

RED TRAIL

Sign Number

- 0: MOUTH OF WARDS CREEK W 300' The sandy area to the west of this point was originally the mouth of Ward's Creek. It was filled in during the 1960s, but it is in the process of breaking through the beach to the Tangier Sound.
- 1: ORIGINAL PARK/PIER W 300' The developed area of Janes Island was originally intended to be on the island. Much site work was done before it was decided that it would be more environmentally appropriate to house it on the mainland.
- 2: BLACK DUCK is a near relative of the Mallard, and both Black Duck genders resemble a hen Mallard, except darker. Because the two species interbreed, many of the hybrid females are incapable of reproduction, placing a strain on the Black Duck population.
- 3: CATTLE EGRET is a white bird with buff plumes in breeding season, known for its tendency to eat ticks and flies off of cattle and other large mammals.
- 4: FILTRATION The waterways and vegetation of the marsh serve to filter pollution and sediment from tidal waters.
- 4A: JELLYFISH is not a fish. It has no brain, no specialized digestive, central nervous, respiratory, or circulatory systems. Jellyfish are carnivores, and stun their prey by stinging it with their tentacles. Also known locally as a "sea nettle."
- 5: RED FOX is a carnivore superbly equipped for survival in the marsh. They have very good vision, but react mostly to movement. Their hearing is so sensitive, they can hear a mouse squeak at 100 meters.
- 6: LOBLOLLY PINE is the most important and widely cultivated timber species in the southern U.S. It grows rapidly on a wide range of sites, and is extensively planted for lumber and pulpwood. The name means "low, wet place" but the tree grows in widely varied habitats.
- 7: FIDDLER CRABS shed their shells as they grow, like all crabs. If the large fiddle claw is lost, males will develop one on the opposite side after their next molt. They live in holes in the marsh, which contribute significantly to erosion.
- 8: NORTHERN WATER SNAKE is a large, aggressive, non-venomous snake that can reach 4.4' in length, and can be brown, gray, reddish- or brownish-black. They have dark crossbands on their necks and dark stripes or blotches on the rest of their bodies. They are often misidentified as copperheads or water moccasins.
- 9: REMAINS OF CULTIVATED FIELDS E 300' Aerial photos of the Island show the remains of farm fields and pastures between this point and the canal.
- 10: CREEKS AND GUTS Janes Island isn't one island; it is crisscrossed by myriad waterways, many of them follow the paths of ditches dug in the 18th or 19th centuries. From the air, the Island proves to be dozens of land masses, rather than one single tract.
- 11: GREATER YELLOWLEGS is a large North American shorebird, known for its long slender bill and its deliberate stride atop mud and sand flats, leaving three-toed



tracks.

- 12: DEER FLIES are part of a family containing horseflies and other biting flies. The most aggressive activity occurs on warm, sunny days when there is little or no wind. They seem to be attracted to moving objects and dark shapes. Their bite can be extremely painful, and allergic reaction from the saliva of the fly can result in discomfort. DEET and Permethrin have proven to be relatively effective.
- 12A: OTTERS dine mainly on fish, but also are known to eat crabs, crayfish, water bugs, young waterfowl, snakes, frogs, mussels, and even muskrats. Their eyes are adapted for underwater vision, and are nearsighted above water. Sound, touch, and smell are very important senses that they use to communicate with each other.
- 13: OSPREY PLATFORM Ospreys will nest either in small colonies or alone and build their nests high in dead or dying trees. With development, ospreys have taken residence in anything thin and tall such as radio antennas, water towers, old utility poles, and even smokestacks. When ospreys are successful with a nest, they will build it up each year with sticks—some nests can weigh half a ton.
- 14: HOODED MERGANSER males are mostly black and have a white, fan-like hood, a white breast with two black bars on either side, rusty brown sides and flanks, and a white patch on the wings. Both sexes have a saw bill and an extremely muscular gizzard that allow them to digest the hard exoskeletons of some shellfish
- 15: EELGRASS is the only true "seagrass" found in the Chesapeake Bay. It dies back during the warm summer months and grows best in the cooler waters of spring and fall. It is important habitat for blue crabs that use the beds for protective cover during mating and as juveniles, and other aquatic animals, and it is important food source for waterfowl.

