

Fitchburg Trail Guide

Detailed Trail Descriptions, June 2018

Prepared by the Fitchburg Trails Vision Committee, a volunteer group working with the City of Fitchburg

Coggshall Park (1st of 6 trails)

(Please note: As of June 2018, the colored blazing referred to in the descriptions and maps of Coggshall Park has not yet been implemented, and some of the trails may not be well marked.)

NAME OF TRAIL: The Mirror Lake Trail Loop

OWNER: City of Fitchburg

TRAILHEAD LOCATION: At Coggshall Park starting across from the Stone House.

PARKING: Parking area on west side of Mirror Lake, or in the handicap spots east of the Stone House.

DISTANCE: 0.5 mile

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY: Easy

HANDICAP ACCESSIBILITY: The trail is wheelchair accessible for 2/3rds of its length around Mirror Lake.

SURFACE: The accessible portion consists of compacted gravel that meets accessibility requirements for wheelchair surfaces. The remaining third is a natural surface consisting of gravel and compacted woodland surface with exposed roots and a section of large stone pavers.

TRAIL BLAZING: Red Circles

TRAIL DESCRIPTION: The Mirror Lake Trail is the main trail loop at Coggshall Park and circles the Park's prominent feature, Mirror Lake. As the most used trail in the park, the trail was recently restored. The north and west sides of the trail are wheelchair accessible and follow along the lake's edge. The remainder of the trail travels through woodlands that are not wheelchair accessible. The woodland section of this trail contains some impressive White Pines as well as a good growth of native Mountain Laurel undergrowth. The trail travels over well-worn ground with exposed roots and rocks, including an old stone walkway that leads to the Amphitheater and Gazebo. There are numerous benches along this trail, especially on the west side, some interesting spur trails that lead to scenic spots, and it crosses over the dam that creates the lake. Visitors need to use this trail to gain access to the Gazebo and the Amphitheater.

Fitchburg Trail Guide

Detailed Trail Descriptions, June 2018

Prepared by the Fitchburg Trails Vision Committee, a volunteer group working with the City of Fitchburg

Coggs Hall Park (2nd of 6 trails)

(Please note: As of June 2018, the colored blazing referred to in the descriptions and maps of Coggs Hall Park has not yet been implemented, and some of the trails may not be well marked.)

NAME OF TRAIL: The Woodland Path Loop

TRAILHEAD LOCATION: At the map kiosk across from the Stone House, Coggs Hall Park.

PARKING: In the parking area west of Mirror Lake.

DISTANCE: 0.5 mile

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY: Easy

HANDICAP ACCESSIBILITY: Not accessible

SURFACE: Natural soil surface with some exposed roots, rocks and decaying leaf matter.

TRAIL BLAZING: Blue Circles

TRAIL DESCRIPTION: The Woodland Path Trail is a short loop trail that begins on the west side of the Stone House, crosses Eastern Ave, and heads west through the White Pine-hardwood woodlands that comprise most of the forest vegetation at the park. This area was hard hit during the ice storm of 2008 and underwent a salvage harvest to clean up the downed trees and storm debris. The area is recovering from this devastating storm, with the native Mountain Laurel enjoying the increased sunlight resulting from the thinning of the forest's canopy. This trail is an easy hike with a modest change in elevation, but generally is a fairly level walk. After looping west and then crossing back over Eastern Ave, the trail travels down to and along Laurel Ave back to the Stone House.

Fitchburg Trail Guide

Detailed Trail Descriptions, June 2018

Prepared by the Fitchburg Trails Vision Committee, a volunteer group working with the City of Fitchburg

Coggs Hall Park (3rd of 6 trails)

(Please note: As of June 2018, the colored blazing referred to in the descriptions and maps of Coggs Hall Park has not yet been implemented, and some of the trails may not be well marked.)

NAME OF TRAIL: **The Pond Passage Trail**

OWNER: City of Fitchburg

TRAILHEAD LOCATION: At the Stone House at Coggs Hall Park.

PARKING: In the parking area on the west side of Mirror Lake at Coggs Hall Park.

DISTANCE: 1.0 mile to complete the loop

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY: Easy

HANDICAP ACCESSIBILITY: Not accessible

SURFACE: Natural soil surface with some exposed roots, rocks and decaying leaf matter.

TRAIL BLAZING: Yellow Circles

TRAIL DESCRIPTION: The Pond Passage Trail is a longer version of the Woodland Loop Trail. It also begins at the Stone House and turns west into the woods immediately after the children's play area. As it heads north, it climbs gently up through a mature woodland setting, crosses Laurel Ave, and passes the small pond by the ballfield. It continues east towards Eastern Ave and then turns south crossing the road. It comes out on Laurel Ave and returns to the Stone House to complete the loop. The elevation change is slight over the course of this trail and the setting of a mixed pine/hardwood forest is very pleasant.

Fitchburg Trail Guide

Detailed Trail Descriptions, June 2018

Prepared by the Fitchburg Trails Vision Committee, a volunteer group working with the City of Fitchburg

Coggs Hall Park (4th of 6 trails)

(Please note: As of June 2018, the colored blazing referred to in the descriptions and maps of Coggs Hall Park has not yet been implemented, and some of the trails may not be well marked.)

