

# Louisiana Seafood



Nearly 1/3 of the seafood consumed in the United States comes from Louisiana. Louisiana is the number one provider of shrimp, oysters, crab, crawfish and alligator in the USA.

Although blue crabs are often associated with Delaware or Maryland, if you've eaten crab on the East Coast, chances are good it's actually from Louisiana. Louisiana is the top shipper of live male crabs to the Atlantic coast market. Blue crab is one of the more abundant and tasty macroinvertebrates in Louisiana's coastal waters. The blue crab also plays a crucial role in the estuarine food web. A prey for many species, it is in turn a voracious predator on others. While recreational crabbing does not have a closed season, there is a 12 dozen per person daily limit.



Louisiana also harvests more than 100 million pounds of shrimp annually. That's because the nutrient-rich estuaries are the perfect environments for both brown and white shrimp breeding. There are ample opportunities to shrimp while driving the Creole Nature Trail All-American Road—with just a \*cast net and a five-gallon bucket. Stop by the side of a small bayou, cast a net and gather it in. If the shrimp are "running," it won't take long to fill the bucket. Fresh shrimp can also be purchased at several areas along the trail.



In general, the spring inshore season begins in late May and extends into July, and the fall inshore season begins in late August and extends into November or December. Offshore shrimping in Louisiana's territorial waters is generally year-round, but exceptions do occur. A closed season may be set during the winter months beginning in January and extending into April or May. Likewise, shrimping in waters beyond the state's regulations is usually open all year but is subject to federal controls.

Local seafood markets can be found on the [CreoleNatureTrail.org](http://CreoleNatureTrail.org) website. Most will ship your purchase for you and ship you more once you exhaust your supply. For recipes and other seafood retailers who ship Louisiana seafood, visit [LouisianaSeafood.com](http://LouisianaSeafood.com).

\*Cast netting is not currently allowed on Sabine NWR.



Credit: B. LaFleur

Another natural defense against coastal erosion is a chenier. Trapped silt deposits, over time, build up and become ridges, resulting in cheniers. Due to their elevation above sea level, cheniers support the growth of hardwood trees such as live oaks. The word "chenier" is actually French for "oak tree," and you will see oaks—particularly when you pass through Grand Chenier where the road is lined with these magnificent trees.

As a first-line defense against tropical weather, cheniers are of vital importance to the area. They are also the first stop for the multitudes of migratory birds that travel thousands of miles annually to Southwest Louisiana.

Manmade alterations and diversions to river systems and floodplains have contributed to increased salinities in Louisiana's coastal marshes, increasing the erosion of these valuable coastal wetlands. Without the ability to replenish freshwater supplies to the area, the delicate eco-balance of these wetlands is in trouble. If this problem is left unchecked, the Gulf of Mexico could potentially advance inland more than 30 miles by the year 2050. If this were to occur, it would be both ecologically—as well as economically—devastating to the nation.



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[www.CreoleNatureTrail.org](http://www.CreoleNatureTrail.org)



