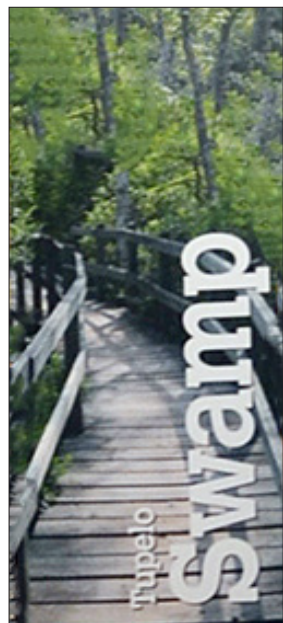


## ORIGIN OF THE TUPELO SWAMP

Tupelo Swamp probably originated soon after the formation of the barrier beach, which cut off the seaward flow of small brooks and streams. Although some water runoff from the land is diverted northerly from Long Pond into Goosefare Brook, it tends to collect behind the dunes.



The swamp is influenced by seasonal fluctuations of water supply. During a normal year, water level is highest in the spring and then diminishes gradually through the summer months until replenished by fall rains. True swamp conditions exist primarily in the upper portions of the drainages, which feed the pond, and along the sluggish stream flowing north from the pond.

During the early 1960s, portions of Long Pond were bulldozed and deepened to restore the area of

open water. Mounds of sand were piled up on the westerly shore of the pond, and trees have subsequently grown up on these mounds, giving the impression that all is perfectly natural.

## ECOLOGY OF THE SWAMP

The swamp is a meeting ground for diverse groups of plants that have become adapted to a realm that is sometimes more suited to aquatic than terrestrial life. Trees such as red maple, black tupelo and willow thrive in the moist soil, and therefore become stepping stones for other plants in the swamp. The fallen trunks of these trees form raised platforms upon which shrubby plants, mosses, ferns and herbaceous plants take root. The following scenario shows how the swamp retains its diverse array of plants and lumpy terrain:

*A large, old tupelo tree falls over in a storm and settles into the muck. The trunk eventually decays into rich organic mulch suitable for new plant growth to become established. Where the root system pulled out of the ground, a pool is formed, which fills with aquatic plants and insect life. On the soil-rich root mass, a lone pine tree germinates from a chance seed that fluttered down from the nearby upland forest. Other plants to be found here include cattail, blue flag iris, and ferns.*

The impenetrable character of Tupelo Swamp is derived from the dense network of shrubs, which includes highbush blueberry, maleberry and winterberry (a holly). Forward movement is often slowed by the twining, thorny vines of the greenbrier.

Forming a spongy matrix on the swamp floor and over stumps is that wonder plant, sphagnum moss. This plant, which commonly evolves into rich deposits of peat, is able to store up to twenty times its own weight in water and serves to provide needed moisture to other plants during dry spells.

The swamp is rich in insect life, which, in turn, attracts many birds, small mammals and amphibians. The frog population is much in evidence during the early spring chorus. Larger animals are rare because of the pressures of civilization in this area, although deer are occasionally spotted in the vicinity of the park.

## SURROUNDING WOODLANDS

The line between swamp and upland forest is usually easily discerned. Where the small brooks of drainage swales meet the swamp, wet conditions may extend back up to the higher areas. Similarly, lobes of upland forest may project into the swamp, given only a foot or two of added soil depth.

Upland forest consists mainly of a mixture of white pine, northern red oak, and hemlock in association with beech, birch, and maple. In the 1950s, the area was logged, removing the mature pine. Since then, the second-growth forest has successfully established itself, with little evidence of previous cutting.

## VISITOR RULES

To ensure a safe & pleasant visit for everyone please note:

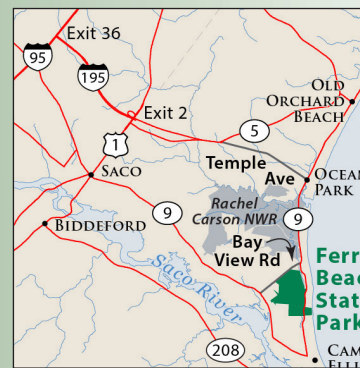
- Pets** Dogs are not permitted on the ocean beach from April 1 to Sept. 30. Elsewhere, pets must be leashed, attended and under control at all times. Clean up their waste.
- Fires** May be built only in grills. Use only charcoal.
- Picnic** On a carry-in, carry-out basis, and take refuse home to recycle.
- Trash** Carry out all trash.
- Leave No Trace** Stay on trails or boardwalks to protect the land, and please do not pick or remove anything.
- Wildlife** Do not feed or disturb park animals. Stay off the dunes and well away from the area closed for nesting birds.
- No Camping** There is no camping in this day-use park. For State Park camping locations visit [www.campwithme.com](http://www.campwithme.com)
- Vehicles** Must remain on designated roads and park only in designated parking spaces.

