

WESTPORT SUMMER PASSPORT



Hello!

- 1 Check out all the locations and decide where you'd like to start. You can visit the passport locations in any order.
- 2 At the first location, have a good look around. This place, and all of the places you'll visit, are scenic and important to Westport's history. Take your time. Before you leave each location, write in the answer to the Passport Challenge Question for each location. This is a fun thing for children to do.
- 3 Now move on to the next place, and the next, until you've visited all six. When you've filled in all the challenge questions, you're finished. You can find the answers to the challenge questions at the Westport Historical Society website: www.wpthistory.org.

PLEASE NOTE

This is a family-friendly activity. Hikes are under 1.5 miles and cover flat ground. You may visit locations in any order, seven days a week, over multiple days if necessary. Depending on weather conditions, trails may be muddy. Watch for poison ivy and take precautions against ticks.

Westport Summer Passport is produced by:
Westport Historical Society
www.wpthistory.org

Westport Land Conservation Trust
www.WestportLandTrust.org

Westport River Watershed Alliance
www.westportwatershed.org



Find us on Facebook

Concept and content: Terry Somerson
Design: Geraldine Millham and Ray Shaw
Photography: Greg Stone

WELCOME TO OUR POPULAR WESTPORT SUMMER PASSPORT!

IT IS A FANTASTIC WAY TO TAKE IN WESTPORT'S BEAUTIFUL

SIGHTS AND EXPLORE OUR HERITAGE AND LANDSCAPE.

TAKE FAMILY AND FRIENDS AND HAVE A GOOD TIME!

IF YOU ARE NEW TO THE WESTPORT SUMMER PASSPORT,

GET READY TO DISCOVER SOME OF OUR TOWN'S MOST

DELIGHTFUL PLACES.



The Handy House Heritage Trail

202 HIX BRIDGE ROAD

The trail begins at the main visitor parking area on Hix Bridge Road. Open dawn to dusk seven days a week. www.wpthistory.org

Did you know that a long time ago there were wolves in Westport? Put on your walking shoes and explore our history from a fresh perspective! This 0.7-mile trail covers three centuries of landscape history, tracing the ecological shift from Native American to European dominance in New England. You will explore the forest from the perspective of the early 18th-century settlers and through the eyes of the local Wampanoag tribes, who had inhabited this region for more than 10,000 years. The story of our trail begins in 1700 as English settlers embarked on the sweeping deforestation of the land and concludes with the miraculous reforestation of 20th-century New England. This land is part of the historic Handy House property. It was home to Elizabeth and William White in the 18th-century, Dr. James Handy in the 19th-century, and Eleanor Tripp in the 20th-century. Today, the property is owned by the Westport Historical Society.

PASSPORT CHALLENGE: How many wolves can you find? (Hint: look closely at the trail signs) _____

Westport River Watershed Alliance River Center

493 OLD COUNTY ROAD

Open two Saturdays each month (check website for updates). www.westportwatershed.org

The Westport River Watershed Alliance's River Center has a rich history dating back to the 1700's. The site was once a blacksmith shop and you can still see the original granite foundation on the outside of the building today. After a fire in the 1890's the building was rebuilt and a second story was added on to the current footprint. The building was also used as a Ford dealership with a ramp from the second floor to the ground to bring cars up to the second-floor showroom. Over the years, the building has also been a gas station, auto repair garage, boat building studio, carpenter's workspace and a gas station/ small engine repair shop.

While visiting the River Center, look for the original granite in the rock work around the outside of the first floor of the building. If you are able to visit the River Center during an open Saturday you can join WRWA staff to view the indoor exhibits, aquariums, a projection microscope and watershed models. Also go for a visit to the rain garden behind the building and look for a few wetland plants to complete your visit. Look for the green sign near the benches for more information on the rain garden.

PASSPORT CHALLENGE: Can you find these plants?



— Cattail



— Pickerel weed



Westport Woods

From Main Road, take Adamsville Road 2.1 miles southwest to the parking lot after the white farmhouse on the right-hand side of the road.

