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Things to Do Along the Creole Nature Trail

Cast a fishing line from the banks of a peaceful lake or deep in the Gulf of Mexico. Watch wading herons and egrets, colorful songbirds flitting among tall grasses, and alligators floating in the shade of bald cypress trees. Gather magnificent seashells as you wander along secluded beaches. When you visit the Creole Nature Trail All-American Road, you'd better be ready for a world of adventure. Located in southeastern Louisiana, the Creole Nature Trail offers some of the finest bird and wildlife watching, fishing, hunting, crabbing, and shelling around. Discover just some of the top things to do along the Creole Nature Trail and plan your visit today.

Visit the Creole Nature Trail Adventure Point

Set along 26 miles of Gulf Coast beaches, there's no end to all the things you can see and do as you explore the Creole Nature Trail. That's exactly why you should start your journey at the [Creole Nature Trail Adventure Point](#) in Sulphur. Free to enter, this attraction serves up a preview of the trail's many natural

wonders, as well as showcasing Louisiana's unique culture. Discover the best places to spot migrating birds and "play along" with a Cajun and zydeco band as you check out the adventure point's immersive exhibits. Take your time to explore and you'll know everything you need to about where to go along the Creole Nature Trail so you can have the adventure of a lifetime.

Explore Scenic Wildlife Refuges

Stroll on a wooden boardwalk through coastal wetlands, keep a keen eye out to spot alligators and hundreds of native and migratory birds, and watch for wildlife as you cruise on secluded driving routes. Follow the Creole Nature Trail and you'll reach three national wildlife refuges that house some of the most diverse wildlife populations in the country. Start at [Sabine National Wildlife Refuge](#), a nearly 125,000-acre stretch of fresh and saltwater marshes home to more than 300 species of birds, 130 kinds of fish, and more. Catch blue crabs in the Blue Crab Recreation Area, take in a stunning view from the overlook tower on Blue Goose Trail, and stroll the Wetland Walkway for a close look at the wildlife. The trail and the walkway are widely considered among the best places to go birding in Louisiana, so don't leave your binoculars at home.

Not far away, the [Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge](#) encompasses marshes and prairies to provide a habitat distinct from the area's other refuges. Come here any time of year and you just may spot red-winged blackbirds, marsh wrens, and common yellowthroats, along with an abundance of butterflies on any given warm day. The spring and fall migration seasons hold many surprises of their own, as that's when colorful songbirds like summer tanagers, Lincoln's sparrows, and orchard orioles make an appearance. Stop by the Refuge Visitor Center before heading out on the Pintail Wildlife Drive, a three-mile loop that passes a range of habitats that shelter a stunning array of birds.

[Lacassine National Wildlife Refuge](#) is another spectacular place to go birding near Lake Charles, but there's more. The refuge houses the 16,000 freshwater Lacassine Pool, a manmade lake created to provide a habitat for migratory waterfowl that is also one of the best bass fishing destinations in Louisiana. When you're not hooking fish, cruise the three-mile Lacassine Pool Wildlife Drive for a wildlife tour of the area.

Finally, if you're looking for alligators, there may be no better location to see them than [Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge](#). Set near the sandy shores of Louisiana's Gulf Coast, the refuge houses the highest density of alligator nests of any place in the country. Explore the waterways and fish for redfish and speckled trout after launching your boat in the water at the Joseph Harbor Boat Launch or follow Price Lake Road for some world-class birdwatching.

When you want to immerse yourself in the beauty of southwest Louisiana's Gulf Coast, visit the wildlife refuges along the Creole Nature Trail.

Hunt for Shells on Secluded Coastlines

If you've ever been to the beach, you've probably spent some time looking for seashells to take home with you. Although every beach has shells, the [26 miles of sandy shores](#) along the Creole Nature Trail stand apart. Largely undeveloped, the beaches here are full of shells large and small that are washed ashore by a southeastern tidal flow. Listen to the crashing waves as you meander along the beach and you'll encounter angel wings, cockles, coquinas, periwinkles, wentletraps, and more. Pick up your favorites and you can take them home as souvenirs. When you aren't hunting for shells, lay out a picnic and enjoy the solitude of miles of untouched coastline. Soft sand, abundant sunshine, and peace and quiet; it doesn't get any better than this.

Go Fishing in Louisiana's Outback

From the deep waters of the Gulf Coast to its lakes, you won't find better fishing anywhere else than along the Creole Nature Trail. Drop a line into the fresh or salt waters of the Cameron Prairie, Sabine, and Lacassine national wildlife refuges, or head out to the beach to go surf fishing. Want to hook bigger fish? Hire one of many [charter fishing services](#) in Lake Charles, Hackberry, Big Lake, and Westlake to try your luck off the coast. Although you can go fishing from just about anywhere, you'll need to have a Louisiana fishing license if you're over the age of 16. You can get your own at most sporting goods stores and Wal-Mart locations or [online](#).

Dine, Shop & Play in Lake Charles

Located on the banks of the Calcasieu River and Bayou Contraband, Lake Charles is one of Louisiana's top destinations. Try your luck at one of the city's four upscale casinos, two of which are also world-class resorts, and discover the local arts scene as you explore galleries and listen to live music. Then browse one-of-a-kind shops in the Charleston Cultural District and the Cottage Shop District before learning all about the history of Mardi Gras at the Imperial Calcasieu Museum. When your appetite hits, savor some of the freshest seafood you'll ever have or dine at one of the many locations along the Southwest Boudin Louisiana Trail.