BROWN TRAIL

Sign Number

- 1: CANAL Work on the Daugherty Creek Canal began in the early 20th century—by hand. It was widened before World War II and again during the early 1960s.
- 2: BIG ANNEMESSEX RIVER 15.4 miles long/2miles wide. First explored in 1508 by John Smith on his first voyage of discovery.
- 3: EROSION In 1849, the Island measured 3,781 acres; by 1998 it had lost 2/3 of its area.
- 4: STACK ¼ Mile E The remains of the LEP Dennis Fertilizer company, built in 1871, burned in 1932.
- 5: PEST HOUSE ¼ Mi. N.E In 1882, local authorities built a 'pest house' on the Island to care for people with smallpox and other contagious diseases, in order to protect the rest of the community. No traces of the building remain.
- 6: BATTLE OF OLD HOUSE COVE In 1862, a local waterman decided to try his hand at out of season oystering with his new boat. The Oyster Navy pursued him, but he fled into Old House Cove, where the police steamer couldn't sail. They fired at him and he shot back, using fishing sinkers when he ran out of lead shot. He eventually escaped and joined the Confederate Army.



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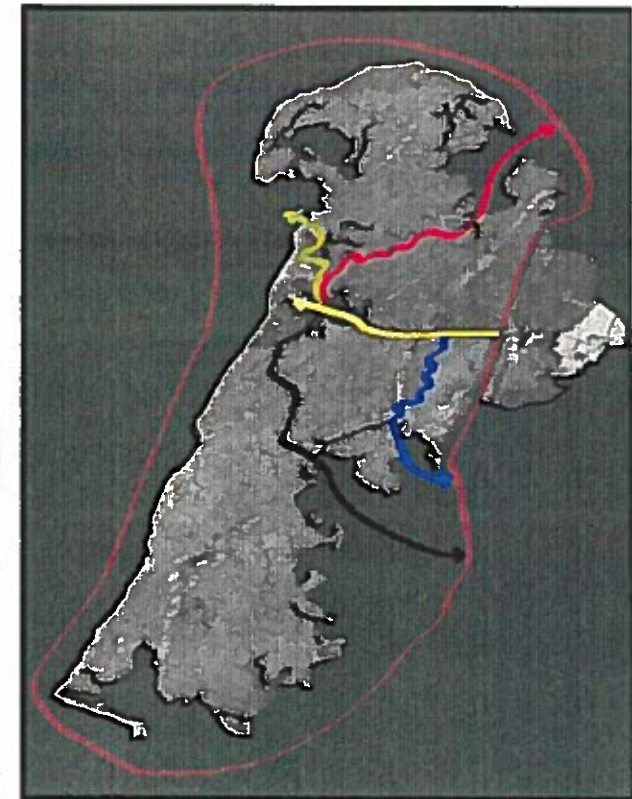
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6 Trails—30 Miles—64 Stops
Paddle at Your Own Pace



Experience firsthand one of the most
beautiful places in Maryland.

Natural-Cultural-Historical
Birds-Mammals-Reptiles

The Janes Island Water Trail Self-Guided Tour consists of 66 stops on the six trails running around and through the Island. Each stop is identified by a large shape- and color-specific trail sign, and a smaller tour sign bearing a distinctive number. Use these signs to refer to the informational text in this brochure. Approximate distance to the feature is given by direction (N,E,W,S) and distance in feet, where applicable.

YELLOW TRAIL

Sign Number

- 1: EROSION S 100' Erosion at this point reveals original marsh level and dredged spoil deposited in the 1960s.
- 2: GREAT BLUE HERON S 100' The largest North American heron, it has a head-to-tail length of 36–55 in., a wingspan of 66–79 in., and a weight of 4.5–8 lbs.



