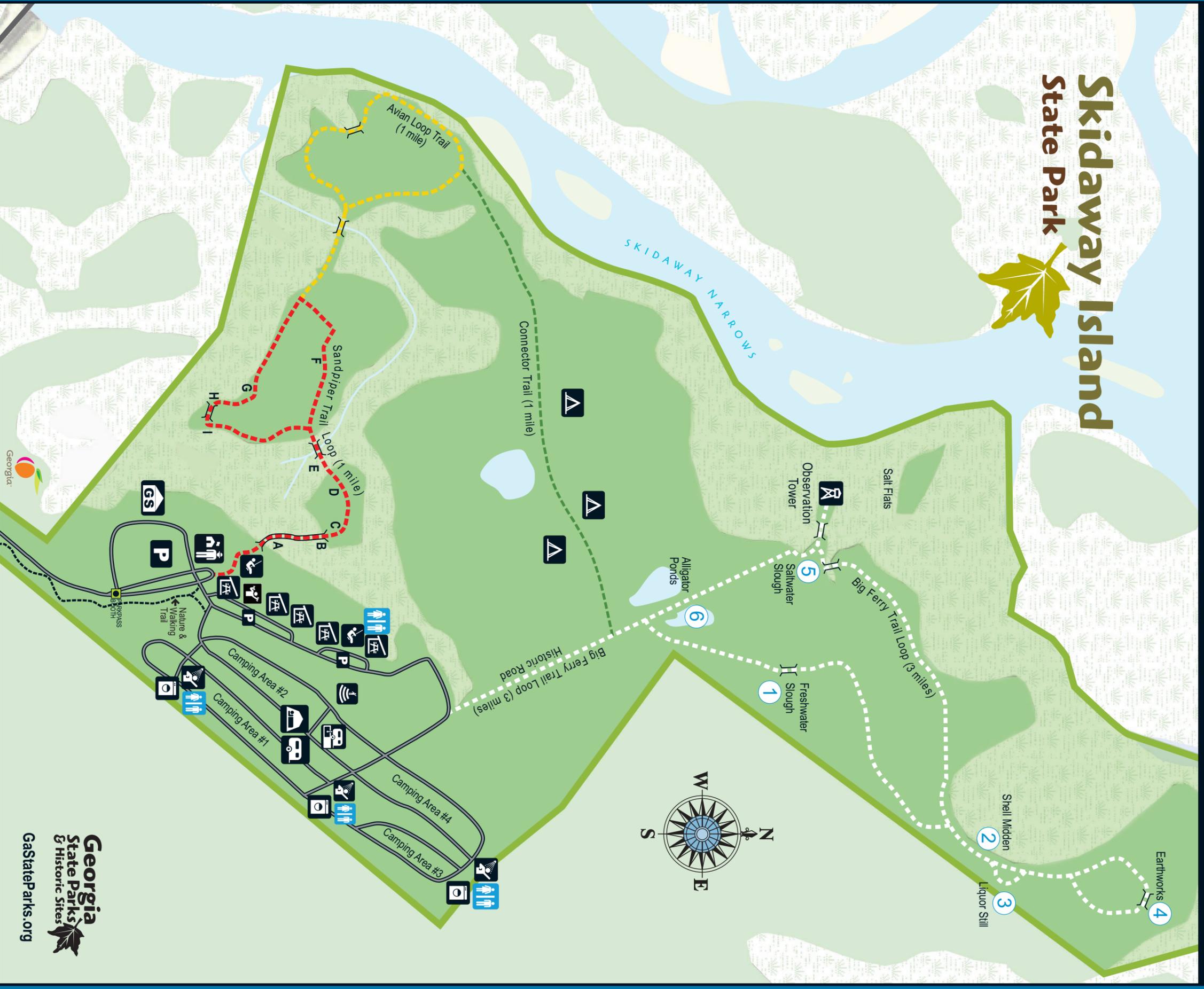


# Skidaway Island State Park Trail Map

52 Diamond Causeway, Savannah, Georgia 31411 • Park: 912-598-2300 • Emergency: 912-598-2300 or 911 • Reservations: 1-800-864-7275

