

[From Summer 2008]

Explore the Wild Side of Virginia's Eastern Shore

Looking to connect with wildlife on Virginia's Eastern Shore? Well, look no further!

On Thursday, June 12th, a two-panel kiosk highlighting the Eastern Shore Loop of the Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail and Chincoteague and Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuges was unveiled at the Virginia Welcome Center (New Church) on Route 13 South. The Welcome Center receives approximately 100,000 visits each year.

The Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail, managed by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries is the first of its kind in the U.S. The Trail links wildlife viewing sites throughout Virginia's 43,000 miles of diverse natural habitats through the Mountain, Piedmont, and Coastal Area trails. (Maps available at CNHA gift shops and online).

On the Coastal Area trail section, the Eastern Shore Loop connects wildlife viewing opportunities on the 70-mile long peninsula of the Shore. Highlighted on the map are the destinations of Chincoteague and Eastern Shore of VA National Wildlife Refuges where visitors can learn about and enjoy wildlife by observing the awesome spectacle of waterfowl and monarch migration, participating in a variety of wildlife-dependent activities, or simply by relaxing on a pristine and undeveloped barrier beach.

This multi-year project was made possible by the partnerships of the following federal and state agencies: Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF), Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), and Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program (CZM). Special thanks go to each individual involved in this project, particularly the Elderhostel volunteers and Carl Palmer who designed the kiosk, directed and assisted with its construction, roofing, and painting.

Virginia itself is home to 400 bird species, 250 species of fish, 150 species of animals including reptiles and amphibians, and a variety of other wildlife.

Head outside and check them out!

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