



photo: Florida Scrub Jay, credit USFWS

**Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge**

Merritt Island NWR is an overlay of NASA's John F. Kennedy Space Center where the world's most advanced technology launched man to the moon, and today, continues space exploration. Alongside NASA and other agencies, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service helps conserve space for over 500 different species of wildlife and 1000 species of plants in Central Florida.

Contained within this 35-mile long barrier island is a rich abundance of plants and animals from both the subtropical and temperate climate zones. The refuge is strategically located on the Atlantic Flyway, a major bird migration corridor, and it is a key resting stop for many migratory bird species.

Merritt Island NWR's habitats support one of the highest numbers of endangered and threatened species found within the refuges of the National Wildlife Refuge System. This unique relationship the refuge shares with NASA bears testimony that nature and technology can coexist.

**For Further Information**

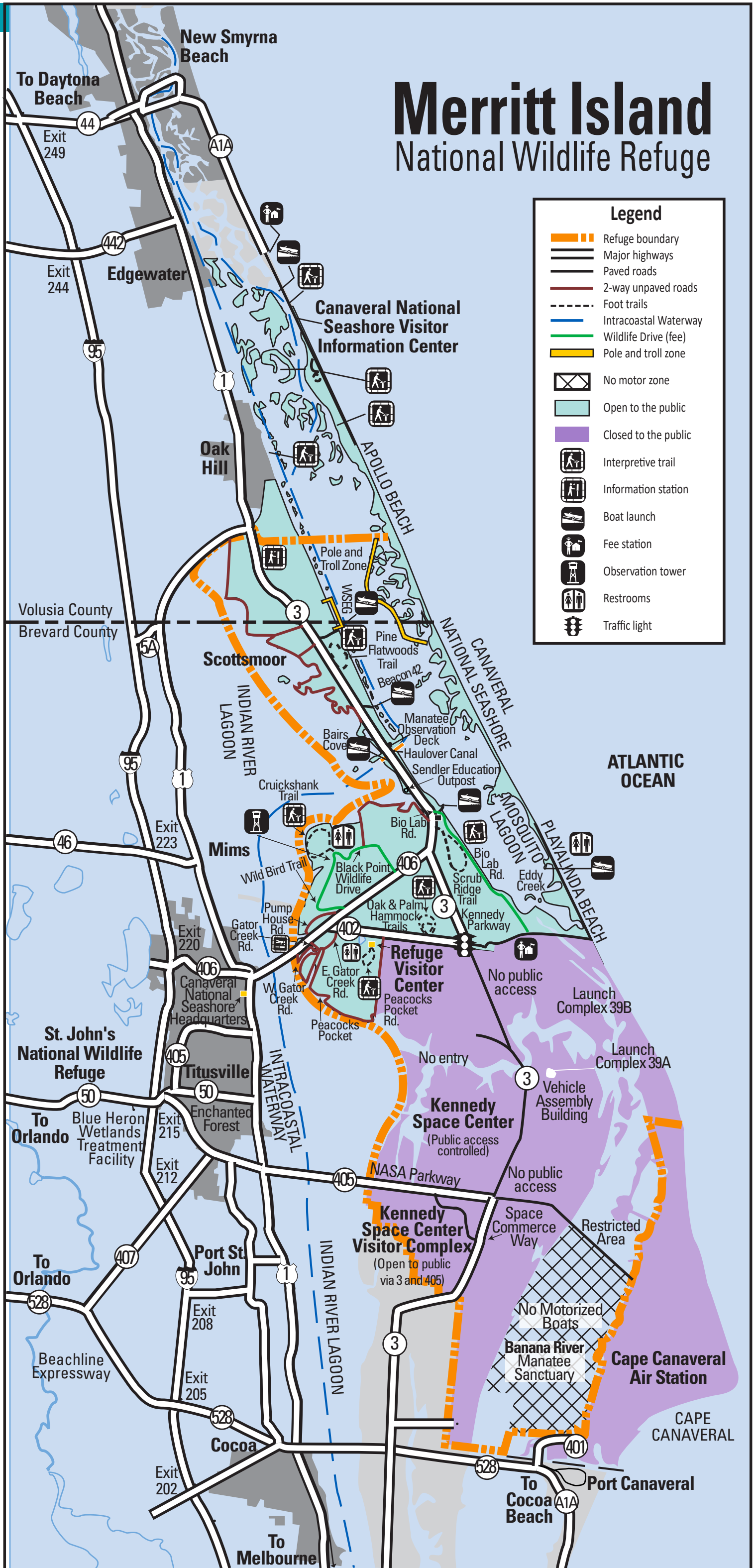
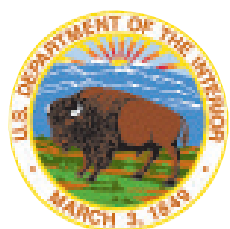
Refuge Manager  
Merritt Island NWR  
P.O. Box 2683  
Titusville, FL 32781

