



CROOKED RIVER

CHARLIE SMITH, SR. HIGHWAY - SPUR 40

Bay Boardwalk Trail  
1.25 miles

Palmetto Trail  
1.5 miles

Sempervirens Trail  
7.5 miles

Nature Trail  
.5 miles

GOPHER TORTOISE NESTING SITE

BIRDING PLATFORM

CAMPGROUND

BIRD BLIND

Observation Tower

Nature Center Trail

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11

### LEGEND

- Park Office
- Nature Center
- Group Shelter
- Picnic Shelter
- Picnic Area
- Restrooms
- Playground
- Tent & RV Camping
- Dump Station
- Cottage
- Pioneer Camping
- Boat Ramp
- Miniature Golf
- Staff Residence
- Palmetto Trail
- Sempervirens Trail
- Bay Boardwalk Trail
- Nature Center Trail
- River Trail
- Park Road
- Unpaved Road



6222 Charlie Smith, Sr. Highway • St. Marys, GA 31558 • 912-882-5256 • Emergency: 911 • [www.GeorgiaStateParks.org](http://www.GeorgiaStateParks.org)

# Crooked River State Park Trail Map



## CROOKED RIVER STATE PARK

This park on the southern tip of Georgia's coast offers campsites, cottages overlooking the river, a boat ramp, saltwater fishing, nature programs, mini-golf and picnicking. A large bird blind is popular with photographers and birders. Anglers 16 and older must have a valid fishing license. Private boats are permitted and there are no horsepower restrictions. Water skiing is not recommended due to the hazards in the river and tidal currents.

## HIKING & NATURE TRAIL DESCRIPTIONS

### Palmetto Trail

This 1.5-mile trail highlights south Georgia's pine flatwoods, one of the most endangered ecosystems in the world. Its plants and animals are well adapted to periodic fires that maintain a habitat dominated by longleaf pine, saw palmetto and wiregrass. The open woods are ideal for watching bluebirds, nuthatch, osprey, woodpeckers, warblers and other birds. Gopher tortoises and endangered indigo snakes depend on this habitat for survival. Look for fruit-bearing plants such as blueberries, muscadine grapes, sparkleberry, wax myrtle and gull berry.

### Sempervirens Trail

These old-growth hardwoods give the trail its name, which is Latin for "ever living." Large oaks, cherries and hickories make up the canopy along the nature loop portion of the trail. These are nurtured by calcium-rich soil, which was created by decomposed oyster shells left by Native Americans. This trail boasts five Georgia Champion Trees: the staggerbush lyonia, Florida soapberry, myrtle oak, chapman oak, and Carolina holly. You may also see Southern magnolia, red cedar, American basswood and yaupon holly.

As you leave the dense hardwoods and enter the pine-oak forest, look for gopher tortoises, Georgia's state reptile. These large turtles dig burrows in sandy soil and feed on small grasses. You may also see raccoons, armadillos, feral hogs and orb weaver spiders. A birding platform makes it easier to spot great egrets, great blue herons, osprey, pileated woodpeckers, white-eyed vireo and warblers.

### Bay Boardwalk Trail

A boardwalk leads to a hardwood and evergreen wetland dominated by two tree species: loblolly bay and swamp bay. Even during winter, this forest appears to be a wall of dark green, dense foliage. Typical south Georgia swamps contain cypress and gum trees that appear bare during colder months. Even during summer, the shade along this trail is noticeably cooler and more humid than other areas.

Although the creek bottom appears mucky, its water is surprisingly clear, coming from rainfall and seepage from the surrounding sandy soil. Decaying trees and leaf litter on the ground form a layer of peat that can be many feet thick. This soil is strongly acidic, high in organic material and holds water like a sponge. Because of this ability, the forest floor does not support fire except during extreme drought conditions.

