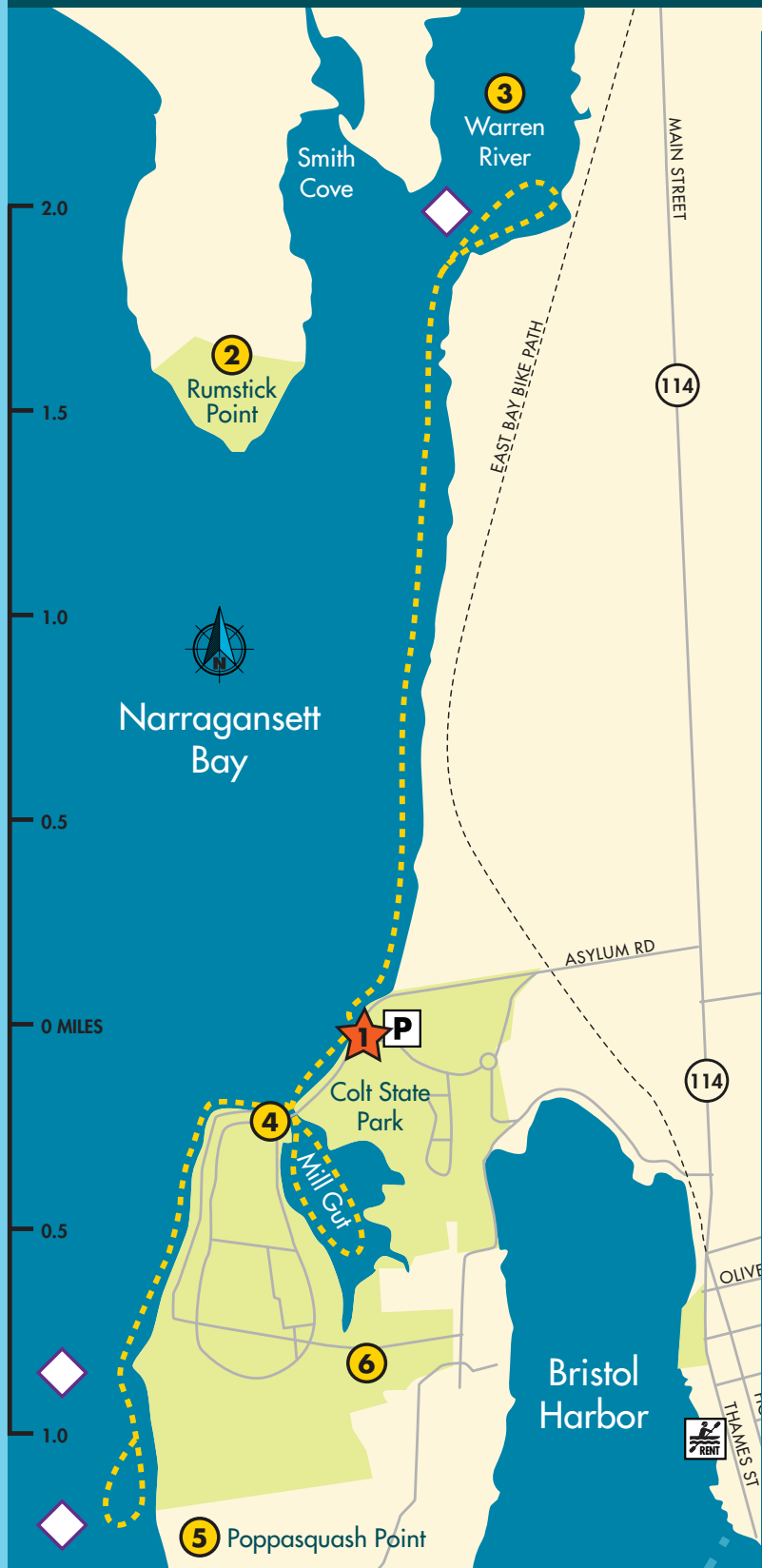





BRISTOL, RHODE ISLAND: COLT STATE PARK






LEVEL	Intermediate
START/END	Colt State Park Boat Ramp
BAY MILES	4-5 miles round trip to Warren, 2 miles past Colt State Park
TIME	3-5 hours
DESCRIPTION	Open Bay (except for Gut portion), can be choppy
SCENERY	Open Bay, residential, marshland, historic

COLT STATE PARK

The Colt Park Boat Ramp  launches you into Narragansett Bay. Go into the Park off Rt. 114 and follow the signs to the park, and through the attendant booth. Drive down to the ramp, which will be on your right. This new facility has a wide ramp used by a variety of recreational watercraft, and parking for over 100 cars.









As you launch, you will be along the eastern shore of Narragansett Bay. Head north and you'll be heading towards Rumstick Point  and the entrance to the Warren River  about 2 miles to the north. Once on the water there is little shelter so if the wind kicks up you should be prepared for waves. This area in particular has a tendency to be windy and rough. On most days the southwest wind fills in strongly in this area in the morning and blows throughout the afternoon, producing significant waves, so be prepared for this when planning your trip. The coast along the way goes from beautiful waterfront homes to protected marshland teeming with wildlife, and into the historic village of Warren. Pleasure craft are common on the Warren River so when possible stay near the shore, out of the channel, and keep a sharp eye out for boats that may not see you.

