

Northeastern North Carolina Paddle Trails

(Updated 5-15-16)



Albemarle Region (A)

Counties: Camden (CA), Chowan (CH), Mainland Currituck (CU), Gates (GA), Pasquotank (PA), Perquimans (PE)

Trails:

A-CA-1 Sawyers Creek Trail, 3 Miles - A tributary of the Pasquotank River, this stream offers a half day excursion. This stream will provide the opportunity to view a variety of flora and fauna native to this area. Using the Wildlife Boat Ramp as put-in, you can paddle upstream 2 miles, return and paddle 1.5 miles to Lamb's Marina and take-out.

Access: (1) NC Wildlife Resources Commission Boat Ramp, NC 343, Northwest of Camden
(2) Lamb's Marina

Skill Level: Beginner

Difficulty: Easy

Time Required: 2 -3 Hours

A-CA-2 Areneuse Creek/Mill Dam Creek Trail, 2 Miles – From Treasure Point 4-H Camp, these two streams provide a leisurely outing under a canopy of towering hardwoods. These streams are very narrow and will provide a unique paddle outing. The mouths of the creeks intersect the Pasquotank River.

Access: (1) Treasure Point 4-H Camp on Treasure Point Road, south of Highway 343.

Skill Level: Beginner

Difficulty: Easy

Time Required: 2 Hours

A-CA-3 Dismal Swamp Canal Trail, 8 Miles - The paddler has several options on the historic Dismal Swamp Trail. Beginning at the access at the Dismal Swamp Visitors Center on US 17 in Camden County, you can travel north into Virginia to tour Lake Drummond and take your canoe out at the boat access adjacent to US 17. Another option is to travel south to the canal locks in South Mills. Below the South Mills locks, one may continue down the canal to intersect the Upper Pasquotank Trail.

Access: (1) Dismal Swamp Visitors Center, US Highway 17
(2) State of Virginia Boat Access, US Highway 17
(3) South Mills, just above the canal locks

Skill Level: Beginner

Difficulty: Easy

Time Required: 3 Hours

A-CA\PA-3 Pasquotank River Trail, 21 Miles – Beginning at the Morgan’s Corner Bridge, this trail provides an opportunity to combine overnight camping with a canoe trip in the coastal plains. At the junction of the River and the Great Dismal Swamp Canal, a high spoil bank overlooking the water offers the paddler a dry place to spend the night. This is a natural setting and precautions should be made for some of the native wildlife, which include cottonmouth water moccasins. Double camping platforms are located at Milepost 10, up a small tributary, and at Milepost 14 on Goat Island. Canoe access is also available behind the College of the Albemarle (COA) between Milepost 15 and 16.

Following the river down to the Shipyard Landing Access will provide an approximate 13 mile outing; to COA a 15 mile paddle; to Lamb’s Marina a 17 mile trip and all the way to Elizabeth City a 21 mile outing.

- Access:**
- (1) Morgan’s Corner Bridge**
 - (2) End of Shipyard Road**
 - (3) COA Access**
 - (4) Lamb’s Marina**
 - (5) Knobb’s Creek Recreation Center**
 - (6) Waterfront Park, Downtown Elizabeth City**

Skill Level: Beginner/Novice

Difficulty: Easy/Moderate

Time Required: 10 - 15 Hours

A-CH\GA-1 Catherine/Warwick Creek Trail, 3.5 Miles (7 miles RT) - This trail begins in the narrows of the creek and takes the canoeist downstream through scenic hardwood swamps to the edge of the Chowan River. As the stream approaches the river it becomes wider and is dotted with islands of buttressed stemmed cypress trees hanging full of Spanish moss. These beautiful sentinels appear to guard the mouth of the creek and one can only wonder what early explorers thought as they investigated this tributary of the Chowan River. Troutman Creek is a tributary of Catherine/Warwick Creek and offers an additional 6 roundtrip miles of trail into neighboring Gates County. Warwick Creek forms the county line between Gates and Chowan Counties. It meanders through beautiful hardwood forests on its way to the Chowan River. On calm days, Holladay’s Island offers additional paddling opportunities and access to 5 camping platforms. Reservations on the platforms are required and available through the Edenton-Chowan Recreation Department.

