Starboard Rock Sanctuary

Welcome to one of the most dramatic promontories on the Maine coast! Starboard Rock offers 180-degree views over the islands and waters of Penobscot Bay, with the mountains of Acadia National Park looming to the northeast. This site, formerly home to a fire-spotting tower, has been enjoyed by islanders for many years. Its conservation history began in 1989, when landowner Edwin Hoyt first placed it under a conservation easement. Ed worked tirelessly over the next fifteen years convincing his neighbors to follow suit, and in 2004 he gifted the Rock outright to Vinalhaven Land Trust, with Maine Coast Heritage Trust holding a conservation easement on the 18-acre parcel. In 2012, a bench was placed at the summit and dedicated in his memory.

To preserve our neighbors’ privacy, and to protect this spectacular site from overuse, access to Starboard Rock is strictly controlled. Water access is not allowed, and land access is only allowed via a VLT foot trail from our parking lot 3/4 of a mile north of the Rock.

Visitors are asked to come in small groups, and if the parking lot is full, please enjoy a different preserve nearby and return here another day. Pets are not allowed.

History

Natural Resources

Birdwatchers can count on seeing warblers and other songbirds, woodpeckers, sea birds, and birds of prey. Be sure to bring binoculars, and remember that the wildlife (and the neighbors) will be grateful if you keep your party on-trail, together, and quiet. Enjoy your visit!
Size: 18 acres

Trails: One trail; distance from parking lot to summit is 3/4 mile, with a short steep section over rocks and moss leading to the summit.

Features: Spectacular water and island views to the east and south from a bold cliff top; dramatic outcrops of granite; mature spruce/fir canopy with moss-covered understory.

Be Aware: Foot traffic only
Small groups only
No pets allowed
Fragile plant communities at summit
Stay on marked trails

Directions: From ferry, go left on Sands Rd. for .4 miles, then right on Old Harbor Rd. for .3 miles, then bearing slightly left onto North Haven Rd. for 1.9 miles, then bear right onto Calderwood Neck Rd. for 3.7 miles (road turns to dirt, and its name becomes Young Rd.). Watch for VLT parking lot on right; if lot is full, please come back another day. Trail from parking lot follows road for several hundred yards, then makes a right into woods, left onto a driveway, right onto dirt road, right onto another driveway, then finally right into woods for the duration. Follow the red paint markings on telephone poles and trees.