A complete list of rules is posted on the park's information boards. If you have questions or concerns, please let us know.

## THE MAINE BEACHES REGION

### DIRECTIONS

The park is located off Maine Route 9 on Bayview Road between Old Orchard Beach and Camp Ellis in Saco.



Lat 43.481514, Lon -70.392965

### FEES & HOURS

- **Park fees** are payable at the entrance either at the staffed booth or by use of the payment canister.
- **Park season** is Memorial Day to Sept. 30; 9:00 a.m. to sunset daily unless otherwise posted at the gate. Please note that the nature center and other facilities may close earlier than the park grounds. Call the park for nature center hours and program information.
- **During the off-season** visitors are welcome to park outside the gate and walk or ski into the park. Please do not block the gate.
- **View online information** for all Parks, Historic Sites, and Public Lands locations at [www.parksandlands.com](http://www.parksandlands.com)

### CONTACTS

Ferry Beach State Park  
95 Bayview Road  
Saco, ME 04072  
(207) 283-0067 (May through Sept.)  
[www.maine.gov/ferrybeach](http://www.maine.gov/ferrybeach)

Southern Region Parks Office  
(207) 624-6080

### SERVICES & FACILITIES

- Accessible trails and facilities. A beach wheelchair is available.
- Beach with lifeguards June to August. Swim at your own risk.
- Changing room & toilets.
- Group picnic shelter. It may be reserved by calling the park.
- Nature Center - call the park for hours & program schedule.



# FERRY BEACH STATE PARK

## GUIDE & MAP



[www.ParksAndLands.com](http://www.ParksAndLands.com)



Long Pond. Photo by Jocelyn Hubbell.

## OVERVIEW

Ferry Beach State Park offers a sweeping view of miles of white sand beaches between the Saco River and Pine Point. The beach has been a destination for generations for sunbathing and swimming. Visitors also enjoy the park's wooded paths and boardwalks. These paths lead through a variety of habitats, including a bog, pond, and a tupelo swamp where a stand of tupelo (black gum) trees, rare at this latitude, may be viewed. A nature center offers exhibits and guided programs. Call the park ahead of your visit for the scheduled hours and programs.

## GEOLOGY OF FERRY BEACH

Ferry Beach is part of the sandy landform that arcs along the westerly side of Saco Bay. The sand that makes up the beach originates from a glacial outwash, following the most recent ice age that ended some 10,000 years ago. Sand carried down the Saco River to the ocean is deposited at the mouth of the river and is then picked up by wave action and deposited further on up the beach by a process called littoral drift.

Much of the sand that finally settles on the beach is then blown into berms and dunes, which run parallel to the beach. These dunes become effective barriers to coastal storms and high tides. This process still continues, although it is reduced somewhat by the construction of dams in the river.



Photo by Randall Landry.

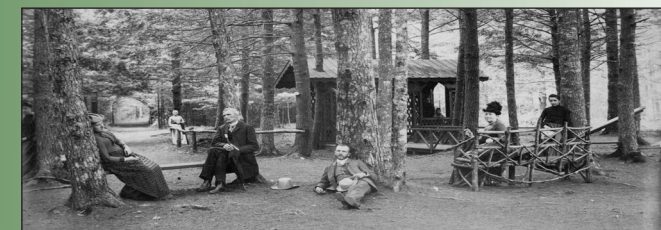
Dune grass holds the sand which provides nesting habitat for birds.

## PROPERTY HISTORY

Long before highways were common north of Boston, beaches provided travelers with relatively safe and easy transportation routes. A ferry crossing at nearby Saco River served beach travelers, and thus Ferry Beach State Park received its name. Two small locomotive engines, each with two or three open-sided passenger cars, traveled the 3.24-mile rail line from the Saco River at Camp Ellis to Old Orchard Beach between 1880 and 1923. They ran daily during the summer tourist season from 6:00 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. with by-request and set stops that included Ferry Beach. This was dubbed the Dummy Railroad, it is thought, because of the small engines and open passenger cars, and because the trains did not turn around. The engines pulled to Camp Ellis and pushed (backed up) to Old Orchard Beach. The roundtrip fare was 20 cents. A boat cruise to Wood Island from Camp Ellis added 25 cents to the fare.



The small train, dubbed the Dummy Railroad, that carried summer visitors from the ferry at Camp Ellis to Old Orchard Beach and back. Circa 1895.



Summer visitors enjoying the shade in a local park. Photo courtesy of Dyer Library Archives/Saco Museum. A gift of Mrs. Guy Emerson

## PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS













Funding from the Land for Maine's Future and the Land and Water Conservation Fund, plus private donations made the purchase of the park land and the construction of the nature center possible.