- 3: EASTERN RED CEDAR S 250' The Eastern Red Cedar and Virginia Pine growth on both sides of the creek follows what was a ridge running along the eastern third of the island.
- 4: SPOIL SITE N 300' One of several spoil sites, this hammock (mound) is the result of dredging waterways through the island. The trees are naturally occurring 'volunteers', as opposed to having been planted.
- 5: OSPREY NW 300' Osprey eggs incubate for approximately 37 days and the young birds leave the nest after about seven weeks. Ospreys may reach two feet in length with up to an 80-inch wingspan.
- 6: EASTERN WHITE CEDAR N 250' The Eastern White cedar is an evergreen tree with fan-like branches and scaly leaves that grows to a height of 33–66 ft. tall. It is believed to have been one of the most dominant trees on the early Delmarva Peninsula.

GREEN TRAIL

Sign Number

- 1: SALTMARSH CORDGRASS builds marsh by growing into the water at the seaward edge of a salt marsh, where it causes sediment to settle. This gradually builds up the level of the land, allowing other plants to take root.
- 2: FRENCHTOWN/RUMBLEY N 3 mi. The two watermen's communities lie northeast of this point, facing the Tangier Sound.
- 3: SEAGULL It is common for various gull species, such as the Laughing gull, Herring gull, or Bona-



- parte's gull, to be referred to as "seagulls". The term actually has no fixed scientific meaning.
- 4: TANGIER SOUND W 150' A branch of the Chesapeake Bay, bounded by the mainland of the Eastern Shore and by Janes, Tangier, Smith, South Marsh, and Bloodworth Islands. Its often-turbulent waters average two times the depth of the Bay.
- 5: DOUBLE CRESTED CORMORANT At 28–35 inches in length, this cormorant is an all-black fish-eating bird with a bare patch of orange-yellow facial skin. In breeding season, it gains a small double crest of black and white feathers. Unlike the duck, its feathers are not waterproof.
- 6: TIDAL ACTION/EROSION has completely obliterated two sandy points formerly located on either side of the entrance to this creek and deposited the sand for a significant distance through the waterways.
- 7: BATTLE OF KEDGES STRAITS 9 miles NW On November 30, 1782, a year after the British surrender at Yorktown, the Revolutionary War Battle of Kedge's Straits took place north of Smith Island. In 25 minutes, 25 Americans were killed and 29 were wounded, out of 65 crewmen on one of the vessels. This battle has been called "the bloodiest battle for its size of the Revolutionary War."

BLACK TRAIL

Sign Number

- 0: BANK TRAPS consist of a large mesh trap at the end of a fence extending out from the shoreline. As crabs move with the tide, they are directed into the trap.
- 1: MOSQUITOES are attracted by carbon dioxide and lactic acid given off when breathing. They can detect body heat, as well. One of the best ways to repel biting is with DEET, which works by confusing the receptors that enable mosquitoes to find prey. Only female mosquitoes bite; males are happy drinking nectar.
- 3: LAND PATENTS The tract of land to the west of this point was privately owned by 1675. This was one of the earliest land patents in Somerset County.
- 4: BEACH GRASS W 500' thrives under conditions of shifting sand, high winds, and burial. This dune-building grass forms the first line of defense for sand dunes along the coast.
- 6: NORTHEASTERN BEACH TIGER BEETLE W 1000' is on the U.S. Endangered Species List. It has been described as a handsome, sand-colored insect and grasps its prey with long, sickle-like jaws in an aggressive, "tiger-like" manner. Janes Island has one of the largest populations in the Chesapeake Bay area.
- 7: DIAMONDBACK TERRAPIN is the only species of turtle in North America that spends its life in brackish water. It is the State reptile of Maryland.
- 8: BLACK NEEDLE RUSH is a salt-loving rush that can cover large areas in coastal salt and brackish tidal



marshes, and is easily recognizable by its grayish-green-to-blackish coloration. The leaves of this species are so tightly rounded, they appear to be very sharp-pointed stems.

