Field Trip Schedule and Details

NOTE: TIMES ARE FOR ACTUAL DEPARTURE. PLEASE BE AT YOUR VEHICLE IN TIME FOR CARPOOLSING. IF YOU ARE MEETING YOUR LEADER AT THE TRIP SITE, PLEASE LEAVE ADEQUATE TIME.

DO-IT-YOURSELF TRIPS TO TAKE ANYTIME THIS WEEKEND:

Greensprings Interpretive Trail - Self-guided. Sunrise to sunset

Distance from hotel - 9.3 miles
3751 John Tyler Highway, Williamsburg, VA 23185

Approximate travel time 15 minutes.

A favorite James City County trail, featuring two walking loops; the Main Loop, 2.1 miles, and Loop 2, 1.3 miles, on level gravel path and wooden boardwalk. Features include a 1000 foot boardwalk. The diverse habitat provides a broad range of species and can produce some surprises.

Habitat: Beaver ponds, mixed woodland, wetlands

Target Species: with over 200 species of documented birds, be on the lookout for wood warblers including Prothonotary, Yellow-throated, Black-and-white, Black-throated Blue, vireos including Blue-headed, Barred Owls, herons and egrets, tyrant flycatchers, Wood Ducks, Spotted Sandpipers, and the elusive American Bittern.

Logistics: Level gravel-based trail and wooden boardwalk. Port-a-john at parking lot at trailhead. Parking lot at trailhead behind Jamestown High School at the end of Eagle Way.
https://jamescitycountyva.gov/DocumentCenter/View/16839/Greensprings-Powhatan-Trails-Map-PDF

Bassett Trace Nature Trail - Self-guided, Sunrise to sunset
(Bassett Hall Nature Trail on eBird)

Distance from hotel - 1.5 miles
302 Francis Street E, Williamsburg, VA 23185

Approximate travel time 5 minutes.

A 2.8-mile sometimes hilly, out-and-back hike (1.4 miles one-way) close to the heart of Colonial Williamsburg. A great example of the local ridge and ravine topography with elevation changes, some short steep slopes with stairs in place on the steepest areas. One of the prettiest walks in Williamsburg.

Habitat: Mixed deciduous forest, bottom land, fresh water ponds, small stream crossed by wooden bridges.

Logistics: Out-and-back mulched trail with changes in terrain, some steep slopes. Stairs and wooden stream crossing. A more demanding trail than others. Facilities in the clubhouse of the Green Course, 1.4 miles from parking lot at beginning of trail. Parking lot at trail head beside Griffin Hotel.

www.colonialwilliamsburg.com/-/media/files/cwf/pdf/pdf-misc/bassett_hall_nature_trail_map.ashx

Freedom Park - Self-guided, open 7:00 am to sunset

Distance from hotel - 9 miles
5537 Centerville Road, Williamsburg, VA 23188

Approximate travel time 20 minutes.

This James City County Park includes 600 acres of mixed deciduous forest with 2 miles of multi-use trails and a 1-mile paved ADA accessible trail through forest, open meadow, and down to a creek. A highlight is the Williamsburg Botanical Garden located in the park and open to the public during park hours. The Interpretive Center features exhibits of the history of the park which dates back to the 1650’s. An interactive kiosk provides extensive information about the park wildlife and history.

Habitat: Open fields, mixed deciduous/pine forest, swamp, creek, Botanical Garden.

Target Species: Veery, Black-and-white Warbler, vireos, Ovenbird, Wood Thrush, Swainson’s Thrush, Blue Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, tanagers.

Logistics: 1-mile paved trail (one way). Historical Site with interpretive structures and displays. Williamsburg Botanical Garden, free and open during park hours. Facilities inside the Interpretive Center when open, and outside available when Center is closed. Ample parking.


FRIDAY, May 1, 2020

Trip 1: Newport News Park

Limit 20, Distance from hotel - 11 miles
13560 Jefferson Avenue, Newport News, VA 23603

Friday 1:15 pm departure. Anticipated trip starting time 1:30 pm.

This 7,711 acre municipal park surrounds two reservoirs with 7 trails and over 200 species of birds documented in the park. This is a favorite spot among local birders and is the locale for regular bird walks led by the Hampton Roads Bird Club.

Habitat: Mixed woodlands, swamp, marshes, reservoir.

Target Species: over 20 species of wood warblers, including Magnolia, Prothonotary, Louisiana Waterthrush, Black-throated Green. Thrushes including Swainson’s and Gray-cheeked, vireos, flycatchers, and possible rails, sandpipers, lingering ducks.

