

## ***Piankatank River Trail***

11.8 to 18.5 miles



This trail borders the northern part of Mathews County and extends from the Gloucester/Mathews County line east to Queens Creek. Throughout its length, Mathews County occupies the south bank of the river and Middlesex County the north bank. The river varies in width between ½ mile at the Twigg Bridge (Rt. 3) to about 2 miles near its mouth. The Middlesex/Mathews County line runs generally in the middle of the river. Most of the trail is open water. Wave action in the river can be substantial if it's blowing hard, especially below Ginney Point.

There are five nice creeks for exploration - Wilton, Cobbs, Healy, Chapel, and Queens Creeks.

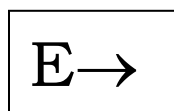
There is much bird life here, as there is on all of the trails. Of special note are the many osprey, great blue herons, and the ever more frequently seen bald eagle.

***It is important that you read the Guide sections "Notes of Caution" and "Using the Guide" before using this trail guide.***



### **PADDLING WEST TO EAST**

#### **Section 1: County line to Ginney Point - 3.5 to 5.4 miles**



This section of the river is all open river with only one side creek to explore - Wilton Creek on the Middlesex side. While it is open to the winds, conditions can be less

severe in windy weather than in the river below Ginney Point. The Mathews shore is pleasant with occasional small sand beaches and swales alternating with stretches of high bluffs. A short distance downriver from the county line, one encounters the Twigg Bridge connecting Mathews and Middlesex Counties. Just below the bridge on the south bank is the beautiful 18<sup>th</sup> century estate of *Providence*.

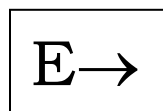
There are a couple of attractions on the Middlesex side of the River. Berkeley Island is in Stampers Bay at the county line above the bridge. There is currently a sign that requires you to contact the owners for permission prior to visiting the island. A phone number is on the sign. Wilton Creek, just below the bridge on the Middlesex side, is lovely and stretches for more than a mile.

#### Launching points:

- #1 - Stampers Bay Wharf
- #2 - Twigg Ferry Landing

#### **Section 2: Ginney Point to Iron Point - 2.8 to 5.2 miles**

NOTE: There are, surprisingly, two Iron Points on the NOAA chart of this trail, and both are on the south bank of the Piankatank. One is upriver of Ginney Point, the other downriver of it. All references to Iron Point in this trail's text refer to the downriver Iron Point.



This section of river starts with a nice side trip up Cobbs Creek. The entrance to Cobbs Creek is just downriver from Ginney

Point. On the right as you enter the creek is a cove with Ginney Point Marina. Further up the creek, one can explore a succession of small coves in peaceful surroundings. The creek is well-sheltered from the winds that can sometimes blow hard on the open river. The dwellings are well-spaced and tastefully done along its whole extent. It is about one mile in length, not including coves.

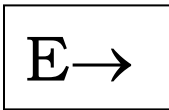
Below Cobbs Creek, Pond Point can be seen with its crescent sand beach and beyond that, Roane Point stands out prominently with a large white Victorian house set on it.

The banks are a succession of bluffs and swales with no coves or creeks, except for the small Warehouse Cove just short of Iron Point. The River is not yet too wide for a detour to the Middlesex side and a paddle up Healy Creek, another of the beautiful creeks of the area.

Launching points:

#3 - Ginney Point Marina  
#3A - Roane Point

**Section 3: Iron Point to the mouth of Queens Creek - 3.9 to 4.9 miles**



(See the NOTE in Section 2 of this trail about Iron Point.). After rounding Iron Point, you enter Godfrey Bay, which is bordered by relatively lower land than upriver. The water depths are shallow for a distance from the shore, which is both good and bad. Wave action in shallow water is amplified, but if you tip over, you will probably be in water that allows you to walk to shore and empty your boat.

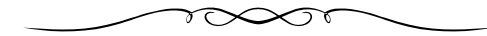
About ½ mile above the Piankatank River Landing is the entrance to Chapel Creek. It is easily identified by two stone jetties about

100 yards in length that form a channel for its entrance. The creek is small but lovely.

Godfrey Bay ends as you round the headland at Burton Point and enter Hills Bay and the approach to Milford Haven. Gwynns Island appears ahead, and the entrance to Queens Creek appears on the right (west) about one mile past Burton Point.

Launching points:

#4 - Piankatank River Landing



**PADDLING EITHER DIRECTION**

**Queens Creek - 2.1 miles**

Queens Creek extends in an east-west direction. It can be entered from the southern tip of Hills Bay opposite the narrowest point between Gwynns Island and the mainland. This is a well-sheltered paddle suitable for bad or windy weather. There are many homes lining the banks, and several little side creeks and coves that are fun to explore. The creek carries good depth its entire length. It ends close to Rt. 198 near its junction with Rt. 626.

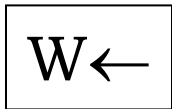
Launching points:

#5 - Roses Creek Landing  
#6 - Milford Haven Landing

  
**PADDLING EAST TO WEST**

**Section 3: The mouth of Queens Creek to Iron Point** - 3.9 to 4.9 miles

(See the NOTE in Section 2 of this trail about Iron Point.)



Godfrey Bay starts as you round the headland at Burton Point after leaving the mouth of Queens Creek and paddle northwest along the shore. Burton Point is about 1 mile from Queens Creek.

About 1 mile past Burton Point on the left (west) is the entrance to Chapel Creek. It is easily identified by two stone jetties about 100 yards in length which form a channel for its entrance. The creek is small but lovely.

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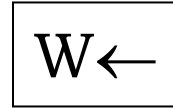
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The banks in this section are a succession of bluffs and swales with no coves or creeks, except for the small Warehouse Cove just after Iron Point. The River is not yet too wide for a detour to the Middlesex side and a paddle up Healy Creek, another of the beautiful creeks of the area.



Above Iron Point, Roane Point stands out prominently with a large white Victorian house set on it. Beyond that, wooded Pond Point can be seen with its crescent sand beach upriver of the point.

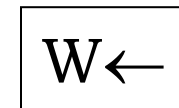
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**Section 1: Ginney Point to County line** - 3.5 to 5.4 miles



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and swales alternating with stretches of high bluffs. In a bit over a mile past Ginney Point, one encounters the Twigg Bridge connecting Mathews and Middlesex Counties. Just below the bridge on the south bank is the beautiful 18<sup>th</sup> century estate of *Providence*.

There are a couple of attractions on the Middlesex side of the River. Wilton Creek, just below the bridge on the Middlesex side, is lovely and stretches for more than a mile. Berkeley Island is in Stampers Bay at the county line above the bridge. There is currently a sign that requires you to contact the owners for permission prior to visiting the island. A phone number is on the sign.

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- #2 - Twigg Ferry Landing

Local Tidbits

- A *waterman* is a Chesapeake Bay commercial fisherman, including crabbers, eelers, etc.
- The term *neck* is used locally as a synonym for *peninsula*.
- Mathews County has only 87 square miles of land, but over 200 miles of shoreline.
- A *deadrise* is the name of the type of local commercial fishing boats that you see throughout the area. It takes its name from the V shape of its hull underwater.
- The NOAA charts use no apostrophe for possessive; White's Creek, for example, is shown on the chart as Whites Creek. We have adopted that form throughout the Guide.
- Gwynns Island appears on the chart as Gwynn Island. The former is used locally.