

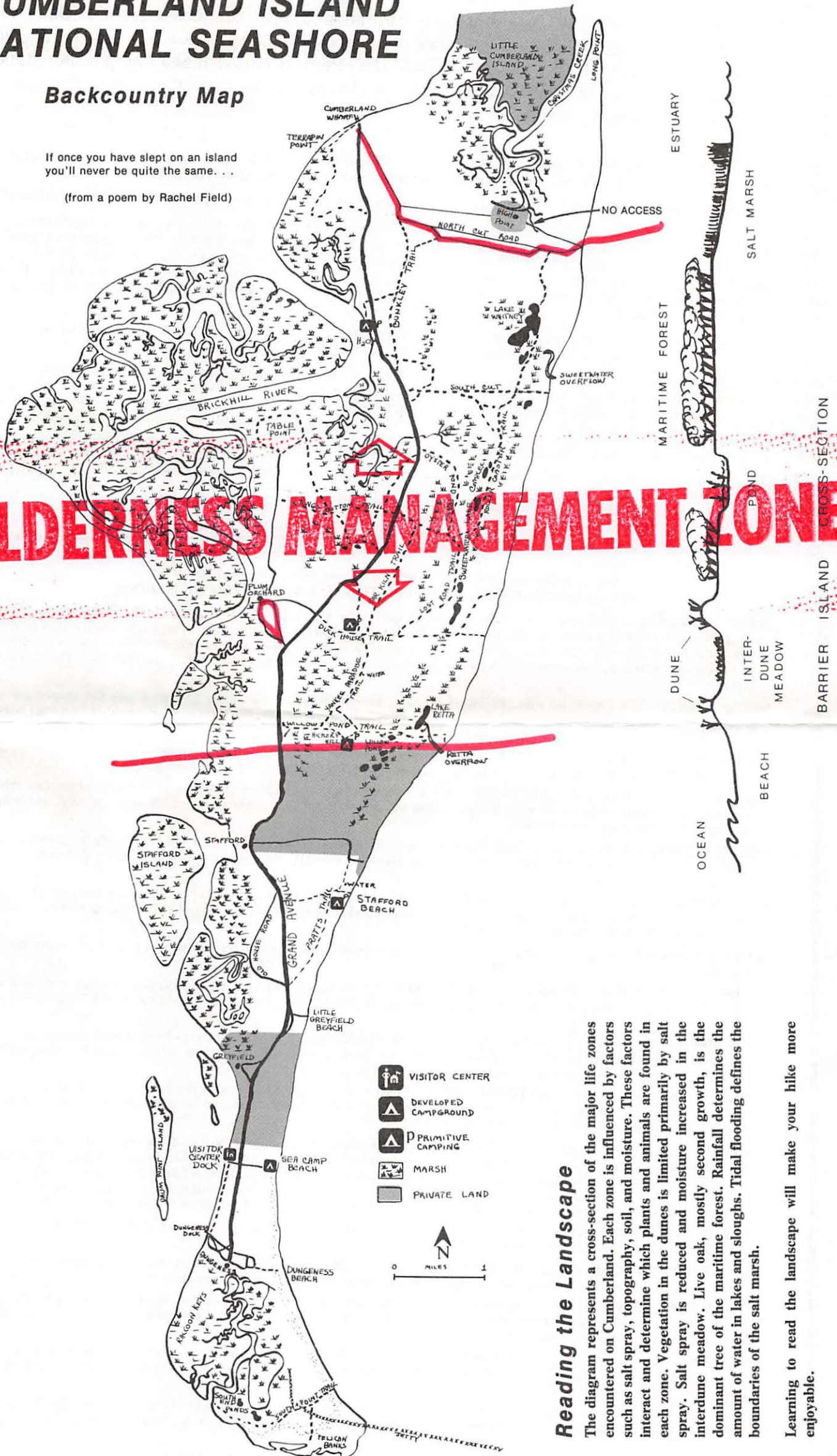
CUMBERLAND ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE

Backcountry Map

If once you have slept on an island
you'll never be quite the same. . .

