



Ponds and Waterways Committee

Sudbury, MA

Public Access to Water Bodies in Sudbury

The Town of Sudbury has many water bodies that are open to the public. Some are good for fishing and boating and others are part of hiking areas and wildlife refuges. All can make for a pleasant venture into the outdoors in Sudbury.

GRIST MILL POND is a large pond that offers fishing and bird watching. Public trails abut the southern side of the pond through Hop Brook property owned by Sudbury Valley Trustees and abut the eastern side of the pond on Wayside Inn property. The northern side of the pond abuts private property, with the exception of a narrow strip of SVT land off of Wayside Inn Road. [FISHING, HIKING]

HOP BROOK winds throughout Sudbury, entering town from Marlborough (Hagar Pond), just west of the Wayside Inn, and ending as it flows into the Sudbury River. Hop Brook is the water source for several of the ponds in town and it is the brook that powers the old gristmill at the Wayside Inn. Access varies and usage varies, but there are almost always trails along the brook. [HIKING]

DUCK POND, in the Hop Brook Marsh Conservation Land and owned by the Sudbury Conservation Committee, is a small pond with beaver activity, wildlife, water birds, and many surrounding trails. This pond is locally known as "Duck Pond" although most maps do not name it. (It is W18 on the Town of Sudbury maps). There are several access points described below. It is located beside Hop Brook. [TRAILS]

- There are two access points from Dutton Road between Amanda Road and Old Garrison Road. One labeled Hop Brook Conservation Land has parking for several cars. The other trail, a bit south, follows the old railroad northwest. Duck Pond is between the two trails, just east of the brook.
- If coming in from the Hop Brook Conservation trails off Dutton Road, follow the main path and watch for the pond on the left. Coming from the railroad tracks, the trail to the pond is on the right with a large opening, just before the trestle across Hop Brook.
- Duck Pond can also be accessed from Millpond Road and Barton Drive. Turn right on the main path; head toward Hop Brook, then before the footbridge take the path to the left. Follow this path around, keeping the brook on your right, and take the path to the right, which goes to Duck Pond.
- If entering from Surrey Lane, follow the trail on the left side of the turnaround, cross a few places where small board bridges have been placed over spots that get muddy. When you get to a pair of these board bridges that are in more of a "V" shape, take the path on your right. Hop Brook will be on your left, but you can't see it well from this point. If you take the left-hand trail, you will come to the footbridge. Take the right-hand trail, and stay on this main trail until you reach the railroad tracks, then turn left and cross the trestle over Hop Brook. To get to Duck Pond, take the first trail to the left (a large opening). The pond will be on your right and the brook on your left. If you continue past the pond, and turn left on the main trail, keeping the brook on your left, you will come to the footbridge over the brook.

Go over the bridge and continue on the main path (stay right at all turns) and you will come back to the end of Surrey where you started.

- Walking the railroad track is pleasant and runs along part of the Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge on the east, and the Sudbury Valley Trustees Memorial Forest and Women's' Club Forest on the south. The tracks cross into Hudson and Marlborough where those two towns intersect.

STEARNS MILL POND off of the north end of Dutton, between Moore Road on the west side and Pratt's Mill Road on the east side, offers good fishing and canoeing during the parts of the year when water chestnuts are not clogging the pond. The pond is too weedy and shallow for motor boats and swimming. Foxes and other wildlife roam the shores and water birds abound. Part of the Hop Brook System, it is sometimes possible to canoe almost to the Wayside Inn, with just a few portages over and around obstacles. Access to the pond is from the dam on Dutton Road. [FISHING, BOATING]

SUDBURY RIVER offers a range of recreational opportunities including hiking, birding, fishing, and boating. Access the river in Sudbury at the Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge headquarters, the only designated boat launch for canoeing and kayaking. Two trails, the Weir Hill Trail and Red Maple Trail lead to the river. [FISHING, BOATING, BIRDING]

PUFFER POND is a 24-acre pond within the Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge. Once called Pratt Pond, it offers fishing, boating, wildlife watching, biking, and hiking. Several hiking trails (including Puffer Pond, Carbary's, and Kingfisher) and roadways access the pond. [FISHING, BOATING, HIKING, BIKING]

WILLIS LAKE, one of the larger lakes in Sudbury, has easy public access for fishing and boating at the north end of Lakeshore Drive. The Lt. Scott Milley Foundation is upgrading the beach and creating a memorial to Lt. Milley who died in Afghanistan. The western half of the northern shore is conservation land: Sudbury State Forest and Assabet National Wildlife Sanctuary. Many people canoe, kayak, and boat on the lake and there is parking as well as a boat launch at the end of Lakeshore Drive. The dock is also a favorite place for sunbathing and fishing. Reported fish are Bass, Crappie, Sunfish, and Perch. Most people catch and release fish since the lake's cleanliness is uncertain; the military dumped waste into the area at one time. Likewise, most people don't swim there. This is the pond where Babe Ruth is said to have sunk a piano. There is also an access to the pond from the end of Run Brook Circle, through a narrow triangle of land owned by Sudbury Conservation Commission; however, the path is difficult to find and the water at that end is weedy and not easily accessible. [FISHING, BOATING]

CRYSTAL LAKE, sometimes known as BOTTOMLESS POND, is a small pond almost totally surrounded by Sudbury State Forest Land with a bit of private land on the southeast corner. Two trails lead to the lake off Crystal Lake Drive. One is a short trail opposite Oakwood Avenue to a privately owned small dock. The other is a bit further north and goes in from the "Crystal Lake Drive and Basswood Avenue" street sign. Several trails in that area, called the Crystal Lake Parcels, are owned by the Sudbury Conservation Commission. The areas are wetlands, which people should avoid to preserve them. The northern and western shores (State Forest land) are surrounded by wetlands and are inaccessible. [TRAILS]