Phone: 321/867 0667  
Visitor Center: 321/861 0669

Email: [merrittisland@fws.gov](mailto:merrittisland@fws.gov)  
[http://www.fws.gov/refuge/merritt\\_island](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/merritt_island)

**In Case of Emergency**

321/867 7911  
Canaveral National Seashore  
Headquarters: 321/267 1110  
Canaveral National Seashore  
Closure Info: 321/867 4077  
Kennedy Space Center  
Information: 866/737 5235



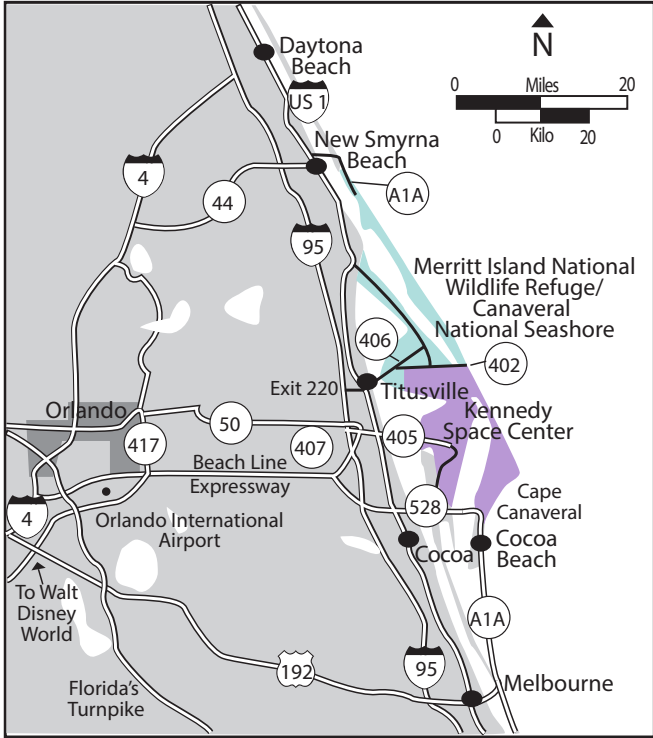
# Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge

Legend	
	Refuge boundary
	Major highways
	Paved roads
	2-way unpaved roads
	Foot trails
	Intracoastal Waterway
	Wildlife Drive (fee)
	Pole and troll zone
	No motor zone
	Open to the public
	Closed to the public
	Interpretive trail
	Information station
	Boat launch
	Fee station
	Observation tower
	Restrooms
	Traffic light

## Visitor Center

Highly recommended for the first-time visitor. For visitor center hours visit the refuge website, Facebook page or call 321/861 0669. The Center is located on SR 402, five miles east of U.S. 1 in Titusville. The Center offers:

- Refuge Maps and Information
- Wildlife and Habitat Displays
- Auditorium for Movies and Programs
- Bookstore
- Educational Resources



## Refuge Fees

The purchase of the Refuge Daily Pass for \$10.00 per vehicle is required to enter the Black Point Wildlife Drive and Bio Lab Road. To launch a boat at Bairs Cove, Beacon 42 and Bio Lab boat ramps requires the purchase of the Refuge Daily Pass. The Refuge Daily Pass is valid at all refuge fee sites and for entry to Canaveral National Seashore. The daily fee is collected on an honor system and can be purchased at all refuge fee areas and the Refuge Visitor Center. Cash or check is required and credit cards are not accepted.