Logistics: Easy walking on level paths, up to 3 miles. Facilities at the Park
Trip 2: Powhatan Creek Trail

Limit 20, Distance from hotel - 8 miles
3131 Ironbound Road, Clara Byrd Baker School Parking Lot, Williamsburg, VA 23185

Friday 1:30 pm departure. Anticipated trip starting time 1:45 pm.

A James City County trail on a 2-mile paved path featuring a 696-foot timber bridge over Powhatan Creek and associated wetlands. Birders love to linger on the bridge and have been rewarded with good looks at many breeding birds as well as spring and fall migrants.

Habitat: Large mature woodland, freshwater Powhatan Creek, wetlands. Includes 7 Prothonotary Warbler nest boxes monitored by Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory, visible from the timber bridge.

Target Species: Prothonotary Warblers along with 14 other wood warbler species, Summer and Scarlet Tanagers, Blue Grosbeak, Orchard and Baltimore Oriole, Swainson's and Wood thrush, Red-headed Woodpeckers, vireos, flycatchers.

Logistics: Easy walking on mostly level paths, up to 3 miles. Parking lot at back of Clara Byrd Baker School. No facilities.

SATURDAY, May 2, 2020

Special Purchase Trip - Discover the James with Captain Mike Ostrander
First Departure
Limit 6, Distance from hotel - 45 miles
Deep Bottom Landing, 9525 Deep Bottom Road, Henrico, VA 23132

Saturday 6:00 am departure. Anticipated trip starting time 7:00 am.

Cost: $60/person, TIP OPTIONAL BUT RECOMMENDED. If trip is cancelled due to weather, you will receive a refund.

Upon arrival at Deep Bottom Landing, you will park and walk down to the dock on the James River. Captain Mike will be waiting in a pontoon boat that holds 6 guests. His goal is to show you the nesting and hunting habits of the larger birds in the area, with special emphasis on Bald Eagles, Great Blue Herons, and Osprey. He will point out nests and explain behaviors of the the birds seen. This trip is a birder's and photographer's dream.

At the conclusion of the two-hour tour, you will be met by a member of the VSO who will walk you down a short path filled with smaller birds, especially the Prothonotary Warblers who nest along the river.

Habitat: Large mature woodland, James River and surrounding wetlands, including Prothonotary Warbler nesting boxes maintained by Virginia Commonwealth University's Center for Environmental Studies.

Target Species: Prothonotary Warblers along the river; Bald Eagles, Osprey, and Great Blue Herons on the river.

Logistics: Gentle boat ride followed by easy walking on mostly level dirt paths for about 1/4 mile. Bathroom facilities are available at the landing but not on the boat.

Special Purchase Trip - Discover the James with Captain Mike Ostrander - see above
Second Departure

Saturday 8:30 am departure. Anticipated trip starting time 9:30 am.
**Trip 3: Piney Grove Preserve**

Limit 12, Distance from hotel - 35 miles
Meet leader Chance Hines on ferry. Jamestown-Scotland Ferry Landing, 2110 Jamestown Road, Williamsburg, VA 23185

Saturday 4:15 am departure for 5:00 am ferry. Anticipated trip starting time 6:00 am.

This Nature Conservancy property is known as the home to one of Virginia's last breeding populations of the US Listed-as-endangered, Red-cockaded Woodpecker (RCW). The Nature Conservancy is working to protect and restore both loblolly and long leaf pines, a requirement for the successful breeding of the RCW's. These birds live in social family groups and utilize mature living trees with soft heartwood for cavities. This trip will be led by Chance Hines, Research Biologist with the William and Mary Center for Conservation Biology, who will provide special access to see these exceptional birds.

**Habitat:** Pine-savannah.

**Target Species:** Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Red-headed Woodpecker, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Northern Bobwhite, Yellow-breasted Chat.

**Logistics:** This trip includes a 20-minute free ferry across the James River. We will meet our leader Chance Hines, on the ferry. Restrooms are available on the ferry.

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**Trip 4: Grandview Nature Preserve**

Limit 20, Distance from hotel - 33 miles
87 State Park Drive, Hampton, VA 23664

Saturday 6:00 am departure. Anticipated trip starting time 6:45 am.

The Preserve operated by the City of Hampton, covers over 475 acres of salt marsh, tidal creeks, and Chesapeake Bay beachfront. The path from the parking area to the beach is a half mile in length. The beach extends 3 miles north to Factory Point. 228 species have been recorded on eBird over the years.

**Habitat:** Salt and fresh water marshlands and extensive beach and dune habitat.

**Target Species:** Shorebirds, terns, and gulls. Marsh and Sedge Wrens, rails and woodland birds along the path to the beach and behind the dunes. Northern Harrier, Osprey, and Bald Eagles.

