

300 DAY HIKES TO TAKE WITH YOUR DOG BEFORE HE TIRES YOU OUT

*...Trails where you won't be able to
wipe the wag off your dog's tail*

DOUG GELBERT



HIKEWITHYOURDOG.COM BOOKS



There is always a new trail to look forward to...

300 Day Hikes To Take With Your Dog Before He Tires You Out

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*"Dogs are our link to paradise...to sit with a dog on a hillside on a glorious afternoon
is to be back in Eden, where doing nothing was not boring - it was peace.*

- Milan Kundera

AHEAD ON THE TRAIL...

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GRAB THAT LEASH AND HIT THE TRAIL

“They look like they are having the time of their lives.”

If you hike with dogs chances are you have heard sentiments like that from other trail users when they see your happy trail dogs. Dogs are happy on any trail but they become especially excited on new trails. New scents to sniff. New sounds to hear. New sights to see.

Every year an estimated 15 million people travel with their dogs. But our best trail companions are not always welcome where we most want to go. National parks ban dogs from trails for the most part and more than half of America’s 1,500+ public beaches don’t allow dogs. But let’s not dwell on the negative - our dogs will not allow it.

Are these the 300 best hikes in America you can take with your dog? While there are many, many hikes described in this book that are on “best lists” and “must-do lists” and “bucket lists” the goal here is to emphasize the rich variety of hiking experiences that await you and your dog. There are canine hikes dusted in history, canine hikes to unusual destinations, and canine hikes that are notable just because. There is a mix of leg-stretchers and hikes requiring a full day on the trail.

All the day hikes are in the continental United States that can be reached by driving. The selected hikes are spread throughout regions so that you are never far from a special outing with your dog.

How do I use this book? The 300 day hikes are broken into 14 different regions of the country. In each section the trails are presented alphabetically by the park involved. In the index are all the parks, alphabetized by state.

Before each hike description is a symbol. They represent:

E The hike is rated for difficulty; either E, M, or S. There is also a time estimate of the duration of the hike. Easy hikes and strenuous hikes explain themselves. Moderate hikes typically involve either several hours of relatively easy hiking or a short period of lung-busting effort that doesn't last long enough to be rated as strenuous. The time estimates can help distinguish the character of a moderate hike.

▲ The availability of a campground in the park or near the trailhead is indicated. This does not refer to primitive camping which may sometimes be available. These are day hikes.

🏊 The swimmer indicates the chance for your dog to have a swim on the hike. While this is usually full dog-paddling it may only be splashing for larger dogs.

\$ This will tell you if an admission fee is required to take this canine hike.

🚙 If a hike has a jeep symbol it means that at least part of the trip to the trailhead will be on unpaved roads. All of the canine hikes in this book can be reached by low-clearance, two-wheel drive cars.

A WORD ABOUT SEAMAN - AMERICA'S FIRST GREAT TRAIL DOG

When writing a canine hiking guidebook the narrative can get choppy when constantly referring to "your dog." Many describers get around this tedious wordsmithing by assuming a generic-named dog, like Spot or Fido. I will adopt that same convention here using Seaman as the name for our generic trail dog.

Who was Seaman? In the summer of 1803 as he was rounding up supplies for his forthcoming Corps of Discovery exploration, Meriwether Lewis bought a dog in Pittsburgh. He paid \$20 - half of his monthly captain's wage. He wrote in his journal, "The dog was of the newfoundland breed one that I prized much for his docility and qualifications generally for my journey." Lewis named his dog Seaman.

Seaman would make the entire trip to the Pacific Ocean and back with the Lewis and Clark expedition, serving as sentry, hunter, and companion. He had more than a few adventures on the trail as well, including being bitten by

a beaver and performing an occasional rescue of Corpsmen trapped in the Missouri River.

A dog collar has been discovered with an inscription that reads: "The greatest traveller of my species. My name is SEAMAN, the dog of captain Meriwether Lewis, whom I accompanied to the Pacific Ocean through the interior of the continent of North America." If Seaman were around today he would be out tackling these trails.



*Paying homage to Seaman in Montana,
one of a dozen statues erected to
America's first great trail dog.*

NEW ENGLAND



CONNECTICUT

- 3. BEAR MOUNTAIN
- 6. BLUFF POINT COASTAL RESERVE
- 18. SLEEPING GIANT STATE PARK
- 20. STEEP ROCK RESERVATION

MAINE

- 1. ACADIA NATIONAL PARK
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NEW HAMPSHIRE

- 22-23. WHITE MOUNTAIN
NATIONAL FOREST

RHODE ISLAND

- 2. ACADIA MANAGEMENT AREA
- 4. BLOCK ISLAND GREENWAY TRAILS
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VERMONT

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- 19. SNAKE MOUNTAIN MANAGEMENT AREA
- 21. UNDERHILL STATE PARK



ACADIA NATIONAL PARK

Jordan Pond Nature Trail

MOUNT DESERT, MAINE

Hiking Time: 1 hour



Acadia National Park is one of the crown jewels in America's park system and hands down the best national park to hike with your dog. After Woodrow Wilson designated Acadia, then called Lafayette, the nation's first national park east of the Mississippi River, patron John Rockefeller, Jr. spent decades constructing carriage roads across the wooded island.

There are 45 miles of rustic roads and 100 more miles of hiking trails. And Seaman is welcome on practically all of them. The *Jordan Pond Nature Trail* circumnavigates a glacial tarn in an easy mile loop. The trailhead is at the Jordan Pond House that was built by the original landowners in the 1870s and has been a hub of social activity on the island ever since. Wooden boards help traverse the marshy areas on shore.

The adventure for Seaman at Jordan Pond comes on several trails that branch off the nature walk, including paths that lead to the top of two rounded mountains framing the pond known as the Bubbles. Unobstructed views of the park and Jordan Pond await with a delightful array of glacial erratics posing on the summits of the North Bubble (872 feet) and the South Bubble (766 feet).

The clear waters of Jordan Pond go as deep as 60 feet - the deepest in Maine. This is a drinking water supply and no dogs are permitted to swim here but the Atlantic Ocean is not far away.

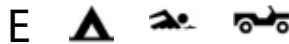


ARCADIA MANAGEMENT AREA

Ben Utter Trail

WEST GREENWICH, RHODE ISLAND

Hiking Time: 1-2 hours



Rhode Island has only 777,000 acres and 14,000 of those are managed at Arcadia, kept in a "more or less" natural state. For excitement many canine hikers pick their way up rocky ledges to the 360-degree views atop 430-foot Mt. Tom.

For an exceedingly peaceful Arcadia hike take Seaman to the *Ben Utter Trail*. **The soft dirt path under paw traces the lively Wood River amidst giant white pines and red maples that escaped logging due to their awkward location by the stream.** You pass foundations of old mills and moss-covered boulders decorate the water. This glorious stretch of woodland is a memorial to George Benjamin Utter, a pioneering member of the Narragansett Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club.

There is no canine universe where this hike could be considered taxing but log steps and wooden bridges smooth over any rough spots. Under an airy forest, the *Ben Utter Trail* is heading towards a climax at Stepstone Falls that make up in charm and bucolic beauty what they lack in large drops.

The trip is less than one mile and can be done as an out-and-back or combined with an old mill road known as Tanner Washout to build a canine hiking loop. There are continuous pools and shallows for Seaman to drop in for a dip - did that need to be mentioned?



BEAR MOUNTAIN

Undermountain Trail/ Appalachian Trail

SALISBURY, CONNECTICUT

Hiking Time: 2-3 hours

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The highpoint of Connecticut is on the slopes of Mount Frissell, whose summit is across the state line in Massachusetts. Bear Mountain, four miles away, is the highest *summit* in the Nutmeg State. Also a better adventure for your dog.

The blue-blazed *Undermountain Trail* links to the *Appalachian Trail*, to tag the peak in just under three miles. Bear Mountain is an honest mountain - there is scarcely a downhill step on the ascent to the top - no depressing drops into saddles and ravines that set tails to drooping when Seaman knows he should be headed up. You are gaining over 1,500 feet in elevation on this canine hike but the serious panting does not begin until the final half-mile.

Without the aid of any roads in 1885, Owen Travis spent three years hauling 350 tons of stone to the summit to build a pyramid 20 feet square and 22.5 feet high. **The tower has crumbled but Seaman can still scramble up ten feet of stabilized rubble and think about what it took to bring all these rocks to the roof of Connecticut.**

A return option is across the summit and down the 2.1-mile *Paradise Lane Trail* that crosses upland forests. The plunge on the north slope is steep, quick and rocky and will challenge the most cautious of dogs so take your time here. The full loop with a back-track on the *Undermountain Trail* will cover about 6.6 miles.



BLOCK ISLAND GREENWAY TRAILS

Rodman's Hollow/ Clay Head Nature Trail

NEW SHORHAM, RHODE ISLAND

Hiking Time: 4-5 hours

m



Most day-tripping canine hikers to Block Island arrive on the ferry carless and queue up with their dogs ready for some spirited walking. The ferry rate per person is less than \$20 round trip and dogs ride free.

Once on the island there are two famous beach bluffs within walking distance: to the north is Clay Head, and to the south are the Mohegan Bluffs. To do both in one day on foot is quite an undertaking so you will be forced to pick a destination. This is not a win-lose proposition by any means - especially since your dog will demand to return to Block Island again.

To reach Mohegan Bluffs, you will cross through Rodman's Hollow, including miles of trails crafted in the tradition of walking the English countryside. **What is your dog interested in? Open fields? Sporty hills? Long vistas? A romp on the beach? A swim in a pond? Unique woodlands? The Greenway here has them all.**

Turning north, two miles on the Corn Neck Road leads to a trail system known as "The Maze." These grassy paths are unmarked but well-maintained and a delight for your dog - even when you are lost. You can pop out at a stone wall or one of the best views on the East Coast. The *Clay Head Nature Trail* runs for about one easy-going mile along the top of 70-foot bluffs. It may be one of the longest miles you've ever stepped with Seaman when you factor in frequent stops for watching crashing waves or charting the progress of a passing vessel.



BLUE HILLS RESERVATION

Skyline Trail

MILTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Hiking Time: 2-3 hours

m

In 1893, the Blue Hills became the first land in Massachusetts set aside for recreation. The framers of the Bay State parks found plenty to love in the shadow of Boston - hills and meadows, forests and wetlands, even a unique Atlantic white cedar bog. There's wildlife here not often associated with Boston Brahmins: timber rattlesnakes, coyote, and otter.

The *Skyline Trail* travels across the spine of the reservation for nine miles from east to west. The route breaks into two legs west of park headquarters and gives canine hikers a chance to complete a 4.5-mile loop to Great Blue Hill, at 635 feet the highest of the 22 hills in the Blue Hills Chain.