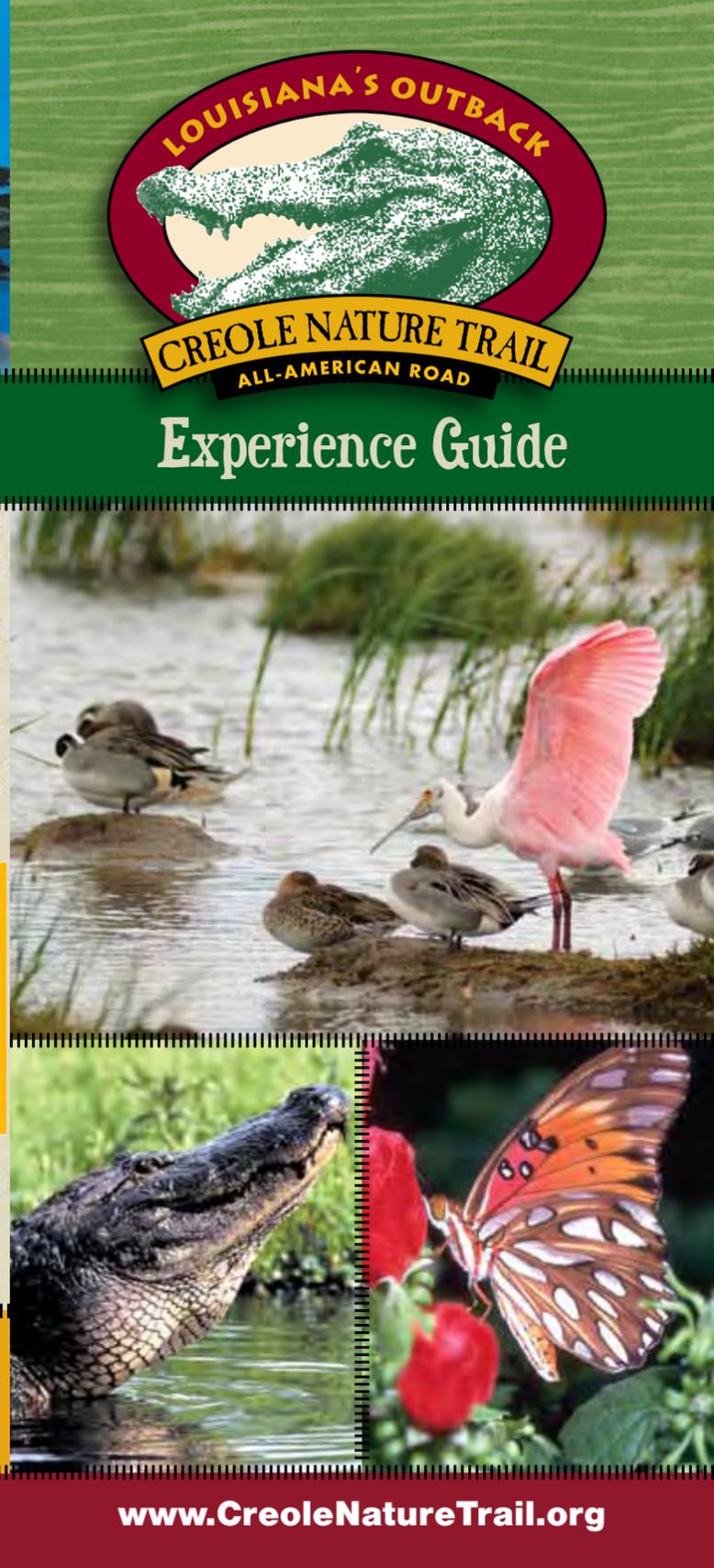
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For more information, call the Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana Convention & Visitors Bureau at 1-800-456-(SWLA)7952.



## Experience Guide



# About the Trail

**In days past, you didn't use a car to rush around the city running errands. Cars were vehicles that took you out of ordinary day-to-day life and into the extraordinary experience of exploration. Cruising down a long stretch of picturesque road was your destination. Your journey was your adventure. And it still is, on the Creole Nature Trail All-American Road.**



Credit: B. LaFleur



Affectionately known as Louisiana's Outback, the Creole Nature Trail All-American Road winds through more than 180 miles of bayous, marshland and shores along the Gulf of Mexico. It is an amazing blend of man and nature, and a rare opportunity to view Louisiana's fertile prairies, lush marshes and abundant wildlife.

The Creole Nature Trail is one of the oldest scenic byways in America. The route was one of the first to be designated a National Scenic Byway (and, in 2002, received the highest designation, All-American Road) by the Federal Highway Administration. Of the 15 byways originally designated, the Creole Nature Trail was the only one selected on the strength of its natural intrinsic qualities.

Easy access from Interstate 10 provides excellent opportunities to visit Louisiana's Outback. From a car the prairies and marshes of Louisiana's Outback appear peaceful and tranquil, but don't be fooled. These lands and waters are teeming with life and activity. Louisiana's Outback supports 28 species of mammals, more than 400 species of birds, millions of monarch butterflies, 35 species of amphibians and reptiles, Louisiana oysters, and 132 species of fish.