**Refuge Daily Pass:** \$10.00 per vehicle (includes motorcycles)

**Individuals on foot or bicycle:** \$1.00 per day

**Merritt Island NWR Annual Pass:** \$25.00. For an additional \$20.00 this pass can be upgraded to Canaveral National Seashore's Annual Pass at Canaveral's Playalinda and Apollo Beach Fee booths.

**America the Beautiful Access Pass:** Free for medically authorized individuals.

**America the Beautiful Senior Annual Pass:** \$20.00

**America the Beautiful Senior Lifetime Pass:** \$80.00

**America the Beautiful Annual Pass:** \$80.00

**America the Beautiful Military Pass:** Free to U.S. military members and their dependents of most military branches with proper military ID.

**Federal Duck Stamps:** \$25.00

## Black Point Wildlife Drive

This 7-mile, one-way drive travels through salt and freshwater marshes and is located on SR 406, one mile east of the intersection of SR 402 and SR 406. A \$10.00 Refuge Daily Pass is sold on an honor system at the drive's entrance. Pick up an auto tour brochure at the drive's entrance or at the Refuge Visitor Center. The brochure includes numbered stops describing the natural history and management of the area. Wading birds, shorebirds, raptors, waterfowl, alligators, otters and other wildlife species can be observed. The Wild Bird Trail (1/4 mile round trip) is located at Stop # 4. Located at Stop #9 are: parking lot, restrooms, observation tower, wheel chair accessible platform, and the trail head to Cruickshank Trail (five mile loop).

## Wildlife Observation and Photography

The main route to view wildlife is Black Point Wildlife Drive. Hiking trails, towers, decks and dike roads marked on the map offer excellent, alternative wildlife viewing, especially in the fall and winter. One of the best ways for viewing wildlife on the refuge is by canoe or kayak.

## Restrooms

Restrooms are located at the Refuge Visitor Center, Stop #9 along Black Point Wildlife Drive and Playalinda Beach.



photo: A roseate spoonbill wades through brackish water on Black Point Wildlife Drive in Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge, credit Bill Nunn.

## Beach Access

Canaveral National Seashore offers 24 miles of pristine, undeveloped beach for sunbathing, swimming, wading, surfing, fishing, and hiking. Horseback riding is permitted November 1 through April 15 by obtaining a special use permit. There are not any designated picnic areas, telephones, food services, beach showers, or drinking water. An entrance fee is charged at the fee station. See Refuge Fees for details. For current beach information, call 321/867 4077.

## Foot Trails

Hiking the refuge is most pleasant during the fall, winter, and early spring. Seven walking trails are marked on the map.