Narrow and twisting, the rocky route is well-marked as it crosses three hills before the steep ascent to your final destination. **The northern leg of the loop will set your dog to panting more than the southern leg so plan accordingly.**

The star of Great Blue Hill is the weather observatory that was founded in 1885 and is home to the oldest continuous weather record in America. Of more practical interest to Seaman on the summit is Eliot Tower, a 90-year old stout stone lookout that makes a fine resting spot in this canine hike.

There are 125 miles of trails in the park, including many in this vicinity so feel free to call an audible or two with map firmly in hand. One, down the *Houghton Path* to a spring-fed pond, winds up on a long beach with easy access to dog-paddling.



BLUFF POINT COASTAL RESERVE

Loop Trail

GROTON, CONNECTICUT

Hiking Time: 1-2 hour

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Even Connecticut natives can be surprised by this slice of Cape Cod on the Nutmeg State's heavily developed Long Island shore. Bluff Point is the last remaining undeveloped public land of any size along the Connecticut coastline. Ironic, since it was one of the first to be developed - Governor John Winthrop made his home on the peninsula in the late 17th century. But during the Hurricane of 1938 every vacation cottage - over 100 - was destroyed. None were rebuilt.

Most of Seaman's trotting around Bluff Point will take place on a wide, level cart road that serviced the long-gone agricultural fields. The trip from the parking lot to Bluff Point in the Long Island Sound is 1.6 miles through alternating maritime forest and open shore land. Easy grades take Seaman up to his ultimate destination atop the pink granite rocks of the bluff.

A short detour leads to a one-mile wide sand spit that connects to the small Bushy Point Beach. Seaman will salivate at the chance to romp across the open sand but it is closed to dogs during the plover nesting season from April 15 to September 15.

The *Loop Trail* back travels along a forested ridge where stone ruins of the 300-year old Winthrop homestead can be explored. There are more nooks and crannies to explore on Bluff Point, including a cut-off to the full 3.6-mile loop for Seaman if too much swimming has left him tuckered out.



CAMDEN HILLS STATE PARK

Megunticook Trail

CAMDEN, MAINE

Hiking Time: 2 hours



The *Megunticook Trail* climbs to the top of the highest mainland mountain on the Atlantic seacoast. Maine pioneering landscape architect Hans Heistad spent the better part of a decade shaping the rocky slopes and groves of Eastern white pine into a park on the shores of Penobscott Bay.

Camden Hills features ten named mountain peaks, with Mount Megunticook at 1,385 feet standing above them all. **The elevation gain on this hike is nearly 1,000 feet but the path takes a joint-friendly one mile to accomplish the summit.** The trail reaches open ledges at the Ocean Lookout which delivers sweeping views of the entire Penobscott Bay and the town of Camden, where the groundbreaking prime time soaper *Peyton Place* was filmed in the 1960s. On a clear day it is possible to glimpse New England's tallest mountain, Mount Washington, to the west. The cliffs offer prime nesting habitat for peregrine falcons, the world's fastest birds.

Heistad designed more than 30 miles of tail-friendly trails at Camden Hills, affording numerous options coming down. The descent on the *Tablelands Trail* leads to the 360-degree views atop 780-foot Mount Battie. The stone tower here was dedicated in 1921 as a remembrance to Maine's World War I soldiers. These ocean views can also be purchased by an auto road that can be incorporated into your Seaman's exploration of the Camden Hills.



CAMEL'S HUMP STATE PARK

Monroe Trail

DUXBURY, VERMONT

Hiking Time: 3-4 hours



There is no mistaking the distinctive double-humped exposed peak in the center of Vermont's Green Mountains. It has long stirred the imagination of those who want to name it. The Waubanaukee Indians called it "Tah-wak-be-deece-wadso" that translates to "saddle mountain." To French explorers in the 1600s it was the "resting lion." When Vermont Founding Father Ira Allen sketched out a regional map in 1798 he colorfully called the unique mountain "camel's rump." By 1830 the name "Camel's Hump" was in common usage.

Camel's Hump is the only alpine peak in Vermont without a ski resort on it so it is a very popular canine hiking destination. Several well-marked routes lead to the 4,083-foot summit. The *Monroe Trail* takes about 2,500 feet of that elevation to climb up the east side of the mountain in 3.3 miles.

Rocks are a big part of your dog's hiking day here that begins in thick birches and past a reflective beaver pond. After clearing the tree line the boulders become more prominent and many dogs may require a helping hand once or twice. The windswept summit serves up a classic Vermont panorama.

Retreat on the *Monroe Trail* or make a loop with the *Long Trail* and *Dean Trail* that tacks another mile onto the journey. **Upon reaching the bottom cool down with an easy stroll on the View Trail, a wide swath of grass, to allow Seaman to admire what he has just accomplished.**



CAPE COD NATIONAL SEASHORE

Great Island Trail

WELLFLEET, MASSACHUSETTS

Hiking Time: 2-4 hours



There are some who will argue that the *Great Island Trail* is the best National Seashore hike in all of the national park service system. Seaman cannot participate in that debate because he is only allowed on part of the trail. But that is more than he was able to experience until 2015 so there is hope that one day your dog may see it all.

This is a hike on Cape Cod Bay, launching Seaman pleasantly onto a roomy path through a mature pitch pine forest. In just a few minutes the trail drops into the open grassy dunes on a still wide, hard-packed sand surface. That sand will become increasingly softer and more problematic as you close in on the bay beach. This area is known as "The Gut" where silt filled in to turn the once Great Island into an appendage of the mainland.

After hiking on the beach for a spell the trail heads inland towards the site of a 17th century tavern that was a favorite stop for whalers. This is where your dog is forbidden to go. Instead, Seaman must continue hiking down the sandy, likely deserted beach, for three miles to Jeremy's Point, a treeless sand spit that gets submerged at high tide.

There are far worse ways to condemn your dog. This stretch of beach is backed by bluffs and dunes, culminating in the Great Beach Hill, a 75-foot pile of sand. And of course there is easy swimming any time Seaman desires before retracing his steps to the trailhead.



CEDAR TREE NECK SANCTUARY

Loop Trail

WEST TISBURY, MASSACHUSETTS

Hiking Time: 1-2 hours



Just off the southern coast of Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard is an extremely dog-friendly resort destination. For canine hikers, the Sheriff's Meadow Foundation has conserved over 2,600 acres of land on Martha's Vineyard in more than 150 separate parcels. From these protected lands the Foundation has created eight sanctuaries open to the public, including dogwalkers. **The largest trail system is at Cedar Tree Neck Sanctuary where two miles of paw-friendly trails await canine hikers on the shores of Vineyard Sound.**

Your dog's day at Cedar Neck begins in a dense maritime forest where the results of twisted trees battling decades of ocean winds are much in evidence. This is a rich arboreal tapestry, woven of red pines, American beeches, cedars, and tupelo trees. At bejeweled Ames Pond one of Martha's Vineyard's trademark memorial benches remembers the donors of these special places.

The trails, alternately sandy and sand-infused dirt, make gentle work of the dunescape. A narrow corridor through shrubby beach grass leads to a quarter-mile of dune-backed sandy shoreline dotted with glacial souvenirs. The gentle waves on the north shore of the island will lure any dog into the water for play.

Beyond the beach a final loop on the *Brown Trail* circles the headland along Cedar Tree Neck Pond where Seaman may meet a local goat introduced into the sanctuary to gobble invasive plants.

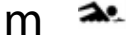


CLIFF WALK

America's Finest Backyard Stroll

NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

Hiking Time: 1-3 hours



Newport's "cottages" are America's finest collection of Gilded Age mansions, built on spellbinding rocky bluffs overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. No matter how rich the owner, however, no one's property could extend all the way to the shoreline. By virtue of "Fisherman's Rights," first granted under British colonial rule and then enshrined in the Rhode Island constitution, the public is always guaranteed the legal right to walk along a small sliver of cliff. Hence, America's finest backyard stroll with your dog.

The *Cliff Walk*, named the first National Recreation Trail in New England, rambles for about 3.5 miles, about two of which are paved and easy to hike. Many folks choose to turn back after this park-like experience, satisfied with glimpses of the houses of the one percent of the one percent.

Continuing past the paved path, the *Cliff Walk* turns rustic with some walking on unprotected, open cliff faces and boulder hopping for your dog. It requires concentration but any level of canine hiker can negotiate the trip. It's not unusual to catch a bit of ocean spray on the tail out here.

At the end of the *Cliff Walk* you will drop to ocean's edge and Reject's Beach where Seaman can get in some ocean dog paddling. You now have the option of returning by the same route along the black Atlantic rocks or exiting into the town and walking back on the sidewalks in front of the mansions whose backyards you have just wandered through.

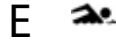


DOG MOUNTAIN

Overlook Trail

ST. JOHNSBURY, VERMONT

Hiking Time: 1 hour+



After surviving a coma following a fall down some stairs in 1994 sculptor/artist/author Stephen Huneck was struck by a vision to build a dog chapel on his property outside St. Johnsbury. He modeled the white-steepled wooden shrine after 1820s New England-styled churches. The exterior is festooned with Huneck's dog sculptures and the interior hand-carved dog pews are lit through stained glass windows telling stories of the familiar canine tropes of loyalty, trust, play, and most of all, joy. Tributes to dogs departed fill the Remembrance Wall inside.

Seaman is welcome, of course, in the dog chapel but he will likely be eyeing the series of grass trails that are cut through wildflower meadows up the side of Dog Mountain. **The grounds are always open for leash-free canine frolic - as the sign says, "Welcome all creeds, all breeds, no dogmas allowed."**

The *Overlook Trail* works gently to scenic views of the surrounding Northeast Kingdom. At the apex your dog is joined by Huneck's winged memorial to his Labrador retriever Sally and a red fire plug.

There are open fields for play time and an agility course for Seaman to try. Also on the 150-acre property of rolling hills are ponds whose only purpose is for dogs to splash and paddle. At any point an impromptu doggie beach party is apt to break out on the banks. Wagging tails are always all around on Dog Mountain.



MOUNT GREYLOCK RESERVATION

Hopper/Mt. Prospect/Money Brook Trails

LANESBOROUGH, MASSACHUSETTS

Hiking Time: 6-7 hours



In 1844 Ralph Waldo Emerson urged his friend Henry David Thoreau to climb Mount Greylock, a place he described as “a serious mountain.” More than 170 years later the climb up the highest point in southern New England (3,491 feet) is still the must-do major canine hike in the Berkshire Mountains.

At Mount Greylock you can hike longer with your dog (more than 70 miles of trails), higher with your dog (some canine hikes will gain over 2,000 feet in elevation) and see more of New England’s oldest trees (200+ years old) than any place in Massachusetts.

