

Bicycling through the Past

Traveling by bicycle gives you a different perspective. The trip, not the destination, is the important part. You become a part of your environment, stopping to investigate anything which catches your eye. On this route, you'll find many such places. Below is a listing of the more significant points of interest you'll pass on your trip.



1. Swansboro

In 1783, the town at the mouth of the White Oak River was officially chartered as Swansboro. Proximity to the sea dictated a maritime economy for the small village. Shipbuilding, the import-export trade and commercial fishing dominated the economy during various periods of Swansboro's development. In periods of war, the manufacture of salt from sea water also became an important industry.

The nation's early wars had a significant impact on life in Swansboro. During the American Revolution, ardent patriots established a warehouse there to supply the Continental Line. The War of 1812 saw North Carolina's most famous privateer hero, Captain Otway Burns, set sail from Swansboro. During the Civil War, Swansboro was captured three times by Federal forces; twice in 1862 and once again in 1864.

Today, things are much quieter in Swansboro. This quaint coastal village has become a popular retirement community and tourist center, once again adapting to meet the needs of the time.

2. Cedar Point Recreation

Cedar Point Recreation Area provides a scenic stop-over and a chance to explore the unusual habitat of the Croatan National Forest. Maintained by the US Forest Service, picnic tables, drinking water and overnight camping facilities are provided for public use. The Tideland Trail, which meanders through pine and hardwood forests, crossing tidal marshes on cypress boardwalks, has been designated to help the visitor better understand the ecology of the area.

3. White Oak Chapel

Established as White Oak Chapel in 1901, the former Unitarian church is currently used as the Pelletier Community Building. Originally, the structure was part of a field of four Unitarian churches established as a mission with an impressive social and educational program, headquartered at Swansboro.

4. Hadnot's Creek Primitive Baptist Church

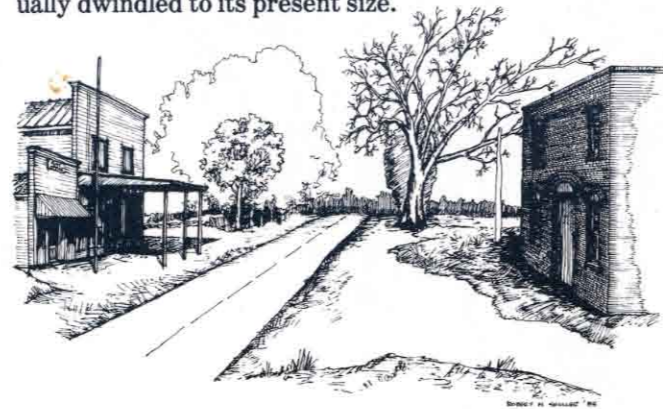
The congregation of Hadnot's Creek Primitive Baptist Church was established at least as early as 1790. The present building was erected about 1840. It is the only landmark which remains to mark the existence of Pelletier's Mills, a once-thriving community with its own post office and water-powered grist mill.

5. Croatan National Forest

Lying between the Neuse River on the east and Bogue Sound on the south, this coastal forest covers a total of 155,000 acres of land. Wildlife abounds in the Croatan. Animal life includes deer, black bear, wild turkey, muskrat, mink, otter and many species of birds including the rare bald eagle and peregrine falcon and the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker. Reptiles, both friendly and not-so-friendly, are also part of this environment. The largest and most awesome is the alligator, a rather retiring resident of the deep swamps and waterways. Several species of poisonous snakes are found in the area, as well. A number of unusual plant species, including the exotic Venus fly trap, the sundew and the pitcher plant thrive in the wet upland bogs of the region.

6. Stella

The village of Stella got its start in the lumber boom of the late 1800's and became a bustling center of mill activity, boatbuilding and shipping. When the lumber industry folded after the Great Depression, Stella gradually dwindled to its present size.



7. St. Thomas African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

While the exact age of St. Thomas' is not known, it most certainly dates from the late 1800's. The Freedmen's Bureau, created at the close of the Civil War, had established a school for blacks on adjoining property in 1868, and the church congregation appears to have been organized the following year. Sunday services are still held in the church.

