

# DAUPHIN ISLAND "A Rare Find"

Sunset Capital of Alabama



11 Mile Bicycle Path



Birdwatching



Art Festivals



Boating & Fishing



Kayaking



## Welcome Guide & Membership Directory

Dauphin Island Chamber of Commerce  
P. O. Box 5  
Dauphin Island, AL 36528  
(877) 532-8744  
[www.dauphinislandchamber.com](http://www.dauphinislandchamber.com)

# Welcome to Dauphin Island!

Come and enjoy our little piece of paradise, dip your toes in the Gulf of Mexico waters, get sand between your toes and just RELAX. Dauphin Island, where many residents say we're living on "Island Time," but once you experience the serenity of an afternoon sunset, or watch sea birds doing their aerial acrobatics, you also will begin to enjoy Dauphin Island.

Come stroll our beaches, charter a boat to fish or to cruise, dine in our special eateries and visit gift shops and boutiques for that special item or gift.

Dauphin Island is the Hidden Gem of Alabama's Gulf Coast & A True "Rare Find". We invite you to come enjoy Dauphin Island TODAY!!

# Dauphin Island...A Rare Find



Standing guard between Mobile Bay and the vast Gulf of Mexico, Dauphin Island is a true barrier island – complete with dunes, maritime forests, salt marshes, tidal flats and two freshwater lakes. Named “barrier” for their role in protecting the mainland from nature’s fury of storm waves, barrier islands also prevent the inflow of salt water from the Gulf into the bays and sounds by forming a physical barrier. This process is essential to maintaining the nursery characteristics of the estuarine ecosystem. The island is accessed from the mainland by a beautiful drive, consisting of a two and one-half mile causeway and a three-mile bridge which opened in 1982.





Naturally sugar-white, clean, soft sandy beaches adorn Dauphin Island. The south side of the island faces the Gulf of Mexico surf, and the north side faces the Mississippi Sound with calm and shallow waters. Both sides experience a forever changing kaleidoscope of sunrises and sunsets throughout the year. Two public beaches are provided; one is next to the Island's elementary school and the other at the extreme west end of the island.





# Bountiful Public Parks

**Dauphin Island Public Beach and Pier** – The 850-foot Dauphin Island “Fishing” Pier is now on dry land due to the recent migration of Pelican Island joining the public beach shoreline. (A similar situation occurred in the 1600s and created Pelican Bay, which was one of the reasons the French first settled here). The Pier structure has now been modified to provide sightseeing and picnicking. Steps at the end of the Pier give easy access to the gulf shoreline. Bring the whole family, even your four-legged members, down to the island for some much deserved time away from the hustle and bustle of everyday living. For more information visit [www.dauphinisland.org](http://www.dauphinisland.org) or call us at 251.861.3607.

**Cadillac Square** – Beautiful old oak trees throughout this historic site of the home of first governor of Dauphin Island. East Bienville Boulevard.

**Indian Shell Mound Park** – A prehistoric monument built by early native Indians on North Iberville Dr.

**East End Park** – Three boat launches, 250-foot fishing pier and small dock. Across from Ft. Gaines.

**Aloe Bay Landing Park** – Waterfront picnic tables, Desoto Avenue, next to Pelican Pub.

**Bayou Heron** – Picnic tables and small dock for fishing. West Cadillac Avenue and Penalver St.

**Magnolia Park** – Pedestrian park between the ferry landing and the Estuarium, picnic tables.

**Bike Trail** – 7 1/2 miles in length from the West End of the island to the East End. Stop & enjoy things along the way.

**Green Park** – Located on Lemoyne Drive as you arrive on Dauphin Island, a place to take a quiet break and enjoy the beautiful oak trees and maybe a nice picnic lunch.



**Goat Tree Park** – Home of the goat tree at Grant & East Cadillac.

**Quarles Skate Park** – Skate boarders of all ages can enjoy ramps and other obstacles for their skate boarding fun.

**West End Beach** – Located on the western most point of the island is our new West End Beach with lots of amenities to offer.

**Pryor Park** – Located at 1301 Chaumont, this park has benches for a quiet and restful visit. Sit and read or watch the beautiful birds that make our island their home.

**Salt Creek Park** – This park is located on Bienville Blvd. There is a Gazebo for parents to sit under while the children play on the equipment provided.

