

Parks, Nature & Wildlife



MetroWest Boston offers a huge array of parks, nature trails, ponds, and outdoor recreation areas. We recommend the following for groups:

Garden in the Woods (Framingham, MA)

Explore the beauty of New England wildflowers at Garden in the Woods. A place visitors often describe as magical, the Garden's 45 acres were sculpted by retreating glaciers into eskers and steep-sided valleys, with a brook, pond, and wetlands that showcase native plants of the region. **Wander the paths, say hello to the turtles, fish, and frogs in the pond, and attend one of the special talks or events.**



The Garden at Elm Bank (Wellesley, MA)

Visit the Massachusetts Horticultural Society's garden, a jewel that blends historic and contemporary into a place of beauty, contemplation and exploration. Tour the gardens, then take a workshop in horticultural history, gardening, or a hands-on art class.

New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill (Boylston, MA)

A 200-acre four season botanical paradise with 18 distinct garden spaces, preserved woodlands, and miles of walking trails. Tower Hill offers educational programs, exhibitions, seasonal special events and a lovely garden shop and café.



Unity Farm Sanctuary (Sherborn, MA)

Take your group on a tour of this farm animal sanctuary where you can meet the residents (including pigs, goats, cows, horses, chickens, and more!) and hear their stories. Property also encompasses walking trails through woods and meadows.

Hopkinton State Park (Hopkinton, MA)

The park's 1,500 acres of forest are crisscrossed by trails, beaches, stocked fishing, and more. The Boathouse rents **sailboats, kayaks, canoes, rowboats, pedal boats, and paddleboards**. Complimentary beach wheelchairs are also available. The bucolic forest offers **amazing trails for hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, horseback riding, and mountain biking**.



Cochituate State Park (Natick, MA)

Rent a **kayak, canoe, pedal boat, paddleboard, or sailboat** to take out on the lake, **swim, fish, wander the hiking trails**, or enjoy a meal at one of the picnic areas of this beautiful park.



MetroWest Rail Trails

Explore 53+ miles of rail trails in MetroWest, including the **Upper Charles Rail Trail**, which you can do **on foot or via bicycle**. The well-maintained trail offers great opportunities to view wildlife in the adjacent forests and bogs, as well as ample spots to hop off the path for a coffee, lunch or to take a peek in one of the little shops and boutiques in town. The **rail trails** in MetroWest offer excellent paved paths for those with limited mobility with a variety of towns, parks, and attractions along the routes to explore.



Sudbury & Assabet Rivers National Wildlife Refuge (Framingham/Sudbury, MA)

Great for groups to **kayak, paddle, or hike** along, the scenic **Sudbury River** is a location lush with vegetation and **excellent for birding**. The entire river basin was formed by glacial activity 10,000 years ago, leaving behind unique geography and geological formations, and a landscape bursting with wildlife. The river runs for miles, with various stops along the way for ponds, lakes and wildlife refuges. Drive a few minutes north to the **Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge**, a unique opportunity to immerse yourself in nature with acres to explore and wondrous species to observe via hiking, biking, or snowshoeing.

Winter Fun

Huge array of winter fun available for groups, including:

Cross Country Skiing: Ashland State Park, Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge, Callahan State Park, Hopkinton State Park, and more

Downhill Skiing: Blue Hills Ski Area, Nashoba Valley Ski Area, Ski Ward, and Wachusett Mountain

Sledding: Cedariver, The Dam at Hopkinton State Park, Jericho Hill Recreation Area, and Sweatt Hill

Ice Fishing: Lake Chauncy, Ashland State Reservoir, Dug Pond, Lake Cochituate, Lake Winthrop, and Whitehall Reservoir



Come see what we have to offer in the heart of Massachusetts!

For other activites, links to venues, and more, visit us online at www.metrowestvisitors.org. For help coordinating your group tour, contact Executive Director Stacey David at sdavid@metrowestvisitors.org