Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge
Trail Map

Unpaved Trails
Lighthouse Trail (0.25 miles)
Walking - moderately easy (sandy hill)

Marsh Trail (0.5 miles)
Walking - easy

Bivalve Trail (0.25 miles)
Walking - moderately easy (uneven terrain)

Service Road (7.5 miles)
Walking - easy
First mile open to bicycling

Paved Trails
Wildlife Loop (3.2 miles)
Walking and bicycling - easy
Open 3:00 PM to dusk to vehicles

Woodland Trail (1.6 miles)
Walking and bicycling - easy

Black Duck Trail (1 mile)
Walking and bicycling - easy

Swan Cove Trail (0.5 miles)
Walking and bicycling - easy

The Refuge is Open Seven Days a Week
May through September
5:00 A.M. - 10:00 P.M.
April & October
6:00 A.M. - 8:00 P.M.
November through March
6:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.
Welcome to Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge... Where people and wildlife meet.

Established in 1943 to provide habitat for migratory birds, the refuge protects more than 14,000 acres of beach, dunes, marsh and maritime forest. Every season brings unique opportunities to enjoy wildlife observation and photography. Songbirds, wading birds and shorebirds arrive in spring and many stay throughout the summer. Fall brings migratory raptors and monarch butterflies followed by the waterfowl that will spend the winter on the refuge. Visitors can explore trails, visit the beach, see the historic Assateague Lighthouse, and more! The refuge also offers a variety of special events throughout the year; so please see our website or inquire at a visitor center for details.

Visitor Centers - Hours vary by season

Herbert H. Bateman Educational and Administrative Center (757-336-6122)
8231 Beach Road, Chincoteague, VA 23336
This center is the second left upon entering the refuge and features an information desk, exhibits, and videos showed on request in the auditorium. Refuge Headquarters is co-located with the Chincoteague Natural History Association, who operate a book store and run seasonal Refuge Treks from the center; call 757-336-3086 for details.

Toms Cove Visitor Center (757-336-6577)
8556 Beach Road, Chincoteague, VA 23336
Located next to the recreational beach at the end of Beach Road, this center features a small aquarium and touch tank, a bookstore and an information desk. Ranger guided programs are available seasonally.

Refuge Rules and Regulations

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service encourages you to enjoy your visit, but remember that protecting wildlife, plants, and their habitats is the priority. Regulations exist for the welfare of wildlife, as well as for your safety. Please read and comply with the following list of regulations. Note this list is not all inclusive; therefore, remember that unless an activity is listed as permitted in a brochure or on a sign, it is not allowed.

Permitted Activities - in designated areas only

- Wildlife Observation, photography, interpretation and education - throughout the refuge
- Surf Fishing - into the ocean from the beach (Follow Virginia State Regulations)
- Hunting (with a refuge issued permit)
- Crabbing & Shellfishing
- Shell collecting (no more than one gallon of unoccupied sea shells per person per day)
- Hiking
- Bicycling
- Boating - in Toms Cove and Assateague Channel (non-commercial)
- Over-Sand Vehicle Use (with permit)
- Recreational Beach (lifeguards present seasonally)
- Horseback Riding (in South Over-Sand Vehicle Zone)
- Climbing Assateague Lighthouse (schedule varies, call 757-336-3086)

Prohibited Activities

- Pets (even in vehicles) - Service dogs permitted as defined by ADA regulations. Contact us for details.
- Consuming alcoholic beverages
- Disturbing, feeding, or harassing ponies or wildlife
- Collecting, removing, or damaging plants or animals
- Removing driftwood, bones or skeletons
- Use of metal detectors and collecting cultural or historic objects
- Climbing onto or digging into fragile sand dunes
- Bicycling on the beach
- Camping/Overnight stays
- Open fires (except with a permit) or Fireworks
- Boats and flotation devices within refuge water impoundments
- Launching, landing, or operating unmanned aircraft (such as drones)
- Firearms and weapons prohibited in government buildings
- Launching, flying, or operating any type of UAS (such as drones)

Safety Measures to Protect You & Wildlife

Protect yourself from ticks and mosquitoes, they may carry disease. To avoid contact: stay on trails; use repellent; wear long sleeve shirts and long pants while exploring the area; and, inspect yourself carefully.

Poison ivy is abundant on the refuge. It can grow as either a vine, shrub or single plant, but always has 3 leaves at the end of a stem. Please stay on refuge trails to avoid contact.

It may cause parents to abandon eggs or chicks, or interrupt feeding behavior at critical times. Disturbance by humans or their pets reduces the birds' chances of survival.

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Contact Us
Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge
8231 Beach Road, Chincoteague Island, VA 23336
757/336 6122 Office, 757/336 5273 Fax
FW5RW_CNWR@fws.gov
www.fws.gov/refuge/Chincoteague
www.facebook.com/ChincoteagueNWR
www.twitter.com/ChincotagueNWR
Federal Relay Service for the deaf and hard-of-hearing 1800/877 8339

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