

Tips for the Trail

Myrtle Beach State Park strives to preserve and maintain the Maritime Forest habitat. These tips are designed to protect you along with this unique and beautiful habitat.

***Stay on marked trails.** Wandering off the trail will disturb and destroy parts of the habitat you came to enjoy.

***Respect the environment** by admiring leaves, berries, and especially flowers. Myrtle Beach State Park has over 1.2 million visitors a year. If each visitor picked a flower, there would be none left for others to enjoy.

***Respect the needs of wildlife** for an undisturbed territory. Don't chase animals or throw stones at animals.

***Protect your dog! Use that leash!** Your pet wandering off the trail can disturb native wildlife or pose a danger to your beloved pet (poison ivy, snakes, etc).

***Do not litter.** If you see litter, please pick it up and dispose of it properly.

***For your personal safety, wear closed toed shoes.** Many unexpected issues may arise such as exposed roots, snakes, poison ivy, etc. along the trail.

***Have a plan!** Let someone know when you are heading out on the trail and what time they should expect you to return.

***Resist the temptation to feed wildlife.** Feeding wildlife can alter their feeding habits, migration, and reproduction levels which result in unnatural behaviors.



Atamasco



Poison Ivy



Copperhead

Please wear closed toed shoes on the trail and carry a flashlight when walking the park grounds at night.

Myrtle Beach State Park- Maritime Forest Adventure

Scavenger Hunt– 1 Hour and 15 minutes/ 1.3 miles/ 2.1 km

Most of the answers to the following numbered questions can be found on educational waysides and signs throughout the park. Use the numbers on the map to guide you to the answers for the corresponding numbered question.

***Start– Park in the Nature Center Parking Lot and cross the road to the Sculptured Oak Nature Trail**

1. Why is the maritime forest important? _____

**Take a stroll on the Sculptured Oak Nature Trail*

2. Why should you keep your pet on a leash? _____

**Look for a green topped post on the right side of the trail. Look at the holes in the tree behind it.*

A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (a type of woodpecker) made these very precise holes!

As you stroll along the trail, look on the ground for small red berries (June- winter months) or small white flowers (May- June). **Did you see the flowers or the berries?* _____

These are Partidgeberries. Native Americans used to make a tea from the leaves.

**Go over the small bridge and at the intersection turn left to follow the Oak trail signs (orange). Don't head to the pond just yet!*

3. How are the seeds of a Witch Hazel seed pod dispersed? _____

4. Yaupon Holly trees create the understory of the maritime forest. Once leaves are dried, what do they contain? _____

**Continue to follow the Oak trail signs.*

5. How large do Southern Magnolia trees grow? _____

**At the intersection, turn left & continue following the Oak trail signs (orange). Find a bench and enjoy!*

6. Sit quietly and write an observation of something you hear. _____

7. What is the Red Cedar's fragrant wood used for? _____

8. Observe the soil as you walk along the trail. Why does the soil become sandier? (Remember you are in a maritime forest) _____

**Exit the trail and head towards the nature trail kiosk.*

9. What slow-growing, salt-tolerant, evergreen plants dominate the edge of the maritime forest?

**Turn right onto the road. Follow the road until you see the Yaupon Nature Trailhead sign on the right before Shelter B6. Watch out for cars!*

10. What was the Live Oak's wood used for? (Notice the shape of the limbs) _____

**Sit on the first bench you see. Notice the graceful shape of the live oak behind the bench.*

11. Sit on the bench quietly and write down how many different colors you observe.

12. What does "loblolly" mean? Observe what the bark looks like for a future question. _____

13. Look at the bark of the American Holly– how many different colors do you observe?

_____ *These colors are from different lichens.*

14. How many species of animals, insects, & birds may live together on a White Oak tree? _____

15. What is the Red Maple tree named for? _____ **Look up at the tree, what red do you see on the tree?** _____

**At the intersection, turn left and continue to follow the Yaupon trail signs (red).*

16. What shape are Sweetgum Tree leaves? _____

17. What is the Tulip Poplar named for? _____

**At the intersection, turn left and follow the Oak trail signs (orange).*

18. Look for a large Loblolly Pine tree on the left hand side just past the bench. Have you hugged a tree today? Well, now is your chance to share your love for nature! Hug the Loblolly tree! Can you guess how old this tree is? _____