**Logistics:** Parking is on the right side of State Park Drive. Level terrain. Path to beach is gravel. Walking distance on beach will depend on birds but will be approximately 1 mile (one way). There are no facilities in the Preserve.

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**Trip 5: Hog Island Wildlife Management Area**

Limit 12, Distance from hotel - 28 miles
5570 Hog Island Road, Surry, VA 23883

Saturday 6:15 am departure for 7:00 am ferry. Anticipated trip starting time 8:00 am.

**PARTICIPANTS MUST GO THROUGH A SECURITY CHECK AT THE DOMINION POWER STATION CHECK POINT. VEHICLES WILL BE SEARCHED. A VALID PHOTO ID IS REQUIRED.**

Hog Island is a peninsula in the James River. As a Wildlife Management Area it supports an array of habitats from tidal marsh, agricultural fields, freshwater impoundments (managed for wildlife), loblolly
and mixed deciduous forest. Enjoy the ferry ride and watch for gulls, terns, Osprey, Bald Eagles, cormorants, lingering ducks.

**Habitat:** A wide range of habitats make this a favorite local destination. Tidal marshes, impoundments, agricultural fields, woodland all offer a host of species.

**Target Species:** Over 35 species of shorebirds have been recorded. Shorebirds include Semipalmated, Least, Spotted, Solitary Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher. Be on the lookout for surprises. Raptors, ibis, Least Bittern, terns, flycatchers, vireos, martins and swallows, and 15+ species of wood-warblers as well as tanagers, grosbeaks, meadowlarks, orioles.

**Logistics:** This trip will involve stopping at various places along the gravel road on the Island as well as short walks on level gravel and/or dirt paths. Facilities on the ferry (recommended) and at the Dominion Power checkpoint Visitor Center.

***INSECT REPELLENT STRONGLY RECOMMENDED.***

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**Trip 6: Great Dismal Swamp - Jericho Ditch**

Limit 20, Distance from hotel - 56 miles
1330 White Marsh Road, Suffolk, VA 23434

Saturday 6:15 am departure. Anticipated trip starting time 7:15 am.

Covering over 110,000 acres the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge includes canals, ponds, lakes, forested wetlands, marshy edges, and mid-story shrubs. A system of trails and roads, mostly level, allow for extensive exploration of this unique location. Drainage ditches that date back to survey by George Washington provide a framework for many of the roads and trails. Lake Drummond in the middle of the Swamp is one of only two natural lakes in Virginia. Over 200 species of birds have been recorded in the Swamp.

**Habitat:** Forested wetlands, canals, ponds, evergreen shrubs, marshy borders, lakes, areas regenerating after fire.

**Target Species:** In May, warblers are a main attraction. The elusive Swainson’s Warbler breeds in the Dismal Swamp and while tricky to see, it’s distinctive “whee whee whee whip-poor-will” is often one of the first birds you’ll hear. Also watch for Prothonotary, Black-throated Green, Prairie, Black-and-White, Yellow-throated, Hooded, Louisiana Waterthrush, and many more among the more than 35 species of warbler recorded in the Swamp. Keep your eyes open for bear.

**Logistics:** Latrine-style facilities are available at the parking lot of Jericho Ditch. Trails are flat, grassy, easy footing. Expect to walk 2+ miles. INSECT REPELLENT IS A MUST IN THIS LOCATION.

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**Trip 7: Cheatham Annex**

Limit 15, Distance from hotel - 6 miles
200 Sanda Avenue, Williamsburg, VA 23185

Saturday 6:30 am departure. Anticipated trip starting time 6:45 am.

TRIP PARTICIPANTS MUST TRAVEL IN A CARAVAN TO GAIN ADMITTANCE ONTO THIS BASE.

Cheatham Annex is a logistics supply Navy base located near Williamsburg. A diverse habitat of fresh water ponds and mixed deciduous/pine trees bordering the York River typically supports 75-80 species during May. A special treat to have access to this location.

**Habitat:** Mixed deciduous/pine woods, fresh water ponds, views of the York River.

**Target Species:** A great location for spring migrants, look for 12-14 warbler species including Kentucky, 5 woodpecker species, tanagers, flycatchers, vireos, and a Great Blue/Great Egret rookery.
Logistics: A two-mile loop trail through the varied habitats of this Navy base. Restroom facilities available.

Trip 8: Jamestown Island - Colonial National Historical Park

Limit 15, Distance from hotel - 12 miles
1368 Colonial Parkway, Jamestown, VA 23081

Saturday 6:30 am departure. Anticipated trip starting time 7:00 am.