The Hopper is a unique glacial-carved bowl on the western slopes of Mount Greylock. Studded with red spruce, some of it old-growth, the Hopper has been designated a National Natural Landmark. An 11-mile canine loop includes the *Hopper Trail*, the *Mt. Prospect Trail* and the *Money Brook Trail* and tags the summits of Mt. Prospect, Mt. Williams and Greylock.

Surrounded on three sides by steep slopes this is honest climbing for your dog with long, steady ascents. Streams course down the slopes to keep this canine hike lubricated.

The first observatory tower was erected on Mt. Greylock in 1831; today’s summit has a 93-foot stone lighthouse. Seaman won’t need the War Memorial Tower to admire the long, open views. He can gaze out from the rock-studded slopes while you study the bronze model of the mountain to see what how far you have come.



NOANET WOODLANDS

Noanet Peak Trail

DOVER, MASSACHUSETTS

Hiking Time: 2-3 hours



You can’t get there from here. Noanet Woodlands is a paradise for trail dogs; Caryl Park doesn’t allow dogs. There is no parking for Noanet Woodlands, you have to park in Caryl Park. There are two lots at Caryl Park. One allows dogs and accesses a trail/road from the parking lot that leads behind the ballfields and into the woodlands. Just don’t let Seaman stray off that golden path.

The quarry you are hunting is a classic New England canine hike with mature forests, rocky outcroppings, and post-card worthy millponds. **This is flat-out one of the best places in Massachusetts to hike with your dog.** The trails are wide and paw-friendly dirt and, especially in the early going, woodchips.

There are 17 miles of footpaths packed into 695 acres of former farmland. The *Noanet Peak Trail* takes 1.5 miles to reach the rocky summit of the 387-foot high “mountain.” It may not summon nosebleeds but the open granite bluffs serve up a unique one-way view straight into downtown Boston.

The *Noanet Peak Trail* feeds into the 2.5-mile *Peabody Loop* that traipses past three millponds and the ruins where the Dover Union Iron Company once crafted barrel hoops and wheel rims from forged iron. There are over 45 trail junctions in these pleasant woods so to take a road less traveled with your dog - with a firm grasp on a park map.



NOTCHVIEW RESERVATION

Circuit Trail

WINDSOR, MASSACHUSETTS

Hiking Time: 2-3 hours

m \$

In 1920, World War I hero Arthur Budd met and married the widowed Helen Bly in London. Back in Massachusetts on Bly family land the couple set about consolidating 20 homesteads in the Green Mountains into the 3,000-acre Notchview estate. Budd gave his property to the Trustees of Reservations for a park in the 1960s.

Notchview has evolved into one of the premier cross country skiing areas in New England. **The Nordic center was one of the first in the country to feature a separate trail system exclusively for skiing with your dog, a sport known as skijoring.**

For the nine months of the year when the trails are snow-free whatever you have in mind for a day hiking with your dog is at Notchview. The *Circuit Trail* loops back through the middle of the property on a wide swath through the trees and spends time in the open meadows. The 1.8-mile ramble travels just about the entire way on a pebbly farm road that is kind to the paw. Although these hills have long supported farming most of the open land has been reforested in red spruce and northern hardwoods.

After this easy ramble you can decide how much of the park's 15 miles of trails to chew off with Seaman. The highest point at Notchview is the 2,297-foot Judges Hill but the reserve elevation averages more than 2,000 feet so Seaman can keep his four-paw drive in reserve for most of the day.



QUODDY HEAD STATE PARK

Coastal Trail/Thompson Trail

LUBEC, MAINE

Hiking Time: 1-2 hours

m  \$

How would you like to stand with your dog on the easternmost point in the continental United States and experience the nation's first sunrise (at least part of the year, depending on the earth's tilt.) You can do just that at Quoddy Head State Park where a lighthouse guiding ships through the fog has perched on 80-foot black rock cliffs since President Thomas Jefferson signed the authorization papers in 1808.

The *Coastal Trail* rolls south from the West Quoddy Head Light for two miles along the clifftops. Seaman will thrill in this rollercoaster romp at land's end, eagerly bounding to the top of the many hillocks to see what awaits on the other side as the path dips and rises. Keep an eye on the waves crashing in from the Atlantic Ocean - tides can fluctuate as much as 20 feet. **The final drop is into Carrying Place Cove where Seaman can enjoy the shallow waters on a sandy beach.**

The return trip over the inland *Thompson Trail* rolls through maritime forests of shallow-rooted white spruce and hardy balsam trees battling the wind and salt spray. Many of these arboreal warriors remain standing after losing the fight, leaving spectral sculptures along the coast. A side trip leads to the Carrying Place Cove Bog, a National Natural Landmark, where the subarctic remnant houses carnivorous plants that survive in low temperatures and thin, non-nurturing soil by sucking nutrients from captured insects.



SANDY NECK BEACH PARK

Great Marsh Hiking Trail

BARNSTABLE, MASSACHUSETTS

Hiking Time: 2-5 hours

E  \$

Seaman can certainly count on sand on this one. Sandy Neck is an appropriately named six-mile barrier island at the foot of Cape Cod Bay. The dune community here reaches back one-half mile to the Great Marshes draining Barnstable Harbor. Two sets of dunes, some as high as 100 feet, run the length of the park and shelter vernal ponds, maritimes forests and vibrant displays of hardy beach grasses.

This is about as far from civilization as your dog can get on Cape Cod - and it comes in a hurry from the trailhead. There is plenty of deep, soft sand on the *Great Marsh Hiking Trail* but there are also dune areas with grass and scrub pine and even a spot of shade in dense forest.

The views of the wetlands are the star on this trail; Great Marsh is the largest marsh on Cape Cod and you can decide how deeply to immerse your dog in this beautiful salt-sprayed world. You can use crossover trails 1, 2, 4, and 5 to the Sandy Neck beach for a return trip whenever you've had your fill of cordgrass and spike grass and blackgrass. Don't try and find Trail #3 - it was abandoned many years ago.

The full trek to Trail #5 will cover 12 miles but a satisfying sample of Sandy Neck can be accomplished in a 1.6-mile circuit on Trail #1. Out on the beach you will be sharing the rock-infused sand with off-road vehicles and on a busy summer weekend it can feel like you need a wide shoulder. Of course you can always cross back to finish up on the marshside path.



SLEEPING GIANT STATE PARK

Tower Trail

HAMDEN, CONNECTICUT

Hiking Time: 1-2 hours+

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Most of the basaltic ridges in Connecticut run predictably from north to south but one rogue two-mile band of hills runs east-west. It was called Mount Carmel but anyone with imagination looking at the isolated ridge could see a recumbent giant humanoid. The granite was especially fine on the mountain and quarrymen were enthusiastically blasting large holes in the giant's head until a horrified populace laid the foundation for the Sleeping Giant Park Association.

Just about any kind of canine hiking fare is on the menu in this cherished park. There are more than 30 miles of trails running from the feet to the head of the Giant, the first trails in Connecticut to be designated a National Recreation Trail. Most are rocky and tricky but even a novice trail dog can tackle the gently ascending road trail that makes up the 1.6-mile *Tower Trail*.

Surmounting 739-foot Mount Carmel is a four-story stone observation tower that looks as if the Knights of the Roundtable and their Irish wolfhounds will be walking out of any minute. Ramps inside allow Seaman multiple views through the arched openings.

Sleeping Giant is a tangle of short trails so adventurous dogs can opt for a final push to the summit on the rocky *Blue Trail*. Many of the ascents are pick-your-way passages and at some spots on the ridge around cobbles of jumbled boulders - like Hezekiah's Knob - the trail narrows enough to demand Seaman's attention.

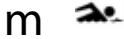


SNAKE MOUNTAIN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

Carriage Road Trail

WEYBRIDGE, VERMONT

Hiking Time: 2-3 hours



Locals in the Lake Champlain Valley always called the long serpentine ridge along America's sixth largest freshwater lake Snake Mountain. In the 1870s when Jonas Smith built a fancy inn on the 1,287-foot summit he didn't think potential visitors would flock to a serpent-themed guest hotel. So it became Grand View Hotel and the mountain took that name until the inn burned down some 50 years later.

It is Snake Mountain once again and the lure here are some of the best views available of Lake Champlain, backed by the Adirondack Mountains in the distance. **Seaman purchases these open, 180-degree views of the 107-mile long lake courtesy of a roomy old carriage road constructed by innkeeper Smith.**

The three-mile canine hike takes its time gaining your objective; there is a spiderweb of walking trails across the property but signs point the route to the summit as you gain almost 1,000 feet in elevation. There are joys on offer beforehand, beginning with the lush northern hardwood forest.

Stands of hemlock and cedar have infiltrated the upland forest here as well. An open bog mat of sphagnum moss awaits along the route, ringed by a bog forest of black spruce and red maple. Near the summit, Red Rock Pond is small and shallow and Seaman will be excused for thinking he has happened upon his own private swimming pool.



STEEP ROCK RESERVATION

Steep Rock Loop

WASHINGTON DEPOT, CONNECTICUT

Hiking Time: 2-3 hours



Attractive woodlands, a sporty trail, a one-of-a-kind view, a long riverside ramble - Steep Rock Reservation has it all for your dog. The *Steep Rock Loop* leaves from the west side of the Shepaug River on a wide, switch-backing path into the hills. When the hemlocks give way to hardwoods the path gets rockier but is still easy on the paw.

The destination is the overlook of the Clam Shell, where the river loops back on itself. Seaman can stay well back of the fence and soak in the dramatic view from a rock outcropping. Heading back down the wooded slopes carriage roads, built by 19th century architect Ehrick Rossiter when this was his country estate, lead the way. A striking series of multi-trunked hemlocks are passed and at the river is the Hauser Footbridge, a cable-and-wood suspension bridge in the fashion of the Brooklyn Bridge.

The last half of this 4.2-mile loop follows the old rail bed along the Shepaug River. The Shepaug Valley Railroad had to blast through 238 feet of solid rock to bring vacationers here from New York City to the now defunct Holiday House. The tunnel seems barely large enough for Seaman to pass through, let alone a locomotive.

There is plenty of opportunity for Seaman to slip into the Shepaug River for a swim on this easy stretch. There are more trails that hug the tranquil river and elsewhere in the hills to extend your dog's hiking day in this magical place.



UNDERHILL STATE PARK

Sunset Ridge Trail

UNDERHILL, VERMONT

Hiking Time: 3-4 hours



Mount Mansfield is Vermont's highest peak, noted primarily for its skiing and the resemblance of the ridgeline to an elongated human face. The geographic features of the mountain have subsequently been given corresponding human facial feature names.