(from a poem by Rachel Field)

WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT ZONE



Reading the Landscape

The diagram represents a cross-section of the major life zones encountered on Cumberland. Each zone is influenced by factors such as salt spray, topography, soil, and moisture. These factors interact and determine which plants and animals are found in each zone. Vegetation in the dunes is limited primarily by salt spray. Salt spray is reduced and moisture increased in the interdune meadow. Live oak, mostly second growth, is the dominant tree of the maritime forest. Rainfall determines the amount of water in lakes and sloughs. Tidal flooding defines the boundaries of the salt marsh.

Learning to read the landscape will make your hike more enjoyable.

BACKCOUNTRY CAMPING takes place in primitive camps: Stafford Beach, Hickory Hill, Yankee Paradise and Brickhill Bluff. Distance north from Sea Camp dock is 3.5, 5.5, 7.4 and 10.6 miles respectively. **CAMP ONLY IN THESE 4 SITES.** Permits issued at Sea Camp visitor station. The permit is necessary to keep track of campers and to spread the impact around so that one site is not overcrowded while others are empty.

NO FIRES IN BACKCOUNTRY. Fire rings multiply and detract from the appearance of the backcountry and it is a long distance to help if fire escapes. With your help minimum impact camping leaves backcountry sites looking clean and untouched.

TAKE YOUR TRASH OFF THE ISLAND. Do not burn or bury. A small island does not have space to harbor large amounts of trash.

ANIMALS: Raccoons frequently help themselves to campers' food. To prevent this, hang it in a sack suspended by rope from a tree limb. In summer mosquitoes are plentiful. On days of mild temperature, sand gnats or no-see-ums may also bite. Wind sometimes disperses insects and repellants help. Snakes are more frequently seen in warm weather. In the event of poisonous bite, victim should move as little as possible to prevent circulation of poison, while a companion goes for help. A victim alone should proceed without exertion to the main road or nearest residence for help. Check yourself for ticks (usual size and tiny "seed" ticks). A method which suffocates the tick is most apt to remove the whole animal and not leave the head still attached.

ALL of the park's historical, archeological, and natural resources are protected; antique and artifact hunting is not allowed; do not pick flowers or cut vegetation; feeding, capturing, or hunting wildlife is prohibited.

BEACH NESTING ANIMALS — loggerhead turtles and several kinds of shorebirds, mostly terns, will nest during spring and summer. Loggerheads, up to 400 pounds, drag themselves to foredunes to nest at night. From the time a turtle leaves the water until actual laying of eggs, they are easily spooked by lights and intruders. Never dig up the eggs. Nesting birds when disturbed will fly about overhead to drive away intruders. This leaves eggs and young chicks exposed to broiling sun and kills them, so keep a distance from nesting shorebirds.

USE only designated dune crossings. Please allow vegetation the opportunity to grow and prevent erosion.

HIGH HEAT AND HUMIDITY of summer days saps energy. Be reasonable in your hiking plans in such weather.

REMINDER: TOURBOAT LEAVES ISLAND AT 12:15 AND 4:45

COMMENTS ON SELECTED TRAILS AND ISLAND FEATURES

Note: A park trail system is being developed from pre-existing roads and trails. ONLY MAJOR TRAILS ARE SHOWN ON THIS MAP AND POSTED WITH SIGNS.

SOUTH POINT TRAIL — Rock jetties built in 1880's on both sides of St. Marys River channel. Following jetty inland you can see that the island has built up since time of construction. South end good birding site especially at high tide which brings birds in closer. General Oglethorpe's Fort Prince William constructed 1740. In 1742 Spanish attacked fort from the sea but were driven off by cannon fire. No vestiges remain of this fort or a lighthouse which operated on the south end from 1820-1838. Clamming on mudflats.

GRAND AVENUE, SEA CAMP TO PRATTS TRAIL — Saw palmetto, most common palm on island, has fan shaped leaves growing from underground prostrate trunk. Shrub size. Look at leaf stalk for "saws". Cabbage palm (or sabal palmetto) larger fan shaped leaves with thready filaments. Grows to tree size.