Access: (1) SR 1232 Bridge

Skill Level: Beginner to Intermediate

Difficulty: Moderate, Due to Length and Open Water at the Mouth of the Creek

Time Required: 3-5 Hours

A-CH-2 Dillard Creek Trail, 3 Miles - Beginning at the old milldam this short scenic trail can be completed in a morning or afternoon. This trail has many mature trees bordering its banks which give the effect of canoeing through twin columns of tall ancient sentries. The mouth of the creek becomes quite wide where it discharges its tannic waters into the Chowan River. Typical to the area, the mouth of the creek is dotted with solitary cypress trees. Located at the milldam is the old mill, which has been converted to electricity. If you are lucky enough to catch the miller in, you can purchase cornmeal ground by the old stones of the mill. Remnants of the millpond are still visible and the paddler can explore the stream that once fed the millpond and provided power to the mill.

Access:

- (1) SR 1226 Bridge**
- (2) Arrowhead Beach Safe Refuge Boat Dock**

Skill Level: Beginner

Difficulty: Easy

Time Required: 2-3 Hours

A-CH-3 Rockyhock Creek\Bennett's Millpond Trail, 5 Miles - Another trail that begins on an old milldam, Bennett's Millpond offers a day of canoeing through cypress trees and beaver lodges. The millpond has a population of nutria which can be seen swimming or sunning on old stumps and tussocks of grass. The millpond is home to a variety of birds including herons, geese, ducks, and owls. Bennett's Millpond is listed on the NC Birding Trail. The canoeist can follow the millpond upstream for several miles, where it becomes a small stream that provides water for the millpond. The millpond is managed by Chowan County and the Edenton-Chowan Recreation Department. The county has developed a hiking trail with several hundred feet of boardwalk and is in the process of developing additional facilities. A pedestrian bridge over the dam where the original mill house was located allows access across the millpond. There is a primitive camping area and picnic shelter available. At the old mill site the canoeist/kayaker can portage around the dam and follow Rockyhock Creek to its mouth where it joins the Chowan River. The creek is lined with a canopy of mature trees as well as views of neighboring farmland.

Access:

(1) Chowan County's Bennett's Millpond. Good parking.

(2) SR 1207 Bridge

Skill Level: Beginner

Difficulty: Easy

Time Required: 3 Hours for Rockyhock Creek, Half Day - Whole Day for Millpond

A-CH-4 Pembroke Creek Trail 5 Miles - This trail can be accessed from the historic waterfront in Edenton by floating dock. While canoeing or kayaking along the waterfront, one can view many historic homes and buildings that showcase Edenton's beauty and quaintness. Also, access to 5 camping platforms on adjacent John's Island is less than .5 mile from the waterfront. Pembroke Creek has some development and is used during warm weather for waterskiing by locals. It is a popular spot for bass fishing and close access to Edenton Bay and the Albemarle Sound. The banks are lined with mature trees, many hanging full of Spanish moss. There are several homes dotting the shoreline as they have discovered the peaceful nature of this stream. The section of the trail along the Edenton waterfront is part of the Albemarle Sound and caution should be exercised because the water can become quite rough on windy days or when storms pass by. Edenton has a wonderful walking tour of many of its historic homes and buildings that can be combined with a canoe trip to make a pleasurable journey into the past.

Access:

(1) SR 1208 Bridge

(2) SR 1200 Bridge

(3) Pembroke Fishing Center

(4) Edenton Waterfront Park

(5) Queen Anne Park

Skill Level: Beginner\Intermediate

Difficulty: Easy\Moderate

Time Required: 3-4 Hours

A-CH-5 Queen Anne Creek Trail, 4 Miles - This trail begins at Edenton Waterfront Park and passes by the town's historical waterfront, as it makes its way upstream to the bridge on NC 32. Remnants of Edenton's past dot the trail as it meanders through tall marsh grasses near the old Cotton Mill. Queen Anne Creek has several of these old structures located on its banks and one can only wonder of the activity of days gone by. The best way to enjoy the trail is to paddle from Historic Edenton to the NC 32 bridge and back for a 4 mile outing.