## Skidaway Island State Park



### LEGEND

Sandpiper Trail Loop <i>(A-I post markers along trail)</i>	Bridge / Boardwalk	Outdoor Exercise Equip.	Pioneer Camping
Avian Loop Trail	Park Office	Parking	Observation Tower
Big Ferry Trail <i>(1-6 post markers along trail)</i>	Public Restrooms	Picnic Shelter	Laundry
Nature / Walking Trail	Public Restrooms <i>(Handicap Accessible)</i>	Tent & RV Camping	Showers
Connector Trail	Picnic Shelter	Dump Station	Playground
Paved Roads	Group Shelter	Amphitheater	
Park Roads	Tent & RV Camping		

**Georgia State Parks & Historic Sites**  
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# Skidaway Island State Park



Located near historic Savannah, this park borders Skidaway Narrows, a part of the intracoastal waterway, and provides scenic camping and picnicking areas. Trails wind through marshes, live oaks, cabbage-palmettos and pines, allowing visitors to watch for deer, raccoon, shore birds and rare migrating birds such as the Painted Bunting. An observation tower provides another chance for visitors to search for wildlife on this beautiful barrier island.

## Activities & Facilities

### Camping

The park offers 87 pull-through sites with water, electrical and cable hook-ups. ADA accessible campsite and restroom available. Campfires are allowed and must be built in the fire rings provided on each campsite. Three restrooms with hot showers and coin-operated washers and dryers are also available for campers.

### Picnicking

There are approximately ten acres of picnic sites complete with two restrooms and five covered shelters. Shelters are reservable or are available free of charge on a first-come, first-serve basis. ADA accessible picnic shelter and restroom available.

### Group Shelter

A large group shelter with capacity for 150 and equipped with range, refrigerator, restrooms, grill, tables and chairs, and outside oyster cooking shed is available for rental from 9:00 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.

### Fishing/Boating

Available outside park entrance within one-half mile of the park on the intracoastal waterway.

### Programs

Experience the many programs offered by our staff. These programs deal with the site's natural, cultural, historical and recreational resources. We offer various programs suited for school field trips, Scout troops, church, civic and adult groups. You can choose a combination of programs to best meet your needs or schedule. Contact the park today at 912-598-2300.

### Sandpiper Trail Loop

This one-mile loop is our most popular trail, taking you over salt flats and tidal creeks, and through maritime forests on island hammocks. Plan on an hour of walking time. Bicycles are not allowed, but leashed pets are welcome if cleaned up after. Follow along the alphabetized posts and signs to learn about the unique resources on the trail.

- A. Salt Flats – High tides flood this area with a thin layer of water that evaporates quickly, leaving behind salt crystals, giving a white sandy appearance.
- B. Fiddler Crabs – They make their homes in the salt flats and marshlands and get their food by filtering organic material from the sand.
- C. Island Hammock – This slightly elevated land provides a home for plants and animals that cannot live in the salty, wet marsh.
- D. Pine Beetles – These flying insects infested and killed the pine trees in this area many years ago, leaving behind dead tree habitats for various birds and insects.
- E. Tidal Creek – Twice daily, the “ocean’s nursery” is flooded by tides that bring food for minnows, shrimp, crabs, and oysters. When the Spartina or cord grass growing here decays it forms detritus, a primary food source.
- F. Confederate Earthworks – During the War Between the States, off duty gun crews rested within the V shaped earthen work around you.
- G. Intracoastal Waterway – The bridge you see in the distance crosses the intracoastal waterway that extends from Florida to Massachusetts. Islands like Skidaway serve as a protective barrier between the main land and ocean.
- H. Liquor Still Site – During the 1930’s this hole contained one of the 31 liquor still sites on park property.
- I. Black Needle Rush – Named after its sharp black tip, this plant grows on the higher ground in the salt flats.

### Big Ferry Trail

This trail can be walked in a two-mile loop, or you can include the earthworks loop to make it nearly three miles. Plan around two hours to walk this trail. Bicycles and leashed pets are welcome. Follow along the numbered posts and signs to learn about the unique resources on the trail.

