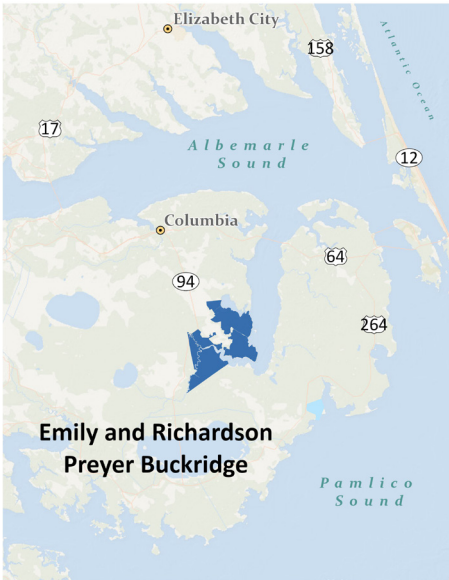


Visitor & Hunting Information

How to Find Us



The Buckridge Reserve is located along the southwestern shore of the Alligator River, adjacent to the community of Gum Neck. To access the site take N.C. 94 south from Columbia, turn east on North Gum Neck Rd. to Grapevine Landing Rd., which bisects the main portion of the reserve. The reserve can also be accessed by boat from nearby N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission boat ramps.

- Guidance:** Visitors should be aware that hunting is allowed during certain times of the year and should use appropriate caution. Beware of biting insects (flies, mosquitoes, ticks, chiggers), and poisonous plants (poison ivy). Sun protection is advised. Certain roads are opened to traffic during the fall hunting season for ease of access. Roads may be closed at times during the season to protect the resource. Driving on gated roads is at your own risk. Blocking roads, gates or otherwise preventing traffic flow is prohibited. Hunting in the game land portion of Buckridge is allowed according to the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission regulations for 3-day game lands. There are no facilities at the Buckridge Reserve. Primary game sought includes white-tailed deer, black bear, and turkey.
- Wildlife:**
- Facilities:**
- Hunting:**

The Buckridge Coastal Reserve is named in honor of the late Emily and Richardson Preyer for their commitment to public service, the environment, education, and the arts.



North Carolina Coastal Reserve & National Estuarine Research Reserve

deq.nc.gov/ncreserve

The Emily & Richardson Preyer Buckridge Reserve is managed by the N.C. Division of Coastal Management to protect the site's ecosystems for research, education, and compatible traditional uses. Support from the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission for road maintenance and wildlife management is gratefully acknowledged. This site is a three-day per week game land and Dedicated State Nature Preserve.

The North Carolina Coastal Reserve & National Estuarine Research Reserve is a part of the N.C. Division of Coastal Management, a division of the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality.

