

Map 3 - Boxford, North Andover, Andover -

BAY CIRCUIT TRAIL route

Trail marking: The BCT is marked with white dollar bill-sized blazes, oriented vertically, painted or nailed on trees or poles. Offset blazes indicate a turn in the direction of the upper blaze. In Bald Hill and Boxford SF, use numbered jcts for location. On some AVIS properties other trails are also marked with white blazes; look for the BCT logo at jct.

Parking along the street is possible at some trailheads. No parking allowed along Rte 114, Gray Rd., Rte 125, Main St., or Central St. in Andover.

Boxford Center to Sharpner's Pond Rd

A 42°39.48" 70°59.53"

0.0 BC map & Boxford Community Store on right (food, restroom, phone available)

0.1 Left onto Topsfield Rd (BCT sign). In 0.5 mi right onto Cahoon Rd (BCT sign); then right into Boy Scout Park lot (P=many). Pass to left of parking lot, enter woods tr at southeast corner of parking lot. Follow woods rd to clearing. Bear left. Reenter woods on first tr to the left. Keep right, passing campsite trails on left. BCT turns sharp left, then right. Follow blazes to exit between 2 houses onto Dana Rd. (Note: if Boy Scouts are using park, bypass the park via Dana Rd)

1.0 Right onto Dana Rd, then go thru the cul de sac and bear left onto the Dana Rd extension to enter **Lockwood Forest**

1.4 At break in stone wall, 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)

1.8 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)

B 42°38.24" 70°59.26"

16.3 Cross Middleton Rd. (P=8) Enter **Bald Hill**

Reservation at steel gate, where map of reservation is posted.)

B 42°38'24" 70°59'26"

2.5 Cross Middleton Rd. P = 8. Enter **Bald Hill**

Reservation at steel gate where map of the Reservation is posted. BCT is marked with standard white blazes and number markers. Go straight, past pond on left. *You may encounter puddles and muddy areas between the Middleton Rd. gate and #14 due to beaver flooding of the trail.* Just after end of pond, (old BC trail turns left toward a beaver dam) go straight (marked as a right hand turn) at #14 thus leaving the woods rd, and ascend gradually through an extensive hemlock grove beside a lovely wetland. Exiting the hemlock forest, go left on stepping stones across a small stream. Soon the trail bears right and up hill to #23. Turn left at #23. Cross over a small stream. Go left at #22. Go left again at #21. Keep left at next fork. Pass #26. Turn right at the wooden gate marked "Trail Closed" and right again at #8A where the main woods road is rejoined. *(For Bald Hill with partial view in winter, turn left at #8A, past #9, and left at #10 and #27 to summit.)* Pass slightly obscured marker #8. Turn right at #7, left at #6, left at #2 when you enter graveled clearing near former ABM site. Follow cairns a short distance to exit onto Sharpner's Pond Rd. P=multiple. Bald Hill section is 3.6 miles.

Boxford State Forest gate to Rte 114

C 42°38'32" 71°2'10"

0.0 Cross Forest St onto Sharpner's Pond Rd.

0.78 After a group of mail boxes and just before Essex St (aka Salem St), go right into woods on old RR bed

0.88 Left at first BCT blaze

0.93 Cross Salem St to enter state forest land

1.03 Cross under power lines to the left

1.11 Right at woods road fork

1.35 *(2005 rerouting—beavers)* Left to road

1.67 Right onto Sharpner's Pond Rd.

1.91 Right onto driveway for Bud Cyr Recycling Center and Sharpners Pond Athletic Fields

2.0 Pass thru a gate, then sharp left at edge of open area

2.02 Bear right onto dirt rd along edge of open area.

Enter woods tr at far left (NW) corner of the parking lot.

Go right at first jct. At second set of athletic fields,

follow tr to left. Emerge at another parking lot. Exit the northwest corner to reenter the woods for a few yards and exit on to Berry St
2.43 jct with Route 114.

