

Maclellan Island

Important Information



Thanks for booking your campsite at Maclellan Island! We can't wait for you to experience the wonder of a true urban wilderness, right in the middle of downtown Chattanooga. Before you go, there are some key things to be aware of to ensure you have the best trip possible.

Please read through this guide in its entirety before embarking on your adventure to the island. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at info@chattaudubon.org or via message on Hipcamp. We'll be happy to help in any way we can!

THERE ARE NO TRASH CANS ON THE ISLAND! CAMPERS ARE EXPECTED TO PACK UP THEIR TRASH AND TAKE IT WITH THEM WHEN DEPARTING THE ISLAND.

Contact Information

IMPORTANT: Please note that Maclellan Island is a primitive campsite with limited accessibility. Know your limits before you go and plan accordingly!

In Case of Emergency

If you have an emergency, **please call 911.**

Questions or Reporting Problems

Chattanooga Audubon Society (main office)

Call: (423) 892-1499

Email: info@chattaudubon.org

Hours: Monday - Saturday, 9am-5pm

Sunday, 1pm-5pm

After Hour EMERGENCIES

Please text us at (352) 464-4316 (*text only, no phone calls*).

FAQs

Where is Maclellan Island located?

Maclellan Island is located in downtown Chattanooga, directly under Veterans Bridge (Georgia Ave./Hixson Pike). There are no roads leading down to the island. Access is by water only.

What should I expect when visiting Maclellan Island?

Maclellan Island is managed by the Chattanooga Audubon Society whose offices are located approximately 30 minutes from downtown Chattanooga. There are no offices or permanent staff on the island. A composting toilet is available (**bring your own TPI!**), but there is no water or electricity. The composting toilet is closest to the camp site on the northeast side of the island. Access is via a narrow path and is difficult to see. Long pants and close-toed shoes are recommended due to the presence of poison ivy on the island. Visitors should check weather conditions before visiting and dress accordingly. *Maclellan Island is maintained as a primitive urban wilderness: visitors should know their limitations and go prepared. In event of emergency contact 911.*

Disclaimer: All forms of outdoor recreation have a higher level of risk than most ordinary activities and therefore can be potentially hazardous or dangerous. This includes hiking and transporting to/from Maclellan Island, especially when weather, currents, and other unforeseen conditions create hazardous situations. Although unlikely, there are many natural and/or man-made risks that could lead to injury or death while visiting. For these reasons, it is the responsibility of the visitor to learn the necessary skills for hiking, kayaking, etc. All participants must assume responsibility for their own actions and safety, exercise sound judgement, be prepared for all conditions, and seek advice on current weather and current trail conditions. These conditions change from day to day and from season to season.

Do you provide boats/transportation to get there?

No, you will need to provide your own transportation to the island. If you need to rent a kayak, we recommend:

- **Scenic City Safari:** (423) 653-4845
- **L2 Outside:** (423) 531-7873

Is there wildlife on the island?

Yes. Maclellan Island is an urban nature sanctuary and is home to songbirds, turkeys, owls, possums, foxes, woodpeckers, and a very healthy raccoon population (be sure to pack up your trash and food!). You may also observe osprey, herons, muskrats, and geese.

Where is the best place to park overnight while camping?

We recommend using one of the paid lots near Coolidge Park. Contact Republic Parking at 423-265-3218 for more information.

Where should I put in to paddle to the island?

There are a couple of options around the Coolidge Park area, but we recommend using the large ramp under the Market Street bridge. Paddlers will find it easiest to stay along the shore until parallel to the island before cutting across the river.

Water Level

Be sure to portage your “boat” to the campsite or up on land away from the river. The Tennessee River can have rapidly changing water levels depending on the dam use, so you don’t want it to float away!