Underhill State Park is a gateway to the 4,393-foot summit with several trails, including a paved road, to ascend busy Mount Mansfield, site of the Stowe Mountain Resort. The *Sunset Ridge Trail* conquers the 2,568-foot elevation gain in three miles. **This canine hike starts out low voltage on an old gravel access road for one mile but your dog's ears will perk up when you break in the open and begin to enjoy nearly continuous ridgeline views.**

The trail will be completely rocky under paw - in fact it will be mandatory to hike on the bare rocks since the last two miles will be across the largest patch of alpine tundra in Vermont. There will be a false summit or two but there will be no doubting being on the "Chin" of Mount Mansfield where Seaman can soak in extensive 360-degree views. You'll know you've caught a clear day if you can see the skyscrapers of Montreal.

Retrace your pawprints back down on the exposed ridge or opt for a shorter descent without the views (*Laura Cowles Trail*). Another choice is a longer hike back down the "face" along the *Long Trail*, the premier hiking route through Vermont's Green Mountains.



WHITE MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FOREST

Franconia Ridge Trail Loop

FRANCONIA, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Hiking Time: 6-7 hours



When *National Geographic* published an article on the "World's Best Hikes: 20 Dream Trails" there was only one day hike in the Lower 48 on the list and this was it. That's a lot to promise your dog.

Sooner or later all trail dogs make their way to Franconia Notch. The destination is 5,260-foot Lafayette Mountain and it will take crossing two others, Haystack (4,840 feet) and Lincoln (5,089 feet), to complete the loop. Most canine hikers opt to begin this classic New England journey on the *Falling Waters Trail*, boulder-hopping along and across several waterfalls. The ascent to Franconia Ridge is accomplished on the grueling "45," climbing 3,840 feet in only four miles. **Some of the rock formations may make Seaman think for a second but there is nothing insurmountable for him on this spectacular hike.**

Upon reaching the ridge Seaman meets the *Appalachian Trail* and the fabled Franconia Ridge knife-edge - exposed rock that dips and rolls for 1.7 thrilling miles. If you catch a clear day the views, including the entire Presidential Range, are the best in New England.

The leg back down is on the *Old Bridle Path* that will give a new appreciation of the sturdiness of horses before the coming of the automobile. When the long, rocky descent across open slopes dips into stunted pines the nine-mile loop is coming to its rewarding end. Seaman will go to sleep dreaming about this one.



WHITE MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FOREST

Ammonoosuc Ravine Trail/Jewell Trail

BRETTON WOODS, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Hiking Time: 6-8 hours



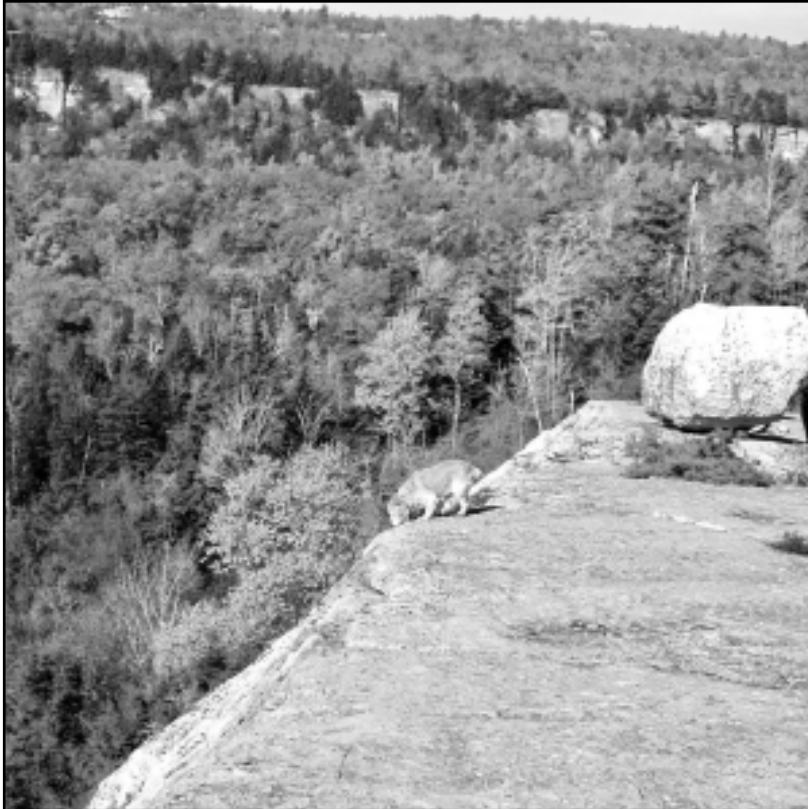
You say you've always wanted to hike with your dog in the snow in July? It can happen at Mount Washington. The weather here is considered the worst in the world; winds have been recorded at 231 miles per hour and hurricane force gales over 75 mph blow one day in three. Dense fog visits the 6,288-foot summit 315 days a year.

There are at least 15 long, rugged hiking trails up Mount Washington, the first of which was hacked out in 1819. Today it is the oldest continually used mountain trail in the United States. The *Ammonoosuc Ravine Trail* climbs up the western slopes. The route traces the plunging Ammonoosuc River through the woods with stream crossings and waterfall views. The hike begins in earnest with steep climbs up rock steps.

From the Appalachian Mountain Club Hut the original *Crawford Trail* climbs 1.4 open miles and nearly 2,000 feet to the busy top. Much of the way is boulder hopping but Seaman can make it without too much difficulty. The views are astounding but the price paid is likely exposure to that harsh weather. The hike to the weather station at the summit is about 7.5 miles.

If the weather is co-operating the *Jewell Trail*, that works along the cliffs with long exposed views, is a good option to come back down the western face of the mountain. Since Seaman won't be sniffing his scent keep a sharp eye out for trail markers across the open, rocky terrain.

MIDDLE ATLANTIC



MARYLAND

28. CATOCTIN MOUNTAIN PARK

NEW JERSEY

- 32. DELAWARE WATER GAP NHA
- 35. HIGBEE BEACH WMA
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ADIRONDACK PARK

Tongue Mountain Range Loop

LAKE GEORGE, NEW YORK

Hiking Time: 5-6 hours



Canine hikers who complete the *Tongue Mountain Range Loop* above Lake George run out of superlatives to describe it. The journey begins in the middle of six summits on an isthmus that thrusts into the lake and crosses the three southern peaks - Fifth Peak, French Point Mountain, and First Peak.

Although these mountains never reach higher than 1,813 feet there are also several unnamed knobs that make the ascents and descents seem like your dog is climbing across the back of a stegosaurus. There are steep, rocky drops - nothing that Seaman can't handle - but canine hikers are best served by taking the loop clockwise.

Views from the lightly forested ridges are spectacular up and down the water, including memorable looks at some of Lake George's 365 islands, many clustered in the Narrows caused by the peninsula. Your destination is the very Tip of the Tongue, where the mountain range plunges into Lake George. **Here, wide rock perches make ideal diving boards for a well deserved doggie dip.**

The loop is closed with a 4.8-mile return trip along the sometimes-steep shoreline. The lower elevations of the Tongue Range invite a smorgasbord of vegetation to mingle and form a deeply green primordial forest. The total distance for this invigorating exploration is about 13 miles. Bring plenty of water for Seaman as there is none aside from the lake.



ADIRONDACK PARK

Van Hoevenberg Trail

LAKE PLACID, NEW YORK

Hiking Time: 6-8 hours



Mount Marcy is the monarch of the 46 mountains that comprise the High Peaks of the Adirondacks, soaring 5,344 feet above sea level. A professor named Ebenezer Emmons led the first recorded ascent on August 5, 1837, naming the peak for New York Governor William Learned Marcy.

Today Mount Marcy can be tagged on well-marked trails from four directions. The shortest route comes in from the north on the *Van Hoevenberg Trail*. It is still 7.4 miles one way, with an elevation gain of 3,224 feet. **Despite those daunting numbers this hike is so popular you might think you are scaling a hill in a neighborhood park with your dog.** Some claim it is the most visited "remote" peak in the United States.

About two miles in the trail crosses Marcy Lake - a perfect refresher for Seaman on the way up and on the way back. Views are scant along the way as you work moderately through a dense spruce forest. The peak can experience snow eight months out of 12 and usually sits in low clouds so puddles are a common feature on the trail.

Nearing the summit, Mount Marcy is covered in dense stands of scrubby balsam fir and the trail narrows considerably. A bit of rock climbing is also introduced. A few hundred feet below the broad summit the treeline fades away and Seaman is left with a scramble on bare rock through rare New York alpine vegetation to the top. The views, suffice to note, are extraordinary in every direction from here.



ADIRONDACK PARK

Wilmington Trail

WILMINGTON, NEW YORK

Hiking Time: 5-6 hours



There are more than 2,000 miles of foot trails in America's largest park and this canine hike is one of its classics. The destination is Whiteface Mountain, one of the 46 4,000-footers that comprise the Adirondack High Peaks.

Lake Placid has twice hosted the Winter Olympic Games, in 1932 and 1980. When they hold the alpine skiing events the 4,867-foot Whiteface Mountain is where they come. The 3,430 feet of vertical drop is the steepest in eastern North America.

So it is fitting that a good part of your canine hike will follow the towline of a retired ski trail. You are off on an ascent of 3,578 feet and the bare summit is just under five miles away. The going can be wet and muddy on the well-worn path as the climbing begins in earnest from the trailhead.

In a little more than one mile you climb over Marble Mountain to deliver an early shot of "we did it." There are looks at the Wilmington Notch here but soon you are working across a long, rocky ridge and views will not kick in again until reaching the rocky glacial deposits near the summit.

The 360-degree views atop Whiteface Mountain are stunning with a look straight down at Lake Placid to the southwest. **The only downer for this all-star canine hike is sharing the summit with the many others who have driven up the Whiteface Mountain Memorial Highway. But Seaman can puff out his chest knowing that he summited the right way.**



BEAR MOUNTAIN/ HARRIMAN STATE PARK

Timp-Torne/Ramapo-Dunderberg Trails

BEAR MOUNTAIN, NEW YORK

Hiking Time: 4-6 hours



When the State of New York proposed at the beginning of the 20th century to relocate Sing Sing Prison to Bear Mountain - so named for its resemblance to a bear in repose - America's conservation consciousness was awakened. In 1910 Bear Mountain-Harriman State Park was dedicated. Within five years it was hosting more than one million visitors per year and 100 years later more people come here than to Yellowstone National Park. The first segment of the iconic *Appalachian Trail* was carved across Bear Mountain in the 1920s.

The Timp Hike starts directly on Route 9W that runs along the Hudson River. The trailhead is an unpromising break in the weeds but things pick up once your dog negotiates the awkward early stages of the journey. You'll pass remnants of the Dunderberg Spiral Railway that was an incline railroad planned in 1890 but never finished. There are tunnels and an old railbed that serves as part of the trail.