NAME OF TRAIL: The Whale Rock/Cascade Loop Trail

OWNER: City of Fitchburg

TRAILHEAD LOCATION: NE corner of Mirror Lake on Laurel Ave. at Coggs Hall Park.

PARKING: In the parking areas on the west side of Laurel Ave NE of Mirror Lake at Coggs Hall Park.

DISTANCE: 1.0 mile to complete the loop

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY: Moderate to Difficult

HANDICAP ACCESSIBILITY: Not accessible

SURFACE: Primarily a natural soil surface trail with some exposed roots, rocks and granite ledge and decaying leaf matter. It has a short stretch of paved roadway as well.

TRAIL BLAZING: Red Triangles

TRAIL DESCRIPTION: This trail starts on the east side of Laurel Ave just east of Mirror Lake and immediately climbs a steep hillside of White Pine and Mountain Laurel until it reaches the "Whale Rock". The "Whale Rock" is a ledge outcrop that looks like a breaching whale. This is a difficult trail section and is not for the novice hiker. From here the trail heads south through the woods to the power line clearing, and then down the slope to the cascading stream that flows from Mirror Lake. The trail follows the stream back to Mirror Lake and then climbs through the woods up the hill and back down to Laurel Ave. From here, it travels along the roadway to its beginning. Because of the elevation change along this trail, it is considered moderate to difficult. It is an interesting trail, challenging users at the beginning, but rewarding them with some interesting views and different habitats along the trail. The varied topography and woodland types, the "Cascades", the stream banks, and the granite outcrops all help to make this an interesting hike.

Fitchburg Trail Guide

Detailed Trail Descriptions, June 2018

Prepared by the Fitchburg Trails Vision Committee, a volunteer group working with the City of Fitchburg

Coggs Hall Park (5th of 6 trails)

(Please note: As of June 2018, the colored blazing referred to in the descriptions and maps of Coggs Hall Park has not yet been implemented, and some of the trails may not be well marked.)

NAME OF TRAIL: The Stone Cliffs Loop Trail

OWNER: City of Fitchburg

TRAILHEAD LOCATION: At the west side of Mirror Lake at Coggs Hall Park.

PARKING: In the parking area on the west side of Mirror Lake at Coggs Hall Park.

DISTANCE: 0.5 mile to complete the loop

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY: Moderately Difficult

HANDICAP ACCESSIBILITY: Not accessible

SURFACE: Natural soil surface with some exposed roots, granite boulders, rocks and decaying leaf matter.

TRAIL BLAZING: Orange Circles

TRAIL DESCRIPTION: The Stone Cliffs Loop Trail starts at the west side parking area and climbs up to the top of the large granite ledges on the western side of Mirror Lake. Visitors with young children should take care to ensure they do not get too close to the cliff's edges! From this point, the trail proceeds southwest through the woods to Eastern Avenue, where it travels south on this roadway for a short distance. The trail then turns northeast back into the woods and descends to Moses' Rock. From here it travels down to Mirror Lake and back to the point of beginning. The boulders and ledges at the beginning of this loop are amazing and a favorite climbing area for young children. Moses' Rock is a classic glacial erratic deposited by the retreating ice mass over 10,000 years ago. The man-made rock table at the beginning of the trail is an interesting feature created after the park was established in the late 1800's.

Fitchburg Trail Guide

Detailed Trail Descriptions, June 2018

Prepared by the Fitchburg Trails Vision Committee, a volunteer group working with the City of Fitchburg

Coggshall Park (6th of 6 trails)

(Please note: As of June 2018, the colored blazing referred to in the descriptions and maps of Coggshall Park has not yet been implemented, and some of the trails may not be well marked.)

NAME OF TRAIL: Lookout Trail Loop

OWNER: City of Fitchburg

TRAILHEAD LOCATION: At the east side of Laurel Ave at the last paved parking area in Coggshall Park.

PARKING: In the parking area immediately across the roadway on Laurel Ave.

DISTANCE: 0.85 mile to complete the loop

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY: Moderate

HANDICAP ACCESSIBILITY: Not accessible

SURFACE: Natural soil surface with exposed roots, granite boulders, rocks and decaying leaf matter.

TRAIL BLAZING: Orange Triangle

TRAIL DESCRIPTION: The Lookout Loop Trail starts at the gated access way on the east side of Laurel Ave and climbs steadily up the hill to the top of the ledge. It continues south along the ledge where a "lookout" juts out to the east and provides some views over the surrounding countryside. The trail continues south to the power line at pole 31-A, then turns northeast and travels along the power line corridor to pole 33-A. The trail heads back into the woods and the hiker proceeds northwest along another rocky ledge and then down to the point of beginning. The varied forest habitat and the elevational change moving from the ledge top down to the valley provide a little exercise and some visual interest on this trail. The eastern half of this trail is located in the disc golf area and the trail goes right by the 6th tee for this course.