

**Map 2 - Rowley, Ipswich, Hamilton,  
Topsfield, Georgetown, Boxford - BAY  
CIRCUIT TRAIL route**

(as shown on map 2 dated March 2011)  
(text updated March 2011)

**(North to South) PROSPECT HILL in  
ROWLEY to MIDDLETON RD in  
BOXFORD**

**A** N42 42.544 W70 53.478

0.0 **Prospect Hill** trailhead is on south side of Rte 133, 0.5 m west of jct Rte 1A. P=5

Proceed on dirt rd thru gate, past rd on right that ascends to summit. Follow white blazes  
0.2 Right at field, ascend to Prospect Hill summit.

0.4 Left at trail jct (water tower on summit can be seen thru trees; take side trail to right to summit for a limited view of the coastline); start descent.

0.6 Halfway down turn right up hill again; follow blazes to old rd. Right; then quick left  
1.0 Cross Dow Brook, then cross under power line; turn right.

Continue on trail to Con Com land, cross 3 new equestrian/foot bridges, and follow trail thru fields to Linebrook Rd.

**B** N42 41.110 W70 53.816

2.5 **Willowdale State Forest** parking area (P=8). Tr jcts in this eastern part of **Willowdale State Forest** are numbered.

Enter **Willowdale State Forest** thru forest gate, parallel field to woods.

Turn right and at #24 follow trail sign and turn left.

Trail is well marked with white blazes to #4.

Continue to #5 and major junction at #6

**C** N42 40.007 W70 54.318

4.4 #6 Right at this major intersection. (See next page for description of the alternative east-west route to this major intersection) Note: white blazed connector trail with Discover Hamilton Trail comes in from left (this connector trail leads 0.5 mi to Topsfield Rd.; parking available on Topsfield Rd. at trail crossing) Many side trails enter the next stretch; follow blazes (straight at 48, 47, 7, 8, 9).

5.1 #10 Left at jct

5.4 #11 Right off woods rd and proceed across swampy area

5.7 #12 Right to boardwalk across Howlett Brook

**D** N42 40.146 W70 55.576

6.2 West St to Rte. 1 crossing (P=4) (*caution: heavy traffic; although trail continues directly across the highway it is safer to proceed left to top of hill and cross there, then return along other side of Rte 1*)

Enter the **Hood Pond section of Willowdale State Forest**

**E** N42 40.117 W70 56.065

6.8 Cross Old Right Rd, then right onto side tr and down steep hill

5.1 Cross footbridge; in 0.2 mi right onto Rowley Rd, then before reaching Linebrook Rd (Ipswich) turn left into woods. Cross second foot bridge, and 0.2 mi to Linebrook Rd.

**F** N42 40.316 W70 57.033

8.0 Linebrook Rd in Ipswich. (Just before crossing Linebrook Rd, take side trail 0.12 mi to a scenic panoramic view of Hood Pond) Follow esker, right onto another esker, then down toward Boxford Rd in Rowley. Now in **Georgetown-Rowley State Forest**. Right onto Boxford Rd briefly; cross and go left uphill into woods

9.7 Mill River crossing. (*CAUTION: as of spring 2008, the Mill River foot/horse bridge in this section is in hazardous condition because of beaver activity and subsequent flooding. Use with great caution at your own risk, or bypass this section for now by a temporary route: At trail intersection #82 (at 8.9 miles) turn left, descend esker, cross wetland on bog bridge to #90. Turn right to #89, then left for a short distance, and follow trail to right which leads to the intersection of Rowley Rd and Camelot Rd. Turn left on Rowley Rd, right onto Rte. 97, cross I-95 bridge, continue 0.5 miles to Kelsey Rd, and turn left to resume following BCT. Temporary route is 1.8 miles.*)

Go right, descend esker to cross foot/horse bridge, and follow trail to intersections #28, #26, #27 and #22. At #22, turn left and follow the woods road to bridge crossing Rte. 95.