Jamestown Island, a favorite among local birders, is a low-lying island jutting into the James River. The Island has a 5-mile loop road with pull-offs providing many birding opportunities as well as historical markers. Well known for the local population of Red-headed Woodpeckers and Brown-headed Nuthatches the Island has over 125 species recorded in the month of May.

Habitat: Open Mixed-deciduous woods, interior marsh, tidal salt marsh, riverside.

Target Species: In addition to Red-headed Woodpecker and Brown-headed Nuthatches, watch for Bald Eagles, Osprey, owls, flycatchers, vireos, grosbeaks, tanagers and 20 species of wood-warblers.

Logistics: Short walks on paved surface or dirt trail (to Black Point). Restrooms available at Glasshouse Parking Lot early. Visitor Center with facilities opens at 9:00. Consider staying to visit the Historic site after birding. Note: The historic site is a National Park Service fee area.

Trip 9: Chippokes Plantation State Park

Limit 15, Distance from hotel - 17 miles
695 Chippokes Park Road, Surry, VA 23883

Saturday 6:45 am departure for 7:30 ferry. Anticipated trip starting time 8:00 am.

State Park admission: $7.00/car entrance fee or State Park pass. This park is unique for being one of the oldest continually farmed plantations in the country. In addition to active agricultural land it includes an antebellum mansion, outbuildings and walking trails, with wide-ranging habitats.

Habitat: This park of over 1600 acres includes a wide range of habitats from dense woodland, to tidal marsh, bald cypress swamp, open fields, river frontage and cultivated fields.

Target Species: With the wide range of habitats expect to see everything from meadowlarks and bluebirds to migrating shorebirds and raptors. Spotted Sandpiper, Grasshopper Sparrow, 20 species of warblers, tanagers, Blue Grosbeaks, Orchard Orioles, vireos and flycatchers.

Logistics: Facilities are available on the ferry as well as at the Park Visitor Center. Multiple trails provide easy access to all locations of the Park. Trails are relatively flat.

Trip 10: “Urban Birding” in Newport News

Limit 15, Distance from hotel - 30 miles
50 23rd Street, Newport News, VA 23607

Saturday 6:45 am departure. Anticipated trip starting time 7:30 am.

Starting at Victory Landing Park, a tour of some of the best green-space locations in Newport News. Victory Landing is located along the James River and is close to the Victory Arch. This location is ADA accessible. Adjacent to this park is the Christopher Newport Park.

Habitat: Within the city of Newport News these parks include rows of large mature deciduous trees, hedgerows, and open lawn that provide cover for migrating songbirds. River frontage on the James.
**Target Species:** The food and cover provided by the large shade trees and hedgerows are popular with migrating warblers as well as Wood Thrush, Swainson’s Thrush, Baltimore Oriole, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher. Watch for Royal Terns over the river.

**Logistics:** This will be easy walking on mostly paved surfaces.

**Trip 11: Newport News Park - see Trip 1 above.**

Saturday 7:00 am departure. Anticipated trip starting time 7:15 am.

**Trip 12: Sandy Bottom Nature Park**

Limit 15, Distance from hotel - 22 miles
1255 Big Bethel Road, Hampton, VA 23666

Saturday 7:00 am departure. Anticipated trip starting time 7:30 am.

A great natural park of 450 acres with mixed habitats that offers an array of breeding ground as well as resting space for over 120 species recorded in the month of May. Viewing platforms offer good looks at waterfowl and shorebirds.

**Habitat:** Forest, wooded and marshy wetlands, open water, excellent sparrow habitat. Meadow.

**Target Species:** Shorebirds including Least Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, yellowlegs, Pectoral Sandpiper, herons, egrets, ibis, vireos, thrushes, tanagers, grosbeaks, and over 20 species of wood warblers including Black-throated Green, Prothonotary, Magnolia, Prairie. Marsh and House Wrens, Cedar Waxwing.

**Logistics:** Facilities available in park Visitor Center. Trails are level, gravel or dirt. 2-mile loop.

**Trip 13: Powhatan Creek Trail - see Trip 2 above.**

Saturday 7:15 departure. Anticipated trip starting time 7:30 am.

**Trip 14: York River State Park**

Limit 20, Distance from hotel - 13 miles
9801 York River Park Road, Williamsburg, VA 23188

Saturday 7:30 am departure. Anticipated trip starting time 8:00 am.

Star Park admission: $5.00/car entrance fee or State Park Pass. This state park of over 2500 acres is a local birding favorite. Situated on the York River and including Taskinas Creek it provides an estuarine habitat as well as the signature ridge and ravine topography of the area. Park hours: 8:00-dusk.

