

about the trails

As you hike through Nags Head Woods, you'll discover a diverse ecosystem where thousands of species thrive. Along our over 5 miles of trails you'll see steep, lushly wooded dunes, peaceful ponds and brackish marsh teeming with plant and animal life. Some of the beech trees, hickories, oaks and pines may be hundreds of years old. Each trail provides a different perspective on our rare maritime forest preserve.

1 Center Trail

Directions to trailhead: Walk past administrative building; cross the bridge and bear left at marker.

The trail: This short loop introduces casual hikers and small children to the forest. You will cross two bridges and skirt a pond where you may hear bull frogs or green frogs. You may see signs of raccoon, deer or other mammals and see red maples, sweet gums and hickories.

2 Sweetgum Swamp Trail

Directions to trailhead: Follow the Center Trail and bear left at the marker, then bear left again on to Sweetgum Swamp trail.

The trail: The preserve's most popular trail is designed for more adventurous hikers. It climbs several steep dune ridges and leads through a variety of plant communities.

Trail includes steps.

3 Blueberry Ridge Trail

Directions to trailhead: Take the Sweetgum Swamp Trail; this trail branches off to the left about halfway around the loop.

The trail: The trail loops around a beautiful pond and provides scenic vistas. *Trail includes steps.*

4 Discovery Trail

Directions to trailhead: From the main parking lot, turn left on Ocean Acres Dr.; the trail head will be ahead on your right through the split rail fence. For a longer hike, this trail meets the Roanoke Trail at Old Nags Head Road.

The trail: This is a great trail for families. You will walk along several dune ridges, pass fresh water ponds and walk through dense forest.



ADA Trail PHOTO © DAVID BLEVINS

5 Roanoke Trail

Directions to trailhead: From the main parking lot, go left on Ocean Acres Dr.; follow to the stop sign and turn right. The trail head is about 50 yards ahead on the left through the split rail fence.

The trail: This popular trail leads through salt marsh and dense forest and ends at a quiet beach on Roanoke Sound.

6 ADA Trail (*Americans with Disability Association*)

Directions to trailhead: From the main parking lot, turn left on Ocean Acres Dr.; follow to the stop sign and continue ahead about 50 yards. You will see the trailhead and signs. There are two handicapped parking spaces available at the trailhead.

The trail: This .5 mile loop goes around an interdunal freshwater pond and through a maritime swamp forest with an overlook of the brackish marsh. The trail is comprised of a wooden boardwalk and concrete, allowing those with disabilities and small children in strollers the opportunity to experience nature in Nags Head Woods.

7 Nags Head Town Trail

Directions to trailhead: Drive to US 158; turn right; travel 1.2 miles. Turn right at the light onto Barnes St.; go 1 mile from the turnoff to the town park on the left. Follow parking area towards the right and look for the trailhead.