- 08A: GREAT EGRET is a large bird with all-white plumage that can reach one meter in height, and weigh up to 2 lbs. It is thus only slightly smaller than the Great Blue or Grey Heron. Egrets are monogamous, and both parents incubate their three to four eggs.
- 09: GROUNDSEL TREE grows on beaches, marshes and hammocks (mounds) near the shore, and various other inland sites including ditches, old fields, and roadsides. It is known locally as the 'Water Bush.'
- 10: SALT MARSHES are sometimes called *tidal marshes*, because they occur in the zone between low and high tides. They rank among the most productive ecosystems on earth. In spring and summer, marshes are lush green, highly productive and grow in height, while in the fall, the plants begin to die. Live cordgrass is not a source of food, but dead marsh plants are a source of nourishment for many species.
- 11: SALT MEADOW CORDGRASS is also known as salt marsh hay and is found in the upper areas of brackish coastal salt marshes. Wind and water action often bends the grass, creating the appearance of a field full of tufts.
- 12: TIDE High and low tides are the result of the pull of the sun and moon, which cause a high tide every 12 hours and 25 minutes and a low tide in between. The difference in high and low tide in this area is usually about 24"-28".
- 13: AMERICAN BITTERN is a stocky heron, with mottled buff-brown plumage and is more often heard than seen, because of its solitary nature.

BLUE TRAIL

Sign Number

- 1: SILTING/SEDIMENT While the marsh grasses do a good job of holding the soil in place, tide, wave action, and ice wears lots of it away. The finer soil travels farthest on the current, filling in some of the waterways or becoming trapped in the grasses and developing new land masses.
- 2: RIDGE The cedars on both sides of the creek naturally occupy the remnants of the 'ridge,' formerly the highest part of the island, and even now home to different vegetation that that found in other, lower areas.
- 3: PERIWINKLES are a species of small sea snail, usually found on rocks, stones, marsh grass, or pilings between high- and low-tide levels. They are known locally as "Pennywinkles."
- 4: LAND OWNERSHIP By 1700, less than two generations after the creation of Somerset County, land on both sides of this point was privately owned.
- 5: GREENHEAD FLY is often a bothersome pest in the Janes Island salt marshes. Because they occur in large numbers and attack continually, they interfere



with the enjoyment of the outdoors throughout much of the summer. Conventional methods of biting fly control are usually ineffective because greenheads are so large compared to other insect Plans for an effective trap can be obtained at the park store.

- 7: VIRGINIA GLASSWORT are annual plants native to salt marshes. The jointed, bright-green stems turn red or purple in the fall. Glasswort ashes contain large amounts of potash, and the plants were formerly used in glassmaking. The plant has been used externally in the treatment of arthritic pain, rheumatism, aches, pains and swellings.
- 8: WHITETAILED DEER are recognized by the characteristic white underside to its tail, which they display as a signal of alarm during escape. Many of Janes Island's herd feed on the marsh, then swim across the canal to bed down on the mainland.
- 9: MUSKRATS are 16-24 inches long as adults, including a long, hairless tail. In streams, ponds or lakes muskrats build nests by burrowing into the bank, but in marshland, they most often build domed 'houses' out of vegetation and mud that are as large as three feet in diameter.
- 11: "NO SEE 'UMS" are biting midges. Their bite can be intensely itchy and create red welts that can last a week or more due to an allergic reaction to proteins in their saliva. Topical antihistamines can help reduce the itching.
- 12: MARSH ELDER naturally grows in the mid- to high salt marsh area, back dunes, and on muddy sea shores where their roots are not subject to prolonged flooding.
- 12A: CRISFIELD SKYLINE 1 mile S Essentially unchanged for many years, the new addition to the McCready Memorial Hospital/Alice B. Tawes Nursing Home and the condominiums built along the water in Crisfield, have greatly altered the Crisfield skyline.
- 13: OSPREY NEST S 100' Ospreys build their nest on dead trees, rock outcrops, buildings, buoys, electric towers, pier pilings, and man-made platforms, almost anywhere near water. The nests are a bulky mass of sticks, often five feet in diameter and two seven feet thick.
- 14: BALD EAGLES build their nests in large trees near rivers or coasts and often use the same nest year after year. A typical nest is around 5 ft. in diameter but over the years, some nests become enormous
- 15: BLUE CRAB—The Maryland state crustacean. Female blue crabs swim to the southern portion of the Chesapeake. In November or December, the female crab releases her eggs. The crabs, in a larva form, float near the mouth of the bay for a month or more before the juvenile crabs make their way back into the Bay.