Not only is the trail the confluence of two major flyways—the Central and Mississippi Flyways—the region also benefits from the little understood phenomenon of western birds migrating east in the winter. Large water bodies, vast wetlands, tidal beaches, flat prairie and croplands provide a diversity of landscapes for wildlife and people.

The trail is also home to the people of Louisiana's Outback—people whose lives are linked closely to this place that is part land, part water. As distinct as the marshes and prairies that they love, they depend on the bounty of the land—then celebrate their toil and heritage with a joie de vivre, or joy of life, that is like none other.



# Trail Route



The most popular entrances to the Creole Nature Trail All-American Road are just off I-10 — in Sulphur (Exit 20) and just east of Lake Charles at La 397 (Exit 36). Other entrances can be found at the Texas-Louisiana border on the Gulf Coast and just east of Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge on La 82 at the Vermilion Parish line.

Driving the entire Creole Nature Trail All-American Road takes eight to ten hours. The most frequently traveled portion of the trail extends from I-10 at Sulphur, south on La 27 to Holly Beach, east across La 82 to Cameron-Creole and north on La 27/Hwy 14 N to Lake Charles. Allowing for stops, this trip takes four to six hours.

## BEFORE YOUR JOURNEY

Exiting I-10 in Sulphur or Lake Charles, prepare for your journey into Louisiana's Outback. Check fuel levels and camera batteries; get snacks and water; make sure you have some bug spray and sunscreen; and, most importantly, assign each person in the vehicle to a window. On the Creole Nature Trail, everyone is a lookout!



## SULPHUR TO HACKBERRY

Between Sulphur and Hackberry, Louisiana's Outback is primarily agricultural. Just before reaching Hackberry, you'll cross over the Intracoastal Waterway on the Ellender Bridge which is close to boat launches, campgrounds and RV hook-ups. (The Intracoastal Waterway stretches from Brownsville, Texas to New York City — hugging the coastline all the way!) Half a mile from the foot of the bridge, you enter Cameron Parish. Just ahead, Hackberry—a center for commercial crabbing, fishing and shrimping and home to some of the first oil wells drilled in Louisiana.



## HACKBERRY TO HOLLY BEACH

Heading south, you'll come to the Sabine National Wildlife Refuge (Sabine NWR). As you drive the seven miles through Sabine NWR, you will see signs for several recreation areas where you can stop to fish, shrimp or crab. These are also good places to see the local culture and perhaps catch sight of a few alligators. Take some time to stop at the Blue Goose Trail and observation deck. This scenic overlook enables you to look out over the marshland and see wintering snow geese and many other migratory birds (seasonal). There is also a one-mile primitive walk leading you to the edge of Calcasieu Lake. About four miles south, you'll find the Wetland Walkway: a 1.5 mile handicap-accessible walk right into the heart of the marsh. Heading south again, you'll reach Holly Beach, just one of 26 miles of accessible Gulf beaches perfect for picnicking, swimming, shelling or surf fishing.

## HOLLY BEACH (EAST) TO CAMERON AND OAK GROVE

Continuing east you will begin to sense the magnitude of Louisiana's oil deposits. The ferry to Cameron crosses the Intracoastal Waterway to the Gulf. Massive freighters, oil tankers, jack-up boats and rigs seem to dwarf the tiny shrimp boats and recreational boats as they glide side-by-side along the waterway. Porpoises are a common sight among the boats in the ship channel, hoping for a free meal from the shrimp boat nets.

Back on land in the community of Cameron, there are a few restaurants and convenience stores available. Visit the Jetty Fishing Pier and RV Park at the end of Davis Road, where you can see jetties (boulders along the ship channel that keep the silt from building up), and where outdoor enthusiasts can enjoy a pavilion and playground or do some saltwater fishing.

The next stop on the trail is a calm, soothing one — Rutherford Beach, where you can enjoy a lazy day in the sun. Just east of Rutherford Beach, you'll come to Oak Grove, a small community named for its magnificent live oak trees.





