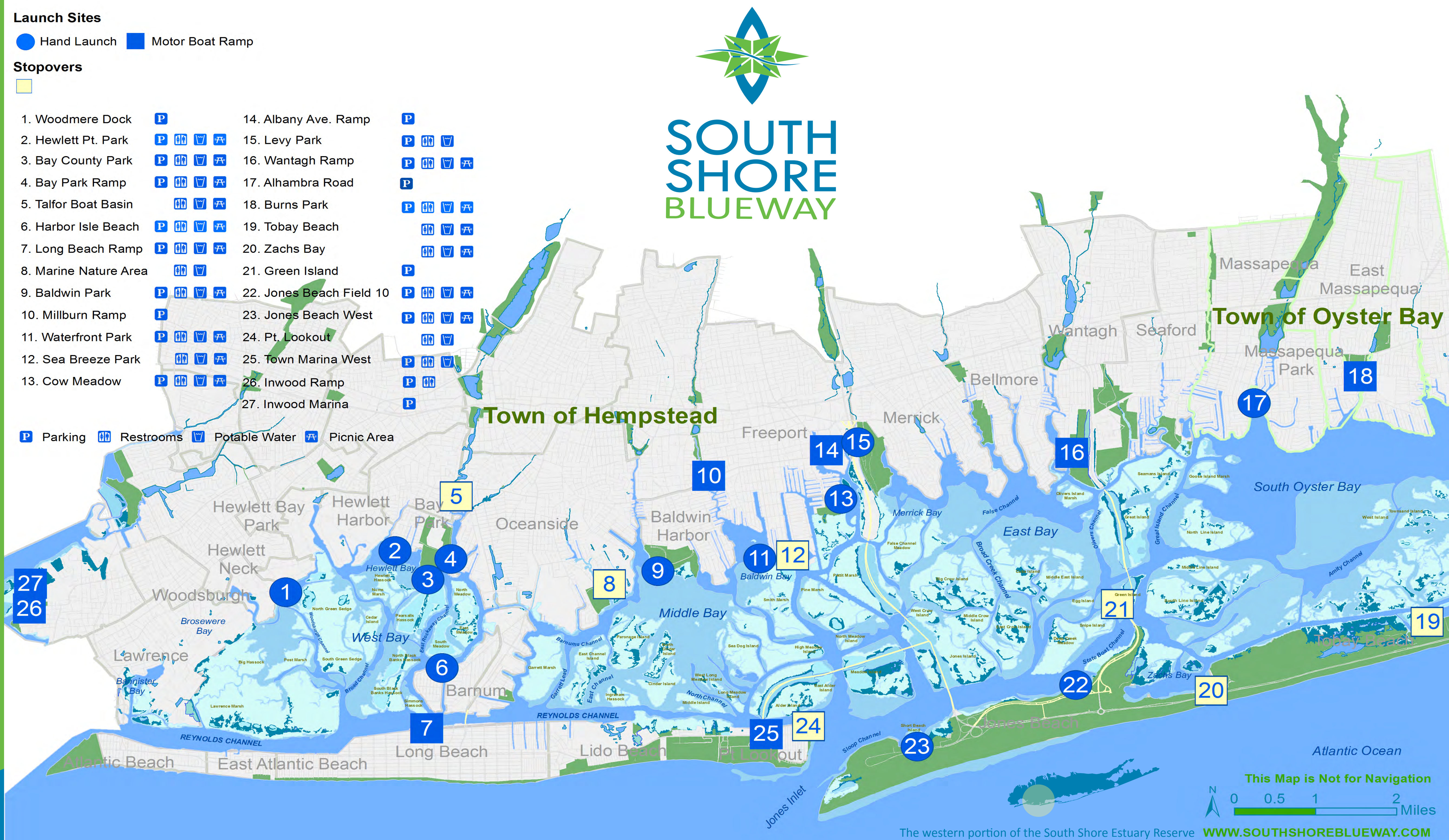


SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Each paddling occasion is unique, offering varying distances, conditions and levels of difficulty. Please plan your route accordingly and take all proper safety precautions before embarking.