1. Freshwater Slough – Pronounced “sloo,” this freshwater pond is formed when the water table is higher than the bottom of the slough. The ground water collects to form the slough, however it will dry out during periods of drought.
2. Shell Middens – These mounds are made of discarded oyster shells left by early native people. Oysters were an important source of food for coastal Indians, and when their shells were mixed with lime and sand, they created tabby – a southern coastal building material used by European settlers.
3. Liquor Still – The islands seclusion made it a good place to build stills during prohibition. Boaters could easily sneak on and off the island with their illegal moonshine.
4. Earthworks – These mounds were often built by slaves during the Civil War as part of the defense system against Union Troops.

5. Saltwater Slough – Unlike freshwater sloughs, these ponds do not dry up and contain brackish water. Like tidal creeks they are part of the “ocean’s nursery,” providing protection and habitat for young fish and marine life to grow up.
6. Alligator Ponds – These ponds provide fresh water and habitat for a variety of birds, reptiles, and amphibians. The water level rises and falls depending on the amount of rainfall. Look out for a possible resident alligator.

### Avian Loop Trail

This one-mile loop takes you to the intracoastal waterway where you may catch a glimpse of osprey hunting for fish or dolphin swimming down river. A sandy causeway crosses the largest tidal creek that flows into the park. This is a great place to see the force and speed of tides flowing in and out of the marsh every six hours. Hanging from the trees is Spanish Moss, an epiphyte once used to stuff mattresses. Look but don’t touch because red bugs (or chiggers) reside in this enchanting plant. That’s why some Georgians still say, “Sleep tight; don’t let the bed bugs bite!”



Scene on the Avian Loop Trail.

### Connector Trail

This connects both the Sandpiper and Avian Loop trails to the Big Ferry Trail and takes you through our unwanted Chinese Tallow forest. Also known as “popcorn trees,” these highly invasive plants have taken over this area of the park. Efforts have begun in killing this toxic tree and returning the forest to its natural state. A freshwater pond (or slough) along the trail sometimes houses a resident alligator or two. In summer, the blooming bladderwort covers the pond with a gorgeous sea of yellow. This carnivorous plant traps mosquito larvae, miniature worms and other tiny animals by catching them in its underwater bladder traps.

## Trail Safety & Etiquette

- Tell someone your itinerary and expected return time.
- Be prepared for unexpected weather changes by dressing in layers and carrying rain gear. Avoid wearing cotton. Today’s hikers can choose from numerous fabrics that wick moisture, dry quickly or conserve heat. Many experienced hikers wear a lightweight shirt that wicks moisture, while carrying a fleece pullover and rain jacket.
- Take a map, water, snacks, first aid kit, flashlight and whistle. Three short blasts on a whistle are known as a call for help.
- 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.
- 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 a hot spot on your feet. Available in the foot care section of drug stores, moleskin is like felt that sticks to your skin.
- Be prepared for unexpected rain and wind which can lead to hypothermia. 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.
- Pack out all trash.
- Keep pets on a leash.
- Do not pick flowers or disturb wildlife.
- Protect the landscape by staying on trails.

## Climate Data for Savannah, GA

Month	Avg. High	Avg. Low	Mean	Avg. Precip.	Record High	Record Low
Jan	60°F	38°F	49°F	3.95 in	84°F (1957)	3°F (1985)
Feb	64°F	41°F	53°F	2.92 in	86°F (1989)	8°F (1899)
Mar	71°F	47°F	59°F	3.64 in	94°F (1907)	20°F (1980)
Apr	78°F	53°F	65°F	3.32 in	95°F (1986)	28°F (2007)
May	84°F	61°F	73°F	3.61 in	101°F (1945)	39°F (1963)
Jun	90°F	68°F	79°F	5.49 in	104°F (1985)	49°F (1913)
Jul	92°F	72°F	82°F	6.04 in	105°F (1986)	61°F (1972)
Aug	90°F	71°F	81°F	7.20 in	104°F (1954)	57°F (1986)
Sep	86°F	67°F	77°F	5.08 in	102°F (1925)	43°F (1967)
Oct	78°F	56°F	67°F	3.12 in	97°F (1986)	28°F (1952)
Nov	71°F	47°F	59°F	2.40 in	89°F (1961)	15°F (1970)
Dec	63°F	40°F	51°F	2.81 in	83°F (1971)	9°F (1983)