### CREOLE (NORTH) TO LAKE CHARLES

Following La 27 north from Oak Grove, you'll reach the community of Creole. Between Creole and the Conway LeBleu Memorial Bridge across the Intracoastal Waterway, you'll pass Big Burns — 100,000 acres of marsh that burned during the 1930s and created ponds. Next stop is the three-mile Pintail Wildlife Drive, featuring a half-mile accessible boardwalk with viewing scopes, on Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge. Then, visit the Cameron Prairie NWR Visitors Center, where a man-made pond surrounding the building provides a home for gators large and small. The interpretive center also has state-of-the-art interactive exhibits and an observation pier with a viewing scope.

As you continue north, you can choose to follow La 27 to La 14 N into Lake Charles or take the La 384-385 loop at Hackett's Corner. Also ending in Lake Charles, this loop runs through two farm communities — Sweet Lake and Grand Lake — where you'll find convenience stores as well as access to Calcasieu Lake, known locally at "Big Lake."



### WESTERN SPUR: HOLLY BEACH (WEST) TO TEXAS BORDER

From Holly Beach, the trail also continues west along La 82. Plan to stop and enjoy a picnic on one of several beach areas. Another excellent stop is the Peveto Woods Bird & Butterfly Sanctuary, open year-round for self-guided excursions. La 82 cuts a path straight to the Lone Star State passing through Johnson Bayou. Just before the Texas border, it's also possible to view the Sabine Pass Lighthouse. A working lighthouse for nearly 100 years, it survived Civil War skirmishes and hurricanes before being extinguished in 1952.

### EASTERN SPUR: OAK GROVE (EAST) TO ROCKEFELLER STATE REFUGE

Leaving Oak Grove, you'll discover another of Louisiana's Outback communities: Grand Chenier.

And just a little further east—Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge. This refuge is a scientific site with a serious commitment to the study of the indigenous wildlife and fauna. The Price Lake Nature Drive on the refuge is open from March to December. Three miles east of the Rockefeller Refuge Headquarters you'll also find a boat launch (over 100 miles of canals are available to the public for recreational fishing and sightseeing.) In order to visit this refuge, you must purchase a Wild Louisiana Stamp available anywhere hunting licenses are sold or by phone at (888) 765-2606.



### LACASSINE SPUR: HOLMWOOD (EAST) TO LACASSINE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Slightly off the beaten path, but a worthwhile jaunt, is the Lacassine National Wildlife Refuge on La. 14. The 35,000-acre refuge is exclusively freshwater marsh dominated by the Lacassine Impoundment. Known locally as "The Pool," the impoundment offers a 3-mile wildlife drive as well as fabulous fishing and birding—one of the only roseate spoonbill nesting rookeries in Louisiana is found here—but be aware that boat motors are restricted to 40 horsepower or less between Marsh 15 and October 15 annually (when the Pool is open for recreation.) In addition, fishing piers are located at the Pool and further west on La. 14 near the refuge headquarters on Streeters Road (south of La. 3056).



# Scenic Walks



Although the Creole Nature Trail is primarily a driving route, there are several stops where you can take advantage of a stroll. Each of these excursion areas provides exceptional wildlife and birding photography opportunities. All facilities below are handicap accessible unless otherwise noted.



Do Not  
Feed  
Alligators



## **SABINE NWR-BLUE GOOSE TRAIL**

(N 29.890783 W 93.400942) – Observation tower, with viewing scope, over waterfowl grit site and prairie area. Paved 1 mile (round trip) path to edge of Lake Calcasieu/Calcasieu Ship Channel.

## **SABINE NWR-WETLAND WALKWAY**

(N 29.866544 W 93.455858) – 1.5 mile (round trip) path/boardwalk, including viewing scopes, into freshwater marsh. Two-story observation tower with panoramic view.

## **CAMERON JETTY FISHING PIER**

(722 Davis Rd., Cameron; N 29.764377 W 93.342428) – Fishing pier into Gulf of Mexico and birding observation tower over beach area, both with viewing scopes.

**CAMERON PRAIRIE NWR-PINTAIL WILDLIFE DRIVE BOARDWALK** (N 29.946078 W 93.084828) - .5 mile (round trip) boardwalk over managed moist soil prairie lands, with viewing scopes.