Common trees and plants in the bay forest include loblolly bay, swamp bay, tulip poplar, water oak, red maple, sweet gum, swamp and water tupelo, cinnamon fern, netted chain fern, climbing hydrangea, muscadine grapes, fetterbrush lyonia and wax myrtle. Look for small ferns in the trees that appear dead during dry weather and alive after it has rained. This is called resurrection fern.

Birders may spot red-bellied woodpecker, pileated woodpecker, flicker, sapsucker, yellowthroat warbler, pine warbler, Northern parula warbler, yellow-rumped warbler, nuthatch, great crested flycatcher, Acadian flycatcher, barred owl, great horned owl, red-tailed hawk, and migratory songbirds and raptors.

## KAYAKING TRAIL MAP



## LEGEND

- BE** - Bald Eagle spotting fish from tall trees of Grover Island near markers 808 to 810.
- DS** - Dolphin Sightings near markers 405, 605, 608, 801, 804, 816, 819 and 820.
- OB** - Oyster Bed
- ON** - Osprey Nest in dead tree behind marker 813. Please respect their space and view from a distance.
- PD** - Private Dock
- SB** - Sand Bar
- TF** - Tidal Flat at lower tide levels.
- TO** - Take Out - test for firm footing.
- Boat Ramp
- Trail Markers
- 401-406** Cherry Point Trail (4.3-miles)
- 601-612** Harrietts Bluff Trail (6.3-miles)
- 801-824** Grover Island Trail (8.4-miles)

## KAYAK TRAIL MARKER COORDINATES

Cherry Point Trail (4.3-miles)			Harrietts Bluff Trail (6.3-miles)			
401	N30°50.82' W81°32.88'		601	N30°51.07' W81°33.85'	607	N30°52.07' W81°34.84'
402	N30°50.86' W81°32.64'		602	N30°51.27' W81°34.01'	608	N30°52.23' W81°34.31'
403	N30°50.91' W81°32.43'		603	N30°51.51' W81°34.05'	609	N30°52.32' W81°33.88'
404	N30°50.82' W81°32.27'		604	N30°51.69' W81°34.36'	610	N30°52.28' W81°33.54'
405	N30°50.33' W81°32.22'		605	N30°51.77' W81°34.56'	611	N30°51.99' W81°33.63'
406	N30°50.64' W81°32.17'		606	N30°52.01' W81°34.80'	612	N30°51.4' W81°33.85'

  

Grover Island Trail (8.4-miles)					
801	N30°50.95' W81°33.55'	809	N30°52.90' W81°33.43'	817	N30°52.35' W81°32.24'
802	N30°51.28' W81°33.64'	810	N30°52.91' W81°33.31'	818	N30°52.24' W81°32.59'
803	N30°51.59' W81°33.63'	811	N30°53.00' W81°33.14'	819	N30°51.92' W81°32.62'
804	N30°51.87' W81°33.45'	812	N30°53.04' W81°32.99'	820	N30°51.70' W81°32.63'
805	N30°52.09' W81°33.28'	813	N30°52.96' W81°32.73'	821	N30°51.50' W81°32.63'
806	N30°52.32' W81°33.37'	814	N30°53.05' W81°32.52'	822	N30°51.20' W81°32.28'
807	N30°52.51' W81°33.78'	815	N30°52.94' W81°32.26'	823	N30°51.09' W81°32.70'
808	N30°52.74' W81°33.39'	816	N30°52.59' W81°32.27'	824	N30°50.94' W81°33.12'

## KAYAK TRAIL DESCRIPTIONS

Recommended paddle times take advantage of semidiurnal tides (two highs and two lows per day). Be safe. Paddle with a friend; take drinking water, snacks and sun protection; wear a pfd, and leave your float plan with the park office. This map and a compass may help you find your way back during fog.

Watch for wildlife living in this tidal river. Dolphins travel in groups upriver to fish and are spotted frequently on all three trails. Once they corner a school of fish, they will surface often to breathe, so listen for their blows. River otter may also be seen swimming in the river.

