



A Map & Guide to the Scenic Ashley River



WELCOME TO THE ASHLEY RIVER BLUE TRAIL

The Ashley River Blue Trail starts south of Schulz Lake at Sland's Bridge as a narrow stream with overhanging trees on its banks and much of the bordering land undeveloped before opening up in to a tidal river with broad vistas framed by the marsh and distant trees to end south of Charles Towne Landing.

The 30 mile Blue Trail invites the paddler to explore this rich historical and natural area that includes iconic plantations predating the Revolutionary War along with pristine habitat for diverse wildlife. Several creeks are also available to paddle and explore, like Church and Town Creeks, and can provide sanctuary to paddlers from the larger motor boats that frequent the lower river.

The historical, cultural, and natural significance of the Ashley River cannot be overstated. The river provides home for fish and wildlife, scenic landscapes, and opportunities for families to enjoy time together outside.

Learn how you can protect the Ashley and other hometown rivers by visiting:

BlueTrailsGuide.org

SCHULZ LAKE
The headwaters of the Ashley River gather in the Wassamasaw Basin, flow through the Great Cypress Swamp, and enter Schulz Lake. This oxbow lake was believed to be the ideal water source for the thriving 18th century rice culture at Ponds Plantation.
32.972364, -80.273322

SLAND'S BRIDGE
32.967851, -80.249312

ROSEBROCK PARK
32.94891, -80.20603

AQUEDUCT TOWER
32.958904, -80.201576



BACON'S BRIDGE
Highway 165 crosses Bacon's Bridge on the site of a historic Indian trail. In 1780, as part of his defense of Charleston against the British, General William Moultrie had an earthen fort built here. This was also the site of a weir dam that prevented saltwater intrusion into the upper river.
32.958375, -80.200592

ASHLEY RIVER PARK
Scheduled to open in late 2016
32.958375, -80.200592



HERBERT H. JESSEN LANDING
32.948117, -80.164769



COLONIAL DORCHESTER STATE HISTORIC SITE
You can find the largely undisturbed 1697 trading town of Dorchester, and a powder magazine and tabby fort constructed in 1757. The site's preserved archaeological remains give visitors a peek into the early history of colonial South Carolina.
32.949710, -80.170622



CONSERVATION
The Ashley River is a beautiful, largely undisturbed black water stream in its upper section and becomes a broader, tidally-influenced river as it passes the historic plantation sites. It has significant historical and natural importance to the region and the nation.

In 1992, the South Carolina Department of Archives and History and the Office of Coastal Resource Management joined with local citizens to create the Ashley River Special Area Management Plan with the goal of preserving the Ashley's natural and historic character.

Public interest led to the designation of the Ashley as a State Scenic River in 1998-1999 to preserve its outstanding qualities. In recent years, the Dorchester County Council's citizen commissions helped create a network of parks, and protected special parts of the county.

Healthy rivers such as the Ashley provide opportunities for active living through boating, swimming and fishing as well as provide outdoor classrooms for youth. Adequately buffered waterways provide protection for wildlife and provide places where today's adventures share a link with our region's past.

To learn how you can get involved, visit BlueTrailsGuide.org/Rivers/Ashley/

MIDDLETON PLACE
Middleton Place is an 18th century rice plantation with 65 acres of America's oldest landscaped gardens. It was home to a President of the First Continental Congress and a signer of the Declaration of Independence.
No public access by boat.
32.900020, -80.136466



MAGNOLIA PLANTATION & GARDENS

Magnolia Gardens was founded in 1676 and occupied by the British during the American Revolution. The outstanding landscaped gardens were opened to public in 1870, making them the oldest public gardens in America. No public access by boat.
32.878751, -80.090837



DRAYTON HALL

Drayton Hall is a National Historic landmark, dating to 1738. An outstanding example of Palladian architecture, the main house was the only Ashley River plantation house to survive both the American Revolution and the Civil War intact. No public access by boat.



STEWARDSHIP

The Ashley River Blue Trail asks visitors to follow the National Leave No Trace Code of Outdoor Ethics (www.lnt.org) that promotes the responsible use and enjoyment of the outdoors:

- Plan ahead and prepare.
- Obey all rules and regulations.
- Respect private property and wildlife.
- Dispose of waste properly (human & litter).
- Leave what you find.
- Minimize campfire impacts.
- Be considerate of others.

PLANNING

- Review the Ashley River Blue Trail map.
- Know where your trip will take you, where to get out, and emergency routes.
- Allow enough time to complete your trip within daylight hours.
- Check river conditions, including the tides. A flooded river can be dangerous and should be avoided. A low river may expose logs or rocks and require carrying your boat, which may make your trip slower and more difficult.
- Planning ahead for the tide is essential to a successful paddle. There can be as much as a six foot difference between low and high tides. Official tide information is provided by NOAA.
- Check weather conditions before your trip. Do not go if the weather is beyond the ability of the least experienced person in your group.

SAFETY

- Avoid boating alone.
- Always wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket.
- Review relevant water level, tidal, and safety information before your trip.
- Leave information about your route and return time with a relative or friend.
- Be aware of wildlife and river hazards such as strainers (fallen trees) and large vessels.
- When in a group assign a lead and sweep boat manned by experienced paddlers.
- Stay in your boat if it becomes stuck and carefully shift your weight as you push off with your paddle or pole.
- Never paddle farther from shore than you are prepared to swim.
- Bring a spare paddle or pole, and in an emergency, stay with your boat.
- South Carolina state law requires each boat carry a noise making device and a flashlight.
- A first-aid kit, plenty of drinking water, sunscreen, sunglasses, and bug repellent are among other trip essentials.

CSX TRAIN TRESTLE

32.847514, -80.050222

FLYNN STREET LANDING

32.847641, -80.037252



PIERPONT LANDING

32.837899, -80.043246



W.O. THOMAS JR. LANDING

32.837373, -80.021099



NORTHBRIDGE PARK

32.834365, -79.986241



CHARLES TOWNE LANDING STATE HISTORIC SITE

The location of the first European settlement of the Carolina colony in 1670, the site includes a reconstructed village, museum exhibits, and nature walks. Paddlers can enter Towne Creek and pass by the replica 17th century sailing ship "Adventure". No access from water.
32.807704, -79.988097



Photo: Hugo Krispyn

Charles Towne Landing State Historic Site

Mouth of Towne Creek

END OF ASHLEY BLUE RIVER TRAIL

DOWNTOWN CHARLESTON

MARKER #8

Midstream navigation landmark for the entrance to Towne Creek
32.972364, -80.273322



Photo: Hugo Krispyn

LEGEND

- POINTS OF INTEREST
- 🚣 KAYAK, CANOE OR BOAT LAUNCH
- P PARKING
- ⛶ PICNIC AREAS
- 🌟 ASHLEY RIVER HERITAGE TRAIL & SHIPWRECK SITES
- 🏠 SHELTERS
- 🚶 HIKING & WALKING TRAILS
- 🚻 RESTROOMS