## **CAMERON PRAIRIE NWR-VISITORS CENTER**

(N 29.973345 W 93.088651) - .25 mile boardwalk—over freshwater marsh, pond and moist soil prairies—to Visitors Center.

**26 MILES OF GULF BEACHES** – while not handicap accessible, during low tide, you can drive on most beaches. Take some time and peruse the abundance of shells, swim, surf fish or enjoy a picnic.

# Refuges



Since President Theodore Roosevelt designated Florida's Pelican Island as the first wildlife refuge in 1903, the National Wildlife Refuge System has grown to more than 150 million acres, 553 national wildlife refuges and 38 wetland management districts. Offering a welcoming, safe and accessible place for people to nourish their spirits and reconnect with the land, refuges play a vital role in managing habitat for wildlife and waterfowl.

The Creole Nature Trail features four refuges, three national and one state, for your enjoyment.

## SABINE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Established as a refuge in 1937, Sabine is comprised of 125,000 acres of protected marshland, 61 miles of levees and eight major water-control structures and is the largest coastal marsh refuge on the Gulf of Mexico.

### HIGHLIGHTS:

**Sabine NWR-Blue Goose Trail** (N 29.890783 W 93.400942)

– Observation tower, with viewing scope, over waterfowl grit site and prairie area. Paved 1 mile (round trip) path to edge of Lake Calcasieu/Calcasieu Ship Channel.

**Sabine NWR-Wetland Walkway** (N 29.866544 W 93.455858)

– 15 mile (round trip) path/boardwalk, including viewing scopes, into saltwater marsh. Frequent sightings of alligators, other wetland wildlife and abundance of birds. Two-story observation tower with a panoramic view.

**Sabine NWR Recreation Areas:**

**Blue Crab** (N 29.878922 W 93.425564)

**Hog Island Gully** (N 93.425564 W 93.383680)

**Northline** (N 29.920914 W 93.381439)

**West Cove** (N 93.383680 W 93.453929)



## ROCKEFELLER WILDLIFE REFUGE

Established in 1920, Rockefeller Refuge originally encompassed 86,000 acres of wilderness.

Erosion has taken a significant toll, and recent surveys indicate that less than 76,000 acres remain.



A state refuge, one must possess a Wild Louisiana Stamp or a Louisiana basic fishing license to recreationally fish, shrimp or crab on the refuge. These can be obtained by phone at (888) 765-2606.

Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge is one of the most biologically diverse wildlife areas in the nation and has the distinction of having the highest alligator nesting densities of anyplace in the United States. Accordingly, it is a major wetland research facility.

### HIGHLIGHTS:

**Rockefeller Refuge – Price Lake Nature Drive**

(N 29.733095 W 92.830854) –

3 mile wildlife drive, areas for recreational fishing and crabbing.

**East End Locks** (N 29.717040 W 92.765570) –

fishing, crabbing and shrimping

**Rollover Bayou** (N 29.658656 W 92.521935) –

fishing, crabbing and shrimping



## CAMERON PRAIRIE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Consisting of 9,621 acres of fresh-water marsh and coastal prairie, the Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge (est. 1988) has been identified as crucial to meeting goals set by the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, an international agreement to restore lost wetland habitats.

It's considered a wonderland for water birds and waterfowl in the winter. The refuge boasts nesting colonies of egrets, herons, cormorants, ibis, and anhingas.

### HIGHLIGHTS:

#### Cameron Prairie NWR-Visitors Center

(N 29.973345 W 93.088651) – Refuge headquarters and interactive Visitors' Center. .25 mile boardwalk—over freshwater marsh, pond and moist soil prairies. Alligators, turtles and wetlands wildlife viewing. Viewing scope.

#### Cameron Prairie NWR-Pintail Wildlife Drive & Boardwalk

(N 29.946078 W 93.084828) – 3 mile driving loop and .5 mile (round trip) boardwalk over managed moist soil prairie lands. Viewing scopes on boardwalk. Wintering waterfowl, alligators, rails and raptors.

#### Cameron Prairie NWR-Cameron Prairie Bank Fishing Road

(N 29.945633 W 93.084913) – freshwater fishing.