A good place to look for birds is near the private dock opposite Marker 809. Please respect private property. More than a hundred gulls, cormorants and egrets often perch on the long boardwalk leading to this octagon-shaped shelter. Overhead you may see flocks of small birds flying in formation, turning all at once to flash light bellies and dark backs, providing a dramatic visual effect.

### Cherry Point Trail – 4.3 miles round-trip

Launch 90 minutes before low tide, get out for a stretch and snack on the sand bars, then ride the incoming tide back to the launch. Moderate difficulty.

### Harrietts Bluff Trail – 6.3 miles round-trip

Launch 90 minutes before high tide, stretch your legs at the public ramp at Harrietts Bluff or along the shoreline of Grover Island, then ride the outgoing tide back to the launch. Moderate difficulty.

### Grover Island Trail – 8.4 miles round-trip

Launch 2 1/2 hours before high tide, then ride the outgoing tide back to Crooked River. Continue against the tide along the north side of the river where the current is less, then cross to the launch. Difficult.

### River Trail

This trail is short and sweet. Only a few hundred yards long it winds along the bluff and down into the marsh. It is a beautiful spot for fishing and bird watching. Wood Storks and herons roost in the dead pines overlooking the rivers edge. Sheephead, Whiting, Trout, Black Drum, rays and small sharks can be caught from the shore. This quiet spot overlooks the Crooked River and golden marsh grasses which are famous to Georgia's coast.

## SAFETY TIPS & ETIQUETTE

- Tell someone your itinerary and expected return time. Check back with them when you return.
- Take a map, water, snacks, first aid kit, flashlight and whistle.
- Before boating, know the tidal schedule and understand how it will affect your trip.
- Prevent erosion by staying on marked trails.
- Heed warning signs of dangerous cliffs that could crumble under foot.
- Do not stray from trails. If you become lost, stay in one location and wait for help. This will make it easier for rescuers to find you.
- Don't count on cell phones to work in the wilderness, but if they do, be able to give details about your location.
- Be prepared for unexpected rain and wind which can lead to hypothermia, even during summer. Always carry quality rain gear and turn back in bad weather. If you become wet or cold, it is important to get dry and warm as quickly as possible.
- Dress in layers and avoid cotton. Choose fabrics that wick moisture, dry quickly and conserve heat. Many experienced boaters and hikers wear a lightweight shirt that wicks moisture, while carrying a fleece pullover and rain jacket.
- Invest in good hiking socks such as those found at sporting goods stores. Avoid blisters by carrying "moleskin" and applying it as soon as you feel hot spots on your feet. Available in the foot care section of drug stores, moleskin is like felt that sticks to your skin.
- Keep pets on a leash at all times and clean up after them.
- Do not pick flowers, disturb wildlife or take anything off the park.
- Pack out all trash.

## CLIMATE DATA FOR ST. MARYS, GEORGIA

Month	Avg. High	Avg. Low	Mean	Avg. Precip.	Record High	Record Low
Jan	63°F	44°F	54°F	3.82 in	88°F (1972)	4°F (1985)
Feb	65°F	47°F	56°F	3.17 in	91°F (1962)	20°F (1996)
Mar	71°F	52°F	62°F	4.01 in	92°F (1967)	22°F (1980)
Apr	76°F	58°F	67°F	2.91 in	94°F (1986)	37°F (1987)
May	83°F	66°F	74°F	2.87 in	100°F (1962)	40°F (1982)
Jun	87°F	72°F	80°F	5.30 in	104°F (1950)	51°F (1977)
Jul	90°F	75°F	82°F	5.80 in	102°F (1986)	63°F (1984)
Aug	88°F	75°F	82°F	5.34 in	102°F (1951)	61°F (1982)
Sep	85°F	73°F	79°F	7.73 in	99°F (1988)	52°F (1981)
Oct	78°F	65°F	72°F	4.22 in	96°F (1951)	39°F (1968)
Nov	72°F	56°F	64°F	2.49 in	93°F (1961)	24°F (1970)
Dec	65°F	48°F	56°F	2.73 in	85°F (1978)	12°F (1983)