

BUCKEYE BROOK TRAIL: BROOK TO BAY

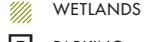


LEVEL	Beginner to Intermediate
START/END	Conimicut Point Park/Longmeadow Fishing Area/ Rocky Point Park
RIVER MILES	3.5 mile round-trip
TIME	3 hours round-trip
DESCRIPTION	Chop, Current
SCENERY	Coastal, Historic
ACCESS	Beach Put-Ins

BUCKEYE BROOK TRAIL: BROOK TO BAY

This paddle explores the Warwick shoreline from the mouth of Buckeye Brook at Mill Cove, just south of Conimicut Point Park , to the Longmeadow Fishing Area  and Rocky Point Park . Each location has ample parking and beach put-ins, though at Rocky Point the parking is approximately a quarter mile from the beach. Wind and current are key elements to this paddle. In higher winds and currents, the paddle becomes difficult, and significant chop may appear. In less favorable weather, paddle closer to shore.

Conimicut Point Park was formed from private land after its homes were washed away in the Great Hurricane of 1938. Today, there are incredible views down the bay from the shoal that extends to Conimicut Point Lighthouse , built in 1883. Paddling south, on your right you will see Victorian-era homes of the Riverview neighborhood , first developed around 1880. In the Longmeadow Fishing Area, guests once stayed at the large, wooden Bayside Hotel, which had a bathing pavilion extending into the bay and, in the mid-20th century, a boat rental concession. Further down the coast is the hillside neighborhood of Highland Beach . Approximately 1100 feet from shore emerges Barren Ledge , a hazard for boats and a haven for striped bass and other fish. The bay floor from here southward becomes strewn with rocks, and caution should be observed. After Highland Beach, Rocky Point Park begins, with its more than a mile of public shoreline extending from the former Rocky Beach summer colony , to the former “World’s Largest Shore Dinner Hall” and amusement park midway , to the beach . Rocky Point was a summer destination for many Rhode Islanders for nearly 150 years before entering receivership. Recent efforts have preserved public access to the shoreline. This shore is a great location for “seaglunking,” or collecting sea glass. South of Rocky Point is Indian Oaks , Senator Nelson Aldrich’s famous mansion, and the shoreline boathouse on the estate which played host to, among others, President Theodore Roosevelt.

MAP LEGEND					
	WATER ACCESS		POINTS OF INTEREST		WETLANDS
	WATER		WATER TRAIL ROUTE		PARKING
	CAUTION		CONSERVATION LAND		ROADS
	PORTAGE				



BUCKEYE BROOK

Buckeye Brook originates in Spring Green Pond near Hoxsie Four Corners, flowing under Airport Road and into Warwick Pond before continuing southeast to Narragansett Bay. Its watershed includes much of central Warwick. South of Buckeye Brook's mouth, Warwick's shoreline is comprised of Victorian-era neighborhoods leading to Rocky Point Park. The brook takes its name from buckeyes (BUCK' - ees), the anadromous alewife and blue-back herring that make their annual spring spawning run up the brook.



BUCKEYE BROOK: IN THE HEART OF WARWICK

Winding among Warwick's houses and streets, you will find free-flowing Buckeye Brook, whose history starts with the Native Americans who populated the banks of the brook and lived off its plentiful resources. Later, farmers drew water from the brook for their farms that occupied much of central Warwick prior to suburbanization in the mid-20th century. Today, the brook is mostly hidden by wooded areas, creating a buffer that allows paddlers to experience parts of the brook with little interference from the bustle of modern Warwick. The brook is home to a surprising array of wildlife, including shorebirds, turtles, eels, river otter, hawks, deer, coyote, and fox. At its mouth, mussels and clams abound, as well as blue crab and oysters.

THE LOWER BROOK: WARWICK THROUGH THE CENTURIES

In the short paddle from Conimicut Point Park to West Shore Road, there are references to every era of Warwick's history. Many Native American artifacts have been found along the banks of the brook, where the Narragansett Indians made summer encampments. While the precise location of Roger Williams' 1639 baptism by Warwick pastor Ezekiel Holliman is unknown, it may have occurred in Buckeye Brook or one of its tributaries. A century later, in 1750, Moses Greene built his home where Buckeye Brook meets Mill Cove. The home may have served a role in the Underground Railroad—a secret cellar room is accessed by a stone wall that slides aside on iron tracks. The room may have also been used by rum smugglers in the "Rogue's

Island" era of the state. Next to the home is the foundation of a tidal mill, built to harness the brook's power in the state's early industrial era. By the end of the 19th century, the brook became the setting for Warwick's growth as a vacation destination for the state's burgeoning urban population.

BROOK TO BAY: WARWICK'S VICTORIAN SEASIDE

At the mouth of Buckeye Brook is Mill Cove, dividing the neighborhoods of Conimicut to the north and Riverview to the south. After Rocky Point Park was founded around 1850 and became a go-to summer destination, Warwick's shoreline became speckled with summer residents in its large hotels, shingled mansions, tiny cottages, and platform tents. The trolley line built to service Rocky Point had stops in seaside neighborhoods, with service every five minutes during the busiest periods. The trolleys would stop at Conimicut Village, the commercial center for the area; Shawomet Beach, now known as Conimicut Point Park; Riverview, with its casino and boarding house; Bayside, with its large hotel and bathing pavilion; and Rocky Point, with its shore dinner hall, dancing hall, observation tower, and rides. A number of factors, including the Great Depression, the Great Hurricane of 1938, impaired water quality in the upper bay, and the suburbanization of Warwick, led to a decline of Warwick as a summer resort. However, this historic shoreline remains one of Rhode Island's gems, offering outstanding public access at Conimicut Point Park and the new Rocky Point Park, as well as a mile and a half of beach in between.

ALWAYS WEAR YOUR LIFE JACKET AND CARRY A WHISTLE OR OTHER SOUND PRODUCING DEVICE, PREFERABLY ATTACHED TO YOUR LIFE JACKET. PADDLERS SHOULD CHECK WATER LEVEL, WEATHER, AND WATERWAY CONDITIONS PRIOR TO EVERY TRIP. REMOVE WHAT YOU BRING, CLEAN UP MORE IF YOU CAN. PLEASE RESPECT PRIVATE PROPERTY. REPORT ANY PROBLEMS YOU ENCOUNTER TO THE BUCKEYE BROOK COALITION AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES IF APPROPRIATE.



Buckeye Brook Coalition (BBC) is the non-profit 501(c)(3) entity and RI Rivers Council member charged with protecting and preserving the Buckeye Brook watershed. BBC activities include clean-ups, fish counts, lectures, restoration projects, and advocacy before governmental authorities. www.buckeyebrook.org

The Narragansett Bay Estuary Program (NBEP) protects and preserves Narragansett Bay and its watershed through partnerships that conserve and restore natural resources, enhance water quality and promote community involvement. NBEP supports the RI Blueways Alliance which is dedicated to creating a comprehensive water trail network to link Rhode Island's rivers, lakes and ponds to Narragansett Bay and to the rivers in Massachusetts that flow into the bay. The trail will be used to promote safety, conservation, recreation and economic development. www.ExploreRI.org



Watershed organizations throughout the Narragansett Bay watershed showcase paddling opportunities on downloadable paddle maps. The full list of maps is available at ExploreRI.org.