Open dawn to dusk seven days a week.
www.WestportLandTrust.org

Protected in 2018, this 82-acre property on Adamsville Road was once home to the St. Vincent de Paul Camp. The community rallied to save this significant natural and cultural resource, and to create Westport's first community park. Westport Woods Conservation Park contains 21 acres of open space, almost three miles of trails through 61 acres of forest, and various natural play elements for children. The park is a great place for picnicking and connecting with nature.

PASSPORT CHALLENGE: How many fruit trees are in the micro-orchard at Westport Woods? _____

Herb Hadfield Conservation Area

Accessed from both Adamsville Road and Cornell Road

Open dawn to dusk seven days a week.
www.WestportLandTrust.org

The Herb Hadfield Conservation Area features easy hiking trails through the forests and wetlands. You'll also find an expansive meadow that was recently restored to a native grassland.

Follow the trail to a long boardwalk and a bridge over water. The boardwalk carries you over some terrain that may be wet and spongy. Stop on the bridge and look at the clean, clear waters below you. This is Angeline Brook, one of Westport's finest coldwater streams. Native brook trout live in Angeline Brook and find their way to the nearby west branch of the Westport River and Buzzard's Bay beyond. These rare fish are called "salters," and they are protected by the forests around the brook.

Make sure that you visit the meadow. The restoration of this almost-six acre site began in 2015 and is nearing completion. The meadow has been seeded with native grasses and now features nesting boxes to attract a variety of bird species.

PASSPORT CHALLENGE: How many bird boxes are in the Herb Hadfield meadow? _____



Town Wharf at Westport Point

2056 MAIN ROAD

You are at the southern end of Main Road at Westport Point, one of the most historic neighborhoods in town. Once called "Paquachuck," the Wampanoag word for "cleared hill," the Point encompasses land that is nestled between the east and west branches of the Westport River and the harbor. This area is called Lees Wharf, named for the Lees family, who emigrated here from Scotland in 1895.

The wharf was first built around 1740 to support the shipbuilding that eventually led to a thriving commercial whaling business. The Paquachuck Inn is the large building on the east side. The building was constructed by the Cory family in 1827. It served the busy people of Westport Point as a ship chandlery — a business that catered to the Point's thriving whaling, fishing, and ship building trades. Like any general store, the Cory Store was an important resource for the neighborhood. It was a post office and custom house, tailor's shop, and sail loft as well before it was converted to an inn in the 20th century.

Today, the wharf still bustles with commercial fishing and lobstering. Main Road in this area once saw steady traffic heading to a ferry and then later to a bridge that connected the Point to the land across the harbor. During the Revolutionary War, ships took refuge here, protected from the British by the rough waters and the dunes of the surrounding beaches, which screened them from view.

PASSPORT CHALLENGE: How many whales are on the sign of the Paquachuck Inn? _____

Gooseberry Island

West end of East Beach Road

Open dawn to dusk seven days a week.

A narrow causeway connects East Beach Road with a small windswept island called Gooseberry. Just 73 acres in size, the island is part of the Horseneck Beach State Reservation. Visitors enjoy hiking, swimming, photography, birdwatching, sunset viewing, and just generally taking it easy.

The island was first settled in 1670 and was used for grazing sheep. But because it was accessible only at low tide, residential and recreational uses were limited. That changed in 1924, when the construction of the causeway was completed, making the island easily accessible. Walking through its sandy trails today, it is hard to imagine that more than 80 summer residences once dotted the remote landscape of Gooseberry Island. Like most of the buildings just down the road on East Beach, Gooseberry's homes were destroyed either in the Hurricane of 1938 or in Hurricane Carol in 1954. Look carefully and you'll see a couple of cement foundations, nearly buried in beachplums and other brush. Structures on the island were so vulnerable to hurricane damage that in 1956, the state of Massachusetts took it over.

From the parking lot, take the trail down the center of the island. Turn right at the fork and head over to the towers, built by the U.S. Navy in the 1940s. Though derelict and covered with graffiti today, these towers were important to America's defense during World War II. They were used for observation, keeping watch for German U-boats that lurked in the coastal waters.

PASSPORT CHALLENGE: How many towers are on Gooseberry Island? _____