The hike splits into the *Ramapo-Dunderberg Trail* (red blazes) and *Timp-Torne Trail* (blue blazes). Heading up the red trail, you break out to views of the Hudson River and you realize why tons of money were burned trying to build a railway here. **The route rolls up and down mountains through boulder foundations until your dog covers the Timp, a peak overlooking the interior of the Hudson Highlands.** Climb back down the Timp and return on the blue trail to complete a tail-wagging 9-mile loop.



CATOCTIN MOUNTAIN PARK

Blue Blazes Whiskey Trail

THURMONT, MARYLAND

Hiking Time: 1 hour



"Any man who does not like dogs and want them about does not deserve to be in the White House."

-President Calvin Coolidge

Coolidge himself had at least 12 dogs. **How would you like to hike with your dog where Presidents hike with their dogs?** Everyone has heard of Camp David but where exactly is it? Surprisingly it is located deep inside a national park called Catoctin Mountain Park.

When you take your dog here you will never see Camp David or any evidence that the presidential compound is hidden among the trees. But the trails to hike with Seaman are of Presidential quality nonetheless. Just don't expect to see any First Dogs.

The star trails on Catoctin Mountain climb to overlooks in the eastern side of the park. Unfortunately these are pet-free. So you can fill your day of canine hiking instead with many easy self-guiding interpretive trails.

The rugged Catoctin Mountains provided ideal cover for a moonshining still, made illegal by the onset of Prohibition in 1919. On a steaming July day in 1929 Federal agents raided the Blue Blazes Whiskey Still and confiscated more than 25,000 gallons of mash. Today the airy, wooded *Blue Blazes Whiskey Trail* along Distillery Run leads to a recreated working still and interprets the history of whiskey making in the backwoods of Appalachia. The journey up and down Blue Blaze Creek clocks in at under one mile.



CATSKILL FOREST PRESERVE

Devil's Path/Hunter Trail/Spruceton Trail

HUNTER, NEW YORK

Hiking Time: 4-5 hours



Hunter Mountain is the second highest peak in the Catskill Mountains and has seen energetic development over the years. Seaman will pass remnants of old logging roads, tram railways, and ski lifts on his ascent to the 4,040-foot summit. The last tree here was harvested in 1917 and for the past hundred years New York's Forest Preserve has worked to renew one of the Empire State's most popular mountains.

Four trails make the journey to the top of Hunter Mountain where New York's highest fire tower awaits. The purchase is an elevation gain of over 2,000 feet in just over two miles with scarcely a downhill step on the way. There are rock ledges but nothing technically difficult for your dog.

The red-blazed *Devil's Path* is the steepest route up so most canine hikers set off on the old road following the blue blazes of the *Spruceton Trail*. Hunter Brook keeps your dog company for a spell before reaching the Hunter Mountain ski area that was the first resort in the world to employ complete snow-making coverage of a mountain.

No views atop Hunter Mountain but the 60-foot high steel fire tower solves that dilemma. **Dogs can negotiate the wide, open steps and even if the cab is closed the upper stairs are high enough above the treetops for panoramas in every direction.** Seaman's reward at the end of the sturdy 7.5-mile loop is the easily accessible swimming waters of Notch Lake.



CATSKILL FOREST PRESERVE

Wittenberg Cornell Slide Trail

PHOENICIA, NEW YORK

Hiking Time: 7-8 hours



John Burroughs, the “Father of the American Nature Essay,” made Slide Mountain one of the most famous mountains in America. In his “The Heart of the Southern Catskills” he described his feelings upon completing the ascent of the highest peak in the Catskills, “The works of man dwindle...”

The *Wittenberg Cornell Slide Trail* is the most popular tough canine day hike in the Catskills. In just over seven miles your dog will gain over 4,000 feet and conquer three mountain peaks across the Burroughs Range before standing on the summit of 4,180-foot Slide Mountain. **Plus there are rock scrambles, mini-cliffs, and ladders along the way. This one is for experienced trail dogs only.**

Wittenberg Mountain is tagged first after four miles and serves up the best views on the hike from a large open rock shelf; the rewards are such that many turn around here. Cornell Mountain is less than one mile ahead with a tricky V-cut to negotiate. If your dog has problems here there is no reason to try for the more difficult ascent of Slide Mountain with a 30-foot rock wall and ladders.

Luckily the views before reaching the roof of the Catskills are every bit as good as the top. If you tag the summit you will find a small plaque memorializing John Burroughs, who was often photographed with his hounds and spent many nights camped up here. The trees weren’t as thick 150 years ago so it was easier for him to wax poetic in those days.



DELAWARE STATE FOREST

Bruce Lake Natural Area

SWIFTWATER, PENNSYLVANIA

Hiking Time: 3-4 hours



This 80,000-acre chunk of the Pocono Mountains that drains into the Delaware River has been carved up into special trail systems and designated natural areas. Hundreds of miles of canine hiking opportunities await in the managed forest here.

The spring-fed Bruce Lake is one of six bodies of water in the state forest birthed by glaciers. An eight-mile loop circles the ancient relic as well as the man-made Egypt Meadow Lake. After the conifer forests around the lake were completely cut down fires swept the area to expose rock formations along the trails. This route combines wide, paw-pleasing logging roads and the usual rocky Pocono paths as it rolls along.

Additional trotting is open through the Buckhorn Natural Area where the headwaters of Bushkill Creek are preserved in addition to a high mountain swamp and gnarly rock ledges. Those rocks supported more than 1,000 bluestone quarries over the years that built much of northeastern Pennsylvania.

A collection of interconnecting paths includes 26 miles of the Pocono Plateau of the *Thunder Swamp Trail System* that can be cobbled into short loop trails for day use or longer loops for overnight treks. Highlights are the rocky Pennel Natural Area to where the trails reach an elevated part of the forest and the low-lying swamps of the Stillwater Natural Area, a hideout for army deserters during the Civil War.



DELAWARE WATER GAP NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

Red Dot/Blue Blazes/Appalachian Trails

WARRINGTON, NEW JERSEY

Hiking Time: 3-4 hour



Seaman probably won't appreciate it as he is switchbacking up 1,527-foot Mt. Tammany but millions of years ago this area was a level plain. Since then the Delaware River, the largest undammed and free-flowing river east of the Mississippi, has ground out the Delaware Water Gap where the water twists in a tight "S" curve. The famous views here spawned great resort destinations in 19th century America that have all faded away.

The sentinels of the Gap are Mt. Tammany in New Jersey and 1,463-foot Mt. Minsi on the Pennsylvania side of the river. An old fire road conquers Minsi that can be combined with the *Appalachian Trail* to form a four-mile hiking loop. The twisting *Red Dot Trail* up Tammany is the more popular of the two summit hikes. It requires 1.5 miles of climbing on the rocky slopes to ascend the 1,200 feet to the top of the Gap.

The route continues on the *Blue Blaze Trail* through thickets of mountain laurel to meet the *Appalachian Trail* skipping along the Kittatinny Ridge. A detour north passes Sunfish Pond, one of New Jersey's "7 Natural Wonders," where the water in the glacial lake is so clear and deep for a long time it was considered to be bottomless. **The loop closes to the south under towering hemlocks and includes a visit for your lucky dog to the tumbling waters and cool swimming holes of Dunnfield Creek.**



FILLMORE GLEN STATE PARK

Gorge Trail/North Rim Trail

MORAVIA, NEW YORK

Hiking Time: 2-3 hours



Millard Fillmore was the first president born when George Washington was no longer alive and the last president who was neither a Democrat nor a Republican (he was a Whig). He was also born in a log cabin about five miles from this trailhead.

The main canine hiking experience at Fillmore Glen is on the *Gorge Trail* that crosses Dry Creek on nine bridges and visits five major waterfalls. Much of the sublime stonework along the trail was constructed by Civilian Conservation Corps stonemasons during the Great Depression.

This is an easy trot for Seaman for two miles into the glen, starting flat and becoming increasingly steep as you reach the end of the gorge. **Opportunities for doggie dips abound but none so picturesque as the natural swimming pool beyond the Cowsheds, a magazine cover-worthy waterfall that drops into a semi-circular amphitheater.**

Unlike many canine gorge hikes your dog is not trapped in Fillmore Glen at the end. There is not one, but two options to create a loop back to the parking lot. The south rim route is the more benign of the two as it connects several picnic pavilions. The heartier canine hike is through the towering hemlocks on the higher side of the gorge, the north side which creates a canine loop hike of just over three miles. The most scenic side water plunges from this side, if Seaman hasn't had his fill of water shows already.



GETTYSBURG NATIONAL MILITARY PARK

Big Round Top Trail

GETTYSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

Hiking Time: 1-2 hours

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It took Abraham Lincoln only 272 words to capture the importance of the Battle of Gettysburg during the Civil War. It will also not take you long to understand the critical role Big Round Top played during the fighting on this hike with your dog. In fact, by the time President Lincoln delivered the Gettysburg Address less than five months after the battle in 1863 efforts were already underway to preserve this ground.

The trail is historic in its own right. It was originally a steep footpath that led to a 60-foot observation tower erected in 1895. The path was rerouted and covered in macadam in the 1930s and today's canine hike can use either or a combination of both. **The tower was removed in 1968 with the explanation that visitors were too tired to climb it after the hike to tag the 785-foot summit. Your trail dog would not have had that problem!**

The highest point on the Gettysburg Battlefield did not witness intense fighting because it was never cleared of trees like the surrounding farm fields. Colonel Joshua Chamberlain did win the Congressional Medal of Honor for his heroism on Big Round Top and the progress of his 20th Maine Infantry can be traced by monuments along the hike. Informal trails lead to more than 1,400 statues and memorials in the park that constitute the greatest exhibit of outdoor art in America.



HIGBEE BEACH WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

Dune Trail

CAPE MAY, NEW JERSEY

Hiking Time: 1-2 hours

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It's not easy to find a secluded beach in America's most densely populated state but it wasn't so long ago that Higbee Beach was remote enough to be an official nude beach. **It's not anymore but pretty much anything still goes here, including allowing your dog to romp in the sand all year round.** One regular at the beach with his dog was Thomas Higbee, whose family owned a hotel here in the 1800s. Dressed in a long coat and accompanied by a large black dog, Thomas's ghost is often reported to be roaming the dunes.

The two miles of nature trails, much of it in deep sand, include passage through the last remaining dune forest on the Delaware Bay. Wide sand and easy wave action will lure any level of canine swimmer into the water.

The beach next door to Higbee is the similarly dog-friendly Sunset Beach, famous for its Cape May Diamonds. The "diamonds" are actually pieces of quartz that have been eroded from the Upper Delaware River and been polished by a 200-mile journey of churning and jostling that can last a millennium or two.

The stones, that can be cut and faceted to do a passable imitation of a diamond, are found in abundance here because the tidal flow bounces off a unique concrete ship that rests offshore. The *Atlantus* was built to transport soldiers during steel-short World War I and as she was being towed to Cape May to serve as a ferry slip an accident dumped her on a sand bar where she remains today.