**G** N42 42.171 W70 57.992

11.1 Cross bridge over I-95 (Pingree Farm Cart Rd). Bear left at fork in woods rd

11.8 Entrance to **Georgetown-Rowley State Forest** (P=10) at end of Pingree Farm Rd.

Immediate sharp left after passing metal gate, continue on woods rd, then right at T jct

13.2 Leave **Georgetown-Rowley State Forest**, go right on King Edwards Ct, and left

on King George Dr.

**H** N42 41.218 W70 58.965

13.7 Cross Rte. 97 onto Kelsey Rd.

(Temporary route joins here)

13.9 Left onto RR bed under power line; after going around metal gate continue straight, turn right across ditch and up embankment onto BCT bearing right on blazed tr thru woods and parallel to Kelsey Rd

14.0 Left onto Hemlock Rd; 0.3 mi right onto Ipswich Rd, then left onto Round Top Rd passing #18 by 100 ft. Right for short trail thru Round Top Park, left back onto Round Top Rd., then right onto Campground Rd, and left onto Chapman Way. Enter woods at end of paved section of Chapman Way. Cross footbridge over Lowe's Pond inlet (*Caution: Sometimes this part is flooded by beavers*)

15.1 Right onto Boren Lane and left at #41 across lawn to reenter woods at trailhead entrance of **Chapman Way** to Boxford Center. Follow antique woods rd, passing cemetery on left, down driveway to the end where it meets Georgetown Rd.

16.9 Left onto Georgetown Rd (becomes Elm St); past Depot Rd (Middleton Rd) to **Boxford Center**

**K** N42 39.754 W70 59.864

16.0 Boxford BCT map & Boxford

Community Store on right (P=25+, food, restroom, phone available)

16.1 Left onto Topsfield Rd (BCT sign). In 0.5 mi right onto Cahoon Rd (BCT sign); then right into **Boy Scout Park** (P=25+). Pass to left of playground, enter woods southwest corner of

parking lot. Left at field with flagpole. Follow blazes to exit between 2 houses onto Dana Rd. (Note: if Boy Scouts are using park, bypass the park via Dana Rd)

**L** N42 38.712 W70 59.337

17.1 Right onto Dana Rd, then go thru the cul de sac and bear left onto the Dana Rd extension

17.2 At break in stone wall, enter **Lockwood Forest**, go right onto path, proceed to Fish Brook, then bear left. With Fish Brook on right, in 0.2 mi enter field, proceed along right edge; re-enter woods directly across field from where you entered the field. Shortly, cross a stone retaining wall, bear right, pass old mill site on the right (note: horses not allowed along Fish Brook dam site trail)

17.8 Right onto Lockwood Lane, cross 2 bridges. Resume tr on left (south) side of the street. Walk around the gate and follow the tr along the west bank of Fish Brook. Continue straight at 4 way woods rd jct, bear right at fork, to stay on marked main trail up a hill, thru a wet spot, up a small hill past a kiosk, to Middleton Rd (BCT map)

**M** N42 38.408 W70 59.447

18.5 Cross Middleton Rd. Enter **Bald Hill Reservation** at steel gate (P=8), where map of reservation is posted. (*Continued on Map 3*)

*(East to West ) APPLETON FARMS and APPLETON FARMS GRASS RIDES, HAMILTON; to WILLOWDALE STATE FOREST TRAIL JUNCTION, IPSWICH*

*Currently this section of the trail starts at*

*Appleton Farms and joins the Bay Circuit Trail from Plum Island in Willowdale State Forest.*

*Plans are underway to connect the trail from Appleton Farms to Crane Beach. Nearest parking for the beginning of the trail is located 0.3 mi north. At the intersection of Rte 1A and Waldingfield Rd, enter the driveway for the parking area (P=20) off Waldingfield Rd. This trail is marked with white blazes, except for the section through Appleton Farms Grass Rides.*

**N** N42 39.123 W70 50.627

0.0 Enter the **Appleton Farms** (dogs and bikes prohibited) on private driveway off Rte 1A. Follow old dirt road around Patch Field to Carriage Barn and The Trustees of Reservations office area. Cross RR bridge and follow horse and walking trails along the Great Pasture. At the cut thru a stone wall, leave **Appleton Farms**.

