



Hoffer Creek

BIRD BLIND

OYSTER PIER

BOAT HOUSE

BIRD BLIND

Spur Trail

Lake Ballard Trail

Homestead Trail

Lake Ballard

BIRD BLINDS

Spur Trail

Riparian Trail

LAKE DECK

PAVILION

Bluebird Trail

SALT MARSH DECK

Fortune's Cove - Lovington, VA

Length	Difficulty	Streams	Views	Solitude	Camping
2.1 mls	★	★	★	★	N/A
Hiking Time: Elev. Gain: 1.5 hours plus a half hour for lunch Notes: 13 ft NOTE: Dogs Are Not Allowed On The Hiking Trails Resources: NOTE: Closed on Mondays Park at the Hoffler Creek Preserve					

This was our first venture into the Tidewater area to do a hike. We were invited by the Hoffler Creek Programs Director to come and take a look at the good work they are doing and hike their trails. We went on a snowy Saturday which made it cool to see the multitude of animal tracks on the trails. Their mission is "To conserve the last parcel of wilderness in the Hoffler Creek watershed for environmental education, research and recreation consistent with good stewardship."

If you live anywhere close to Portsmouth, this is a worthwhile preserve to visit. Make sure you visit the Oyster Pier and Reef where they have reclaimed (using oyster shells) 200' of the creek bank that was badly eroding. If you love water, you'll love this hike!

There are multiple ways Hoffler Creek can be hiked with most trails intersecting the main Lake Ballard Trail. Be sure to stop at the headquarters and pick up a Bird Checklist, over 200 species of Birds have been observed at least once a year in the Preserve. We started our hike just behind the Pavilion on the far side of parking lot.

- ▶ **Mile 0.0** – Start hike on the yellow blazed Kid's Trail
- ▶ **Mile 0.2** – Turn right on Lake Ballard Trail. Directly in front of you will be the Lake Deck for a view of Lake Ballard, a reclaimed VDOT borrow pit.
- ▶ **Mile 0.3** – Turn right on white blazed Homestead Trail
- ▶ **Mile 0.5** – Intersection of out and back trail to Willet Blind, bear right towards Willet Blind
- ▶ **Mile 0.6** – Willet Blind
- ▶ **Mile 0.8** – Retrace steps and bypass 1st intersection until you again reach the Lake Ballard Trail, bear right.
- ▶ **Mile 0.9** – Reach Memorial Blind on right just off the trail.
- ▶ **Mile 1.0** – Oyster Pier, Oyster Reef, Kayak Dock, and Lab on the right. Kayaks can be rented during warmer months. Continue on Lake Ballard Trail.
- ▶ **Mile 1.3** Turn right onto red blazed Riparian Trail and in 0.1 miles take short spur trail to White Bird Blind. Retrace steps to intersection and bear right back onto the Riparian Trail.
- ▶ **Mile 1.7** – Turn right onto blue blazed Blue Bird Trail for out and back to Saltmarsh Deck.
- ▶ **Mile 1.8** – Saltmarsh Deck, retrace your steps and stay on the Blue Bird Trail until you reach the Lake Ballard Trail.
- ▶ **Mile 2.0** – Lake Ballard Trail, bear right
- ▶ **Mile 2.1** – Turn right towards the Headquarters Building, where hike ends.