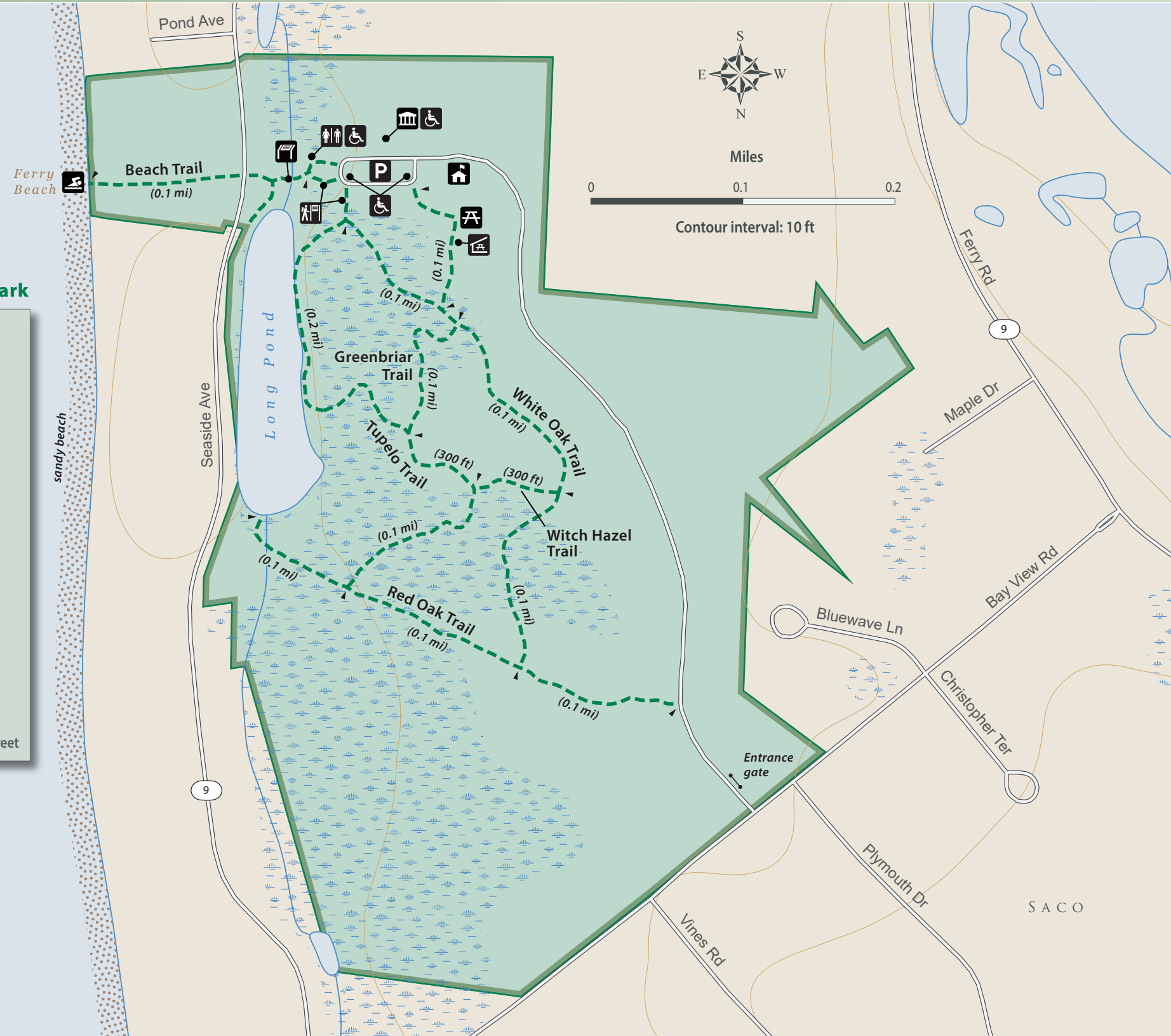
AmeriCorps members, including Maine Conservation Corps, have assisted with trail maintenance, educational programs, and special events.



## Ferry Beach State Park

### Trails and Interest Points

-  Hiking trail
  -  Entrance booth
  -  Parking
  -  Picnic area
  -  Group picnic shelter
  -  Toilets
  -  Accessible
  -  Kiosk
  -  Interpretive sign
  -  Nature center
  -  Swimming area
- Transportation
-  Secondary road, Street



## TRAILS

Note that the map is shown with south at the top so that it is oriented for your direction of travel as you enter the park.

Please review the park map to become familiar with the trail system before venturing out into it. Trails are color coded on the trail sign at the edge of the parking area and on the sign posts along the trails. There are several loops and combinations of walks one may take to discover the park's varied habitats.

