

Suggested Trails - Prudence Island offers 13.5 miles of hiking along blazed trails and restricted-vehicle access roads. These trails pass through a variety of habitat types and showcase a diverse array of natural, historical, and ecological stewardship features that are unique to Prudence Island. Many trails parallel the shore of Narragansett Bay, making Prudence Island one of the best places in Rhode Island to experience long, undeveloped stretches of the Bay's coastline. The hikes listed below are just a sample of the many hiking possibilities that exist on Prudence Island.

Easy

Sunset Trail. This 1.0 mile (round-trip) out-and-back hike starts at the trailhead on the south side of Chase Way. Scenic views of the West Passage of Narragansett Bay are common along most of the route.

Pine Hill. This scenic 1.1 mile loop hike in the Reserve's Pine Hill area passes through upland grasslands and includes a natural overlook with dramatic views of Narragansett Bay. Proceed south from the locked green gate for 0.11 miles and take the first right. Continue 0.28 miles, turn left and continue for another 0.26 miles. Turn left again at road's end and continue for 0.12 miles and then either turn left to return to the gate or continue straight for another 0.12 miles to reach Jenny Marsh and long stretches of isolated beach.

Bay Avenue. This 1.4 mile (round-trip) out-and-back begins at the old Stone Wharf on the west side of Prudence Island. The trail initially passes a few 19th century homes before continuing south along an abandoned road with nice views of the West Passage of Narragansett Bay.

Moderate

South End Interpretive Trail. This 1.9-mile self-guided interpretive trail includes 14 stops with information on the cultural and natural history of the South End of Prudence Island. It starts and ends at the T-wharf and continues in a loop on a mix of paved and dirt roads that pass through a wide-variety of interesting habitat types and old Navy bunkers. Interpretive guides can be obtained for free from the Reserve's Education Shed at the T-wharf or from the Lab and Learning Center to the north. Baker Farm Loop. This 2.7 mile figure-eight hike showcases the historic Baker Farm and the extensive interior forests of Prudence Island. The hike suggested here begins at the Heritage-Army Camp trailhead on Broadway. Follow this trail north for 0.42 miles to Baker Farm and continue straight for another 0.40 miles to the intersection with the Division Wall Trail. Turn right and continue for 0.31 miles and then turn right again to follow the Diamond Trail for 0.42 miles to return to Baker Farm. Return to the beginning by following the Schoolhouse Trail for 0.63 miles and turning left on Broadway.

Providence Point Trail. This 4.0-mile (roundtrip) out-and-back hike begins at the locked green gate to the Reserve's North End Unit and introduces visitors to the seldom-visited north end of Prudence Island. Highlights include Coggeshall Marsh, the historic North End Farm, and Providence Point (the extreme northern tip of Prudence Island with views to Providence). Four spur trails (ranging from 0.2-0.4 miles each) provide additional access to Potter Cove and Coggeshall Cove with views across to Patience Island. *Warning:* In summer months this area is often swarming with mosquitoes, horse flies, ticks and other biting insects.

New Trails in 2017

To celebrate the 2015 acquisition of the 93 acre Eugene Chase Farm, the Trail Gang has been hard at work establishing new trails that provide numerous opportunities for varying your scenic hikes as you loop through and link up with existing trails.

Deer Chase Run. This 0.9 mile trail begins on Sunset Hill Road and terminates on the Blind Allen Trail. It takes you (east to west) through the Mill Creek watershed and crosses a beautiful stand of pitch pine in a portion of the old desert before dropping down through mixed hardwood forest. From the junction with the Blind Allen Trail turn left to return via the Sunset Trail to the Division or Ballard Trails or right to Pulpit Rock and follow the road to return via the Old Desert Trail.

Old Desert Trail. A moderate 0.4 mile hike uphill begins in mixed hardwood forest and links up with Deer Chase Run and the Indian Springs trail near the edge of the old desert. Past land use resulted in a near total depletion of topsoil in this area which is recovering as a pine barrens community. As you pass through, take note the unusual mix of vegetation that comprises this rare habitat.

Indian Springs Trail. This 0.5 mile trail begins just beyond Indian Springs, traveling over two streams in the Mill Creek basin and continuing uphill through mixed hardwood and pitch pine forest to link with Deer Chase Run and the Old Desert Trail.