(Note: South to North—From Rte 114 cross to Berry St, then right on trail toward soccer field. Rerouted BCT skirts RIGHT side of soccer fields. Take driveway to Sharpner's Pond Rd, then left at blazed trail to rejoin former BCT)

Jct Rte 114/Harold Parker Rd (No. Andover) to Shawsheen River (Andover)

Harold Parker State Forest, Mass. DCR

D 42°37'46" 71°3'53"

0.0 Jct Rte 114 and Harold Parker Rd. Trail enters forest on right in 100 yds (P=3). Use stone wall to cross wetland (cyclists--continue on Harold Parker Rd 0.25 mi, right onto trail, join BCT at 0.34)

0.34 Right at T trail jct.

0.38 Left (9/2005 rerouting)

0.65 Left (rejoin former BCT route)

0.86 Right at trail jct (Wet in spring. Stay on trail here to Salem St to avoid adjacent gun club)

Trail relocation: turn left to avoid wet section. Many turns; follow blazes. Then left to return to woods rd and former BCT. Cross bridge

1.21 Sharp left at trail jct

E 42°37'13" 71°5'1"

2.48 Cross Salem St (picnic pavilion about 100 yds to the right; P=5) Follow blazes at tricky jct

2.73 Right turn, proceed down slope

F 42°37'4" 71°5'36"

2.79 Berry Pond Rd (paved but closed to traffic; public beach, restrooms, large parking lot 0.25 mile along rd on right) Bear right on rd briefly (possible relocation to cross rd directly onto trail that will connect with trail below)

2.82 Left into woods (*distances approx. for rest of HPSF*)

3.0 Right onto narrow trail, thru or around two 19th century granite quarries

3.4 Cross small woods road, then downhill to footbridge. Continue to rd

3.6 Cross Jenkins Rd (P=2). (*distances measured for rest of Andover*)

3.7 Trail descends to small brook crossing

3.76 Glacial erratic boulder

Jan. 2006 note: *Flooding exists near the former mill/soapstone quarry in SkugReservation. Temporary route, which may not be blazed, is as follows:*

3.76 Glacial erratic boulder; follow trail right instead of left.

Pass thru stone wall. Almost immediately turn left. At T junction turn right onto BCT. Continue at * below
Going S to N: Just before tr goes thru stone wall, turn left. At T jct turn right, go thru stone wall and continue to glacial erratic boulder. Go left on BCT.

Skug River Reservation, AVIS *Look for BCT logo markers at trail jcts. White blazes have also been used on non-BCT trails in AVIS reservations. When flooding has been eliminated, resume this BCT route:*

3.76 Glacial erratic boulder; follow trail left.

3.91 Right at trail jct before small footbridge

3.97 Pass stone foundations of former mill on left *

4.51 Sharp right at trail jct; cross long boardwalk
G 42°37'28" 71°6'1"

4.61 Cross Salem St (parking lot=6)

Hammond Reservation, AVIS; and Mary French Reservation, Cons.Com

4.61 Cross Salem St from Skug parking lot into

Hammond Reservation, go 0.11 mi to rock wall/trail intersection. Continue straight ahead up slight incline, bear left 0.08 mi. to trail intersection. Turn right to start of stone and earthen former dike (not suitable for bicycles), cross small bridge, and take left onto trail leading to long bog bridge/boardwalk.

This **Mary French Reservation** area offers dramatic views of wildlife. Boardwalk crosses Skug River twice and offers dramatic views of swamp and birds.

At end of boardwalk follow trail to Korinthian Way (parking on street)

5.2 Left on Korinthian Way to Grey Rd

5.4 Right on Grey Rd

5.43 Left onto narrow trail thru Conservation Commission woodlands

5.87 Left on Tucker Rd.

Chas. Ward Reservation, The Trustees of Reservations

5.91 Right off Tucker Rd.; bear immediate left at edge of field after crossing stone wall; sharp left after crossing field

6.0 Right onto grassy rd in woods

6.22 Proceed along lower edge of field; right into woods

6.29 Trail ascends through field

6.35 Tricky trail jct. Take level wide woods rd.

6.53 Stay on path thru field to top of Holt Hill.

6.62 Solstice stones; view of Boston to South. Sharp left to BCT sign at edge of field. Descend thru woods

6.75 Left onto paved access road, closed to traffic
H 42°38'25" 71°6'41"

6.81 Right onto trail (or continue on access road to Prospect Rd, right briefly to reservation parking lot, if that's where you left your car)

7.15 Tr junction. (note: a BCT tr thru wetlands complete with a boardwalk connects directly with route 125, opposite the woods rd at mile 7.75 below, but beaver activity may have flooded the trail. Choose described route below in spring or wet weather)

Left at trail jct.

