THE ALABAMA COASTAL BIRDING TRAIL

You could wander anywhere in Alabama and see rich natural habitats and beau-
tiful birds, but when the wind shifts in spring or fall, it’s time to head for the coast.

The Gulf of Mexico exerts a powerful influence on migratory birds, and twice a
year the tiny transients swarm by the thousands along its shores. The Alabama
Coastal Birding Trail will lead you to some of the most spectacular concentrations of
migratory stopovers since ancient times. Look for legendary places like Fort
Morgan and Dauphin Island to dozens of lesser-known gems. On big migration
days the trails are alive with a kaleidoscopic swirl of birds, with kingfishers,
terns, sandpipers, and shorebirds getting ready to fly south. The stunning
views and saltwater breezes are just part of the show.

For more information: www.alabamacostalbirdingtrail.com or call 877-276-9089.

GREAT FLORIDA BIRDING TRAIL

Lividly colored and the Florida Panhandle is Open Season; ro SS  NuSS baumer/ Npl/mi Nde N pi C ture S; tom vezo; altre Ndo Nature/ge t t y image S; rober t roy Se; pe ter lilja/ge t t y image S; rober t roy Se; tom vezo; ar thur morri S/Corbi S

Florida Birding Trail lives up to its name with sheer magnitude—stretching
some 2,000 miles and including almost 500 sites—and with the quality of the
birding it offers. Be prepared to see huge concentrations of birds most of the
year. The trail’s southwest end lies Okefenokee Swamp. This immense wetland is
easy to cross by canoe or kayak, and more than 100 miles of boat trails invite you to seek out the
swamp’s birds. For more information: http://georgiaaudubontrail.displaycontent.aspx?Doc=6367224371235615

GEORGIA’S COLONIAL COAST BIRDING TRAIL

Some of the most splendid salt marshes left in the United States are on the
Georgia coast, where they provide a year-round home for clapper rails, marsh
weevils, and many other birds. Seasonal movements bring northern harriers,
flocks of white ibises, and flocks of pink egret spoonbills. Several of the barrier
islands are easily reached by bridges and causeways. On the islands’ protected
beaches and tidal mudflats you’re likely to find terns, shorebirds, and
numerous other shorebirds gathering in winter or during migration. Away from the
water’s edge, the woods of the islands and coast are alive with songbirds. In summertime spectacular painted buntings pop up in the
thickets, especially in Cumberland Island’s semi-wilderness. From Florida to
North Carolina, the trail’s southwest end lies Okefenokee Swamp. This immense wetland is most easily traversed by canoe or kayak, and more than 100 miles of boat trails invite you to seek out the swamp’s birds. For more information: http://georgiaaudubontrail.displaycontent.aspx?Doc=6367224371235615

KENTUCKY’S AUDUBON BIRDING TRAIL

Taken by its very self, this is one of the shortest birding trails on the continent, with
only three major stops. But it is a must-visit birding destination for anyone
who dreams of seeing his or her own state in great detail. Along the way there are
unique habitats, where you can literally walk in his footsteps and perhaps watch
dancing kings. At Henderson, where John James Audubon lived for several years while begin-
ing the building of his collection of bird engravings, you have the opportunity to
look at his studio and the legend he left behind. From Henderson to the trail’s end, the
southeast corner, one of the world’s largest and most significant birding destinations, one
that has been called the “birding capital of the world,” is scheduled to be ready for business by the summer of 2009. Travel
sections of a statewide birding trail are finished, and the third, the mountain
section, is scheduled to be ready for business by the summer of 2009. Travel
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