**Habitat:** Estuary, York River, mature upland forest, pond, tidal marsh, brackish inlets, open lawn.

**Target Species:** With such diversity of habitat, bird species run the gamut from 20 species of warblers to Wood Ducks, Red-headed Woodpeckers, Wild Turkey, Blue-headed Vireo, Purple Martin, Brown-headed Nuthatch, tanagers, thrushes, and grosbeaks.

**Logistics:** Facilities available at Visitor Center. Trails are easy-walking gravel or sandy base.
Trip 15: New Quarter Park
Limit 20, Distance from hotel - 4.9 miles
1000 Lakeshead Drive, Williamsburg, VA 23185

Saturday 8:00 am departure. Anticipated trip starting time 8:15 am.

A favorite York County park and home to regular bird walks sponsored by Williamsburg Bird Club. Trails will take you through mature woodland, open meadows, a floating dock on Queens Creek, tidal marshes and views out to the York River. Kentucky Warblers have been recent breeders along the trail to the Point.

Habitat: mature woodland, meadows, tidal Queens Creek observed from floating dock, extensive tidal marsh, great example of the York River ridge and ravine topography.

Target Species: Migrating and breeding warblers including Kentucky, Ovenbird, Louisiana Waterthrush, Black-and-white, Common Yellowthroat, Hooded Warbler, American Redstart, flycatchers including Acadian, Great Crested, Eastern Kingbird, vireos, thrushes, Clapper Rails, Spotted Sandpipers, nesting Osprey, Bald Eagles, woodpeckers including Red-headed.

Logistics: well-maintained gravel trails, with some elevation changes, including a short but steep trail to/from the floating dock. Parking lot with restroom facilities.

SUNDAY, May 3, 2020

Trip 16: Grandview Nature Preserve - see Trip 4 above.
Sunday 6:00 am departure. Anticipated trip starting time 6:45 am.

Trip 17: Hog Island Wildlife Management Area - see Trip 5 above.
Sunday 6:15 am departure for 7:00 am ferry. Anticipated trip starting time 8:00 am.

Trip 18: Great Dismal Swamp - see Trip 6 above.
Sunday 6:15 am departure. Anticipated trip starting time 7:15 am.

Trip 19: Cheatham Annex - see Trip 7 above.
Sunday 6:30 am departure. Anticipated trip starting time 6:45 am.

Trip 20: Jamestown Island - see Trip 8 above.
Sunday 6:30 am departure. Anticipated trip starting time 7:00 am.

Trip 21: Chippokes Plantation State Park - see Trip 9 above.
Sunday 6:45 am departure for 7:30 am ferry. Anticipated trip starting time 8:00 am.

Trip 22: “Urban Birding” - see Trip 10 above.
Sunday 6:45 am departure. Anticipated trip starting time 7:30 am.

Trip 23: Newport News Park - see Trip 1 above.
Sunday 7:00 am departure. Anticipated trip starting time 7:15 am.
Trip 24: Sandy Bottom Nature Park - see Trip 12 above.
Sunday 7:00 am departure. Anticipated trip starting time 7:30 am.

Trip 25: Powhatan Creek Trail - see Trip 2 above.
Sunday 7:15 departure. Anticipated trip starting time 7:30.

Trip 26: York River State Park - see Trip 14 above.
Sunday 7:30 departure. Anticipated trip starting time 8:00 am.

Trip 27: New Quarter Park - see Trip 15 above.
Sunday 8:30 departure. Anticipated trip starting time 8:45 am.

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SPECIAL FEATURE TRIP" DRAWING******************************************************************************

“Birding William and Mary” with William and Mary Chancellor Professor Dan Cristol
Sunday 7:00 am departure.
This will be a limited-size feature opportunity for 10 lucky birders to travel with local William and Mary
bird-whisperer Dr. Dan Cristol to some of his favorite spots on the historical and beautiful campus of the
College of William and Mary. Dan will chauffeur you in the William and Mary van as well as walk you
along some of William and Mary’s best birding paths. With his sharp eyes and ears, expect the
unexpected (e.g. Limpkin in Williamsburg!!) Likely species include Wood Duck, Veery, Swainson’s
Thrush, Acadian and Great-crested Flycatchers, warblers including Ovenbird, Black-throated Blue,
Black-and-White, Yellow-throated, Louisiana Waterthrush, Prothonotary, and any migrant is possible at
this time of year! Solitary and Spotted Sandpipers, Greater Yellowlegs, are possible at Lake Matoaka.
The 10 spots will be filled by special raffle drawing Friday night.