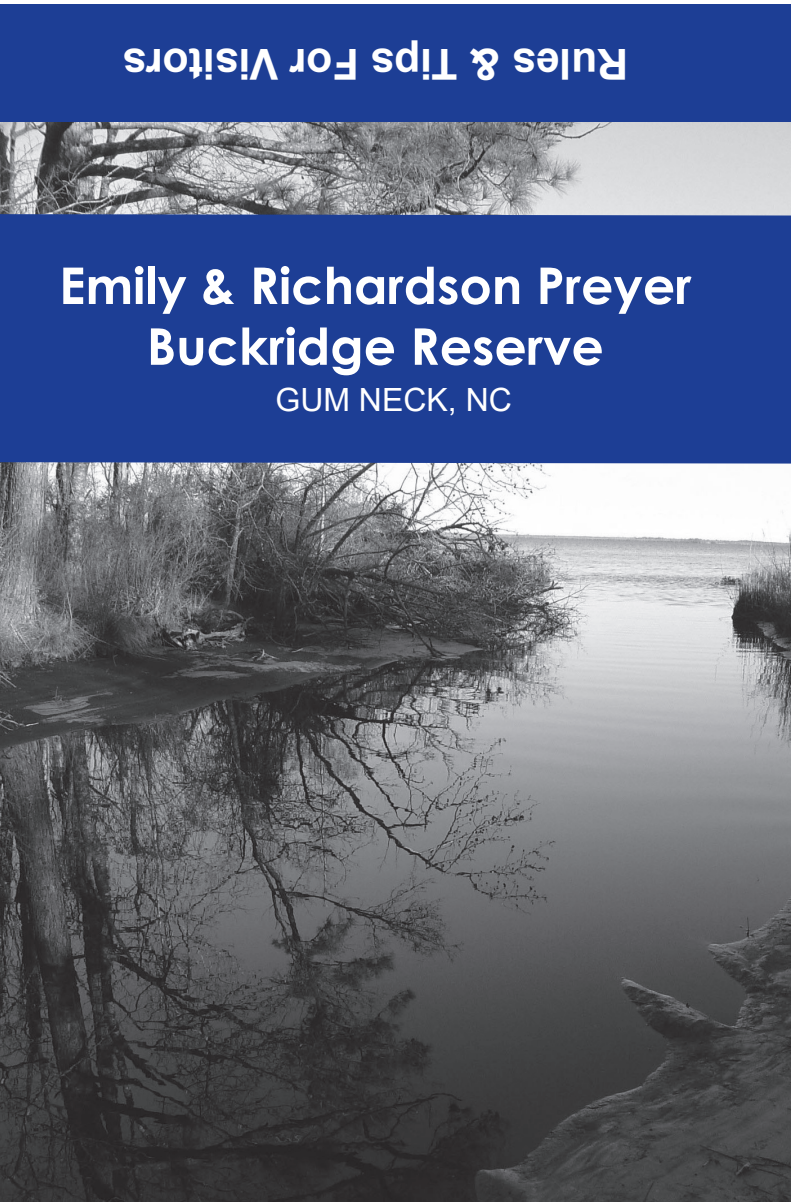


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2025



Rules & Tips For Visitors

Emily & Richardson Preyer Buckridge Reserve

GUM NECK, NC

- The reserve is open to visitors year round.
- Visit at your own risk. The site is remote and conditions can include natural hazards such as biting insects, poisonous plants, and venomous snakes.
- Off-leash pets are prohibited except dogs engaged in a lawful hunt.
- Fires, fireworks, target shooting, nudity, and camping are prohibited.
- Hunting and fishing are allowed according to the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission regulations. The site is part of the N.C. Game Lands Program. Both hunters and visitors should use appropriate caution. Producing noise that is disruptive to wildlife or other visitors is prohibited.
- Removal or disturbance of plants, animals, fungi, or cultural resources is prohibited.
- Littering is prohibited. Leaving any personal property unattended within the boundaries longer than 24 hours is prohibited.
- Written authorization is required for organized events, commercial activities, and other special activities.

For the most up to date rules and guidance visit: deq.nc.gov/reserve-rules

This natural area is one of ten sites that make up the North Carolina Coastal Reserve & National Estuarine Research Reserve. Preservation of the Buckridge Reserve allows perpetuity as a natural outdoor laboratory where scientists, students, and the general public can learn about coastal processes, functions, and influences which shape and sustain the coastal area. Traditional uses, including recreation, are allowed as long as they do not disturb the environment or organisms research and educational activities.

Purpose of the Reserve

In 1994 the Coastal Futures Committee identified certain types of coastal habitats that were underrepresented among preservation interests. In 1997, the Buckridge tract was offered for sale which was ideal in that it contained several under-represented coastal habitats in an inland setting. Its acquisition protected the outstanding resource waters of the Alligator River, and helped connect the Alligator River and Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuges. The Nature Conservancy, N.C. Land and Water Fund, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service all provided funding or assistance toward the creation of this reserve.

Creation of the Reserve

Buckridge Reserve

Nonriverine Swamp Forest

Seasonally flooded wetlands are not associated with rivers, they occur on moderate to deep peat soils. The canopy is dominated by red maple and swamp black gum, with lesser amounts of loblolly pine and bald cypress. All age classes of this community are present at Buckridge.

The understory ranges from open to dense, with sweetbay magnolia, swamp bay, swamp titi, fetterbush, and sweet pepperbush commonly found.

This community type has several large examples in N.C.; but most are very close to sea level, and at risk of being lost to rising water levels.

Peatland Atlantic White Cedar Forest

These wetland forests are dominated by their namesake tree, occurring on poorly drained organic soils not flooded by rivers. Soils are often embedded with fallen logs, which may persist for centuries due to the rot resistance of Atlantic white cedar and the waterlogged peat soils.

A globally rare community, most examples in NC are shrinking. Logging and unique regeneration requirements are the primary causes. A 4,000 acre stand at Buckridge is likely the largest patch of this community in the state.

Pond Pine Woodland

Pond pine and loblolly bay dominate the canopy. Pond pine woodlands typically possess a tall, dense shrub layer, often greater than 15 feet high. Species of the shrub layer include swamp titi, gallberry, fetterbush, maleberry, swamp redbay, and sweet pepperbush.

This community is typically not as wet as others at Buckridge, and is more adapted to fire, with much of the vegetation readily resprouting or releasing seed afterward.

Low Pocosin

Low Pocosins are communities of short shrubs on the deepest peats, as much as 14 feet at Buckridge. Low soil fertility and high wetness stunt plant growth, with scattered pond pine restricted to ¼ their normal size.

The dense shrub layer is composed mostly of fetterbush, gallberry, and honeycups, with laurel-leaved greenbrier mixed in. Where the shrub layer becomes sparse, Pocosin Opening community types take hold.

Pocosin Opening *Pitcher Plant Subtype*

Pocosin Openings are small patch communities of deep peats, occurring at Buckridge within the Low Pocosin. The Pitcher Plant Subtype is identified by the numerous yellow pitcher plants present, with most other vegetation limited to dwarf shrubs and herbs.