Access:

- (1) Edenton Waterfront Park**
- (2) Queen Ann Park**
- (3) Cotton Mill Boardwalk Access**

Skill Level: Beginner

Difficulty: Easy

Time Required: 2-3 Hours

A-CH-6 Trestle House Inn/Cape Colony Trail, 4 Miles – This trail begins at the Historic Trestle House Inn, south of Edenton off the Albemarle Sound. This trail offers an opportunity to explore the creek that feeds into the Albemarle Sound and to continue along the edge of the Sound to the Edenton waterfront. The Sound portion of this trail is located in open waters and only experienced paddlers should utilize this portion of the trail. To gain access from the Trestle House, paddlers must pass through a culvert under the road into Cape Colony.

Access :

- (1) Cape Colony Neighborhood Access at the end of Blackbeard's Road. Good parking and launch platform at water level.**
- (2) Queen Anne Park, Edenton**

Skill Level: Intermediate

Difficulty: Moderate

Time Required: 2-4 Hours

A-CU-1 Moyock Creek/Northwest River Trail, 10 Miles - Beginning at an unusual "camelback" bridge in Moyock, the paddler can begin a ten mile excursion through hardwood swamps which turn into flat marshes along the river. There are several coves and ox-bows that can be explored before the paddler reaches the Tull Bay Marina.

Access: (1) Moyock Creek "Camelback" Bridge (SR 1222)

(2) Tull Bay Marina on Tull Creek Road (SR 1213)

Skill Level: Beginner\Intermediate

Difficulty: Easy\Moderate

Time Required: 5-6 Hours

A-CU-2 Tull Creek Trail, 5 Miles - Beginning near the mouth of Tull Creek and canoeing upstream through the almost still water, the paddler will pass thickets of pine trees and marshes located on the banks of the creek. The banks of the trail are somewhat developed with homes, but the expanses of woodland offer the opportunity to view a variety of animals, birds and plants.

**Access: (1) Tull Bay Marina on Tull Creek Road (SR 1213)
(2) Poyners Road Wildlife Boat Access (SR 1232)**

**Skill Level: Beginner
Difficulty: Easy
Time Required: 4-5 Hours**

A-CU\CA-3 Indiantown Creek Trail, 10 Miles - Indiantown Creek Trail is probably one of the best known steams in the region and can provide an all-day outing. Paddlers may paddle downstream around the island loop and back, or continue downstream and up a small creek to the community boat ramp near North River Campground.

One of the tributaries, "Frog Crik" should be explored for it offers an opportunity to paddle under a canopy of trees.

**Access: (1) SR 1147 Bridge, (Indiantown Road), Currituck County
(2) North River Campground**

**Skill Level: Beginner/Intermediate
Difficulty: Easy/Moderate
Time Required: 6-8 Hours**

A-GA-1 Merchants Millpond Trail - Merchants Millpond Trail is located on the 760 acre millpond at Merchants Millpond State Park. Two trails are marked on the millpond, leading to the canoe-in family and group campsites. The millpond offers excellent opportunities for a half day or full day of paddling. For additional information on this trail and park information contact Merchants Millpond State Park at (252) 357-1191 or visit the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation website at: <http://ils.unc.edu/parkproject/ncparks.html>.

Access: (1) Park Boat Ramp on SR 1403, (Millpond Road)

**Skill Level: Beginner
Difficulty: Easy
Time Required: Varies**

A-GA-2 Bennett's Creek Trail, 21 Miles - Bennett's Creek Trail begins at the canoe launch site, just below the dam for Merchants Millpond, and follows Bennett's Creek to the Town of Gatesville and beyond to the Chowan River and Holladay Island camping sites or to Cannon's Ferry Heritage Park boat access.