Safety

Know your limits. The Tennessee River is a great spot for paddling, but please be aware that there is a current. If you’re a true beginner, it might not be the best starting point, but otherwise, most anyone who is comfortable paddling will be just fine. The water can be fairly swift near the docks and around the bridge pillars, so make sure you are able to paddle upstream before you venture too far. (Launching from downtown—the closest access point—will require you to paddle upstream a bit. We recommend sticking to the shoreline until you’re parallel with the island before cutting across.)

Look out for poison ivy! The spring and summer months bring lots of new growth—including plenty of poison ivy along the trails. Know [how to identify it](#) before heading out so you can avoid it as much as possible.

Watch out for ticks and mosquitoes. Ticks are plentiful on the island, so be sure to check yourself thoroughly. They like to hide, so be sure to check places like your armpits, head, and groin area, and look closely because some species are tiny!

Check the weather. Conditions can change quickly, so please check the weather before you go. In case of bad weather, *please do not attempt to paddle to the island*. Contact us and we will work with you to reschedule.

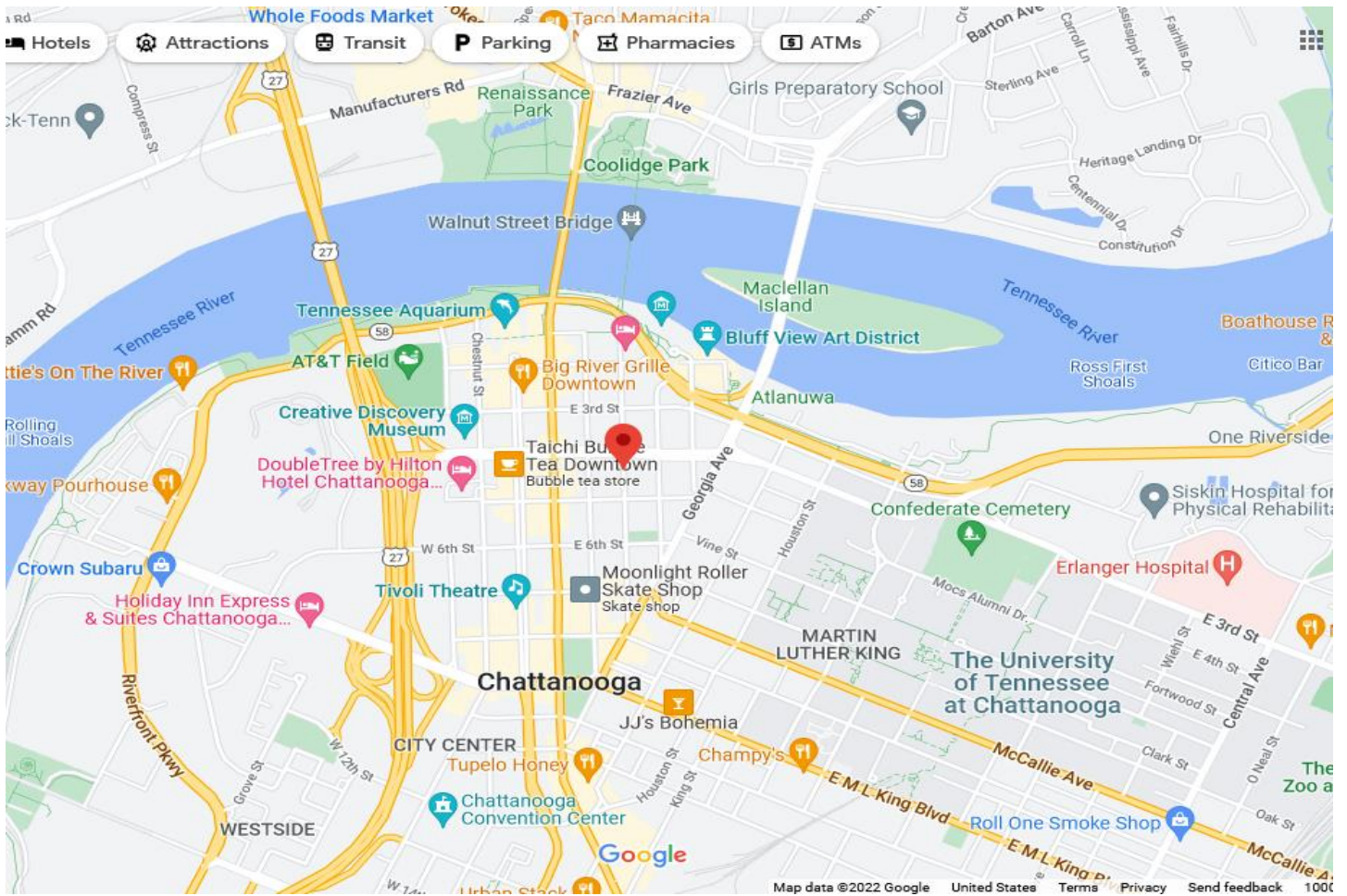
Resources

[Flatwater Paddling in Downtown Chattanooga \(RootsRated\)](#)

[Tennessee River Hydrograph](#)

[Tennessee River Blueway](#)

SEE MAPS ON NEXT PAGE



MACLELLAN ISLAND

Chattanooga's Most Unique Island Nature Sanctuary

A PLACE OF SERENITY IN THE HEART OF CHATTANOOGA

Maclellan Island is a unique, 18.8-acre nature sanctuary situated in the middle of the Tennessee River, in the heart of downtown Chattanooga.

There are no offices or permanent staff on the island. There is no water or electricity available. Long pants and close-toed shoes are recommended due to the presence of poison ivy. Maclellan Island is maintained as a primitive urban wilderness; know your limitations and go prepared. In event of an emergency contact 911.

As you explore our 1+ mile trail, please look for our other signs sharing information about the island's rich history and biodiversity.

Maclellan Island is owned by CHATTANOOGA AUDUBON SOCIETY, a 501-c3 nonprofit. Renovations, signage, and other improvements to the island were made possible by the generous donation of the MACLELLAN FOUNDATION.