- Visitor Center Boardwalk easy - 1/4 mile Loop - 15 minutes - *Along this short accessible trail, visitors will see native vegetation and potentially wildlife including birds and alligators*
- Oak Hammock Trail easy - 3/4 mile Loop - 20-30 minutes - *Enticing visitors into a walk in the woods through a thicket of ferns under the shade of live oaks, the Oak Hammock Trail provides an easy introduction to one of the most pleasant habitats – the hammock.*
- Palm Hammock Trail easy - 2 mile Loop - 40-50 minutes - *Palm Hammock Trail treats you to a lush forest of mature saw palmettos under a dense canopy of live oaks on the way to an island of cabbage palms surrounded by marshes.*
- Scrub Ridge Trail moderate - 1 mile Loop - 30-40 minutes - *This easy trail leads visitors through some of the most unique habitat in Florida. Starting on a solid sandy limestone trail, visitors will stroll between a freshwater impoundment and scrub habitat.*
- Cruickshank Trail and Tower moderate - 5 mile Loop - 2 hours - *Allan Cruickshank Memorial Trail honors Cruickshank who advocated for the protection of sweeping wet landscapes when NASA began plans for Kennedy Space Center. This open sunny trail offers wide vistas from atop dike roads with views out over the marshes. Good birding opportunities. Bring water and insect repellent.*
- Wild Bird Trail easy - 1/4 mile Round Trip - 30 minutes - *Along Black Point Wildlife Drive. Wild Birds Unlimited Trail is a short flat trail connecting two great bird observation platforms overlooking the marshes.*
- Pine Flatwood Trail moderate - 1 mile Loop - 30-40 minutes - *The trail follows established fire break roads. The pine flatwoods ecosystem is dominated by fire tolerant plants such as slash pine, several species of scrub oaks, saw palmetto, gall berry and wire grass.*

## Manatee Observation Deck

Manatees frequent this spot when the water is warm and can be seen reliably in spring and summer. The deck is located 10.5 miles north of the Visitor Center off SR 3 at Haulover Canal.

## Wheelchair Accessibility

- Refuge Visitor Center and Boardwalk (1/4 mile loop)
- Manatee Observation Deck
- Kayak launch dock at Biolab boat ramp
- Observation Deck at refuge entrance on SR 406
- Beach Access at Eddy Creek (Parking Lot # 8) at Playalinda Beach

## Boat Launches

Motorboats, canoes and kayaks may be used for wildlife observation, fishing and hunting. Boat speed regulations are in effect in several areas for manatee protection. Boat launching is limited to designated launch areas. A \$10.00 Refuge Daily Pass is required to launch a boat from Bairs Cove, Bio Lab and Beacon 42 boat ramps. The Refuge Daily Pass is sold on an honor system at each site, cash or check only. For details see Refuge Fees.

- Bairs Cove - Haulover Canal
- Beacon 42 - Mosquito Lagoon
- WSEG - Mosquito Lagoon (No Fee)
- Bio Lab - Mosquito Lagoon
- Eddy Creek - Mosquito Lagoon

## General Refuge Regulations

- The refuge is open sunrise to sunset daily.
- Air boats, jet skis and ATVs are not permitted.
- Carrying, possessing fireworks or explosives is prohibited. Persons possessing firearms on National Wildlife Refuges must comply with all provisions of State and Local laws.
- Feeding, watering, enticing or disturbing alligators, manatees and other wildlife is not permitted.
- Camping, open fires and barbeque grills are not permitted on the refuge.
- Pets are permitted on the refuge, but must be leashed and under control at all times.
- Horses are not permitted on the refuge, but are permitted at the North District of Canaveral National Seashore in New Smyrna Beach from November 1 through April 15.
- Releasing of any wild or domestic animals onto the refuge is prohibited.
- Collecting of any animals, plants, artifacts and natural features is prohibited, other than legally taken fish or waterfowl.
- Fishing and crabbing are permitted on the refuge in accordance with state and refuge regulations. A refuge permit is required for both recreational and commercial fishing. Fishing is allowed in the open waters of the Indian River Lagoon, Banana River, Mosquito Lagoon, mosquito control impoundments and interior lakes. Fishing is prohibited along Black Point Wildlife Drive and its adjacent dike roads except for L Pond Road.
- Two pole and troll zones are located in Mosquito Lagoon. Operation of internal combustion engines is not allowed within the zones and vessels drafting more than 12" may not enter. Electric trolling motors and non-motorized power sources such as push poles or paddles are permitted.
- Waterfowl hunting is permitted November through January in designated hunt areas. A refuge permit and hunter safety certification is required. State, federal and refuge regulations apply.
- Glass beverage containers are prohibited.
- Bicycles are prohibited on foot trails.