0.5 **Appleton Farms Grass Rides** (horses prohibited). Continue straight to offset trail junction (right 0.2 mi to parking on Highland St) and cross thru junction, pass two more trail junctions, turn right on descending trail, and cross over a small stone bridge. Follow trail to Round Point granite monument.

0.8 Six trails converge at the monument. Leave by the trail opposite from where you entered.

Go

0.5 mi., past one tr on right to Cutler Rd

**P** N42 38.005 W70 51.920

1.3 Cross Cutler Rd to trail entrance in the **Harvard Forest**. Portions of the trail overlay the Discover Hamilton Trail. From here on, the BCT has standard white blazes. Go 0.1 mi. to tr

bridge over Black Brook. Enter Essex County Greenbelt's **Pingree Reservation**. Cross bridge, bear left up onto esker then right down to 4-way tr jct. Right at tr jct. Left up hill. Right at horse fence. Follow tr down hill and parallel to horse track. Keep left. When trail comes to driveway, turn right at open field before driveway, go west of Pingree School pond, then left along marsh to School Drive and Highland Rd.

**R** N42 38.316 W70 53.152

2.9 Cross Highland Rd, enter private driveway, and immediate right on new bridle path paralleling Highland Rd and over bridge connecting to Bradley Palmer State Park.

3.1 Enter Bradley Palmer State Park on tr left. Intersection numbers are on DCR posts. Bear left at 68, straight through 75, 71, 72 to park rd

4.0 Straight across rd to tr. At major jct of six trails with town boundary marker go right. Straight through 55, 56, 40 to steeplechase course and open field.

4.4 Take left on trail going uphill into the woods at 39. Bear right at 38, then straight through 35 and 30 to Moon Hill field.

4.8 Bear right at field and follow edge of field. Pass trails at 28, 27. Right at 26. At bottom go straight across open area and continue straight down tr to Ipswich River. Cross bridge to Topsfield Rd

(As of 2010, the bridge over the Ipswich River is closed due to damage to the center pier during the March floods. Until it is repaired, a 1.6 miles temporary trail is shown on the map. From the south side of the bridge, go left on paved accessible trail along the river

to Bradley Palmer State Park parking lot, and right on park roadway to Asbury St entrance. Right on Asbury St to cross the river, and right on Ipswich Rd (becomes Topsfield Rd at town line) for 0.6 mil to trail crossing road north of the bridge)

**S** N42 39.629 W70 54.169

5.5 Cross Topsfield Rd and go 0.5 mi. straight on past several trails to well-marked jct

**C** N42 40.007 W70 54.318

5.9 Bay Circuit 3-way jct in **Willowdale State Forest** eastern section (*see point "C" on previous page*)

## **Map 2 - Rowley, Ipswich, Hamilton, Topsfield, Georgetown and Boxford - FOR MORE INFORMATION**

**Trail marking:** BCT is marked with dollar-bill sized white blazes everywhere except in Appleton Farm Grass Rides.

**Trail uses:** BCT and other trails are generally open to all non-motorized uses and closed to all motorized uses with a few exceptions. Horses are not permitted in Appleton Farms Grass Rides nor on some trails in Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary at certain times. Dogs prohibited in Ipswich River Sanctuary. ORV use is permitted only on certain trails in Georgetown-Rowley SF. Snowmobiles permitted on certain trails in Bradley Palmer SP and Georgetown-Rowley SF. See DEM maps for details. Most trails are suitable for cross-country skiing. Most are open to mountain bikes, but the glacial eskers are fragile. Bike

with care with the land in mind. Equestrians are frequent on most, and mountain bikers in particular need to be careful not to frighten the horses.

