

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT: FACT SHEET updated 10 2 6

Habitats

- The Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program has identified 41,136.5 acres of the Vineyard as Priority Habitat (including great ponds), with another 11,731.3 acres just offshore.
- Pitch pine/scrub oak barrens and sandplain grasslands provide habitat for rare plants such as Bushy rockrose, New England blazing star, and Nantucket shadbush. These specialized habitats also provide homes for a number of rare animal species adapted to their unique circumstances. These are primarily invertebrates such as the regal fritillary butterfly and the barrens buckmoth; and birds such as the northern harrier. Coastal beaches on the Vineyard also host a number of rare invertebrates such as the beach tiger beetle and birds such as the piping plover and least tern.
- The Vineyard's ponds and harbors also provide habitat and breeding grounds for a number of commercially and recreationally important shellfish such as scallops, oysters and quahogs; and fish such as herring and winter flounder.

2003 Estimated Protected, Developed and Available Land

Town	AQ	CH	ED	OB	TI	WT	Island
Total (acres)	3,510	12,442	17,762	4,735	4,300	16,195	58,963
Protected Open Space (%)	22%	20%	40%	30%	20%	40%	32%
Developed/Built (%)	33%	40%	32%	40%	47%	35%	36%
Wetland (%)	13%	6%	7%	3%	5%	2%	5%
"Available" (%)	31%	33%	22%	33%	29%	22%	26%
"Available" (acres)	1,094	4,079	3,827	1,557	1,245	3,632	15,435

Source: Martha's Vineyard Commission and Conservation Partnership, 2004