close to town and its well-maintained trails that extend all the way to the south shore of the island. Once part of the original sheep grazing common lands set aside by English colonists who came to the island in the late 1600s, this expansive stretch of land also held a dairy farm and a private hunting preserve. Without sheep or dairy cows, the rolling open grasslands of Sanford Farm now host habitat for rare and endangered plants and animals and a research study on the plants now being eaten by white-tailed deer, the main herbivore on the island. Bordering the entire Western side of Hummock Pond, these open conservation properties protect and shelter this freshwater ecosystem from further decline and the effects of overdevelopment. Enjoy your walk along the northern loop of this true Nantucket trail.

Directions: From the start of the Madaket Road in Town, drive approximately 1 ½ miles and turn Left into the parking lot for Sanford Farm. Look for the Staycation Scavenger Hunt welcome sign at the beginning of the walking trail to the right of the red kiosk and follow the directions from here.

PLEASE BE AWARE OF TICKS WHEN VISITING THIS PROPERTY AND CHECK YOURSELF AFTER VISITING

Here are a few things to look for while you are at Sanford Farm- check off as many as you can find!

- Someone walking their dog
- A milkweed plant
- A swan on Hummock Pond
- A cone from a pine tree
- A dragonfly
- A leaf that looks like it was nibbled on
- A nice bench for people to sit on
- A flying bird
- Animal tracks in the mud or sand
- Litter (we hope that you don't find any, but please collect and dispose of in the trash if you do- thank you!)



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The Weaver Property

The Weaver Property was once a retired farm and hunting preserve that has been incorporated into the expansive Ram Pasture & The Woods system of trails. Signs of the previous owners are still quite visible in historic farm equipment, artifacts of the old whaling era, and planted groves of fruit trees along this shrubby path. Emerging close to the beautiful view from the Sanford Barn, the Weaver Property trail is a hidden pathway that is relatively unexplored when compared with the incredibly popular Sanford Farm Ocean Walk or Southern Ram Pasture loop. The shrubland and sheltered wetlands of this wooded property provide habitat to many deer, rabbits, turtles, and scrub-loving bird species. We hope you enjoy a walk through this hidden gem of a trail to one of Nantucket's best views.

Directions: From the start of the Madaket Road in Town, drive approximately 2 miles and turn left onto Barrett Farm Rd (just past the Water Fountain on Madaket Rd.). Follow Barrett Farm Rd. for 8/10 of a mile and turn left onto Proprietor's Way. Follow this road and the signs to the West Gate of Ram Pasture Parking Lot. Look for the Staycation Scavenger Hunt welcome sign at the Weaver Property gate to your right and follow the signs to the Northeast.

PLEASE BE AWARE OF TICKS WHEN VISITING THIS PROPERTY AND CHECK YOURSELF AFTER VISITING

Here are a few things to look for while you are at the Weaver Property-- check off as many as you can find!

- Grapes growing on a vine
- A rabbit running along the trail
- Apples growing on a tree
- A butterfly or dragonfly flying in the path
- Hummock Pond seen from the barn overlook
- A flying bird
- A flower being pollinated



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Head of the Plains

Head of the Plains represents one of the best examples of sandplain grasslands in the world. Home to a diverse array of wildflowers and pollinators, this 436 acre property is maintained and managed through rotational mowing and occasional prescribed burning by our friends and neighbors at the Nantucket Land Bank. Active grassland restoration research is also taking place here through the our Fecon & Harrow management plots where scrubby oak thickets and woody vegetation were removed to allow more sandplain grassland plants to regenerate and get better access to light. The diversity of pollinating insects in our beautiful reference plots is one of the highest along the East coast, owing to the wide array of wildflowers blooming here from April to September. September in particular is an incredible time to visit the abundant open grasslands filled with Asters, Goldenrods, and the spectacular bright purple blooms of New England Blazing Star. Head of the Plains is also mostly flat and expansive, allowing walkers and runners of all ages and speeds to see for miles as they get exercise along Nantucket's south shore. Once well-grazed by herds of sheep, this amazing grassland system and winding wooded trail is waiting for you to explore and appreciate.

Directions: From the start of the Madaket Road in Town, drive approximately 2 miles and turn left onto Barrett Farm Rd (just past the Water Fountain on Madaket Rd.). Follow Barrett Farm Rd. for 1.5 miles until you reach a grassy parking lot on your right. Look for the Staycation Scavenger Hunt welcome sign at the start of the trail in the parking lot.

PLEASE BE AWARE OF TICKS WHEN VISITING THIS PROPERTY AND CHECK YOURSELF AFTER VISITING

Here are a few things to look for while you are at Head of the Plains- check off as many as you can find!

- Yellow, Purple, and White flowers
- A Black Cherry tree with cherries growing on it
- A happy wasp or bee buzzing around
- A pitch pine cone
- A bird of prey flying around
- A leaf turning red for the fall
- A small bird looking for food in the grass
- Litter (we hope that you don't find any, but please collect and dispose of in the trash if you do- thank you!)



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Words to Know

Bird of Prey: A type of bird that eats or hunts other things for food.

Habitat: The home of an animal or a plant.

Grazing: When animals eat plants, especially in grasslands.

Kettle-hole: A round, bowl-like depression in the land created thousands of years ago by a large melting chunk of glacial ice. Nantucket has lots of kettle hole ponds left over from the glacier.

Microscopic: Extremely small! So small that you need a microscope in order to see it.

Migratory: Birds or animals that move to one place to another because of food or temperature. (For example, birds will fly south in the winter and north in the summer).

Organic Matter: What organisms and living things are made of or broken down into.

Photoperiod: The amount of time that the sun is in the sky each day aka the length of the daylight. This changes with the time of year.

Pollination: Taking the pollen from one flower to another so that the flower can turn into a seed.

Predator: An animal that eats other animals.

Species: A particular type of animal, plant or other living thing that shares common traits.

Swamp: A very wet forest that is home to many animals such as turtles, frogs, salamanders.

Wetland: An area where the soil is completely wet or even covered in water during the growing season. Only plants that like getting their roots wet can grow in a wetland.