HITHER HILLS STATE PARK

Serpents Back Trail

MONTAUK, NEW YORK

Hiking Time: 2-3 hours



It took an acrimonious three-year battle for New York planner Robert Moses to gain permission for his visionary necklace of public parks along the Montauk shores in the 1920s. The enduring jewel of his struggle is Hither Hills that stretches from ocean to bay and is the largest state park in the tony east end of Long Island.

Hither Hills is a mile of pristine, dune-backed Atlantic Ocean beach and top-rated campground. With such delights, the 1,755-acre park's interior that stretches to Napeague Bay is often overlooked. All the better for trail dogs, who can't swim in the ocean or sleep in a tent here. Miles of informal sandy trails and jeep roads pick through the pitch pine, scrub oak and beach heather.

The 1.5-mile *Serpent's Back Trail* travels through the spine of the park and can be used to form sporty hiking loops that will delight Seaman for hours. Expect plenty of ups and downs as you twist through the pine barrens, leading to panoramic overlooks and the sandy/cobbly shore of Napeague Bay with easy dog paddling in the sheltered water.

Hither Hills is home to unique walking dunes - 80-foot high piles of sand that are blown more than three feet each year by the strong westerly winds. As the sands shift they completely bury trees and vegetation, eventually leaving phantom forests of dead trees. A 3/4-mile trail at Napeague Harbor loops through the giant bowls for Seaman to explore.

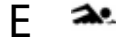


LAKE GEORGE WILD FOREST

Black Mountain Trail

LAKE GEORGE, NEW YORK

Hiking Time: 3-4 hours



Black Mountain is the tallest peak around the shores of Lake George; at 2,646 it is just a few leaps beyond a half-mile high. **The canine hike to the summit is one of those climbs where your dog is enveloped inside the woods the entire time with no views in sight, or even imaginable. But the views at the top of the journey? So, so worth it.**

You have your choice of how to claim these unparalleled views of Lake George from its eastern shore. The steeper route (red badges) summits in 2.5 miles and only challenges your dog in the rocky upper stretches. There is a closed fire tower at the summit but the primo views actually come from ledges just below the summit. Fires have visited most of the bare rock clearing views from the spruce and oak-beech forests.

With islands in the lake and a shoreline stretching northward between low-lying mountains, you can appreciate why Thomas Jefferson wrote, "Lake George is without comparison, the most beautiful water I ever saw."

You can send Seaman back down the way you came or close a loop on the gentler rise to the top of Black Mountain. That previous road (yellow badges) not taken unfolds over 4.2 miles. With time and a hot day this is a chance for some refreshing doggie dips in any one, or all, of three ponds. It is also just a quick drive to Washington County Beach for a swim in those crystal blue waters Seaman has been looking at from high above.



LETCHWORTH STATE PARK

Gorge Trail

CASTILE, NEW YORK
Hiking Time: 2-8 hours



William Pryor Letchworth entered business at the age of 15 in 1848, working as a clerk in the saddlery and hardware trade. He soon shifted to the iron products business and was successful enough to retire at the age of 48. He donated his 1,000-acre Glen Iris estate along the Genesee River to become one of the cornerstones of the New York state park system.

Dubbed the "Grand Canyon of the East," the wooded gorge was scraped and shaped by glaciers, leaving some of the country's most dramatic waterfalls in their wake. **The Gorge Trail traces the ravine for seven miles but most folks don't explore past the first three major hydrospectaculars so you will have no trouble slipping away into the woods with your dog in relative solitude.** Your biggest decision on this canine hike will be pinpointing the spot - if any - when it is time to count up your wondrous views and turn around.

The *Gorge Trail* matches Mother Nature's eye-popping moments with its own collection of stone bridges and stairways carved into the cliff walls by Civilian Conservation Corps workers during the Great Depression. An active railroad bridge across the gorge is no mean engineering feat itself although it came at the cost of a much-beloved steel trestle that stood for 142 years before being condemned in 2018.

The footpath is wide and easy to maneuver through the gorge but the builders were not overly energetic on guard rails so take note.



MINNEWASKA STATE PARK PRESERVE

Gertrude's Nose Loop

KERHONKSON, NEW YORK
Hiking Time: 4-5 hours



If your dog could talk you would hear about this hike for a loooooong time. The state park on the dramatic Shawangunk Mountain ridge is where feuding brothers Alfred and Albert Smiley opened competing vacation houses in the 1800s. When they made nice again the Smileys built a network of carriage roads between the hotels. These wide, carefully graded roadbeds are where you will be doing most of your hiking with Seaman.

The early steps lead to a swimming beach at cliff-fringed Lake Minnewaska. If this was as far as your dog went it would probably be a four-star hike. The *Millbrook Mountain Carriage Road* then moves through mixed forests onto the open cliffs and Patterson's Pellet, a glacial erratic perched improbably on the edge of a cliff.

The carriage road joins *Gertrude's Nose Trail*, a narrow footpath that will eventually spend much of its 2.7 miles poking along flat, open clifftops. There are so many mind-blowing views around Gertrude's Nose they actually become ho-hum after awhile.

Take heed of the red blazes - when they lead inland they are taking Seaman away from potentially dangerous crevices in the Shawangunk conglomerate. An occasional rock scramble adds interest to your dog's hiking day, regardless. Pine trees in all shapes and size decorate the clifftops.

Multiple options close the 7.5-mile loop; Seaman will vote for the one that leads back to Lake Minnewaska for a well-earned doggie dip.



NATIONAL ARBORETUM

Mount Hamilton Trails

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Hiking Time: 2-3 hours

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Paws down, this is the best place to hike with your dog in the nation's capital. Congress established the National Arboretum as a research and education facility and living museum in 1927 on the banks of the Anacostia River. The park began with 189 acres and now has 446 acres on the grounds less than two miles from the National Mall. This is one of the nation's largest urban living plant museums.

Most of your dog's explorations will be on paw-friendly grass to sniff the specimens in the Holly and Magnolia Collection, the Goteli Dwarf Conifer Collection, the National Boxwood Collection, the National Grove of State Trees, and more. One meadow houses 22 sandstone Corinthian columns from the east portico of the United States Capitol built in 1828. They were rescued from the scrap heap and reinstalled in the Arboretum.

There are also landscaped hiking paths, most notably the major trail system that circles Mount Hamilton, at 240 feet one of the highest points in the nation's capital. On the southern and eastern slopes are over 15,000 hardy azaleas that can still see blooms into November. **The route eventually takes Seaman to the top where he can peek through the trees to the west and see the Capitol building and the Washington Monument.** You can bet that with the millions of folks who visit Washington each year that picture is not on many iPhones.



PENNSYLVANIA STATE GAME LANDS #110

Appalachian Trail

HAMBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

Hiking Time: 4-5 hours

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Thru-hikers on the *Appalachian Trail* like to say that Pennsylvania is where boots go to die. Rocks are certainly a theme on this canine hike from extended boulder hopping to the jumble of rock ledges that deliver the finest panoramas in the Keystone State. The two stars are Pulpit Rock and The Pinnacle. They overlook a river of quartzite boulders 500 feet wide and a half-mile long known as the Blue Rocks, souvenirs of the last ice age.

Some of the best places to hike with your dog in Pennsylvania are on its many state game lands. Here, the *Appalachian Trail* links with a fire road to create a nine-mile loop to the ridges along Blue Mountain. Tackling the loop counter-clockwise offers two routes to the Pinnacle: the very rocky, lung-busting *Valley Rim Trail* and a shortcut on a switch-backing access road to a mountaintop observatory (it is not a major time-saving shortcut).

The mountain climbing ends at Pulpit Rock but not the treacherous footing for Seaman as the trail to the much-anticipated Pinnacle is particularly rock-studded here. **A giant rock cairn signals the turnoff to the many rock ledge overlooks at the Pinnacle for your dog to gaze at the cultivated fields of the Cumberland Valley stretching to the horizon below.**

The return trip pitches the rocks for a wide, level fire road: perfectly flat at first and then dropping alongside the fast and fun Furnace Creek. It is almost like Seaman gets two hikes for the price of one on the day.

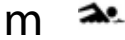


PYRAMID MOUNTAIN NATURAL HISTORIC AREA

Blue/ Yellow/ White/ Red Trails

BOONTON, NEW JERSEY

Hiking Time: 2-3 hours



Pyramid Mountain is not what Seaman would expect from a hike in heavily suburbanized northern New Jersey. The mountain is best known for its glacial erratics - boulders that were sprinkled across the landscape by retreating ice sheets long ago. The most celebrated is Tripod Rock, a boulder variously estimated at between 150 and 200 tons in weight, that is suspended heroically off the ground by three smaller stones. Two massive stone monoliths: Whale Head Rock and Bear Rock stand close by. It was the desire to save these treasured rocks that led to the development of the Natural Historic Area that protects more than 1,500 acres of sporty trails, fields, forests and wetlands.

A five-mile loop cobbled together from the Visitors Center takes in all three natural phenomena. As a bonus the route tops out at 924 feet on Pyramid Mountain with views of the New York City skyline. **There are wet paws along the way and enough short, steep, and rocky climbs to remind Seaman he is on a mountain and not in suburban New Jersey.** Switchbacks help lessen the strain of 300-foot elevation gains.

If you are used to hiking with your dog in some of the wilder areas of the metropolitan New York area, Pyramid Mountain may seem like you have signed up for a parade on sunny weekends. Maybe someone will invite you and Seaman to drop in for a backyard barbecue at the end.



RICKETTS GLEN STATE PARK

Falls Trail

BENTON, PENNSYLVANIA

Hiking Time: 3-4 hours



A good waterfall trail might yield three, maybe four waterfalls. How about a trail that goes past 23 named waterfalls? That's what Seaman find on the magical *Falls Trail*, a Y-shaped exploration along two branches of Kitchen Creek. One of the most uniquely scenic areas in the Northeast, Ricketts Glen was slated to become a national park in the 1930s but World War II shelved plans for this development. Instead, 13,000 acres of Civil War hero and timber baron R. Bruce Ricketts became a state park.

Colonel Ricketts hired a crew to build a trail along and across the plunging waters and the project took 28 years. Today the *Falls Trail* remains a maintenance challenge and its steep grades can be muddy and slippery so your dog's four-wheel traction will be most welcome.

Kitchen Creek slices through the Ganoga Glen to the left (the tallest water display, 94-foot Ganoga Falls is here) and Glen Leigh to the right before uniting at Waters Meet. The two prongs of the trail connect at the top of the twin falls via the 1.2-mile *Highland Trail*. The complete falls experience encompasses almost seven miles.

