

Vinalhaven Land Trust

Founded in 1986, Vinalhaven Land Trust (VLT) offers over 15 miles of well-maintained trails on our preserves. In 2011, we celebrated our 25th anniversary by gaining accreditation from the Land Trust Alliance; only the fourth land trust in Maine to be so recognized. In addition to our role as stewards of these properties we also offer educational programs and guided walks throughout the year. For more information, visit our kiosk to find maps, schedules of events, and detailed preserve brochures. It's located in Skoog Park, just 2/10 of a mile west of the ferry terminal along Sands Road. Feel free to enjoy our picnic table overlooking Sands Cove where you can relax with your lunch.

VLT's work relies on the generosity of our members. For more information on how to support our work, please contact us.

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Vinalhaven Land Trust promotes the conservation and appreciation of our island's significant plant and wildlife habitat, our water resources, and scenic or traditionally valued spaces in order to preserve the character of the community for generations to come.

Whitmore Pond Sanctuary



Sanctuary Bird Walk

This walking guide will take you through an array of habitats that make Whitmore Pond and the surrounding area fantastic for bird watching. The sanctuary is active year-round, with peak diversity of bird life between May and October. To begin, leave your car or bike at the parking lot below Little Tip Toe Mountain town park.

A) With a quick scramble up the rocks, you'll find yourself on top of Little Tip Toe Mountain, owned by the Town of Vinalhaven. To the east you'll have a wonderful view of Crockett's Cove. Scan the waters for waterfowl and seabirds.

In the spring and summer, visitors will undoubtedly hear the hoarsely high-pitched "zee zeee zrr-zoo-zee" song of the black-throated green warbler. A local breeder, this 5-inch beauty is arguably the most abundant warbler on Vinalhaven. Look for the brilliant yellow flash of the face, sandwiched between the black throat and the bright green of the upperparts.

On fall days with north-west winds, Little Tip Toe can be a good hawk watching spot. Northern harriers, broad-winged hawks and sharp-shinned hawks ride the updrafts of the peak, while merlins, American kestrels, and peregrine falcons go bombing by with their strong flight.

(B) Walk north on Tip Toe Mountain Road (back the way you drove in), and in about a tenth of a mile you'll come to Heller Field on your right. The field is edged with sumac and alders and is great habitat for American

woodcocks. A shorebird of forest and alders, the male woodcock performs his spectacular courtship/territorial display just before dark in very early spring.

