

# Take a walk on the island's wild side

Take a walk with early morning birds, bunnies and butterflies in some of the most picturesque coastal areas of New England in the Conanicut Island nature trails.

Choose a different path every day for an afternoon stroll through the rich homes of local fauna and flora. Enjoy interpretive signs that point out sea life, bird and animal species. Explore historical spots that date back to pre-Revolutionary times.

Trails are open for roaming between sunrise and sunset. Some of the pathways are managed by the Conanicut Land Trust and some are managed by the Conservation Commission. Thanks to the efforts of these organizations, the preserved open spaces provide important havens for wildlife and indigenous plant species. The town asks visitors on the trails to show respect by keeping dogs on leashes and picking up after them. Take note that some areas do not allow pets. No motorized vehicles are allowed on the trails, and please, no littering.

With the high profile of deer, ticks, and Lyme disease in recent years, follow good trail sense by wearing protective clothing such as long pants and a long-sleeved shirt. Check your body and clothing after your hike to rid yourself of any pest who may have jumped on for a

free ride. Above all, delight in the peaceful, natural surroundings.

## Conanicut Island Sanctuary Trail

The entrance to the sanctuary trail is on the right at the end of the ramp from Rte.138 south. The one-mile looping nature trail boasts two viewing decks that reveal foraging egrets and nesting ospreys at Marsh Meadows.

Belted Gallaway cows dot the view of the hillside at Dutra Farm. The 32-acre wildlife preserve includes forest, meadow and salt-water marsh, offering a comfortable blend of habitat for birds and animals. The sanctuary has free parking at the Jamestown golf course or police station, found opposite each other about 100 feet to the south of the entrance on Conanicut Avenue.

## Ft. Getty Walking Trail

Ft. Getty is a town-owned park which requires a sticker or fee for entry. A sign and a right hand turn after Mackerel Cove on Beavertail Road will mark the entrance to the old fort park. The coastal walking trail starts behind the pavilion and follows the cliffis edge that overlooks a rocky shore and views of the West passage, Narragansett and Dutch Island. Evidence of World War II still remains with bunkers along the path. The walk runs the full length of the park's coastline and finishes opposite the boat ramp. Restrooms and picnic areas make this spot a pleasant stop. Parking is marked in designated areas.

## Kit Wright Nature Trail

This quarter-mile stretch along the Fox Hill Salt Marsh is across from the campground at Ft. Getty Recreational Area. The entrance is marked with a sign near the boat ramp. The trail, named after islander Kit Wright who donated the land to the town, is a comfortable quarter mile stroll through woods and coastal shrubs that leads to an observation platform for walkers to rest and enjoy some bird watching. Parking is in designated areas.

## Conanicut Battery Trail

South on Beavertail Road about a quarter mile from Mackerel Cove and the road to Ft. Getty, turn right onto Battery Road. At the end of the road is a looping trail that leads through a forest into a meadow that boasts a view of the West Passage and a display of earthen fortifications that date back to pre-Revolutionary time. Interpretive signs along the route highlight historical notes on the battery and WWII bunkers found higher up on the hill of the trail. Parking is at the trail's entrance.

## Parker Farm Conservation Area

The entrance to this 48-acre protected open space is on East Shore Road, north of Cranston Cove. A medley of meadows, wetlands and forest make this collection of trails a must see. The land trust keeps an updated trails map and rules of the donated conservation area on the properties pages of their website at [www.conanicutland-trust.org](http://www.conanicutland-trust.org).

Parking is also at the entrance on East Shore Road. No pets allowed.

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