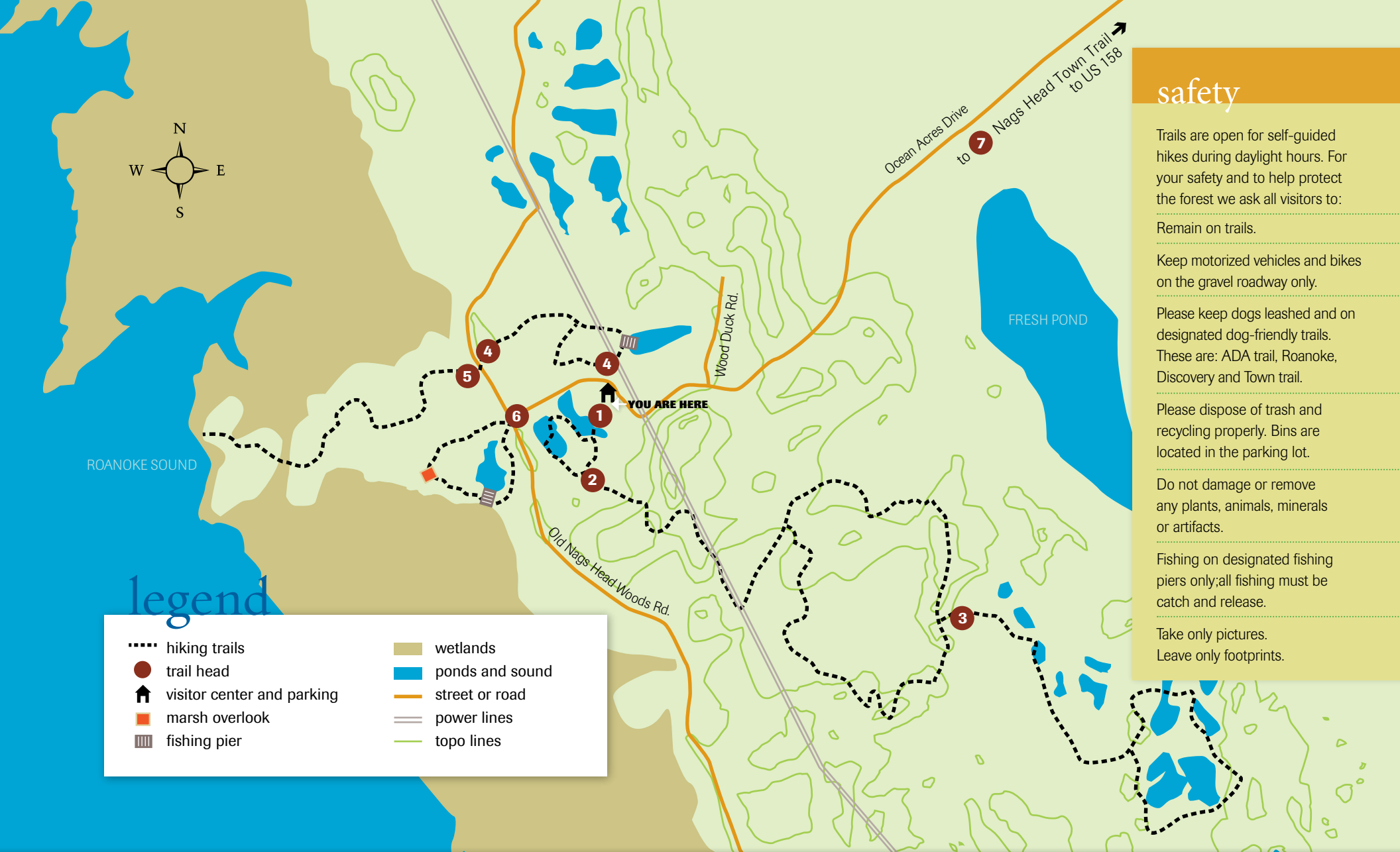
The trail: This trail climbs several dune ridges and leads to the shore of the Roanoke Sound. A trail map is available at the Barnes St. trailhead kiosk.



PHOTO © DAVID BLEVINS

Nags Head Woods Preserve

Trail Guide



safety

Trails are open for self-guided hikes during daylight hours. For your safety and to help protect the forest we ask all visitors to:

Remain on trails.

Keep motorized vehicles and bikes on the gravel roadway only.

Please keep dogs leashed and on designated dog-friendly trails. These are: ADA trail, Roanoke, Discovery and Town trail.

Please dispose of trash and recycling properly. Bins are located in the parking lot.

Do not damage or remove any plants, animals, minerals or artifacts.

Fishing on designated fishing piers only; all fishing must be catch and release.

Take only pictures. Leave only footprints.

legend

- hiking trails
- trail head
- 🏠 visitor center and parking
- 📏 marsh overlook
- 🏠 fishing pier
- 🟤 wetlands
- 🟦 ponds and sound
- 🟠 street or road
- ⚡ power lines
- 🟢 topo lines

TRAIL	LENGTH	DIFFICULTY	TRAIL	LENGTH	DIFFICULTY
1 Center	0.25 mile loop	easy walk	5 Roanoke	1.5 mile out-&-back	moderate hike
2 Sweetgum Swamp	2.25 miles combined total loop	moderate hike	6 ADA Trail	0.5 mile loop	easy walk
3 Blueberry Ridge	3.75 miles combined total loop	moderate to strenuous hike	7 Nags Head Town	1.6 mile out-&-back	moderate hike
4 Discovery	0.5 mile loop	easy walk			