

BHI TRIP PLANNING · YOUR TRIP, HANDLED

Family Hikes & Walks

Easy, beautiful ways to stretch your legs — for every age.

Bald Head is small, flat, and car-free, which makes it a dream for unhurried family walks: ancient maritime forest, salt marsh, and miles of quiet beach, all within a few minutes of each other. Here are the ones worth your time, with the honest details on each.

Walk at low tide. On the beach, low tide means firm, wide sand and the best shelling and sand-dollar hunting. A quick search for a Bald Head Island tide chart tells you when.

M. Kent Mitchell Nature Trail

Easy · about a half-mile loop · 15–30 minutes · paved · stroller- and all-ages friendly

On Federal Road near Maritime Market. A paved loop with boardwalk bridges over the marsh and almost 360-degree views. Interpretive signs call out the wildlife — fiddler crabs, egrets, terns, songbirds — and you'll catch a glimpse of Middle Island's ibis sanctuary across the water. The gentlest, most grandparent- and toddler-friendly walk on the island. Go in the morning when it's cool and the birds are busy.

Bring bug spray — the marsh edges have ticks and mosquitoes.

Bald Head Woods Maritime Forest Preserve

Easy–moderate · dirt trails · shaded · skip the unpaved paths when wet

189 acres on the island's high ground — dense, old-growth maritime forest with a canopy that stays cool even at midday. Find the Timmons' Oak, the oldest tree on the island at roughly 400 years. This is your hot-afternoon escape: shady, quiet, and full of songbirds. The unpaved paths are fragile and slick after rain, so save those for a dry day.

Beach walks

- **West Beach** — the calmer river side and the place to be at sunset. Best for little legs.
- **East Beach** — quiet and wide, wonderful at sunrise, long enough for a real stretch.
- **South Beach / Cape Point** — where the ocean meets the Cape Fear River. Dramatic and gorgeous, but the currents at the point are strong — keep kids close and don't swim there.

A short, flat stroll

- **Around Old Baldy & the creek** — a gentle, pretty loop with a big dose of island history; pair it with climbing the lighthouse.

Before you go

Water · bug spray (ticks in the forest and marsh) · reef-safe sunscreen · a hat. The trails are car-free, so bring the cart or bikes to the trailhead — and remember, mornings are cooler and the wildlife is more active.

P.S. Rather have it all handled? Pick what you want and book your whole trip in minutes at bhi-trip-planning.pages.dev — carts, dinners, boat days, all of it. I take it from there, so the island is yours to enjoy.