## LACASSINE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Established in 1937, Lacassine is a breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife. The refuge includes 35,000 acres of freshwater marsh dominated by the 16,000 acre Lacassine Impoundment, known locally as “The Pool.”

### HIGHLIGHTS:

#### Lacassine NWR- Lacassine Pool

(N 29.982716 W 92.894428)

– 3 mile wildlife drive, freshwater fishing, bird/wildlife observation and photography, hiking along levees.



# Alligators



**Within the bountiful marshes and swamps of Southwest Louisiana resides a beast. Broad of face with a flat, round snout, this predator feeds on fish, frogs, snakes, turtles, birds, mammal and carrion.**

**Along the roads that traverse the marshlands, warm, sunny days bode well for sightings of the American alligator, which derives its name from the Spanish el lagarto, or “the lizard.” Ranging in length up to 14 feet, alligators can readily be seen lounging on land or drifting along in a canal.**

**Ever wondered how to estimate the size of an alligator when all you can see is his head in the water? Estimate the distance from the tip of his snout to between his eyes—now change that number from inches to feet! So if you see about 6 inches of gator from snout to eyes, chances are you're looking at a 6-foot-long alligator!**

The alligator may seem slow and ungainly, but it can jump with a burst of speed. If you happen to come upon a resting gator, don't be deceived by its calm demeanor. Do not feed, tease, prod, or otherwise provoke an alligator, and for your own safety, always keep your distance! These are wild, often very large reptiles with big jaws and powerful tails that can be extremely dangerous, and should always be treated with respect.

### TOP SITES TO EXPERIENCE:

**Wetland Walkway** (N 29.866544 W 93.455858)

**Pintail Wildlife Drive** (N 29.946076 W 93.084829)

**Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge – Visitor Center and borrow canals just south of the center** (N 29.973345 W 93.088651)

**Lacassine Pool Wildlife Drive** (N 29.982716 W 92.894428)



# Birding

It is estimated that as many as half of all land birds that breed in eastern North America pass through Louisiana twice each year. Waterfowl are equally dependent on this region. A single wildlife refuge pool can host more than 800,000 ducks and geese at one time. Sightings of more than 400 species of birds have been recorded along the Creole Nature Trail—an astounding figure by anyone's reckoning and the reason the Creole Nature Trail is considered one of the top 10 birding locations in the nation.



Whether you wish to see neotropical songbirds fluttering in the trees during the spring and fall; shore birds like Black Skimmers and American Avocet refueling in the tidal flats and salt marshes; fields made white by the massive flocks of wintering waterfowl resting there; or migrating gulf fritillary and monarch butterflies in the late fall to early summer, the climate and habitats along the Creole Nature Trail happily play host to them, and you!

## TOP SITES TO EXPERIENCE:

**Sabine NWR-Blue Goose Trail** (N 29.890783 W 93.400942):

neotropical songbirds – spring & fall; waterfowl – winter

**Peveto Woods Bird & Butterfly Sanctuary**

(LA 82 west of Holly Beach; N 29.76110 W 93.60496): neotropical songbirds and butterflies – spring & fall

**Rockefeller Refuge-Price Lake Road**

(N 29.733095 W 92.830854): waterfowl – winter

**Rutherford Beach** (LA 82 west of Oak Grove;

N 29.75828 W 93.12429): wading birds – year round

**Cameron Jetties Fishing Pier** (722 Davis Rd, Cameron;

N 29.764377 W 93.342428): wading birds – year round

**Cameron Prairie NWR-Pintail Wildlife Drive**

(N 29.946076 W 93.084829): rails, raptors – year round; waterfowl – winter

**Lacassine NWR-Lacassine Pool Wildlife Drive**

(N 30.00555 W 92.91091): rails, raptors, wading birds – year round; waterfowl – winter

**Cameron Ferry** (Cameron; N 29.803811 W 93.347023):

pelicans, gulls – year round

**All seven beach areas:** Shore birds – year round



# Shelling & Beaches

**The 26 miles of natural beaches along the Creole Nature Trail All-American Road are undeveloped and easily accessible, providing an excellent opportunity for a wide range of water activities from swimming and tubing to surf fishing, shelling, birding and sun bathing.**



Located to the west of the Mississippi delta, the beaches are all natural. Deposits from the “muddy river’s” southeast tidal flows most often include driftwood and a variety of shells, including whelks, cockles, angelwings, olives, wentletraps, coquinas, periwinkles and many more. Another fascinating find is the “Sea Bean,” a pod carried all the way from Central and South American forests.