7.45 Right onto Prospect Rd (reservation parking lot is .25 miles on left)

7.54 Cross Rte. 125 (*CAUTION: fast moving traffic*)

Right on trail beside fence, parallel with Rte. 125. Walk on highway briefly past wetland, then reenter woods

Phillips Academy

7.75 Left onto woods rd.

8.1 Cross field diagonally; use driveway to reach Salem St. (northbound, use the driveway with iron gate belonging to brick house at corner of Salem and Holt to reach field)

8.2 Right onto Salem St, immediate left onto Holt Rd, then right into woods

8.35 Enter PA athletic fields; proceed along track, head for parking lot near tennis courts. Follow driveway to Main St (pass through iron gate) (Southbound, enter PA driveway between iron gates, follow drive to athletic fields, continue more or less straight, parallel to track, to reach woodland trail)

The above section thru PA is not well blazed. To avoid it, walk or bicycle along Salem St from Holt Rd to traffic light at corner of Main St and Salem St.

J 42°38'46" 71°8'0"

8.6 Right onto Main St to traffic light. Cross to other side of Main St. Continue N to Phillips St.

9.0 Left onto Phillips St. (on-street parking) Cross School St.

9.6 Cross Central St; enter **Purdon Reservation, AVIS**. Follow main tr more or less straight

9.8 Left onto Lupine Rd. (exit Purdon Res) (P=3)

9.93 Right onto Central St. Cross Shawsheen River. Use caution to walk along narrow road under RR bridge.

K 42°38'51" 71°9'4"

10.07 Parking for several cars on right

(*Andover BCT continues on map 4*)

Map 3 - Boxford, North Andover, Andover - FOR MORE INFORMATION

Trail markings: BCT is marked with rectangular white blazes, painted or nailed to trees or poles. In AVIS reservations, other trails may also be marked with these blazes; look for Bay Circuit logo markers at trail junctions. Trail thru Phillips Academy campus is sparsely marked; use whatever route you find parallel to Salem St to get from Holt Rd to Main St.

Trail uses: All trails are open to the public for hiking and walking. Most are suitable for cross-country skiing (not West Parish Cemetery). AVIS discourages mountain bikes on its properties. Dogs and bicycles not permitted in West Parish Cemetery. Most Harold Parker SF trails are suitable for horses; some other properties have not been cleared to accommodate horses. No motorized vehicles allowed on any trails. Boy Scout camp in Boxford is closed to the public when in use by Boy Scouts.

Public transport: MBTA trains from North Station to Andover; also bus service from Boston
Maps and trailguides:

- Relevant USGS **topo maps** 7.5 x 15 are Ipswich, Lawrence, and Reading
- **State forest and park maps** online: www.mass.gov/dcr Click on Trails
- Free maps of **Harold Parker State Forest** are available at the park headquarters, Salem St about .25 miles south of Harold Parker Rd. on the Rte 114 side of the forest and online: www.mass.gov/dcr Click on Trails
- Free maps of **Boxford State Forest** are available at Bradley Palmer SP headquarters, off Asbury St. 978-887-5931 Map online: www.mass.gov/dcr Click on Trails
- Large map of **Charles Ward Reservation** is posted at the parking lot, Prospect Rd. Maps are sold at Moor and Mountain in Andover (3 Railroad St.) and online (see TTOR)
- TTOR map of **Weir Hill** available at Stevens Coolidge Place near Old No. Andover Center
- Maps of **North Andover** properties are available for photocopying in the maps file at the reference desk of Stevens Memorial Library.
- The AVIS map of **Andover** is available for about \$5 at Moor and Mountain and the Andover Bookstore. It is free to new members of AVIS (see below).
- **Walking tour maps** of several historic neighborhoods in **Andover** are available at Andover Historical Society, 93 Main St, for a small fee.
- **BTA/BOLT Guide to the Bay Circuit and to other Walks in Boxford** (BTA/BOLT-2005) www.btabolt.org for current sources and prices.
- **Andover Trail Guide** (2003) is available for \$10.95 at Moor and Mountain in Andover (3 Railroad St), and the Andover Bookstore (93 Main St). This book includes maps and descriptions of 41 properties, with history and natural features as well as suggested trail routes. Most maps also online: www.avisandover.org

Local trail and land/water protection organizations

Merrimack River Watershed Council works for protection of the watershed in Massachusetts and NH. Supervise volunteer stream monitors. Also lead canoe trips. 600 Suffolk St, Lowell 01854 978-275-0120 www.merrimack.org