### **Maps and trail guides:**

- Relevant **USGS topo map** is 7.5 x 15 Ipswich
- **BTA/BOLT Guide to the Bay Circuit and to other Walks in Boxford** (BTA/BOLT-2005) includes an excellent detailed guide to the BCT from Willowdale S.F. to North Andover. [www.btabolt.org](http://www.btabolt.org) for current sources and prices.
- **The Bay Circuit Guide to Walks in and around Ipswich**, (Ipswich BCT Committee) includes a detailed guide to the BCT from Prospect Hill, Rowley to Rowley Rd in Boxford between Willowdale S.F. and Georgetown-Rowley S.F. Available at many locations including town clerk's office, library, stores
- **Discover Hamilton Trail** map and trail description (Ham.Cons.Com). Free at Hamilton Town Hall on Rt. 1A (577 Bay Rd)
- Trail maps of **Appleton Farms and Grass Rides** and of **Crane Beach & Wildlife Refuge** on TTOR website: [www.thetrustees.org](http://www.thetrustees.org)
- Essex Country Greenbelt sells a guidebook of their properties online: [www.ecga.org](http://www.ecga.org)
- Bradley Palmer, Willowdale, Georgetown-Rowley, Cleaveland Farm, Boxford SF, Prospect Hill (DCR) **Maps** available at headquarters; some also online [www.mass.gov/dcr/parks/trails.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/parks/trails.htm).
- Ipswich River **canoeing map** sold online:

ipswichriver.org

- Maps online at Essex County Trails Assn  
www.ectaonline.org
- **Massachusetts Audubon** maps online  
www.massaudubon.org Maps online.
- **Pingree Reservation.** Map online at Essex  
County Greenbelt Assn. www.ecga.org
- Trustees of Reservations property **maps** for  
sale; order on-line. Some also online:  
www.thetrustees.org

### *Local trail and land/water protection organizations*

**Mass. Dept. of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)** administers Bradley Palmer SP, Willowdale, Georgetown-Rowley, Cleaveland Farm and Boxford SF, and Prospect Hill. Headquarters are in the northern part of Bradley Palmer SP, off Asbury St 978-887-5931  
www.mass.gov/dcr/parks/trails.htm

**The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR)**, the country's oldest land trust with more than 100 outstanding reservations in Mass., including 6 thru which BCT passes; own Appleton Farms Grass Rides and the Crane properties in Ipswich. Quarterly newsletter to members.  
www.thetrustees.org

**Essex County Greenbelt Assn** own or hold conservation restrictions on many properties, particularly wetlands. BCT passes through Pingree Reservation. Monthly hikes.  
www.ecga.org Quarterly newsletter. 978-768-7241

**Boxford Trails Assn/Boxford Open Land Trust (BTA/BOLT)** has been a prime mover and steward of the BCT and other trails in Boxford and surrounding towns. The group owns or holds conservation restrictions on several open spaces. Weekly hikes, 9:15 Tuesdays, annual equestrian events, quarterly newsletter. Office on second floor above Boxford Community Store  
www.btabolt.org

**Ipswich Bay Circuit Trail Committee** has been instrumental in establishing BCT from Rowley thru Willowdale SF, now working to extend Hamilton branch of BCT to Crane Beach. New members welcome. Meet 2nd Tuesday at Town Hall in Historical Commission office at 7:30

**Rowley Bay Circuit Committee** was created in 1986 to encourage inclusion of Rowley's open space in the BC greenway. They are now working on closing BCT gap between Newbury and Rowley.

**Hamilton Conservation Commission** developed "Discover Hamilton Trail," part of which coincides with BCT

**Horticultural Society of Boxford**, working to protect and improve the Harlan P. Kelsey Arboretum. POBox 142, Boxford 01921

**Massachusetts Audubon** protects the Ipswich River Sanctuary and 44 other properties. They offer classes and walks for adults and children. Beautiful bi-monthly magazine and reduced admission fees for members 1-800-

AUDUBON www.massaudubon.org Maps online.

