

Barred Island Preserve, Deer Isle

One time I came across a description of a Maine preserve as a “moss garden.” Since then, I’ve been through a lot of lush, beautiful moss gardens, particularly in Downeast Maine. But Barred Island, in my mind, has the greenest, thickest blanket of moss I’ve yet come across in a coastal forest. It’s beautiful. In addition, you’ll walk through shadowy forests, with the sun sending shafts of light through the trees, and even darker, denser spruce forests. You can climb up to a small rocky knob with a just okay view, and finally, come out on an expansive sandy beach (at low tide) that connects to a little, scrubby island. Be very careful: the inviting tidal bar connecting the mainland to the island is covered with five feet of water during high tide. So only cross when you have plenty of time before the tide rolls in. Here is a self-guided nature trail to this wonderful preserve.

It’s just about 1 mile from the parking area to the beach.

Directions: From Route 15, turn left onto Goose Cove Road. Keep to the left at the intersections to the small lot and trail head. Island Heritage Trust says if the lot is full, you must turn back as you’re not allowed to park along the road. So here’s another reason to visit off season!