The best opportunities for shelling are at low tide—particularly after severe weather.



## BEACHES:

**Holly Beach** (LA 27 at LA 82; N 29.76997 W 93.47244)  
**Constance Beach** (LA 82 West; N 29.759386 W 93.577378)  
**Gulf Breeze Beach** (LA 82 West; N 29.757255 W 93.591008)  
**Little Florida Beach** (LA 82 West; N 29.755770 W 93.605027)  
**Long Dun Beach** (LA 82 West; N 29.753795 W 93.627209)  
**Mae’s Beach** (LA 82 West; N 29.749783 W 93.663960)  
**Rutherford Beach** (LA 82 west of Oak Grove; N 29.75828 W 93.12429)

# Crabbing



Credit: Craig H. Crawford, D.D.S.

From May through September, crabbing is a time-honored activity along the Creole Nature Trail. Accordingly, there may be a lot of activity taking place at the many small bridges crossing the roadside canals.

The Gulf of Mexico and saltwater estuaries along the trail are critical to blue crabs as crabs hatch in the deep waters of the Gulf but move to the saltwater marshes as immature crabs to shelter them as they grow and mature.

It’s pretty easy to tell the gender of blue crabs. Male blue crabs have a T-shaped abdomen that is easily distinguishable from both the immature female, which has a triangular shaped abdomen, and the mature female, which has a broad and rounded abdomen.

**All that’s needed to crab is some thick string; turkey or chicken necks, cut fish or chunks of meat; a dip net for scooping; and a pail to hold the crabs. Tie a piece of meat to the string and lower it into the water until you reach the bottom. Have a dip net handy to scoop once the crab has attached to the meat and you have slowly pulled them up. Throw them into a bucket and you are well on your way to a delicious meal. Be sure to stay alert because alligators also like raw meat.**

You do not currently need a license to crab recreationally using the method noted above.

## TOP SITES TO EXPERIENCE:

### **Sabine National Wildlife Refuge Recreation Areas (LA 27 West):**

**Blue Crab** (N 29.878922 W 93.425564)  
**Hog Island Gully** (N 93.425564 W 93.383680)  
**Northline** (N 29.920914 W 93.381439)

### **West Cove** (N 93.383680 W 93.453929) **Rockefeller Refuge (LA 82 East):**

**East End Locks** (N 29.717040 W 92.765570)  
**Rollover Bayou** (N 29.658656 W 92.521935)

# Fishing

The fishing opportunities in Louisiana's Outback are almost too numerous to relate—and it is the activity that is the most accessible to the most people. Your major choice is between freshwater or saltwater fishing. After that, you must decide if you want to fish from a boat or the shore. Surf fishing is excellent along the beaches and there are plenty of waterways along the Creole Nature Trail perfect for dropping a line.

While a 10.13 pound speckled trout was caught in Calcasieu Lake, state records are being caught throughout the region. Some of these records include a 12.38 pound speckled trout caught south of the trail in the Gulf of Mexico; a 11.25 pound red snapper caught 14 miles south of the Rockefeller Refuge; and a 36 inch king mackerel caught at Southwest Pass. Redfish caught along the trail have been weighing in between 35 and 40 pounds, and black drum have been weighing in as large as 60 to 70 pounds.



Because fishing plays such a vital role in Louisiana Outback's economy, there are many resources available, including expert inshore and offshore fishing guides. Contact the Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana Convention & Visitors Bureau at (800) 456-SWLA or visit <http://www.visitlakecharles.org/visitors/fishing-hunting/>.