**Access: (1) Canoe Launch on SR 1403, (Millpond Road)
(2) Town of Gatesville Park on NC 37 South of Gatesville
(3) Cannon's Ferry Heritage Park**

**Skill Level: Beginner
Difficulty: Easy/Moderate
Time Required: 6-10 hours**

A-PA\PE-1 Little River Trail, 4 Miles - Little River forms the boundary between Pasquotank and Perquimans Counties in

northeast North Carolina. The trail begins in the narrows of the headwaters of the river and continues downstream, through hardwood swamps, making its way to the Albemarle Sound. Approximately 3.75 miles downstream, turn left into Hall's Creek and follow it to the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission's Boat Ramp to complete the Little River Trail.

**Access: (1) Little River Small Boat Access on Old US 17 (SR 1367)
(2) NC Wildlife Resources Commission's Boat Ramp on Halls Creek Road (SR 1140)**

**Skill Level: Beginner
Difficulty: Easy
Time Required: 3-4 Hours**

A-PA-2 Big Flatty Creek Trail, 2 Miles - The Big Flatty Creek Trail is located in the southeastern corner of Pasquotank County. The trail begins on the more open waters of the creek and goes upstream to the headwaters of Chapel and Mill Dam Creeks and a third unnamed creek. Each creek is four miles roundtrip.

**Access: (1) NC Wildlife Resources Commission's Boat Ramp on Shadneck Road. Good Parking.
(2) Chapel Creek bridge on SR 1103
(3) Mill Dam Creek culverts on SR 1103**

**Skill Level: Beginner
Difficulty: Easy
Time Required: 4-5 Hours**

A-PA-4 Newbegun Creek Trail, 4 Miles (8 Miles RT) - The Newbegun Creek Trail is located in southeastern Pasquotank County. The trail begins at Sawmill Park, which has good parking and a wooden platform at water level for launching canoes and kayaks. The trail ends at the mouth of the Pasquotank River.

Access: (1) NC Wildlife Resources Commission's Boat Ramp at Sawmill Park off NC 34.

**Skill Level: Beginner
Difficulty: Easy
Time Required: 4-5 Hours**

A-PE-1 Perquimans River Trail, 22 Miles - This trail begins in the upper reaches of the Perquimans River, seven miles above the small community of Belvidere. The upper Perquimans River is also a **NC Birding Trail**. Paddling downstream, you will pass the mouth of Goodwin Creek as you make your way to the town of Hertford and on to the Perquimans Recreation Center and the Newbold-White House. There is a triple camping platform above Winfall, a double camping platform across from Historic Hertford, and a double camping platform on Mill Creek, which is a **NC Birding Trail**. Much of the river is lined with cypress trees covered in Spanish moss.

**Access: (1) Perry's Bridge Road
(2) NC 37 Bridge, Near Belvidere. Good parking area. Boardwalk with lower launch platform.
(3) Winfall Park. Good parking. Boardwalk with wooden launch platform at water level.
(4) Missing Mill Park and Town of Hertford. Good parking. Floating canoe/kayak launches at both locations.
(5) Perquimans Recreation Center. Good parking area. Launch from beach area.**

Skill Level: Beginner

Difficulty: Easy\Moderate

Time Required: 6-8 Hours

A-PE-2 Goodwin Creek\Perquimans River Trail, 3 Miles - The Goodwin Creek Trail, on a tributary of the Perquimans River, offers a shorter paddling outing in the upper portions of the Perquimans River. The trail passes through cypress/gum forests and by some agricultural land.

Access: (1) NC 37 Bridge, Near Belvidere

(2) SR 1111 (Beech Springs Road) Bridge Access

Skill Level: Beginner

Difficulty: Easy

Time Required: 2-3 Hours

A-PE-3 Mill Creek\Perquimans River Trail, 2 Miles – The Mill Creek Trail, on a tributary of the Perquimans River, offers a shorter paddling outing in the lower portions of the Perquimans River. This **NC Birding Trail** winds through stands of old cypress trees covered with Spanish moss. A double camping platform is located at Mile Post 2.