**Ipswich River Watershed Assn (IRWA)** works to protect water quality and enhance recreational use of the Ipswich River and tributaries. Organize occasional canoe trips and events. Quarterly newsletter. 978-356-8939  
ipswichriver.org

**Essex County Trail Assn (ECTA)** - mostly equestrians, but also hikers and mountain bikers. Maintain trails including Bradley Palmer SP and Pingree Reservation. Conduct rides and occasional hikes. Quarterly newsletter 978-526-4849

**New England Mountain Bike Assn (NEMBA)** sponsors many rides, including some in this area; help maintain trails in Boxford SF  
Monthly newsletter 800-576-3622

**Charles River Wheelmen** - very active group of bicyclists that lead rides of varying lengths throughout Bay Circuit area. Excellent website lists rides, other information, and membership info. www.crw.org

**North Shore Bikeways Coalition** promotes road and mountain biking, as well as development of bikeways, including proposed Border to Boston Bikeway, which might follow the abandoned rail line in Boxford and Topsfield.  
www.masspaths.org/bikeways/facguide/mapnpr  
io.htm

Greater Newbury's **Friends Of Our Trails** (FOOT) merged with the Coastal Trails Coalition. Info on the website: [www.coastaltrails.org/j1/](http://www.coastaltrails.org/j1/)

Informal **hiking group** meets Wed. 9:30 am fall to spring, weather permitting, at Ipswich Town Wharf. For info phone 978-356-5823

The **Bay Circuit Alliance** headquarters is in the Moor and Mountain store at 3 Railroad St, Andover, across the tracks from the converted old RR station. 978-470-1982 [www.baycircuit.org](http://www.baycircuit.org) .

## **Map 2 - Rowley, Ipswich, Hamilton, Topsfield, Georgetown, Boxford - THE JEWELS**

**Prospect Hill** (DCR; 90 acres) - This parcel, including the summit of Prospect Hill, was acquired by the state in 1995 with the help of the BCA and others. It is a glacial drumlin rising 267' above sea level, providing a limited view from Cape Ann to the Isles of Shoals in NH and Mt. Agamenticus in Maine. BCT passes over the summit.

**Ipswich Town and Water Dept. Lands** - Forested lands behind Dow Brook and Bull Brook Reservoirs make a very pleasant area for walking. Good view down Bull Brook Reservoir where the BCT crosses one end of it.

**Willowdale State Forest--Pine Swamp Section** (DCR; 2400 acres) - beautiful forest, eskers and wetlands, criss-crossed by numerous

old carriage roads and trails. Getting lost is easy, but tr jcts have recently been marked with numbers. Map in 1999 edition of *BC Guide to Walks in and around Ipswich* shows numbers. Map online [www.mass.gov/dcr](http://www.mass.gov/dcr) Click on "trails". BCT thru Willow-dale is described in BTA/BOLT and in Ipswich guides. The BCT 3-way junction where the Hamilton branch and the Rowley/Newburyport branch meet is in the center of the Pine Swamp section and is labeled with trail signs. A favorite area of equestrians. Bicyclists should use caution.

**Willowdale State Forest--Hood Pond Section** (DCR; 2400 acres) - Some of the most spectacular glacial eskers on the BCT, as well as numerous kettle holes and vernal pools. From Linebrook Rd at Hood Pond to Rowley Rd the BCT runs mostly on top of an esker, very steep at points

**Cleveland Farm State Forest** (DCR) - Acquired in 1997 with help from the former owners (the Haynes family), BTA/BOLT, Boxford Conservation Fund, and Essex Country Greenbelt. Contains many eskers and wetlands and helps protect a fragile environment. BCT runs along the northern edge for a short distance. Trail map is included in the new edition of the Boxford Bay Circuit guidebook. Also on DCR Willowdale map.

**Georgetown-Rowley State Forest** (DCR; 1,112 acres) - Split by I-95, but a footbridge connects the two sides and carries the BCT over the highway. Certain trails are open to ORV's and snowmobiles, including part of the BCT. Impressive eskers near the eastern edge.