**Alonzo Landing (Billy Goat Hole)** – Take a drive to the East End of the Island and you will find a fishing pier and boat launch open to the public.

# Historic Fort Gaines

*“Damn the torpedoes – full speed ahead!”*



Historic Fort Gaines' construction began in 1821 and was completed during the Civil War with additional batteries added in the Spanish-American conflict. It has been called one of the best preserved examples of 19th century brick seacoast fortifications in the east. It was a key element in the battle of Mobile Bay, famous for Admiral Farragut's command "Damn the torpedoes – full speed ahead!" See the actual cannons used in the battle, the huge anchor of Farragut's flag ship, tunnels, original blacksmith shop, bakery, latrine, Quartermaster building, Officer's Quarters building, museum and gift shop. Self-guided history brochure available at entrance. Explore the grounds while hearing stories of yesteryear. Watch live reenactments. Appreciate today a place where simpler times and historic culture has been preserved. For more information visit [www.dauphinisland.org](http://www.dauphinisland.org) or call us at 251.861.6992.









## Rich in History

Dauphin Island is rich in history, dating back to around one thousand years B.C., during which time the island is believed to have been used by Native Americans for various purposes including religion. Drawn from far by the endless supply of seafood found in the coastal waters, these early inhabitants left their mark on the north side of Dauphin Island by forming “mounds” of discarded clam and oyster shells, parts of which still exist and may be explored today. One large shell mound and several smaller ones in a serpentine formation exist on the north side of the island, located on Iberville Drive. Although somewhat of a mystery, the Indian Shell Mounds are similar to those of the Aztec and Mayan cultures, and are a lasting testament of the long-term Native American occupancy of Dauphin Island. According to legend, the first European to visit the area was Prince Madoc of Wales in 1171. The island and Mobile Bay were mapped in 1519 by Alonzo Pineda. Over the next century or so, the island was visited by different exploring nations, some of whom perhaps tried to settle here. When Pierre Le Moyne D’Iberville led French explorers to colonize here in 1699, they found a mountain of human skeletons – perhaps the remains of a lost colony – and cried out in horror, “Ah! What a massacre!” They subsequently named the island “Massacre Island.” By 1707, he renamed his fort “Isle Dauphine” and the port to “Port Dauphin.” The island remained a French possession until 1763, in spite of Spanish attacks, and became the capitol of the Louisiana territory. The British captured the island in 1766, only to be seized by the Spanish in 1780. American forces captured the island in 1813 in an effort to prevent the British from using it in the War of 1812. It was not until 1813 that Dauphin Island was truly American.

## Globally Important Bird Area

Dauphin Island has been named one of the top four locations in North America for viewing fall and spring migrations! The Sanctuary consists of 133 acres of maritime forest, marshes, and dunes, including a lake, a swamp and a beach. Recently, the 3 mile trail system within the Sanctuary has been designated as a National Recreational Trail. Most enjoy the 1/2 mile nature interpretive trail loop which includes the fresh water lake, dune system, gulf beach and swamp. The trail features educational signs explaining the various animals, vegetation and their interconnection in these eco-systems. A 1,000-foot boardwalk (handicap accessible) leads from the parking lot to a wharf overlooking Galliard Lake with a breathtaking view. Egrets and herons hang out in the marshes and trees and an occasional alligator might be spotted sunning on the bank in the late afternoon. Dauphin Island is classified as a “Globally Important Bird Area” by the American Bird Conservancy, and is well known as one of the best places in the country to observe “neotropical migrants” – a term for those flying south each fall to the tropics, and north each spring to North America. Although it is well known that ducks and other waterfowl make these journeys, it is not so well known that songbirds, hummingbirds and even butterflies also make these trips of thousands of miles.

251.861.3607, 213 Bienville Boulevard.  
[www.dauphinisland.org](http://www.dauphinisland.org)



# Wetlands

## Wetland as Habitat

Wetlands are important habitats for many species of plants and animals. They provide a home for a variety of birds, fish, and other wildlife. Wetlands also help to filter pollutants from water and provide a natural buffer against storms and flooding.

## Wetland as a Filter

Wetlands act as natural filters, removing pollutants and sediments from water. This helps to improve water quality and protect downstream ecosystems.

