



Hogback Trail

GREENFIELD STATE PARK

Greenfield, New Hampshire

Self-Guided Hike

- 1.** The Hogback Trail is 1.2 miles long and relatively flat. It will take you approximately 45 minutes to go around the pond. As you walk, keep an eye out for the abundant wildlife and unique plants that are in this secluded area of the park. Throughout the trail, there are numbered stations that correspond to this guide and benches to rest upon. Practice “Leave No Trace” on your hike; Take only photographs, leave only footprints.
- 2.** Hogback Pond is a glacial kettle pond formed when massive chunks of ice were buried in the sand, then slowly melted leaving a huge depression in the landscape that eventually filled with water. Kettle ponds generally have no streams running into them or out of them, resulting in a still body of water. Water in the pond is replenished by rain and is acidic, prohibiting many common wetland species from flourishing.
- 3.** The blueberry bushes around Hogback Pond and throughout Greenfield State Park are two species; low-bush and high-bush. Many animals such as Black Bear and several species of birds seek out these berries as an important summer food source.
- 4.** The Eastern Hemlocks that you see around you are one of the several varieties of evergreen that grow around Hogback Pond. This slow-growing, long-lived tree grows well in the shade. They have numerous short needles spreading directly from the branches in one flat layer. You can identify them by the two thin light green lines on the reverse of the needle.
- 5.** The ridge you walked up is a small example of a glacial esker. This feature was formed by a glacier as it was melting roughly 18,000 years ago. As the glacier melted and retreated, small streams formed within the ice itself, these inner-glacial stream beds were deposited on the ground leaving relatively straight ridges of sand and rock that directly traced the paths of those ancient streams.
- 6.** The floating vegetative mats are a variety of Sphagnum Moss and are the most unique trait of a kettle pond. Moss is able to hold large amounts of water, creating a living sponge. As the old moss dies off and is replaced by new, it settles down to the bottom of the pond slowly filling it in. The pond eventually transforms into a swamp because of this plant.



Stop #5: ridge is an example of glacial esker



Between Stops #2 & 3: example of unique vegetation found on kettle ponds



Stop #10: Black Spruce trees and small shrubs growing on Sphagnum Moss



7. On your left is one of the largest White Pines growing in Greenfield State Park and is estimated to be 125 years old. To tell pine species apart take a look at their needles; White Pine has five soft needles, Red Pine has two long needles in a cluster and Pitch Pine has three short needles.

8. The moat between the floating plants and the shoreline is prime area for many of this area's frogs such as the Green Frog. Small mammals such as chipmunks and squirrels also live in this area; look for the small holes that chipmunks excavate for their homes along the trail. Many birds also live here including song birds, hawks, woodpeckers and occasionally a Ruffed Grouse.

9. The wide gravel trail you are currently standing upon is a portion of an old carriage road that was once an important east-west road prior to the railroad that also passed through the town.

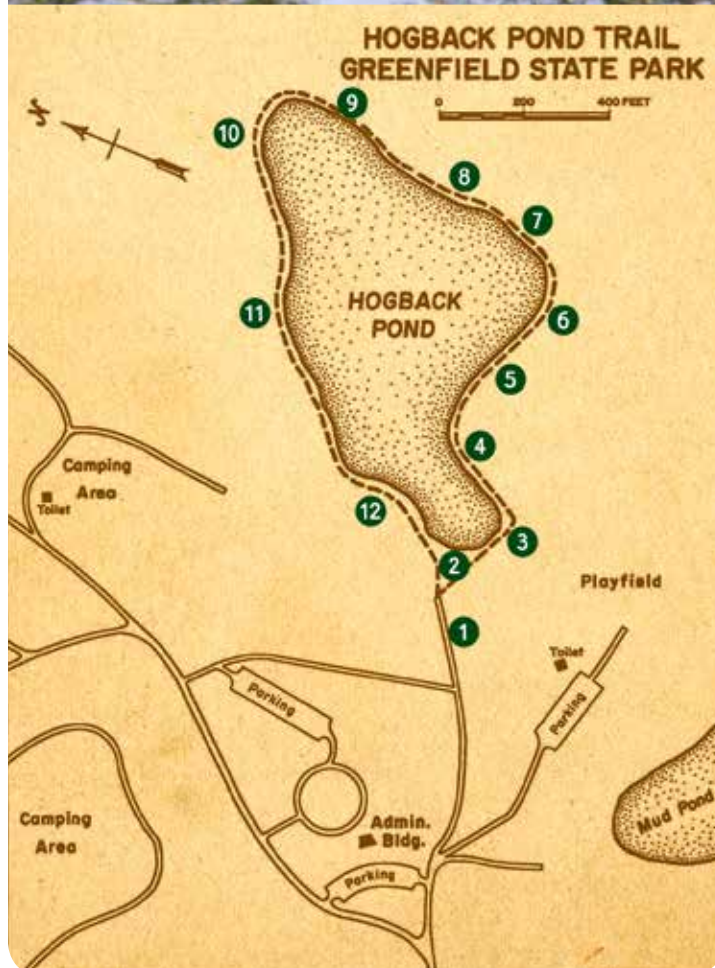
10. Mats of Sphagnum Moss grow outwards from the shore, not up from the bottom, floating on top of the water. This natural community is dominated by heaths and small shrubs and few trees grow in this area, except Black Spruce which thrives in swamp areas. The kettle pond will eventually turn into acidic swamp which will be difficult to distinguish from the rest of the surrounding forest.

11. This next section of the trail takes you away from the shore and into the surrounding forest. The forest is not affected by the acidity of the pond and allows for different species to thrive. Oak trees dominate much of the canopy while White Pines and Beech fill in the mid-story of the forest.

12. Besides walking and nature observation, Hogback Trail provides excellent fishing access. The cold clear waters provide a good trout fishery and are suitable for shore bank fishing or small hand-carried boats.



Stop #8: Green Frog



Stop #10: Black Spruce trees & small shrubs growing on Sphagnum Moss