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. They publish *The Bay Circuit Guide to Walks in and around Boxford*. The groups own or hold conservation restrictions on several properties thru which the BCT passes. www.btabolt.org

North Andover Trails Committee is a citizens' group interested in protecting open space, improving public access and trails, and offering public walks. Workdays are open to people with all skill levels. 978-682-6665

Andover Trails Committee publishes *Andover Trail Guide* with AVIS. Citizens' group supports Bay Circuit projects, improves and maintains existing trails on conservation land, and works on the Shawsheen River Greenway initiative. The public is invited to attend meetings and to volunteer for trails projects. Call BCA headquarters in Andover for meeting schedule: 978-470-1982

Members of the **Appalachian Mountain Club** Andover Committee lead guided walks in the area most weekends from Sept. thru June. Free to the public. Check "Events" column of local newspapers or join the AMC to receive a monthly magazine, listing walks and events throughout New England, NY, NJ, and PA 617-523-0655 x 303 www.amcboston.org

Andover Village Improvement Society (AVIS) owns over 1100 acres on 25 reservations that are open to the public for walking, skiing, and enjoyment of nature. Membership is \$15 individual, \$30 family. New members receive excellent map of the town, with major reservations mapped in detail. POBox 5097, Andover 01810 www.avisandover.org

The Trustees of Reservations manages Charles Ward Res. in Andover and North Andover, Weir Hill in North Andover (Stevens St.), and the Stevens-Coolidge Place in North Andover (near the Common). TTOR is the oldest land trust in the country, with 95 reservations in MA. Membership is open to the public. Quarterly newsletter 978-524-1858 www.thetrustees.org

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

The **North Shore Bikeways Coalition** promotes both road and mountain biking, as well as development of bikeways in the area. They are working particularly on the proposed Border to Boston Bikeway, which might follow the abandoned rail line in Boxford and Topsfield. Quarterly newsletter. www.massbike.org

Charles River Wheelmen - very active group of bicyclists that lead rides of varying lengths throughout BC area. Excellent website lists rides, membership & other info www.crw.org

The **Bay Circuit Alliance** headquarters is located in the Moor and Mountain store at 3 Railroad St., Andover, across the tracks from the converted old RR station. 978-470-1982. < baycircuit@juno.com > web page: www.baycircuit.org

MAP 3 - Boxford, No. Andover, Andover - THE JEWELS

Boy Scout Park - South of the Boxford Historic District lies this mostly forested property which includes a large parking lot, a ball park, a skating pond and a children's playground. It is used as a training ground for the Boy Scouts of America. When the Boy Scouts are using the park, it should be should be by-passed by following Dana Rd.

Wildcat Conservation Area - (Boxford; 319 acres) - Trails make a human & wildlife corridor from Four Mile Pond at the Alpers Property, across bridges thru wetlands, to a Stiles Pond access road. Pitcher plants in bogs, lovely hemlock forest, and remains of a wolf pit visible.

Bald Hill Reservation - 1624 contiguous acres, apportioned among the Boxford State Forest, the Phillips Wildlife Sanctuary, and Essex County Greenbelt, in the towns of Boxford, North Andover and Middleton. Motorized vehicles NOT allowed. Several historic landmarks, unique geology, 4 ponds, rare wildflowers and other wildlife. Details of these as well as detailed descriptions of the BCT and the many side trails are in the *Boxford Bay Circuit Guidebook*.

P=8 at Middleton Rd. entrance, P-=Multiple at lot at end of Sharpner Pond Rd

Harold Parker State Forest (Mass. Dept of Conservation & Recreation; 3100 acres) - Good hiking, ski touring, horseback riding, mountain bikes; fishing and hunting in limited areas with license. See map at headquarters for seasonal hunting areas. Headquarters are on Salem St., .25 mile south of Harold Parker Rd. Tr maps available. Call for current information about campground and public beach openings. Campground is on Jenkins Rd. Parking: Numerous off-road sites for 1 or 2 cars at trail access points. Several parking lots. Map online: www.mass.gov/dcr Click on Trails

Weir Hill Reservation (The Trustees of Reservations; 192 acres) - Twin drumlins rise 300 feet above shores of Lake Cochichewick and Stevens Pond. 4 miles of trails. Parking on Stevens St. Map available at Stevens-Coolidge Place.