Everyone, even Louisiana residents over the age of 16, must possess a valid recreational fishing license for freshwater fishing, while saltwater fishing requires both a saltwater and freshwater license. For more information on license requirements, please see the licensing section or visit [www.wlf.state.la.us/licenses](http://www.wlf.state.la.us/licenses). Licenses may be purchased by phone at (888) 765-2606.



## TOP SITES TO EXPERIENCE:

### Freshwater

**Cameron Prairie NWR-Cameron Prairie**

Bank Fishing Road (N 29.945633 W 93.084913)

**Lacassine NWR-Lacassine Pool** (N 30.00555 W 92.91091)

### Saltwater

**Sabine National Wildlife Refuge Recreation Areas**

(see coordinates under Crabbing section)

**Cameron Jetties Fishing Pier**

(722 Davis Rd., Cameron; N 29.764377 W 93.342428)

**Stone breakwaters west of Holly Beach**

(LA 82 West; N 29.768292 W 93.501809)

**Gulf Beaches** (see coordinates under shelling & beaches section)

**Gulf of Mexico**, especially near oil platforms

# Hunting



Since the Creole Nature Trail All-American Road lies in the middle of the Central and Mississippi Flyways, millions of birds fly through during the fall and winter months providing a veritable smorgasbord for hunters. What makes the area unique is the variety of birds—including snows, blues, speckle belly and Canadian geese, as well as mallards, pintails and teal ducks—and the number of available hunting areas. In fact, the trail is considered the “grand slam” for duck hunters, as the region is home to many species of duck.

Public hunting is permitted at the Sabine National Wildlife Refuge in Cameron Parish. Guides can arrange for hunting in the marsh or in rice, soybean or plowed fields. Hunters must obtain permits from one of many license outlets around the region to participate in the various seasons—duck, goose, deer, dove, quail, rabbit, squirrel and turkey.



Louisiana now requires the successful completion of hunter education for anyone born on or after September 1, 1969. Since all 50 states now require some form of mandatory hunter education certification prior to issuing a license, seasoned hunters should check the state regulation as it may apply to them.

For an up-to-date list of hunting guides, contact the Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana Convention & Visitors Bureau at (800) 456-SWLA or visit <http://www.visitlakecharles.org/visitors/fishing-hunting/>.

# Licensing



**In Louisiana, appropriate licenses are required for commercial and recreational fishing and hunting. Recreational licenses can be purchased from anywhere by calling the Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries toll free at (888) 765-2602. The department accepts payment by Visa, MasterCard, debit card or electronic check only. At the time of purchase, an authorization number will be provided for your immediate use, and the actual license will be mailed to the licensee’s mailing address.**

Everyone, even Louisiana residents over the age of 16, must possess a valid recreational fishing license for freshwater fishing, shrimping and oystering, while saltwater fishing requires both a saltwater and freshwater license. Likewise, everyone over the age of 16 must possess a valid recreational hunting license issued to and carried by the individual while hunting. In addition to the required state license, duck stamps are required by everyone 16 years of age and older to hunt ducks.

For questions regarding licensing requirements, please contact the local wildlife and fisheries enforcement office at (337) 491-2580 or explore the Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries’ web site, which provides the most current and comprehensive information on commercial and recreational licensing, limits and the various seasons, at [www.wlf.state.la.us](http://www.wlf.state.la.us).



# Louisiana's Coastal Wetlands



**There are four distinct types of marshes depending on how salty or fresh the water is, and each such area has its own unique habitat and purpose in this ecosystem. Louisiana's coastal wetlands along the Creole Nature Trail are a national treasure whose value reaches far beyond their natural beauty. Louisiana's wetlands represent an estimated annual economic value in excess of \$40 billion, and contribute either directly or indirectly to the lives of everyone in the United States by:**



- Providing the wintering habitat for more than 5 million migratory waterfowl.
- Providing a year-round habitat for many endangered and threatened species of animals.
- Functioning as a giant natural water treatment system filtering sediments, nutrients and chemical pollutants.
- Providing breeding grounds and homes for shrimp, crab and the smaller crustaceans that sustain the northern Gulf of Mexico fish population.
- Providing a natural defense against erosion, and acts as a critical first-line defense against the potential devastation of hurricanes.