Other carnivorous plant species present include purple pitcher plant, spoonleaf sundew, and bladderwort. This community type is critically imperiled and is endemic to North Carolina.

Other notable species include switchcane, leatherleaf, chalky bluestem, Walter's sedge, Virginia cottongrass, and fringed yelloweyed grass in a bed of sphagnum.

Tidal Cypress-Gum Swamp

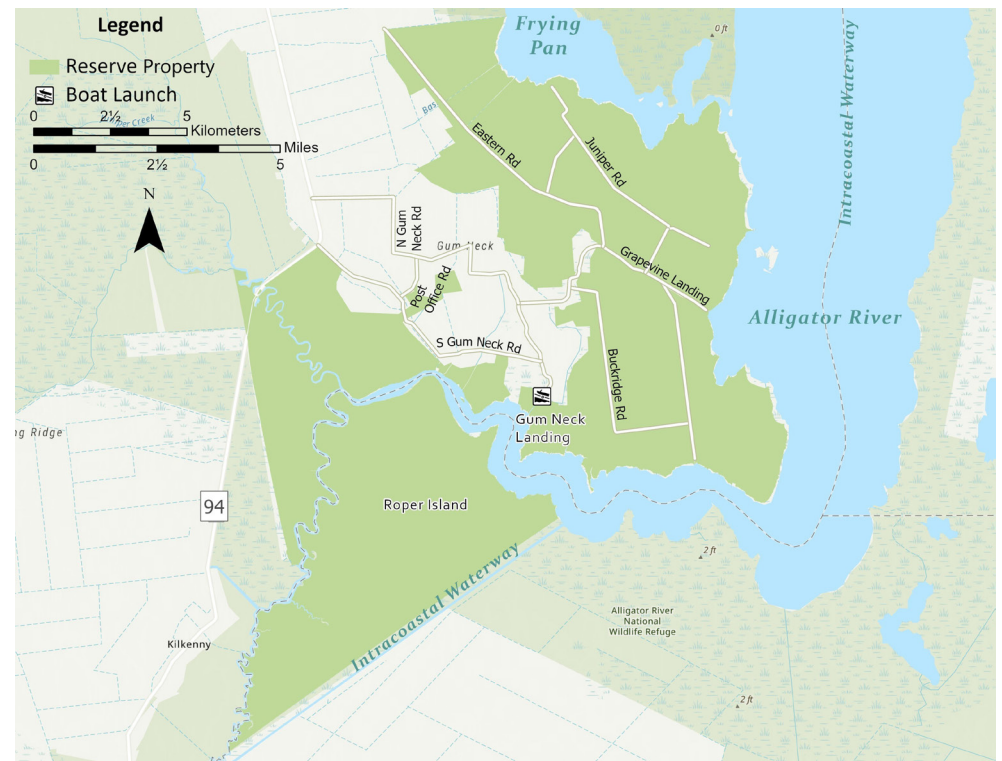
Along the edge of the freshwater side of estuaries, it is flooded by wind tides at Buckridge. Bald cypress and tupelo dominate the canopy, sometimes with loblolly pine, and red maple. Understory may include swamp redbay, sweetbay magnolia, red cedar, and Carolina ash. Shrub layer may feature wax myrtle, swamp titi, highbush blueberry, swamp rose, and switchcane.

At Buckridge, this community transitions into tidal freshwater marsh or open water as one approaches the river. Dieback from storm events transform this habitat into ghost forests at Buckridge.

Estuarine Fringe Pine Forest *Pond Pine Subtype*

These are strongly pine-dominated woodlands adjacent to marshes that are almost always wet. This is an emerging community type at Buckridge, where former Pond Pine Woodlands have converted with changes in the nearby estuary. This community does not experience normal tidal flooding.

The shrub layer consists mainly of wax myrtle, though swamp bay, and inkberry may be abundant. Other typical pocosin shrubs are largely absent, and species associated with tidal freshwater marshes are usually present.



Mammals

Larger mammal species found on site include bobcat, black bear, beaver, river otter, white-tailed deer, raccoon, Virginia opossum, and gray fox. Red wolves occur in and around the reserve, but these endangered predators are secretive and rarely seen.

Reptiles & Amphibians

A wide variety of these species occur on site, but comprehensive inventories have yet to be performed. Dozens of species of turtle, lizard, snake and amphibian have been observed.

American alligators occur at Buckridge, but are typically shy and difficult to observe.

Canebrake rattlesnake, copperhead, water moccasin, and pigmy rattlesnake are venomous species seen at Buckridge. Pigmy rattlesnakes in this area have an unusual pinkish to red coloration.

Birds

Notable species include the red-cockaded woodpecker, bald eagle, wood duck, prothonotary warbler, barred owl, and wild turkey.

Bird species composition in the forest is seasonal, with Buckridge hosting numerous migratory species.

Standing dead timber in parts of Buckridge provide nest sites for cavity nesters.

The endangered red-cockaded woodpecker is an unusual cavity nester, only nesting in living pine trees.