The stem of the trail flows through the Glens Natural Area, among towering hemlocks and oaks, before tumbling over three cascades at Adams Falls on the opposite side of the trailhead. These may be the prettiest falls of them all and they aren't even on the official trail in this National Natural Landmark.



SARATOGA NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK

Wilkinson National Recreation Trail

STILLWATER, NEW YORK

Hiking Time: 2-3 hours

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Saratoga is one of the most famous and influential battlefields in world history. In two battles, three weeks apart in the fall of 1777, American general Horatio Gates pounded British commander John Burgoyne who was awaiting reinforcements that never arrived. The surrender of 6,000 British regulars guaranteed the Colonies would not be split along the Hudson River and went a long way towards gaining American independence. The National Park Service maintains this ground much as it looked more than 240 years ago.

On the *Wilkinson National Recreation Trail* Seaman will follow a 4.2-mile balloon loop that travels on roads used by the British during the two battles. He passes sites of British and German fortifications and enters fields that witnessed intense fighting. Behind the Breymann Redoubt he will see the unique Boot Monument. The footwear in question belonged to American battle hero Benedict Arnold who rode through a cross-fire in front of the defensive position to secure victory, receiving a piercing wound in his leg. The marble boot monument does not mention the eventual traitor's name.

Saratoga isn't just walking in the footsteps of Revolutionary War soldiers - it's a darn good canine hike. Easy trotting crosses rolling grasslands with islands of airy deciduous hardwoods. The Great Ravine, which helped dictate battle strategy, provides a change of pace to the terrain. All in all, a fun outing, even if you learn something along the way.




STOKES STATE FOREST

Appalachian Trail

BRANCHVILLE, NEW JERSEY

Hiking Time: 3-5 hours

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Stokes Forest is the chunk of land between the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area to the south and High Point State Park to the north giving New Jersey about 30 miles of uninterrupted parkland for the *Appalachian Trail* to travel along the Kittatinny Ridge. **Any type of canine hike is possible here - you could fill up a day just walking on beginner trails that explore attractive streams, visit old mine sites or disappear with your dog in a remote patch of beguiling woods land.** Before you start, stop in the office and pick up the best trail guide in New Jersey.

Most canine hikers aim for 1,653-foot Sunrise Mountain, the second-highest spot in New Jersey but with the best views in the Garden State. From the recreation area at Stoney Lake four heavily wooded trails run up to the *Appalachian Trail* atop the ridge enabling you to create hiking loops of between four and ten miles, depending on how long Seaman wants to walk on the ridge soaking in the views. This is absolutely a workout for your dog and the terrain can be rocky - take care especially coming down across large slabs of stone. The welcome waters of Stoney Lake await your return.

To cap off Seaman's day at Stokes Forest head to Tillman Ravine for easy trotting through a dark, shady evergreen forest of Eastern hemlock. The Tillman Brook that carves this moist ravine is one of the prettiest in the state.

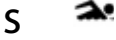


TIADAGHTON STATE FOREST

Golden Eagle Trail

SLATE RUN, PENNSYLVANIA

Hiking Time: 4-5 hours



If your trail dog spends any time in Pennsylvania he is likely to hear tell of the *Golden Eagle Trail* being the ultimate day hike in the Keystone State. Seaman may find this curious as the hike is in an obscure state forest neither in the Pocono nor Allegheny mountains.

The statistics paint a crystalline portrait of what lies ahead: nine-mile loop, over 4,000 feet in total elevation gained, two ascents of 800 and 1,000 feet, and four vistas. Looping counterclockwise gets the steepest climb out of the way early and deposits you on the much celebrated Raven's Horn vista with 270-degree views of the Pine Creek Valley early rather than late. Timber rattlesnakes make their home in the rocks so keep Seaman from being too curious here.

The rocky slopes give way to a long draw up Wolf Run with many opportunities to get paws wet. White pines and old growth hemlocks keep things cool amidst the huffing and puffing on the trail. The abundance of flat rocks bears evidence to an old flagstone quarry. Three more vistas emerge, climaxing at the highpoint of the trail, the Beulahland Vista, elevation 2,180 feet. The view is of a long ago futile attempt to coax crops out of these mountains.

The loop finishes with a descent down Bonnell Run with more tail-wagging stream crossings and tiny waterfalls. With the tough going behind you assessments can be made on the Golden Eagle's place in the Pennsylvania canine hiking pantheon.



WHARTON STATE FOREST

Batona Trail

TABERNACLE, NEW JERSEY

Hiking Time: 3-4 hours



The New Jersey Pine Barrens are a tapestry of impenetrable scrub forest, cedar swamps, and peat bogs. The land is so mysterious it is the home of the legendary winged creature with the head of a horse supported by a four-foot serpentine body known as the "Jersey Devil." One million acres of undeveloped land reside in America's most densely populated state here, including the bulk of Philadelphia financier Joseph Wharton's former 100,000-acre estate.

The *Batona Trail* slices 50.2 miles through this unworldly wilderness, marked by its distinctive pink blazes. This is easy walking on paw-friendly sand for most of its length. **Despite the over-whelming flatness of the surrounding countryside, there are undulating elevation changes on the trail itself that make this a fun romp for any dog.**

An outstanding sample of the *Batona Trail* for Seaman is a four-mile hike to Apple Pie Hill, soaring all of 209 feet above sea level but with a fire tower that delivers views across all of New Jersey from the Delaware River to the Atlantic Ocean. The steps may be too open for most dogs to get those views.

Mostly the views are of millions of pine trees while gobbling wild blueberries and huckleberries along the trail. The starting point for this canine hike is a memorial to Emilio Carranza Rodriguez, the founder of the Mexican Air Force, who perished in a plane crash in the Pine Barrens in 1928 at the age of 22.



WORLD'S END STATE PARK

High Rock Trail

FORKSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

Hiking Time: 1-2 hours

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Early maps called this place Worlds End, possibly due to the staggering views and difficulties in reaching the area. The unusual name may also be a reference to the swirling S-curve in Loyalsock Creek that blocked lumbered logs from flowing downstream, called "Whirls End." In 1929, the former Department of Forests and Waters began purchasing the logged-out land to establish a state forest park. In 1932, \$50 was allotted to create the park facilities, which bought little more than four picnic tables. A few years later four Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) were established and hundreds of out-of-work campers built many of today's facilities, like the swimming area and dam, cabins, hiking trails and roads.

The 20 miles of hiking trails of Worlds End State Park are mostly rocky with steep sections that climb the surrounding mountains. **For experienced canine hikers this is some of the best, toughest hiking around.** The rewards of the *High Rock Trail* include dramatic views earned on the rugged climb up the mountainside, the park earning its name with each step. In the eastern half of the park the *Canyon Vista Trail* is highlighted by a spectacular view of the Loyalsock Creek gorge at an elevation of 1,750 feet.

You can also use the park as a jumping on point for the famed *Loyalsock Trail* that flows for 60 miles through the park on footpaths, old logging roads and abandoned railroad grades.

SOUTH ATLANTIC COAST



DELAWARE

52. CAPE HENLOPEN STATE PARK

FLORIDA

50. BIG CYPRESS NATIONAL PRESERVE

64. JONATHAN DICKINSON STATE PARK

65. KEY WEST BOTANICAL GARDEN

67. LITTLE BIG ECON STATE FOREST

GEORGIA

62. Jekyll Island State Park

70. SKIDAWAY ISLAND STATE PARK

MARYLAND

49. ASSATEAGUE ISLAND
NATIONAL SEASHORE

71. TUCKAHOE STATE PARK

NORTH CAROLINA

51. CAPE HATTERAS NATIONAL SEASHORE

53. CAROLINA BEACH STATE PARK

57. FORT FISHER STATE RECREATION AREA

59. HICKORY BLUFF PRESERVE

63. JOCKEY'S RIDGE STATE PARK

69. MERCHANTS MILLPOND STATE PARK

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54. CONGAREE NATIONAL PARK

55. EDISTO BEACH STATE PARK

60. HUNTING ISLAND STATE PARK

61. HUNTINGTON BEACH STATE PARK

68. MAGNOLIA PLANTATION AND GARDENS

VIRGINIA

56. FIRST LANDING STATE PARK

58. GREAT DISMAL SWAMP NWR

66. KIPTOPEKE STATE PARK

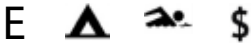


ASSATEAGUE ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE

South Ocean Beach

BERLIN, MARYLAND

Hiking Time: 2-3 hours



Assateague Island - the sands were connected to the mainland until 1933 when an August hurricane tore open an inlet to the Sinepuxent Bay - is best known for its free-roaming Chincoteague ponies. Legend has it that the original herd escaped a shipwrecked Spanish galleon and swam ashore. The ponies rule the island and Seaman can see them on the roads or even meet them in the surf.

A lighthouse was erected in 1833 but ships still ran aground, including the *Dispatch*, the official yacht of five American presidents. The cruiser was ruined beyond repair when it reached the shore unscheduled on October 10, 1891.

Dogs are not allowed on the three short channel-side nature trails and can not go on lifeguarded beaches but **once you and your dog start hiking at South Ocean Beach there are miles of undeveloped beach** until the Virginia border is reached and dogs are not allowed further. That is the better part of a dozen miles so Seaman can get a full day of beach hiking at Assateague on the undeveloped, windswept beach sands.

Dogs are welcome any time of the year but even in summer you may well have most of this beach to yourself and your dog - especially in the off-season. Your best trail companion is also welcome in the National Seashore campground. Pack your own sticks for fetching in the surf; not much driftwood stays on the beach.



BIG CYPRESS NATIONAL PRESERVE

Florida National Scenic Trail

I-75: MM 63, FLORIDA

Hiking Time: 3-6 hours



You will **never find a better hike with your dog at a highway rest stop** than this stretch of the *Florida National Scenic Trail* that crosses I-75, better known as Alligator Alley. On the north side of the ribbon of highway volunteers of the Florida Trail Association have used a segment of the 1,300-mile foot trail as the backbone for hiking loops of six, eight, and fifteen miles. Pushing out from the parking lot, trail maps are kindly provided to assuage any trepidation about the ornery wilds lurking ahead.

The *Florida Trail* here is a wide, flat jeep road that traces a canal where Seaman can observe plenty of alligators from a comfortable distance. The cross trails (red and yellow) and the full loop (blue) are single track that traipse through open forests of dwarf cypress and slash pine.

Several pack-in campsites are scattered through the loops, including a cabin that is a souvenir from President Franklin Roosevelt's Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) during the Great Depression of the 1930s. "Roosevelt's tree army" set up in rural areas building roads, working on flood control and starting beautification projects. Nationally, the CCC was responsible for 3,470 fire towers, 126,000 miles of roads and trails, 89,000 miles of telephone lines and over two billion trees planted.

Shade is at a premium throughout this quintessential Florida hike so have drinking water at the ready.