PRATTS TRAIL — good alternate to Grand Avenue. Passes by 20-year old loblolly pine plantation. Of 4 types of pine on the island, loblolly has shortest needles (6-9") and smallest cones (3-6"). Rapid grower; used in paper pulp.

STAFFORD — Stafford house built about 1900, one of 4 homes on the island for children of Thomas and Lucy Carnegie. Low tabby wall is all that remains of the earlier home of Robert Stafford, owner of 8000-acre plantation. Sea island cotton, rice, and indigo were grown on this island prior to 1860.

GRAND AVENUE, STAFFORD TO WILLOW POND — look for slash pine; needles in 2's and 3's, 8-12", newly fallen cones have varnished look, 2-6"; bark thin and papery on older trees. Note 42" diameter slash pine about 50 ft. south of Willow Pond trail on east side.

LAKE RETTA — has drainage outflow to ocean that sometimes becomes flooded by salt water, reducing aquatic plant growth in lake. This shallow (2 ft.) 34-acre brackish lake system is an excellent place to see large numbers of wading birds, alligators, turtles and during winter, many kinds of ducks.

YANKEE PARADISE TRAIL — location of artesian well (sulfur water); look for pipe on east side of trail; leave water flowing slightly.

GRAND AVENUE, WILLOW POND TO PLUM ORCHARD — resurrection fern growing in profusion on trees; shriveled and brown during dry weather, comes to life after a rain. Crossing the creek, notice the tannin stained water; look for alligators and birds.

PLUM ORCHARD — built for George Carnegie around 1900. This 20-room home with indoor swimming pool and squash court, now owned by the National Park Service, is scheduled for restoration and will be open for tours in the future. It is occupied by a park ranger for protection, and should be viewed from the front exterior only.

GRAND AVENUE, PLUM ORCHARD TO DUCKHOUSE TRAIL — longleaf pine has longest needles, 8-18", in bundles of 3, and biggest cones, 6-10", of the 4 pines found on island. An impressive tree, used in colonial times for masts and spars of sailing ships. Slash and longleaf now used in naval stores industry.

DUCKHOUSE TRAIL — the road and the "duckhouse" were associated with hunting activities of Carnegies and guests. Crosses part of the Sweetwater Lake. Note pond cypress tree; only grows several places on the island. Notice sawgrass marsh. Same species as is found in the Everglades; look closely at grass blade to see sharp saw edges. A *Spartina* meadow has third species of cordgrass; look for the other 2 species in the salt marsh, western side of the island. Sloughs closest to the duckhouse contain tiny floating duckweed in mats. Trees are red maples, willow and buttress-based blackgum (all lose leaves in fall).

TABLE POINT, KINGS BOTTOM — encompasses freshwater ponds, maritime forest and provides access into salt marsh; passes thru 300-acre fire which occurred summer, 1977, caused by lightning strike.

LOST ROAD TRAIL, ROLLER COASTER SOUTH — trails follows old dune ridges. You can look down into sloughs on both sides and see cordgrass, sawgrass, water willow, marsh mallow. River otter and mink frequent area.

ROLLER COASTER NORTH — various grape vines including muscadine dangle from trees. Spanish moss is plentiful; note inconspicuous flower in spring followed by small seed capsule; illustrates this is not a true moss, but a higher plant in the pineapple family. Does not harm trees.

WHITNEY LAKE — this shallow (3-8 ft.) 83-acre freshwater lake system is unique, largest of its kind on Georgia's barrier islands. Slow encroachment by vegetation and active sand dunes. American lotus and water spider orchid bloom profusely during summer. Good freshwater fishing (with state license).

TERRAPIN POINT — View of Cumberland Wharf, debarkation point for guests of the north end hotel (1870-1920). In fall, note yaupon trees decorated with red berries; holly family; used by Indians and settlers to make "black drink" and tea. Contains much caffeine.

MYSTERY — island named Wissoe (sassafras) by Indians; who has seen this plant here lately?