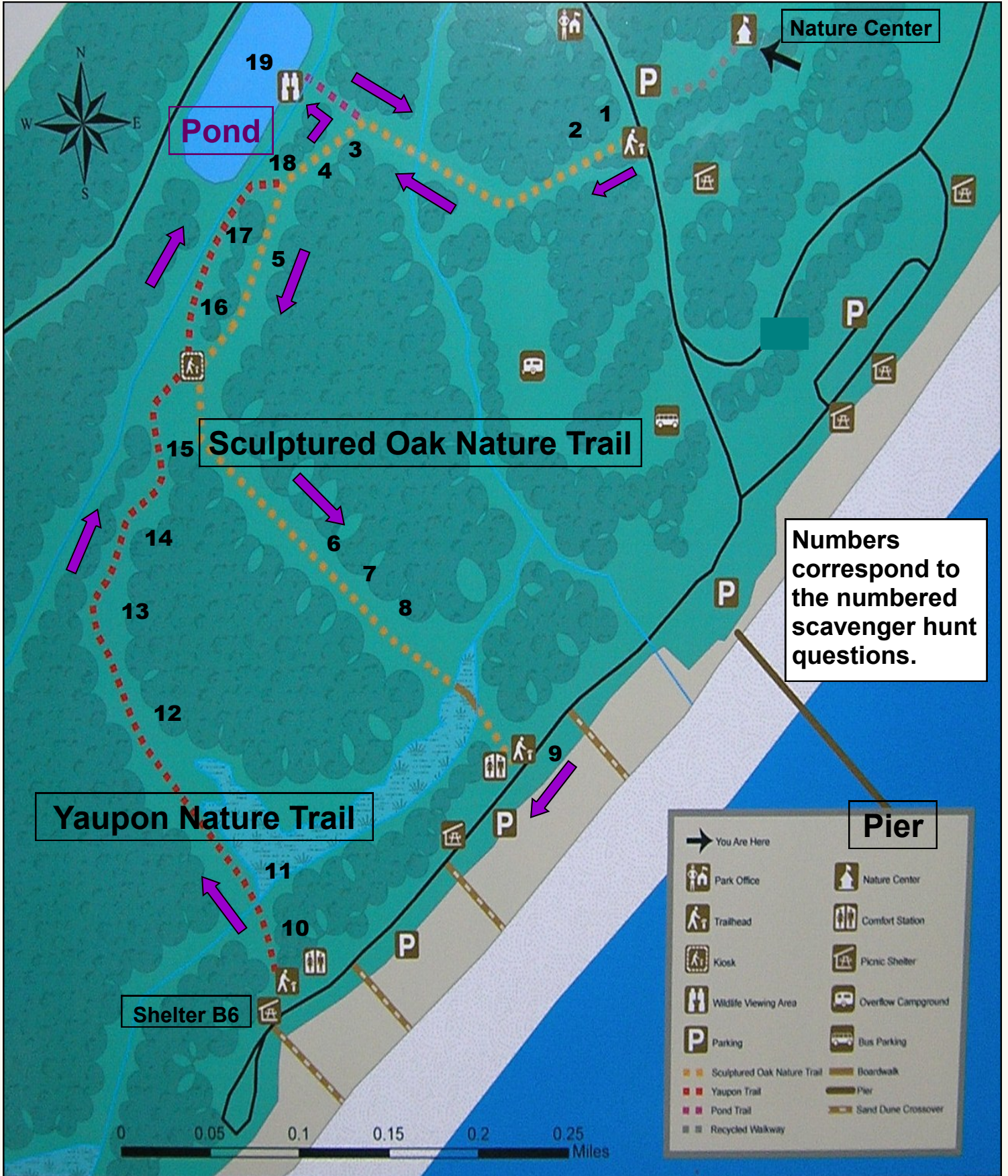
**At the next intersection, turn left and head straight towards the pond– 180 feet. Walk onto the deck.*

19. Write two observations you see or hear. _____

**Retrace your steps back to the trail. Continue on the trail straight ahead towards the parking lot.*

***END**

Myrtle Beach State Park Maritime Forest Adventure



Myrtle Beach State Park– Maritime Forest Adventure Scavenger Hunt Answers

Use this information to check your answers from the self led scavenger hunt.