RULES & REGULATIONS

This is a Nature Sanctuary and is maintained so that you can enjoy and experience wildlife in its natural settings.

- Please leave everything as you found it. Hunting, fishing, trapping, or harassment of any wildlife is not allowed. Digging, excavating, or removal of anything for any purpose is strictly prohibited.
- No alcohol or illegal drugs are permitted on the island.
- Pets are not allowed on the island. This is for the protection of wildlife.
- Please remove any trash that you bring with you. If you see any that isn't yours, please help us by removing it from the island.

This is private property operated for the benefit of our members. We reserve the right to refuse admission and access to anyone. Overnight camping is by permit only.

Chattanooga Audubon Society's mission is to educate and promote an understanding of the responsibility to preserve and protect our environmental, cultural, and historical resources through programming and stewardship. Please consider making a donation today by scanning the QR code.

RESERVE A CAMPSITE

Reserving Maclellan Island is easy! Scan the QR code to be taken to our booking site. Select the dates you'd like to camp and pay directly through the website. You will receive a confirmation with all the information you need to know.

DISCLAIMER: All forms of outdoor recreation have a higher level of risk than most ordinary activities and, therefore, can be potentially dangerous and/or dangerous. This includes hiking and participating in these Maclellan Island, especially when weather, terrain, and other unforeseen conditions create a hazardous condition. Although unlikely, there are some isolated and/or steep, rocky trails that could lead to injury or death while visiting Maclellan Island. For those reasons, it is the responsibility of the visitor to learn the necessary skills for such hiking, kayaking, etc. All participants agree that they are using the natural or other route risk and to hold Chattanooga Audubon Society harmless from any liability, costs, claims, or damages resulting from their use of the island. All participants agree to receive medical professional and be prepared for all conditions. These conditions change from day to day and from season to season.