Access: (1) Town of Hertford public boat access with a floating canoe/kayak launch.

(2) Missing Mill Park in Hertford. Good parking with a floating canoe/kayak launch.

Skill Level: Beginner

Difficulty: Easy

Time Required: 2-3 Hours

A-PE-4 Raccoon Creek\Perquimans River Trail, 2 Miles - The Raccoon Creek Trail, on a tributary of the Perquimans River, offers a shorter paddling outing in the lower portions of the Perquimans River. The trail passes by the Hertford waterfront before it enters a section with cypress/gum forests.

Access: (1) Town of Hertford public boat access with a floating canoe/kayak launch.

(2) Missing Mill Park in Hertford. Good parking with a floating canoe/kayak launch.

Skill Level: Beginner

Difficulty: Easy

Time Required: 2-3 Hours

A-PE-5 Sutton's Creek\Perquimans River Trail, 2 Miles – The Sutton's Creek Trail, on a tributary of the Perquimans River, offers a shorter paddling outing in the lower portions of the Perquimans River. Accessing the trail from the Perquimans Recreation Center takes the paddler across a broad section of the Perquimans River, which can be choppy on windy days.

Access: (1) SR 1300, White Hat Road with dock and shore access.

(2) Perquimans Recreation Center. Good parking and beach launch area.

Skill Level: Beginner when no wind and Expert when windy.

Difficulty: Easy to Difficult depending on wind conditions

Time Required: 2-3 Hours

A-PE\CH-6 Yeopim Creek\Yeopim River Trail, 12 Miles - This system of trails provides a variety of paddling options that can be tailored to fit anyone's skill level and time constraints. The trails are located on the Yeopim River and several of its tributaries: Bethel Creek, Burnt Mill Creek and Middleton Creek. These trails surround the small community of Snug Harbor and its bordering farming community.

Access: (1) **Burnt Mill Road Bridge on Burnt Mill Creek (SR 1341)**
(2) **Burnt Mill Road Bridge on Bethel Creek (SR 1341)**
(3) **Bethel Creek Fishing Center on Yeopim River (SR 1356)**
(4) **Snug Harbor Marina on Snug Harbor Road (SR 1340)**
(5) **Holiday Island Road Bridge on Yeopim Creek (SR 1347)**

Skill Level: Intermediate

Difficulty: Moderate Due to Length and Open Water

Time Required: Varies from 2 to 12 Hours

Pamlico Peninsula Region (PP)

Counties: Beaufort (BE), Mainland Dare (DA), Mainland Hyde (HY), Tyrrell (TY), Washington (WA)

Trails:

PP-HY\BE-1 Pungo River, 10 Miles - The blackwaters of the Pungo River are the setting for the Pungo River Trail. Beginning at the NC 45 Bridge near Union Grove, the trail follows the river downstream through many turns and twists, intriguing the paddler as to what's around the next bend. This is a great trail for viewing eagles! As you make your way downstream, the trail transforms from a wide canal to a small winding stream, as the upper portion of the river was channelized to more efficiently drain the thousands of acres of farmland in the area. There are several loops between the old river channel and the channelized stream that are worth exploring.

Access: (1) **NC 45 Bridge near Union Grove**
(2) **Riverside Campground, Located off NC 45 near Ponzer**

Skill Level: Beginner

Difficulty: Easy

Time Required: 3-6 Hours

PP-HY\TY-2 Alligator River Trail, 17 Miles - The Alligator River Trail begins near its headwaters, just below the confluence of the Northwest and Southwest Forks of the river. Beginning at an old loading dock, the outing starts on the Northwest Fork of the Alligator River and travels in a southeasterly direction. The beginning section meanders through a coastal forest of pines and swamp hardwoods and gradually changes to a coastal marsh estuary. The upper section of the trail intersects the Intercoastal Waterway in three places near NC 94, so watch out for big boats and wakes. After approximately 4 miles, the paddler turns south and follows the river through miles of brackish marshes, remnants of once majestic cypresses, and great forests of pines and mixed hardwoods. This is also a great trail for viewing eagles.

