

# Exercise and Exploration: Identifying With Our World



## Six ways to be active in our ecosystem



- Walk, bike, or hike—within and outside cities and towns—if your body permits
- Leave the gym and exercise with people you know
- Ask for public exercise equipment and open-air exercise classes in city and town parks
- Share knowledge about and interest in Rhode Island ecosystems across generations
- Attend events with local conservation organizations, or volunteer with them
- Follow and support your own city or town council's efforts to preserve and maintain places where people can be outdoors
- Wherever we live, getting to know the rest of the natural world helps us to take care of it—and with it, ourselves and each other.

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*Household action: Choose a hike, walk, or even a place to sit that suits your abilities, and go. Rhode Island has many bike paths and trails that will take you through woods and fields. For more about how to get into less built-up parts of the state if you live in a city, see the “Transportation” and “Walking and Biking” subsections; for places to go in Rhode Island, see the “Further Resources” list online.*

Doctors and psychologists agree that being active outside can relax our minds and bodies and lower our stress. It lowers our fossil fuel consumption, too, if we’re not in/on a gas-powered vehicle and not using energy-powered devices. Exercising outdoors, including walking or biking for our commutes, is also a way to claim public space as our space—a place where we can move, meet and gather. Public exercise equipment and open-air exercise classes can be especially useful for elderly people to connect with each other as well as with the surrounding world.

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*Community action: Pay attention to your own city or town council’s efforts to preserve and maintain places where people can be outdoors—or to threaten them. Committees on Development and Planning, City Property, and Public Works; Conservation Commissions, Land Trusts, and Recreation Committees; and the Zoning Board of Review are all good ones to watch.*