At high tide you can head under the stone bridge just south of the access site into the Mill Gut , a marshland and estuary with herons, osprey and other wildlife. Or continue along the shore past the Park, and on to Popasquash Point  and the entrance to Bristol Harbor, 3 miles south, but be prepared for stronger currents and rougher water around Popasquash Point. If you decide to head south you should also be aware that the main shipping channel, used by large vessels going to and from the Port of Providence, is only ¼ mile off shore in places.

If you decide to explore Colt State Park a little, there are 464 acres of lawns, stone walls, and curving drives along one of the state's most spectacular shorelines. Or visit Coggeshall Farm Museum , a living history farm depicting Bristol's agrarian life in the year 1799.

 Bristol Kayak Center, 251 Thames St, (401) 245-5100.

MAP LEGEND

 WATER ACCESS	 POINTS OF INTEREST	 ROADS
 WATER	 WATER TRAIL ROUTE	 PARKING
 CAUTION	 CONSERVATION LAND	



BRISTOL HARBOR

Bristol, Rhode Island is one of New England's famous historic ports. The well-preserved waterfront district and surrounding areas contain wonderful old buildings, churches, mills, mansions and ship building facilities that tell the history of Bristol's development since its founding in 1680. Today, restaurants, shops and public parks provide visitors with many options to make Bristol the ideal spot to launch your next paddling experience.



ABOUT BRISTOL, RHODE ISLAND

Steeped in a [rich history](#) that spans three centuries, Bristol, Rhode Island is a quintessential New England waterfront town. The town center is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and with its unwavering commitment to preservation, Bristol continues to maintain the picture-perfect charm of a historic port town. The well-preserved waterfront district contains the commercial enterprises, civic buildings, churches, mills, sailors' shacks and slave-traders' mansions that tell the history of Bristol's development since its founding in 1680.

Bristol holds the distinction of having the oldest, continuous [Fourth of July Celebration in America](#). The Celebration, first held in 1785, was started by Bristolians who actually took part in the Revolutionary War. This fervor continues today as Bristol becomes arguably the most patriotic town in America during the three-week Celebration which culminates in the gala Parade on Independence Day which is watched by over 200,000 enthusiastic people.

Sailing and shipbuilding have played an important role in the life of Bristol since the 17th Century. Today Bristol is the home of [several shipbuilding companies](#) that have local and international reputations for quality and workmanship. In 1995, Bristol became the home of the [America's Cup Hall of Fame](#).

Bristol is the cultural center for Bristol County as it is home to eight fine museums and [Roger Williams University](#). Bristol remains a center of history with many handsome homes built in the 1700s and 1800s, some designed by noted architect Russell

Warren, gracing the tree-lined streets. Visitors come from far away locations to enjoy Bristol's history, stroll along its waterfront, shop in its many stores and dine in its many [fine restaurants](#).

Bristol is situated on a 10 square mile peninsula, shaped like a lobster claw, the maw of which forms Bristol Harbor, with Narragansett Bay to the west and Mount Hope Bay to the east. It is about 12 miles distant from both Providence and Newport. With miles of coastline, 14 parks, and the starting point of the East Bay Bike Path, the town is an excellent choice for a variety of outdoor activities.

HELPFUL HINTS

Several good launching sites are available along Bristol's working waterfront. The DEM launch site on Poppasquash Road or Independence Park on Thames Street are both ideal. Numerous public parks offer safe and comfortable spots to take a break and walk ashore. Clam shacks to fine dining are all within easy reach. Check out the world famous Herreshoff Marine Museum / America's Cup Hall of Fame, and the Blithewold Arboretum in Bristol as well.

Bristol Harbor is always busy with pleasure boats and commercial activities. Please respect other craft and remember that larger boats have the right of way.

A very predictable southwest wind picks up every afternoon, which can make sea conditions uncomfortable. Paddling in the morning is advisable.

ALWAYS WEAR YOUR LIFE JACKET AND CARRY A WHISTLE OR OTHER SOUND PRODUCING DEVICE, PREFERABLY ATTACHED TO YOUR LIFE JACKET. PADDLERS SHOULD CHECK WATER LEVEL AND TIDES, WEATHER, AND WATERWAY CONDITIONS PRIOR TO EVERY TRIP. REMOVE WHAT YOU BRING, CLEAN UP MORE IF YOU CAN. PLEASE RESPECT PRIVATE PROPERTY. REPORT ANY PROBLEMS YOU ENCOUNTER TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES IF APPROPRIATE.

Be sure to visit Bristol's new website for details and attractions: www.explorebristol.com

The Narragansett Bay Estuary Program (NBEP) protects and preserves Narragansett Bay and its watershed through partnerships that conserve and restore natural resources, enhance water quality and promote community involvement. NBEP supports the RI Blueways Alliance which is dedicated to creating a comprehensive water trail network to link Rhode Island's rivers, lakes and ponds to Narragansett Bay and to the rivers in Massachusetts that flow into the bay. The trail will be used to promote safety, conservation, recreation and economic development. www.ExploreRI.org



Watershed organizations throughout the Narragansett Bay watershed showcase paddling opportunities on downloadable paddle maps. The full list of maps is available at ExploreRI.org.