Stevens-Coolidge Place (The Trustees of Reservations; 91 acres) - Historic house and gardens open to the public. House: Sun. 1-5 and Wed. 2-4 spring to fall; gardens open daily year round. Parking lot across Andover St, near Town Common.

Town Farm/Town Forest (No.And.Cons.Com; 180 acres) - fields, woodlands, wetlands, and ballfields. Access from Dale St and from Carriage Chase Rd off Castlemere.

Mazurenko Farm & Rea's Pond Cons. areas (No.And.Cons.Com; 120 acres) - Abundant wildlife enjoy diverse habitats. Blazed trail from parking lot on Bradford St (north of map 3).

Osgood Hill (No.And.Cons.Com; 165 acres) - Two blazed trails let walkers and skiers (not mountain bikers) enjoy this former estate and its woodlands, including a stretch along Lake Cochichewick. No wheeled vehicles. Map available at town hall. Parking on Osgood St between Prescott St and Chickering Rd. (north of map 3, near Weir Hill)

Den Rock Park (Lawrence; 80 acres) - Well-known rock-climbing site; numerous trails, some illegally used and damaged by ORVs. Small parking lot off Rte 114 in N. Andover

Skug River Reservation (Andover Village Improvement Society) - Over 200 years ago, the Skug River was dammed to power a profitable sawmill and grist mill. The massive stone walls of the millrace can still be seen. Also site of a soapstone quarry. Parking lot on Salem St; parking for 2 cars on Jenkins Rd.

Hammond Reservation (AVIS) - The stone and earthen causeway in Hammond Reservation was originally a dam, creating an ice pond and livestock watering hole.

map 3

Parking in Skug Reservation lot on Salem St

Mary French Reservation (And. Cons. Com) - Dramatic wetlands abutting the Skug River. Good birding. Easiest access to viewpoint is along wide boardwalk from Korinthian Way. Handicapped accessible. Parking on street

Charles W. Ward Reservation (The Trustees of Reservations; 700 acres) - Granite solstice stones crown Holt Hill, marking north, east, south and west. The smaller rectangular stones mark the sunrise and sunset directions on the longest and shortest days of the year. Great views. Near the main parking area on Prospect Rd. is Pine Hole Bog, a quaking bog, home to many rare plants including wild calla, horsetails, pitcher plants, and sundews. Ten miles of trails open to hikers, skiers, and mountain bikers. Parking lot off Prospect Rd.

Phillips Academy (450 acres) - PA is a co-ed day and boarding school for about 1100 students from throughout the United States and over 50 foreign countries. Descriptions of walking tours of the Academy and nearby School Street are available from the Andover Historical Society. Cherry and apple trees bloom in May. Cochran Wildlife Sanctuary blooms with mountain laurel and rhododendron in late June (access from the end of Chapel Ave. off Rte. 28). Wide smooth trails are suitable for walkers with limited vision or people with sports wheelchairs. Also open to the public: PA's Addison Gallery, specializing in American art, and Peabody Museum of Archeology with interesting displays of the local Pennacook tribes.

Purdon Reservation (AVIS; 9 acres) - In 1843, Purdon Reservation's natural amphitheater was the site of a speech by Daniel Webster to an audience of thousands. Parking on Lupine Rd

Lupine Reservation (AVIS; 2 acres) - Look for a plaque near the remaining piers of the Andover Canoe Club, circa 1910. Walkers enjoy a view of the Shawsheen River as it passes under the old stone railroad arch. Good fishing. Parking for several cars on Lupine Rd.

Taft Reservation (AVIS; 60 acres) - Woodlands and wetlands offer scenic walking along narrow trails. Parking on Vine St and Sagamore Dr.

Goldsmith Reservation (AVIS; 142 acres) - Excellent cross-country skiing on varied wooded terrain. Limited parking at corner of Rte 125 and Gould Rd, across Rte 125 from entrance

Peggy Keck Reservation (AVIS; 40 acres) - Loop trail and ancient granite cliffs. Parking corner of Gould Rd and Rte. 125 (across from police barracks)

Robert A. Pustell Reservation (And. Cons. Com; 84 acres) - Vernal pools and sassafras trees, granite cliffs and logging rds. Parking: Regency Ridge Rd, Arcadia Rd, Carter Ln

Pomp's Pond (Andover's Recreation Park) - Walking trails, tennis, swimming (with sticker or fee). Parking off Abbot Rd.

April 2005