8. Hammock's Beach State Park

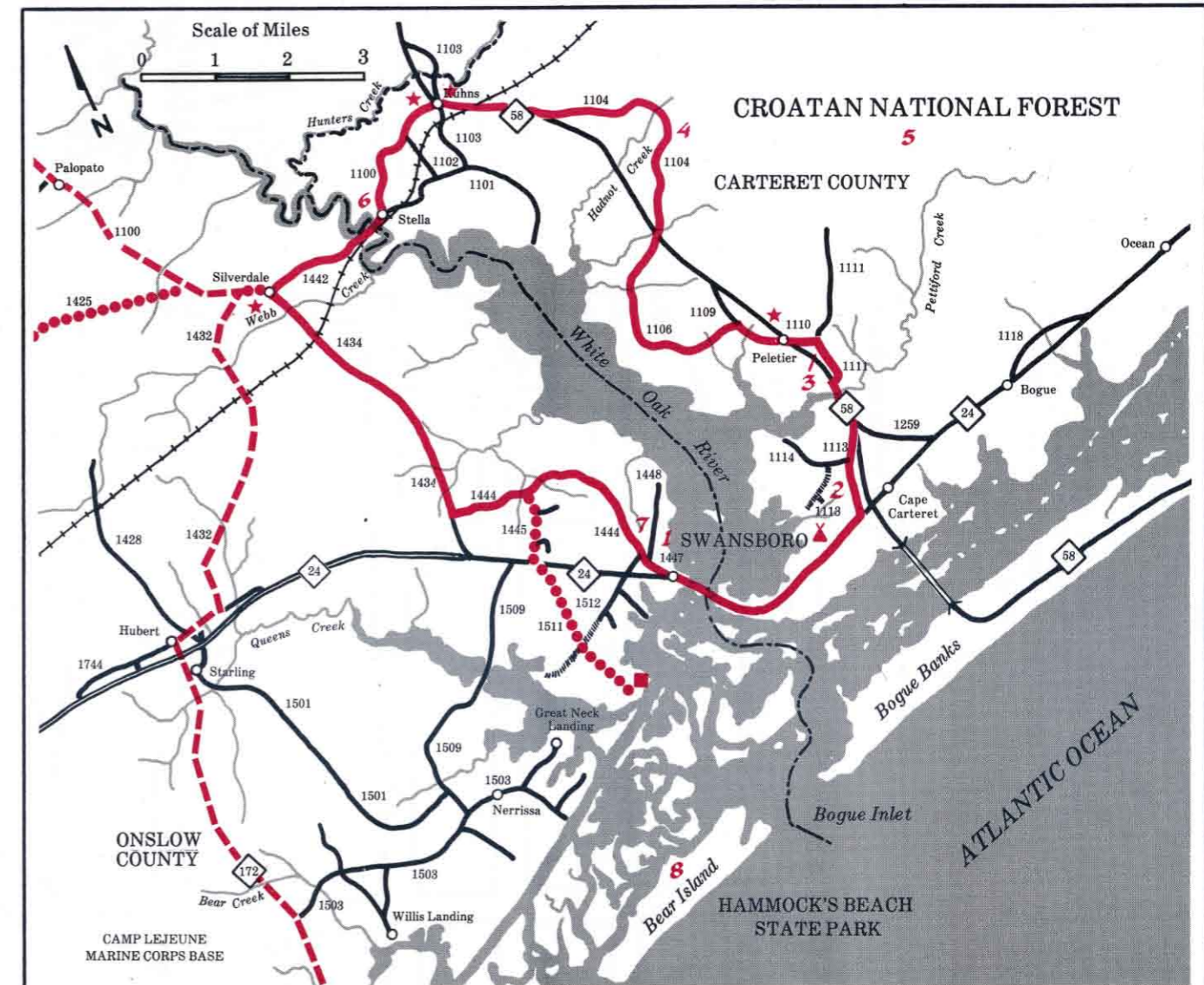
Hammocks Beach State Park occupies 892 acres on Bear Island. The island is three and one-half miles long and three-fourths of a mile wide. Sand dunes on the island rise to 60 feet above sea level.

The park, with its three miles of ocean frontage is said to be one of the most beautiful and unspoiled beaches on the Atlantic Coast. Largely undeveloped, Hammocks Beach State Park presently offers a bath-

house with restrooms, showers and baskets for swimmers and a refreshment stand and picnic tables. Primitive camping is permitted on the beach.

The park can be reached only by boat. Two free passenger ferries operate daily between Memorial Day and Labor Day, making one round trip per hour. The first boat leaves the mainland at 9:30 am and the last boat departs the island at 6:00 pm.

No bicycles will be transported to the island, but arrangements can be made with a ranger to store them in a locked maintenance shed at the ferry landing.



Safety Tips

The bicycle has legally been considered a vehicle since 1937. It has full rights and responsibilities on the roadway and is subject to all regulations governing a vehicle. Please follow the tips below to insure a safe trip along the roads of Onslow and Carteret counties.

- Always ride on the right.
- Obey all traffic signs and signals.
- Avoid night riding, especially in rural areas.
- When riding with a group, ride single file.
- Watch for sand, loose gravel and wet leaves.
- Watch out for speeding drivers.

Legend

- Bicycle Route
- Paved Road
- Unpaved Road
- Jacksonville City to the Sea Route*
- Ports of Call Bicycling Highways Route*
- 1-8 Points of Interest
- ★ Country Stores
- ▲ Campground
- Hammocks Beach Ferry Landing

*maps available from NC Bicycle Program, PO Box 25201, Raleigh, 27611, (919)733-2804