The Northwest and Southwest Forks offer the paddler the opportunity to experience a unique "pocosin" environment. The streams are fairly deep, and can reach a depth of 30 feet in the main channels. These deep channels pass through groves of hardwood and pine trees. In many places, the banks are lined with native reed beds. There is no development along these

streams, but there are some old boats and log pilings that hint of earlier activities. Alligatorweed may clog the upper ends of these streams between May and October.

**Access: (1) Near Northern NC 94 Bridge, 15 Miles South of Columbia
(2) Culverts at Hyde/Tyrrell County Line on NC 94**

Skill Level: Beginner/Intermediate

Difficulty: Easy

Time Required: 12 - 20 Hours

PP-TY-1 Lower Scuppernong River Trail, 14 Miles – There are two options for beginning the Lower Scuppernong River Trail: the NC Wildlife Resources Commission’s Boat Ramp west of Columbia or the Visitor’s Center managed by the Partnership for the Sounds and the headquarters for the Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge in Columbia. Near the beginning of the trail, the lands adjacent to the river are within the Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge and are inhabited by the many different varieties of native wildlife and migratory birds. Paddlers may spot a black bear or whitetail deer swimming across the river in this undeveloped area. The Lower Scuppernong River Trail ends at Creswell Park at Spruill’s Bridge on SR 1142.

Riders Creek and Second Creek are located upstream from Columbia, and can offer interesting side trips or a pleasant round trip from the Visitor’s Centers.

**Access: (1) NC Wildlife Resources Commission’s Boat Ramp off of SR 1228
(2) Partnership for the Sounds’ Visitors Center and Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters, off US 64 in Columbia
(3) Cross Landing Bridge on SR 1105**

Skill Level: Beginner/Intermediate

Difficulty: Easy

Time Required: 4- 6 Hours

PP-WA-1 Upper Scuppernong River Trail, 2 Miles - The upper portion of the Scuppernong River Trail begins at the Town of Creswell Park at Spruill’s Bridge on SR 1142 and continues upstream to the small community of Cherry, NC. Along this section of the river, you will pass through several oxbows and old canals that were dug long ago to help drain the surrounding farmland. Old Canal and Thirty-Foot Canal were used to drain Lake Phelps.

**Access: (1) Town of Creswell Park at Spruill’s Bridge on SR 1142
(2) Phelps Bridge on Sr 1155 North of Cherry**

Skill Level: Beginner

Difficulty: Easy

Time Required: 2 - 4 Hours

PP-WA-3 Mackeys/Kendrick Creek, 6 Miles - This trail begins at the old fishing village of Mackey’s Ferry, near the Albemarle Sound, where several old fish houses can be seen. This stream has stretches of high banks which provide habitat for many upland hardwood species that usually aren’t seen along many coastal streams. Four eagles have been spotted between mile markers 2 and 3, and two eagles between mile markers 3 and 4, along this trail.

**Access: (1) Boat Ramp at the end of SR 1322 in Mackeys
(2) Roper Park Canoe Launch**

Skill Level: Beginner

Difficulty: Easy

Time Required: 2 - 4 Hours

PP-WA-4 Conaby Creek Trail, 7 Miles - This trail begins at the bridge across Conaby Creek on Main Street, just east of downtown Plymouth. Beginning in the upper headwaters of the creek, the paddler is completely enclosed by the overhanging canopy of hardwood trees draped in Spanish moss. The creek slowly opens up to become a substantial body of water as it reaches the Roanoke River near the end of the trail. From mile marker seven, the adventurous paddler may continue up the Roanoke River to the WRC boat ramp on NC 45 (about 2.3 miles) or on to the Town of Plymouth (about 5.5 miles).

**Access: (1) Bridge on Main Street, east of downtown Plymouth (SR 1325)
(2) Wildlife Resources Commission Ramp on NC 45 and Conaby Creek**

Skill Level: Beginner

Difficulty: Easy

Time Required: 3 - 4 Hours

For more information on these paddle trails contact:

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