

# CROATAN National Forest North Carolina



Welcome to the Croatan National Forest, one of four National Forests in North Carolina. Information and maps for the other three — the Pisgah and Nantahala in the western mountains and the Uwharrie in the piedmont, near Troy — are available at all North Carolina National Forest offices.

The Croatan National Forest came into existence with President Franklin Roosevelt's proclamation of July 29, 1936 and was made possible by the 1911 Weeks Act. A purchase unit for the Croatan was established in 1933 and 77,000 acres had been acquired by 1935. Today, the Forest incorporates over 157,000 acres.

The Croatan's unique estuary and pocosin areas are interesting to visit but care should be exercised by visitors not to ignore the hazards represented by some permanent residents; poisonous snakes, insects and the usually nocturnal and reclusive American alligator.

Off-road vehicle (ORV) users should check with the local Ranger Station for current regulations.

## CAMPING REGULATIONS

The purpose of the rules in effect in National Forest recreation areas is to insure your protection and maximum pleasure.

By observing these regulations, you and your camping neighbors will be able to enjoy the peace and serenity of the forest environment.

## GENERAL RULES

- In developed recreation areas, put vehicles, tents, and trailers only in places provided.
- Occupy your campsite the first night you arrive; then don't leave it unoccupied for more than 24 hours at a time.
- Camping is not permitted in day use areas such as picnicking sites, swimming areas, etc.
- Length of stay; not more than 14 consecutive days.
- Only campers permitted inside campgrounds during established night hours (usually posted).
- Build fires only in stoves, grills, fireplaces and fire rings.
- Help preserve all facilities and vegetation. Protect recreation areas for future generations.

A fee is charged for use of some recreation areas in the Croatan National Forest. The pay-as-you-go fee system was created through the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act passed by Congress in 1965.

The Golden Age and Golden Access Passports are valid on all Forest Service recreation areas. There is no charge for the Golden Age Passport, just proof of age, 62 years and older. The Golden Access Passport is issued free of charge upon proof that the applicant has been medically determined to be blind or permanently disabled to receive benefits under Federal law. These passports entitle the bearer and all who accompany him/her in a private non-commercial vehicle into designated fee areas for one-half the daily use fee. Camping fees include swimming privileges. The passports are available at the Forest Supervisor's Office in Asheville and at the District Ranger Office on Thurman Rd., South of New Bern.

## Hunting & Fishing

Hunting and fishing are allowed under State regulations. Check with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission for licenses, regulations, and seasons. The address is 512 Salisbury St., Raleigh, NC 27611, telephone 1-800-662-7127 (toll free).

## THE FOREST

Recreation on the Croatan National Forest offers something for everyone who enjoys coastal forests and beaches. Thousands of visitors picnic and camp on the forest each year.

The forest derives its name from the Algonquin Indian word for "Council town." The word "croatan" carved on a tree on Roanoke Island was all that seemed to remain of Sir Walter Raleigh's 1585 lost colony.

The White Oak river marks the western boundary of the Croatan National Forest, while the Neuse River and its tributary, the Trent, are the northern and eastern boundaries. To the south is Bogue Sound and the Atlantic Ocean. On the Neuse River, a few miles south of the historic town of New Bern, you will find the Croatan Ranger Station and several camp and picnic grounds. A swimming beach administered by the Forest Service is located at the Neuse River — Flannery beach site just south of Fishers Landing.

This unique coastal forest is interlaced with the sea's numerous areas called estuaries, where shrimp, crabs and oysters reproduce and grow to maturity before going to sea. The forest is spotted with many dwarf swamp vegetation areas called "Pocosin," an Indian word for swamp on a hill.

## WILDERNESS

In June 1984, Congress added almost 69 thousand acres of wilderness to the 31 thousand already existing in the North Carolina National Forests. Four of these — Catfish Lake South (7,600 acres), Pocosin (11,000 acres), Pine Pine (1,860 acres) and Sheep Ridge (9,540 acres) — are on the Croatan National Forest and represent a coastal/estuarine ecosystem unique to this National Forest.

## FIRE

Despite the high water table in much of this National Forest, fire is a major threat to the intermingled rural and developed areas. Prescribed burning (controlled use of fire) is often employed to lessen the hazard of excessive fuel buildup in the pocosin types adjacent to development. Properly burned areas recover rapidly and often improve the habitat for both man and wildlife.

If you have questions about National Forest management activities, the Ranger Station (five miles south of New Bern on U.S. 70) is open daily (except weekends & holidays), 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., for information, maps and other visitor needs.



Cedar Point Tideland Trail



Timber Marking

## TRAILS

**Cedar Point Tideland Trail** — This National Recreation Trail takes about one hour to hike and provides a good opportunity to see wildlife and typical vegetation of a marshland estuary. It meanders through pine and hardwood forests and uses boardwalks to cross marshes and open water. The trail includes viewing blinds from which shorebirds and other wildlife can often be seen without disturbance.

**Neusiok Trail** — Starting on the Newport River and ending on the Neuse River at Pinecliff Recreation Area, this trail passes through pine and hardwood timber stands, and interesting areas of pocosin. The trail traverses 20 miles of National Forest land and crosses several paved and non-paved roads. No camping facilities exist along the trail, but primitive facilities are permitted. Trail users are requested to pack out their garbage. Hikers will need to carry drinking water and wear boots to cross frequent wet areas. Most people prefer fall, winter and early spring hiking to avoid the heat, insects and snakes.