Trails are open to the public year-round; however, signs are removed during late fall, winter and early spring for storage and maintenance.



Witch Hazel Trail.

**Tupelo Trail** (easy, 0.36 miles) crosses a boardwalk overlooking a pocket swamp filled with ferns, mosses, and the tupelo trees for which this trail is named. A picnic table provides a great spot to rest and take in the view of Long Pond at its mid-point. Enter the tupelo swamp along a second boardwalk and get a close look at tupelo trees and their thick, blocky bark, which resembles alligator hide. The trail ends at the intersection with the Red Oak Trail.

**Access:** Begin at the northeast corner parking lot and stay to the right at all trail crossings to remain on this trail.

- For a 1-mile easy loop showcasing several of the park's unique features, combine the Tupelo Trail with the Red Oak and White Oak Trails. Download the Natural Heritage Hike for this loop at: [www.maine.gov/dacf/mnap/assistance/hikes/ferry\\_beach.pdf](http://www.maine.gov/dacf/mnap/assistance/hikes/ferry_beach.pdf)
- Shorter loops are in combination with either the Greenbriar or Witch Hazel Trails.

**Red Oak Trail** (easy, 0.30 miles) Look for the red oaks, for which this trail is named, with their pointed leaf tips. Be sure to watch the forest floor as well, especially during late summer, for the yellow spindle coral mushrooms. The trail ends at the north end of Long Pond where a bench provides a great spot to view the entire length of the pond.

**Access:** off the park entry road to explore as an up-and-back or combine with the White Oak and Tupelo Trail for a 1-mile loop leaving from the parking lot.

**White Oak Trail** (easy, 0.30 miles) is a cool, shady respite after a day on the beach. This trail meanders through a hemlock woods and ends at the Red Oak Trail. See bulleted notes under the Tupelo Trail description for looping hike options.

**Access:** Begin at the northeast corner parking lot and stay to the left at all trail crossings to remain on this trail. Or, connect from the picnic area trail at the northwest corner of the lot.

**Witch Hazel Trail** (easy, 0.057 miles or 300 feet) links the Tupelo Trail to the White Oak Trail, making a 1/2-mile loop with both start and finish at the parking lot.

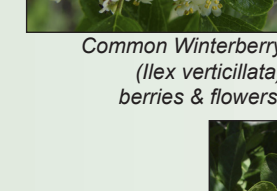
**Greenbriar Trail** (easy, 0.10 miles) links the Tupelo Trail to the White Oak Trail, making a 0.4-mile loop with both start and finish at the parking lot.



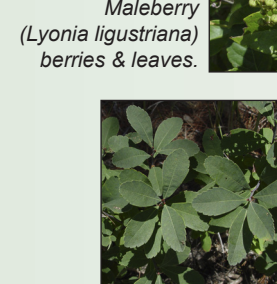
Eastern white pine (*Pinus strobus*) needles



Common Winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*) berries & flowers.



Maleberry (*Lyonia ligustriana*) berries & leaves.



Sweet gale (*Myrica gale*) leaves & flowers.



Witch hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*) leaves & flowers.



White oak leaf (*Quercus alba*)



Greenbriar (*Smilax rotundifolia*) leaves & spines.



Northern bayberry (*Myrica pensylvanica*) leaves & berries.

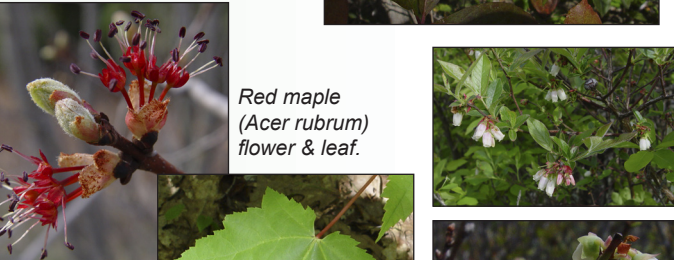
## PLANTS OF INTEREST AROUND THE TUPELO SWAMP

The swamp is noted for a large stand of black tupelo, which is extremely rare in Maine. They represent the northern most extension of the tupelo range, which includes most of the eastern United States. Tupelo may be recognized by their gray, deeply fissured bark (up to 10 cm) and short branches, which tend to grow horizontally with sub-branches at nearly right angles. Tupelo trees may grow to a height of 30 meters.



Black tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*) bark & leaves.

All plant detail photos courtesy of the Maine Natural Areas Program.



Red maple (*Acer rubrum*) flower & leaf.



Highbush blueberry (*Vaccinium corybosum*) bush & flowers



Greenbriar (*Smilax rotundifolia*) leaves & spines.

Northern bayberry (*Myrica pensylvanica*) leaves & berries.