

8 At the water's edge note a pond on your right.
Do not go that way and you'll be all right.

Look across the pond for 2 osprey poles which may have nesting osprey from April to September. Watch for the adults in flight, bringing food back to their young.

Turn to the left and look far to see
What remains of an old whitish tree.
As you walk, the water will stay on your right.
The soft sand is your path and you're filled with delight!

Look for animals or things that might be washed up along the way. We have found a baby seal carcass and a dead deer, as well as horseshoe crabs and many types of shells. Horseshoe crabs, for instance, can shed their shells up to sixteen times! Look for their empty shells along the beach.

9 The stump once held secrets and we took a look.
We met with success and found a cool book.
Now the treasure is no more.
A storm took it from our shore.

Follow the sandy path until you can turn left.
In front of you will be a sea inlet.
An inlet is a narrow entrance from a larger body of water into a smaller body of water.

10 Turn left to the sea.
The pond is now behind thee.
Here's the way to beat the tide:
Keep the brush on your left side.

Your course now becomes a bit rocky, and so a new kind of seaweed appears: rockweed. Also, new shell life abounds: clams, mussels and whelk shells. The difference between channeled and horned whelks is: horned whelks have points on the side and channeled whelks have smooth ridges along the outside.

An arrowhead rock plays a role.
Find it pointing towards an osprey pole.
Stay high
And you'll stay dry.

Fiddler crabs are fun to watch here. The crabs flood Coskata beaches in the millions, sounding like many little rocks hitting each other. Look for their holes in the wet sand. The males have big left claws which look like they're holding a fiddle.

Take your time, enjoy the view.
Play with the crabs; they'll tickle you!

The cedar and oak trees to your left look as if they have been chopped off at the top. This is the result of harsh wind elements

here. Coskata has a hardy population of cedar trees, with a calming smell of spice.

Don't go walking off the flattened reeds' path
or you'll get stuck in the mud's wrath!

Did you get a whiff of the mud? That is the smell of sulfur. Phew!

11 Your journey here takes a while
Carry on, it's less than a mile.
On the natural benches just sit still.
Here's a semicircle where you can chill.

From this vantage point you can look back at the northern end of Coskata and the Glades of salt marsh hay and cord grass. Keep your eye on the sky and along the water's edge. You might see terns, northern harriers, snowy egrets, oystercatchers or great blue herons.

12 Round the bend to find strange clay cliffs
With trees sticking out sideways, almost stiff.

Coskata has cliffs, up to 12 feet high, gauged by constant erosion.

You must go through broken down trees
In order to pass and be set free.

After walking by tree roots and clay deposits, you are now on a sandy beach, overlooking the head of the harbor.

Look ahead to where we began
Can you see a boulder in the sand?
The rock near the trees is the one to spy,
That way our quest box stays nice and dry.

Sign the log book, replace the box, then you're done!

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Coskata Woods Quest

COSKATA-COATUE WILDLIFE REFUGE,
NANTUCKET



HOW TO QUEST

Use the clues and map that follow to find a hidden treasure and story throughout Coskata Woods. Along the way you'll have fun, and learn to see (and read) land use clues and history. At the end of this Quest you'll find a hidden treasure box, where you can sign in, collect a copy of our Quest's stamp, and then replace the box for the next visitor. We recommend you take 1 hour to enjoy this adventure. Happy trails!

INTRODUCTION

This quest brings hikers into Coskata Woods. The woods are enjoyed the most when visited during the late fall and early spring months when mosquitoes are at bay. This trip is best accomplished at low tide, so please check the tide charts for Great Point. Then add two hours. (Example: Low tide at Great Point is 8 AM, so low tide at Coskata is 10 AM.)

This quest is DRAFTED BY:

The students from the Nantucket Lighthouse School!

Thanks for all your hard work!

Begin:

1 Follow the road to the Wauwinet Inn. Now your journey will truly begin. Pass the Wauwinet Village along the way. On the sand road, in four-wheel drive, you must stay.

Wauwinet Village is where eel fishermen once set up little fishing shacks. Over time, their wives and families joined them and they added on to their little huts.

2 Pass the very last house: on your left note a post. Nantucket Conservation Foundation is your host. For a brief ride 'til a green sign comes into view. The Trustees of Reservations welcome you.

Along the way, look for lichen, or reindeer moss, which shows that the air is clean.