- Always wear a US Coast Guard approved, properly fitted life jacket.
- Paddle with a group or a buddy.
- Do not wear cotton. Dress for the weather and water temperature.
- Be visible, wear bright colors. Kayaks and canoes sit low in the water and are extremely difficult to see from a distance, especially in marginal conditions.
- If paddling at night, be sure to have USCG approved 360-degree white light.
- Motorized boat and jet ski traffic can be heavy, especially on the weekends.
- Use caution when crossing a channel; do so quickly and together as a group.
- To ensure your safety, let someone know your trip itinerary by filing a float plan.



SOUTH SHORE BLUEWAY

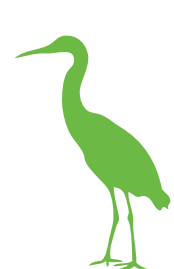


EXPLORE

Long before Europeans arrived on Long Island, Native Americans navigated its waters fishing and travelling by kayak and canoe for thousands of years. Today, visitors can explore East, Middle and West Hempstead Bays and South Oyster Bay, each has its own unique characteristics and habitat. There is abundant wildlife—blue herons, snowy egrets and nesting osprey. Sweep through salt marsh islands on quiet creeks and channels where migrating birds nest, harbor seals haul out and the tiny Bay houses of shellfishers stand on stilts above the wetlands. Land on a secluded beach or combine your paddle with hiking a nature trail or biking the Jones Beach Greenway. Paddle and dine on locally caught steampers at a waterside seafood shack or “catch your own” kayak fishing for over 40 species.

By using the appropriate gear, taking proper safety precautions and being aware of tides and weather conditions, even beginners and families can enjoy the beautiful scenery and wildlife of the South Shore Blueway. For advanced or expert kayakers, there are plenty of challenging full day adventures, multi-bay routes across inlets and ocean kayak surfing. From health benefits to stress relief and more, paddling is an activity with endless benefits for people of all ages and abilities. Have a safe and enjoyable experience on the South Shore Blueway!

**Discover more of the South Shore Blueway Trail
at southshoreblueway.com.**



CONSERVATION

The South Shore Blueway is in the shallow waters of the western reach of the South Shore Estuary Reserve, an officially protected area that is striking and very fragile. During your visit, we hope you will be respectful of the south shore's natural wonders by observing wildlife from a safe distance, practicing "leave no trace" outdoor ethics and taking only pictures. The extensive mudflats and salt marshes islands are an important part of the south shore's marine environment. Do not land on grass islands. Use caution at low tide, so as not to impact fragile sea grass beds and marine life nurseries. Particular caution is required at beaches where pairs of endangered piping plovers are active.

TIDES & CURRENTS

The changing tides alter the currents in the bays. Plan to travel with the tidal current, then when the current turns paddle with it in the return direction. There are a number of tidal flats, passageways between marsh islands, and creeks that become completely mud during lower tides. When crossing under bridges and across inlets, water conditions can be rough. Use caution and only advanced skill level trail users should navigate bridge abutments and inlets where currents can be extremely swift at ebb and flood tide. Check local tide charts, available at park offices and online at lিশore.org.

WEATHER

Severe weather can approach quickly, check local weather before heading onto the water. If a Small Craft Advisory is posted, head to safety immediately, as winds may become too strong to operate your vessel safely. Cold water is extremely dangerous. A wet suit is a must in water as warm as 50° – 60° degrees, which can cause “Cold Water Shock”. A drysuit is recommended for colder temperatures.



ITEMS TO BRING

- Life jacket
- Drinking water
- Signaling devices: flashlight, flares, safety whistle
- Sunglasses, wide-brim hat, sunscreen
- Cell phone, VHF radio, GPS unit
- First aid kit
- Water shoes
- Blife pump
- Map or chart and compass

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

The US Coast Guard and all marine patrol vessels monitor VHF marine radio channel 16, 24 hours a day. In the event of a marine emergency, dial 9-1-1.

Nassau County Police Marine Bureau
(516) 573-4450
Town of Hempstead Bay Constable
(516) 897-4100
Town of Oyster Bay Bay Constable
(516) 797-7986



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Credits: Going Coastal, Inc. Design by Bea Santiago, Maps by Graphics & Data, Inc., Photographs courtesy of Empire Kayaks.