**Island Creek Forest Walk** — This 1/2 mile trail offers the opportunity to observe many interesting plant communities, including a stand of virgin hardwood trees. It is peaceful, relaxing and particularly scenic during the fall color season. This trail can be found by taking U.S. 70 South from New Bern for 1 mile and then, going west on N.C. 1004 for 8 miles.

## Wildlife

Wildlife on the Croatan National Forest provides pleasure for hunters and excellent opportunities for those who love to see and study wild creatures. Animal life includes deer, black bear, turkey, squirrel, rabbits, quail and raccoons, all of which can be hunted under North Carolina state game regulations. Muskrat, mink and otter are also fairly common.

A favorite pastime for summer visitors to the tidal areas of the Neuse River and Pettiford Bay is flounder fishing. Flounder fishermen use a light at night in shallow waters along the shore to spot the flat, bottom-hugging fish and "gig" them with spears.

Fishermen enjoy this sport with both saltwater and freshwater species. Freshwater sport fish include large-mouth bass, red-breast sunfish, bluegill, chain pickerel, warmouth, yellow perch and catfish. Saltwater fishing is popular at the lower end of Neuse River and the saltwater marsh areas.

Forty miles of streams and 4,300 acres of lakes exist on the Croatan. Lake fishing is usually poor however, because of the high acidity of the water.

The Croatan lies on the Atlantic flyway of migratory birds, including ducks and geese. Its creeks, bays, swamps, marshes and pocosins provide habitat for many types of birdlife. Bird watchers may see greys, flycatchers, woodpeckers, hawks, woodcocks, owls and many other species. Several rare species of birds, including the bald eagle and peregrine falcon, are seen occasionally. A common resident of the Croatan is the osprey or fish hawk.

Reptiles are a frequently seen resident of the forest and coastal environments. The largest and probably the most awesome is the American alligator, a rather retiring resident of the deep swamps and waterways.

The more troublesome, poisonous reptile species include: cottonmouth moccasin, canebrake rattler, eastern diamondback rattler, pygmy rattler, and copperhead.

Several unusual plant species thrive in the areas of the pocosins. The Venus fly trap (*Dionaea muscipula*) for example, lives only in the eastern Coastal Plain and on no other National Forest. Its leaves close on and entrap insects which the plant then digests. Another plant, the shrub *Zenobia*, lives only in pocosin areas.



Neuse River Recreation Area



Gigging for Flounder at Flannery Beach



Osprey Redging in the nest



Insect eating Pitcher Plant



United States Department of Agriculture  
Forest Service  
Croatan National Forest

Remember — only YOU can prevent forest fires!



**SUPERVISOR'S OFFICE**  
NATIONAL FORESTS IN NORTH CAROLINA  
P.O. BOX 2125  
ASHEVILLE, NC 28802  
(813) 255-2292

**CROATAN NATIONAL FOREST**  
DISTRICT RANGER  
141 E. THIRD STREET  
NEW BERN, NC 28562  
(919) 638-5628



## FOREST WATCH

To report fires, vandalism or crime, call (toll free)

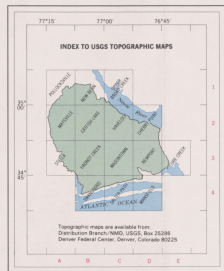
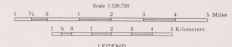
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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOREST SERVICE  
F. DALE ROBERTSON, CHIEF

## CROATAN NATIONAL FOREST

NORTH CAROLINA  
1989



- LEGEND**
- National Forest Boundary
  - National Forest Land
  - Other Federal Land
  - State Land
  - Special Area Land
  - Ranger District Office
  - Forest Service Facility
  - Historical Center Station
  - Lookout Tower
  - Primary Highway
  - Secondary Highway
  - Improved Road, Paved
  - Improved Road, Gravel
  - Improved Road, Dirt
  - Unimproved Road
  - Trail
  - U.S. Highway
  - State Highway
  - Secondary State Highway
  - Forest Road
  - Forest Trail
  - Church, School, Cemetery
  - Quarry
  - Ponds and Other Wetlands

FOREST SUPERVISOR'S OFFICE  
ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

RECREATION SITES	LOCATION	CAMPING		DOMESTIC WATER		FISHING		HUNTING TRAILS		SWIMMING		TRAILER DUMP STA.		TRAILER SPACE	
		D	L	D	L	D	L	D	L	D	L	D	L	D	L
BRICE CREEK	B-1	L													
CANDOLLE CREEK	D-2	L													
CEDAR POINT	B-4	L	F												
FISHERS LANDING	C-2	L													
GREAT LAKE	C-3	L													
HAYWOOD LANDING	A-3	L													
NEUSE RIVER	C-2	L	F												
PINE CLIFF	D-2	L													

D = FEE AREA  
L = LAUNCH RAMP  
F = OPEN SEASONALLY

Wilderness Areas shown resulted from the passage of the North Carolina Wilderness Act, PL 98-324, June 19, 1984.

FOREST SERVICE MAP  
Compiled in 1984 at the Regional Office, Atlanta, Georgia from USGS  
Forest Service electronic vector maps. Revised in 1989 by the USDA Forest  
Service Geospatial Services Center, Salt Lake City, Utah from vector  
files provided by the Southern Region. Data current as of October 1989.