Map available at BPSH hq and online [www.mass.gov/dcr](http://www.mass.gov/dcr) Click on "trails" and in BTA/BOLT guidebook to Boxford trails

**Harlan P. Kelsey Arboretum** (Horticultural Society of Boxford; 4.2 acres) - protected remnant of a 500 acre nursery with many plants brought from No.Carolina. Paths thru former show garden. Visitor center and parking to be developed. P along Hemlock Rd (on BCT)

**Chapman Lane** - Beautiful views; enjoy this old cart lane to the center of Boxford. Part of the Lane has been permanently protected by a BTA/BOLT land purchase

**Boxford Historic District** - BCT passes thru; many fine old buildings, described in BTA/BOLT guidebook to Boxford trails

**Lockwood Forest** - BCT goes thru the Lockwood/Moore estate conservation land and over private land protected by a conservation restriction. Views of the pond on Fish Brook, rhododendrons and azaleas. Respect owners' privacy by keeping to south side of field near pond. Historic forge and mill sites

**Appleton Farms Grass Rides and Appleton Farms**, Ipswich (TTOR; 917 acres) - wide vistas and many broad formal trails, originally intended for equestrians and horse-drawn carriages (horses and dogs banned from various areas. Check TTOR website for rules and more info). Detour off the BCT up the hill to the north edge of the property and an extensive view over Appleton Farms, in continuous cultivation since the 1600's. It will be continued as a working farm. A master use plan is being drawn. It is easy to get lost in the Grass

Rides. Follow the red TTOR disks that mark the BCT/Discover Hamilton Trail here, or obtain the detailed map for sale by TTOR. When you get to the monument (the setting will surprise you), note on which trail you entered the clearing. The BCT continues on the trail directly opposite. Popular for cross-country skiing, but the small parking area is often full on weekends; cars parked along Cutler Rd will be towed. Try parking at Bradley Palmer S.F. and skiing or walking BCT to Grass Rides and back

**Harvard Forest** in Hamilton - Harvard University owns a tract on both sides of the MBTA rail line; contains some unusual tree species. For more details see the *Discover Hamilton* trail guide available from the Hamilton Conservation Commission. The BCT passes through a small corner of this forest

**Pingree Reservation** (Essex County Greenbelt) - acquired recently as a gift from the Pingree family. It is an important part of the protection of Black Brook and provides a trail link to Bradley Palmer State Forest. Several trails, some on eskers, but no complete trail map yet

**Bradley Palmer State Park** (DCR; 721 acres)- high hills, a wading pool, a steeplechase course and the Ipswich River flowing along one side. BCT/Discover Hamilton Trail winds through it. Map available free at park hq and online: [www.mass.gov/dcr](http://www.mass.gov/dcr) Click on "trails". Trails are also shown on *Discover Hamilton* trail map and *BC Guide to Walks in Ipswich*. 978-887-5931

**Ipswich River** - wonderful flat-water canoeing.

The IRWA publishes an excellent canoeing map and occasionally leads canoe trips. Canoes can be rented at Audubon's Ipswich Sanctuary and from Foote Brothers on Topsfield Rd

**Willowdale Mill** (Essex County Greenbelt) - at the north-east corner of Bradley Palmer on Winthrop St; can be reached from BCT by a lovely trail along the Ipswich River downstream from the footbridge where the BCT crosses

**Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary** (Massachusetts Audubon; 2,267 acres) - 10 miles of trails, including esker trail overlooking Wenham Swamp and an incredible rock garden. Canoes for rent in summer; limited camping on islands by prior arrangement. Courses and birding walks offered for adults and children. Trail map available for loan or purchase. Small admission fee for non-members. Closed Mondays. Horses, dogs, bicycling prohibited. Access from Perkins Row, off Rte 97 south of Rte 1 jct 978-887-9264  
<[www.massaudubon.org](http://www.massaudubon.org)>

**Julia Bird Reservation** (Essex County Greenbelt) - A little-known but beautiful reservation on the Ipswich River downstream from Bradley Palmer. Steep banks overlook the river. Limited parking off Waldingfield Rd west of the RR bridge