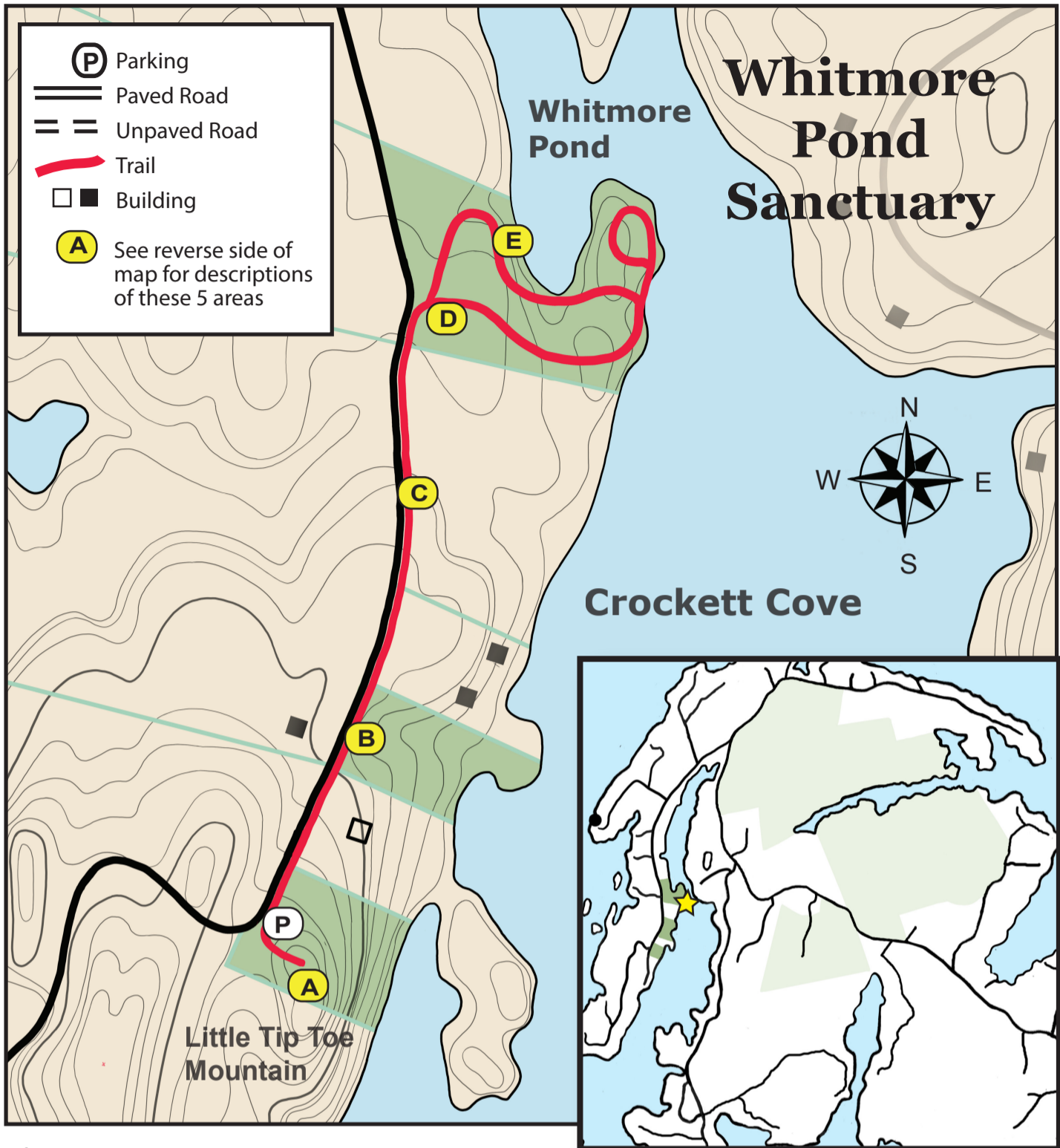
The view of Crockett's Cove from Heller Field is worth a scan or two. In the summer look for double-crested cormorants and black guillemots fishing on the water or for belted kingfishers as they patrol the shoreline. At low tide, mudflats are exposed just below the field. The flats are the feeding ground for herring gulls, crows, and shorebirds in migration.

(C) From Heller Field continue walking north along Tip Toe Mountain Road, keeping your eyes and ears open. The road can be humming with songbird activity, especially in the alder thickets where the road dips. As the road rises back up into a taller forest, listen for ovenbirds with their distinctive "Teacher, teacher, teacher!" song.

(D) You will quickly approach a tiny parking spot on the right side of the road. This is the entrance into Whitmore Pond Sanctuary. From here, a trail passes through a mix of spruces, alders, and overgrown meadows. Transitional zones like these are great places to see sparrows, or even a deer feeding under an old apple tree. Please note that **dogs are not allowed in the sanctuary.**

(E) Curling back across the narrow stretch of land, you'll come to a bench with the best views of Whitmore Falls. It is not uncommon to see great blue herons stalking their prey by the falls or in the marsh.

After this, the trail loops back and around to the parking lot.



Size: 6 acres (Whitmore Pond), 2 acres (Heller Field)

Trails: The entire walk described here is about 1.1 miles over mostly level ground.

Features: Numerous water views along Crockett's Cove and Whitmore Pond, including a reversing waterfall; varied habitats providing excellent birding; easy walking for all ages; ample parking.

Be Aware: Foot traffic only. There are several nearby residences along the walk; please be quiet and respectful of their property and privacy. Please drive slowly along the Tip Toe Mountain Road. **No dogs allowed at Whitmore Pond Sanctuary.**

Directions: Turn left from the ferry terminal, go 0.4 miles, then right on Old Harbor Road for 0.3 miles. Bear left onto North Haven Road for about 6.5 miles to where Tip Toe Mountain Road (gravel) will be a left turn. Drive about 1.2 miles down this road; the gravel parking lot at the base of Little Tip Toe Mountain Town Park will be on your left.

Welcome

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