1. The maritime forest at Myrtle Beach State Park is important because countless animals live their entire lives in this small green oasis, while other species rely on it as a safe rest stop during long migrations. Plants also find refuge here, providing food for wildlife and filtering pollutants from our air and water. Walking the nature trail gives you the last remaining glimpse of this habitat that once blanketed the entire coastline!



2. Pets should be kept on a leash because the maritime forest is a wildlife preservation and observation area. Please be aware of the disturbances caused to both humans and wildlife by unruly dogs.



Look at the holes in the tree. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (a type of woodpecker) made these very precise holes!

Walking along the trail, you will commonly see small white flowers (May-June) or red berries (June– winter months). These belong to the plant Partidgeberry.



3. The seeds of the Witch Hazel tree are dispersed by shooting out of their pods as far as 30 feet!!



4. Yaupon Holly trees create the understory of the maritime forest. Young dried leaves contain caffeine! From October through March, these trees have beautiful red berries which attract many birds.



Yaupon Holly leaves and berries

5. Southern Magnolia trees reach 60 to 80 feet in height, with a trunk up to 5 feet in diameter.



Magnolia flower

The fragrant white flowers bloom from May to June.



Magnolia leaves

6. Answers may vary! Birds, ocean, wind, airplanes, leaves rustling, squirrels, people, cars, etc.

7. Red Cedar's fragrant wood is used for pencils, chests, wooden pails, fence posts, and much more.

8. Walking along the trail, you may observe the soil begins to become sandier and sandier the closer you get to the beach.

9. The plants of the maritime forest are adapted to the harsh and demanding environment of the coast. The forest edge is dominated by slow-growing and salt-tolerant evergreen plants such as live oaks, yaupon hollies, and southern red cedars.



10. Live oaks have a distinct spreading appearance and were formerly used in ship building because of their large size and great strength.



11. Answers may vary! Rust, black, moss, brown, dark green, light green, tan, blue, white, red, etc.

12. One of the meanings of “loblolly” is mud puddle, where the Loblolly Pine trees often grow.

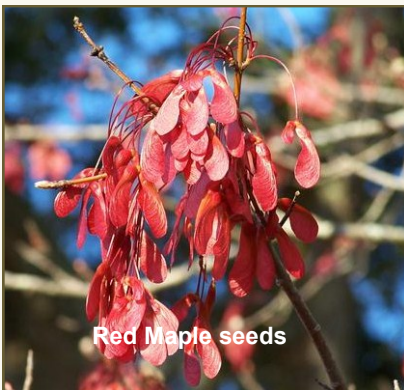
American Holly bark



13. Answers may vary: red, tan, light brown, dark brown, green,

14. In a mature White Oak tree, over 200 species of animals, insects, and birds may live together. It can grow up to 100 feet tall.

15. Red Maples are named for the brilliant red color of the stems, flowers, and autumn leaves.



Red Maple seeds



Red Maple flowers

16. Sweetgum leaves are in the distinct shape of a star.



17. Tulip Poplars are tall straight trees named for their spring flowers which resemble tulips or lilies.



18. Hope you enjoyed hugging the tree! As of March 2011, this Loblolly Pine was estimated to be at least 85 years old. Myrtle Beach State Park opened on July 1, 1936. Without the protection of this land through state parks, who knows if this tree would still be growing today!



19. Answers may vary: birds, bees, dragonflies, butterflies, ducks, snakes, frogs, lizards, and many more.

Thank you for adventuring through the Maritime Forest and enjoying Myrtle Beach State Park. Always remember to respect wildlife and keep the forests clean from litter!