CAPE HATTERAS NATIONAL SEASHORE

Nature Trails

OUTER BANKS, NORTH CAROLINA

Hiking Time: less than 1 hour for each



There is no better place for *loooong* hikes with your dog on dune-backed beaches than the 70 sandy miles of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore spread across three barrier islands. **There are also a trio of short nature trails - one on each island - to try with your dog.**

The best of the lot is in Buxton Woods on Hatteras Island, near the Visitor Center and lighthouse. This trail bounds across pine and oak-covered dunes with marshy wetlands tossed into the mix. The gnarled trees and shrub thickets provide a shady respite from a day on the beach with Seaman.

Another leafy canine hike is on the *Hammock Hills Nature Trail* on Ocracoke Island which traipses through a maritime forest on the edge of Pamlico Sound for a bit less than a mile. For an easy hike with your dog in the sunshine and salt air stop at Bodie Island Lighthouse. Here Seaman can explore freshwater ponds and marshes that were artificially created by building dams and dikes and artificial dunes to block the intrusion of ocean salt spray.

The Bodie Island Light is just one of five your dog can visit on the Outer Banks built to help mariners navigate the "Graveyard of the Atlantic" - more than 600 ships wrecked off Cape Hatteras. Included in the quintet is America's tallest and most famous, the 208-foot black-and-white swirled Cape Hatteras Lighthouse. Seaman will have to wait outside while you hike the 268 steps to the top.



CAPE HENLOPEN STATE PARK

Dune Overlook Trail

LEWES, DELAWARE

Hiking Time: 2-3 hours



Cape Henlopen has the distinction of being one of the first parks in America: in 1682 Quaker overlord William Penn decreed that the lands would be for "the usage of the citizens of Lewes and Sussex County." Today the park boasts more than 5,000 acres, including four miles of pristine beach where the Delaware Bay mingles water with the Atlantic Ocean. This is Delaware's largest state park.

The primary destination for dog owners at Cape Henlopen is the 3.1-mile *Dune Overlook Trail*, located south of the pet-friendly campground. The loop is part natural surface, part paved road through pitch-pine corridors and past old fortifications built to bolster America's coastal defenses during World War II.

Do not let Seaman skip the two short spur trails! One leads into the spartina marshes typical of the Delaware Bay estuary and the other is a romp for your dog onto the 80-foot Great Dune, the highest sand pile on the Atlantic shore between Cape Cod and Cape Hatteras.

A good way to explore the undeveloped sands is on the 1.8-mile *Beach Loop Trail* that begins opposite the parking lot in the southernmost section of the park and leads to overlooks of Gordon's Pond Wildlife Area, a unique saltwater impoundment. The soft sand can make for heavy going so don't hesitate to plop down on a dune for a rest. And there is always a chance to play in the lively Atlantic Ocean waves.



CAROLINA BEACH STATE PARK

Sugarloaf Trail

CAROLINA BEACH, N CAROLINA

Hiking Time: 2 hours



The stretch of land along the Cape Fear River just before it spills into the Atlantic Ocean is such a unique environment that it moved the state of North Carolina in 1969 to spend its first money for a park since 1916. **For canine hikers Carolina Beach boasts one of the most extensive trail systems on the Carolina coasts.**

The feature canine hike is the *Sugarloaf Trail* that leads to a 55-foot high pile of sand on the bank of the Cape Fear River. Sugarloaf Dune appeared on navigational charts as early as 1738 and was an important landmark for river pilots. The Confederate States of America also made use of the dune during the Civil War, stationing 5,000 troops near here as part of the defense of the port of Wilmington.

The *Sugarloaf Trail* winds for three delightful miles through a typical Southern forest of pines and live oaks and eventually leads to a triad of ponds, each with its own personality. All told there are six miles of well-marked sandy, paw-friendly trails here. There is no access to Atlantic Ocean beaches at "Carolina Beach" but there is good swimming for your dog in the Cape Fear River.

The *Fly Trap Trail* unveils a shrub bog where the lack of nutrients in the soil have led some plants to turn insectivorous. Venus' Fly Trap grows wild only in these parts of the Carolinas. When an insect twice touches the tiny hairs inside its hinged leaves, the "trap" snaps shut, digesting the victim in lethal juices.



CONGAREE NATIONAL PARK

Boardwalk Loop Trail

HOPKINS, SOUTH CAROLINA

Hiking Time: 2-4 hours



One of America's smallest national parks, Congaree nonetheless serves up big adventure for your dog a short drive inland from the Atlantic Ocean. **Not only are dogs afforded a rare chance to enjoy National Park trails but they are also are permitted in the Wilderness Area** and that is virtually unheard of.

Congaree protects the largest contiguous area of old growth bottomland hardwood forest remaining in the United States. More than 52 million acres of floodplain forests have been decimated in the Southeast in the past century so these 2,000 acres of virgin pine, tupelo and bald cypress are special indeed. The park's forests harbor 20 state or national champion trees.

The 150-foot high canopy is one of the highest deciduous roofs in the world. The marquee trail is a 2.4-mile *Boardwalk Loop* that lifts hikers above the flooding of the Congaree River that occurs an average of ten times a year. Everywhere, cypress knees protrude above the water line, mysterious swamp trademarks whose purpose is not entirely known.

Another 20 miles of trail await in the Wilderness Area beyond the boardwalk. The old growth forest is much the same but Seaman's journey is now on sandy loam and dirt rather than pressure-treated wood. You are never far from the tannin-stained waterways that lubricate the park on these primordial passageways.

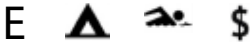


EDISTO BEACH STATE PARK

Spanish Mount Trail

EDISTO BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA

Hiking Time: 1 hour



Edisto Island was once world famous for its Sea Island Cotton but life has never had a sense of permanence here - the entire town of Edingsville was washed away in a hurricane in 1893 and never rebuilt. The Edisto Company gave 1,255 acres for the park after the cotton trade disappeared.

The *Spanish Mount Trail* features **one of the most unique destinations of any trail on the South Atlantic coasts** - a 12-foot high pile of oyster shells. Known as a shell midden, the oyster pile is typical of American Indian rings found throughout the coastal islands. The Spanish Mount is estimated to be 4,000 years old, the second oldest known in South Carolina. These piles of bleached shells might have been built for ceremonies or possibly they are just ancient trash heaps.

The wooded trail is 1.7 miles one way and moves along a wide, hard-packed dirt road. You can avoid completely retracing your pawprints on the return trip by using the *Forest Loop Trail* or the *Scott Creek Trail*. All the canine hiking here is on natural surfaces and easy going for every dog.

After Seaman gets an extended taste of the maritime forest and tidal creeks - and you'll find some of South Carolina's tallest palmetto trees here - head next for the Atlantic Ocean and the park's 1.5 miles of beachfront. The sand continues into adjoining Edisto Beach, which has remained a low-key residential beach. Save for the busy summer season, dogs can roam off leash on the beach.



FIRST LANDING STATE PARK

Bald Cypress Trail

VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA

Hiking Time: 2-3 hours



It has been almost 400 years since the first English settlers came ashore here at the bottom of the Chesapeake Bay. In addition to the history, First Landing State Park is a National Natural Landmark as the northernmost location on the East Coast where subtropical and temperate plants grow and thrive together.

The trail system features 19 miles of dog-friendly hiking. The marquee walk is the *Bald Cypress Trail* that circles a cypress swamp for 1.5 miles, much of the way on elevated boardwalks. Airborne Spanish moss drapes many of the ancient giants. Looping off that path is the 3.1-mile blue-blazed *Osmanthus Trail*, named for the American olive tree that grows abundantly on the fringes of the dark lagoon. Another worthwhile detour is the quarter-mile *High Dune Trail* that uses wooden sleeper-steps to ascend a tree-stabilized dune.

First Landing hiking is easy going for Seaman on these packed sand and soft dirt trails that are further cushioned to the paw by pine straw from towering loblolly pines. Gentle undulations spice up the visit.

The park stretches to the edge of the Chesapeake Bay where dogs can swim on unguarded sandy beaches. **Dogs are allowed on this beach year-round, the only such Virginia state park allowing dogs in the beach/swimming areas.** Just offshore are naked eye views of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, one of the seven modern engineering marvels of the world.



FORT FISHER STATE RECREATION AREA

Basin Trail

KURE BEACH, NORTH CAROLINA

Hiking Time: 2-3 hours



The largest earthwork fort in the Confederacy was constructed here to keep Wilmington's port open to blockade runners during the Civil War. The Union did not feel confident enough to assault Fort Fisher until December 24, 1864. For two days the sand and earth fortifications absorbed gunboat shells until Northern forces withdrew. On January 12 a bombardment by land and sea finally produced a white flag after six hours of fierce fighting. It was considered the greatest land-sea battle of the Civil War and helped seal the ultimate fate of the Confederacy. Earthworks still remain at the historic site that is now a recreation area.

The *Basin Trail* slips almost unnoticed from the south end of the parking lot into what appears to be a maritime forest. Seaman will twist through a maze of wax myrtles for only a few steps, however, before bursting into the open with nothing ahead but **a stretch of seven miles of tail-friendly, dune-backed sand beaches.**

Along the way you'll pass an old World War II-era hovel where Robert Harrill, the "Fort Fisher Hermit," lived for 17 years. Harrill was far from alone, however. He welcomed all visitors and more than 100,000 made the pilgrimage over the years to listen to his philosophies of simple life. In 1969 the state of North Carolina called him the Tarheel State's second largest tourist attraction behind the battleship *North Carolina*. Not that Robert Harrill ever lived truly alone - he often had a dog by his side.



GREAT DISMAL SWAMP NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Washington Ditch Trail

SUFFOLK, VIRGINIA

Hiking Time: 3-4 hours



At the age of 21 George Washington could be found down on the Virginia-North Carolina border organizing the Dismal Swamp Land Company. His plan was to drain the swamp - so named by the English because there was no need for settlers to force Indian tribes off the land as they had already left - and set up logging operations. Over the next 200 years all of the cypress and Atlantic white cedar forests growing here would be logged at least once.

If you are looking for a place to disappear with your dog on a hike for hours, this is it. During its logging years, over 140 miles of roads were constructed through the Dismal Swamp. Seaman will be hiking on firm sand/dirt roads, level and easy everywhere. Shade is at a premium on hot days so pack plenty of water for your outing.

The refuge has developed an interpretive trail at the site of Washington's former camp, Dismal Town. An extensive boardwalk, nearly a mile long with a couple of spurs, snakes through the heart of the swamp. For a full day's adventure, take Seaman on a 4.5-mile hike along the Washington Ditch which leads to Lake Drummond, one of only two natural lakes in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

You may think a long, straight hike is dull until you see Seaman sniffing and exploring the whole way. Especially when there is a gorgeous private doggie swimming pool waiting at the end.