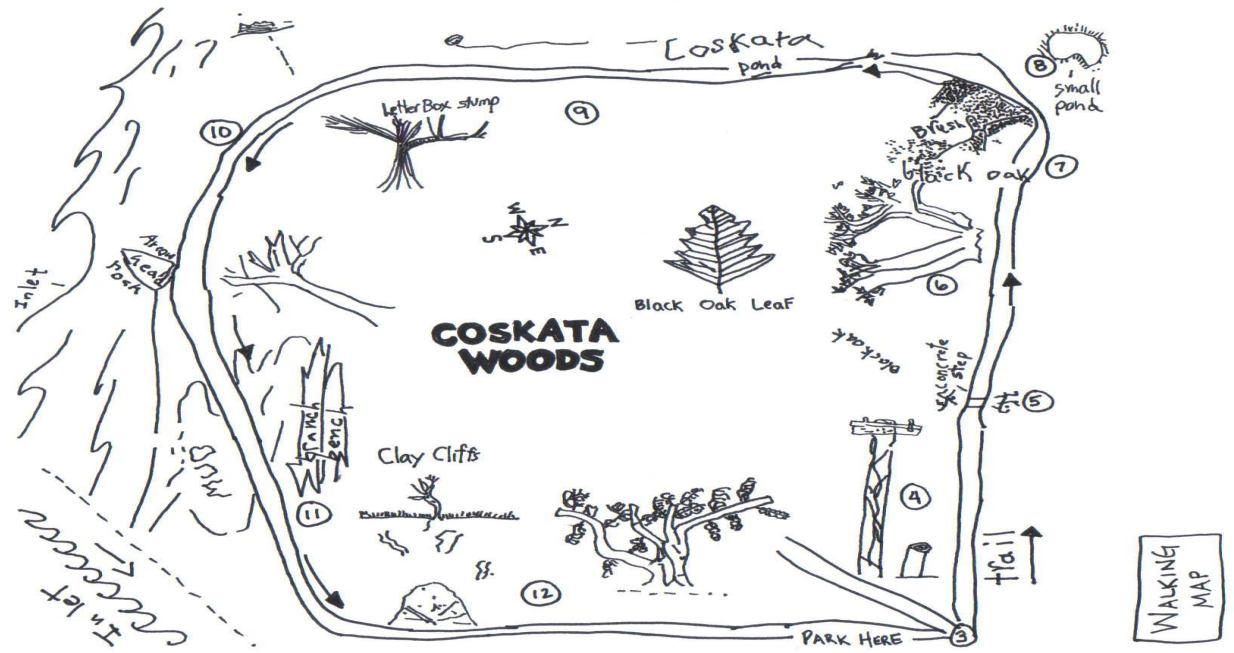
Just before that green sign, a road will appear. Don't travel forward, you must turn LEFT here. If you are driving, check for 1 and 3/10 miles. Only 6/10 to go, park the truck, you're all smiles.

Now you are ready to begin. Tread lightly, and carry out whatever you carry in.

Look for the fence that makes a line. Right nearby you will see a sign: "Fragile Habitat" are the words, What is the picture of the birds?

This area protects endangered birds, such as piping plovers and oystercatchers, as they nest. (The sign shows least terns, which nest elsewhere on the property.)

3 Here is something you must do: Stand with the ocean behind you. A fork in the path should be in view. The middle trail is the one that will do.



The fork in the road looks like a great blue heron print, which can be larger than a child's footprint. Many seabirds occupy this area, from great blue herons to gulls, both black-backed and herring.

4 In order to reach your goal You'll have to find an old osprey/telephone pole. Look ahead and up high—For it is quite nearby.

This pole does not have an osprey nest, probably because it is too low and is near too many trees. Osprey need to hunt for their food in wide open areas in the ocean.

5 Before you reach the pole, look down low To see a cement clue as you go. Is this a step, showing that someone might have lived here at one time?

6 Now find a big tree almost 300 years old. This great black oak tree can never be sold. Pointy leaves green or brown, If you walk in winter, leaves may not be found. Black oak trees have leaves with pointy tips. White oak leaves have rounded edges.

7 The path will curve a little left and a little right. If you curve one more time you might lose our site. On your left, a vine-wrapped black oak stands. Its one branch reaches out as if to shake hands.

Watch out for poison ivy vines, which at any season could cause an itchy rash. If leaves are visible, remember this rule: 4 leaves, it's okay...3 leaves, stay away!

Walk slowly along and keep a sharp eye. (On your right a smaller path you might spy.) Black oak on left, White oak on right... (Remember what the leaves look like!)

(If you take the side trail you might get a view Of what's up ahead that you'll soon come to. It will show you more oaks of days of old And meadows gentle to behold.)

Have you heard of the Coskata mermaid, the color of gray? She walked the woods here long ago, some might say.

Back on our path, tunnel through brush Might need to duck, no need to rush. Soon you'll get a peek of what's next for you The sparkle of water might come into view.

The Coskata area once had a farm. One lighthouse keeper lived at the farm after his home at Great Point burned down. Imagine his daily commute! Later, a lifesaving station was built on the same site. The lifesaving crew of Coskata made many rescues and performed heroic deeds. Today farming continues at Coskata; the farming of oysters and clams in Coskata Pond.