

Maritime Hammock Sanctuary Trail Map



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Description:

The 150-acre Sanctuary contains coastal strand, maritime hammock, and mangrove forest. The Sanctuary rolls over ancient sand dunes from the Atlantic Ocean to the Indian River Lagoon. A portion of this sanctuary near the entrance was once an exotic plant nursery. Some of the non-native plants that were grown at the nursery, such as weedilia and boston fern, have escaped into the hammock. An intensive non-native invasive plant removal project has been underway here. The 3-mile hiking trail features 2 bridges, a boardwalk over wetland areas, and an observation deck over a marsh pond ideal for viewing wading birds and pelicans. It has beautiful views of the Indian River Lagoon shoreline.

Parking:

To enjoy the Maritime Hammock Sanctuary's mile trail, please park at 6200 S Highway A1A, Melbourne Beach at the northern trailhead.

Trail Instructions:

The trail's two main entry points are located along Highway A1A and provide informational kiosks with maps and bike racks.

The main north trailhead at 6200 S Highway A1A contains the parking lot. The second trail access point begins approximately 0.1 miles south of the north trailhead but does not have parking. From the northern kiosk, you will travel east on the trail, passing through the old nursery area and into the hammock. You will hike through the hammock to a bridge before making your way out to the Indian River Lagoon. Here, the trail splits; you can head north along the lagoon for .5 mile before hitting a series of stormwater ponds, home to wading birds and alligators. After visiting the ponds, you can finish the loop and hike back to the main trail through a cabbage palm hammock for another .5 mile. There is also a kiosk and bike rack just north of the ponds which connects to the loop, however there is no parking at this location.

If you choose to head south at the intersection, you will hike along the lagoon for .5 mile before reaching a second bridge. Take the bridge back east, and you will hike through a beautiful maritime hammock to a large boardwalk and then a pond overlook. Continue hiking east for another .5 mile to reach the exit of the trail at the south access point along Highway A1A. You can walk along Highway A1A north .1 mile to return to the parking lot.