



Graveline Bayou Blueway Kayak & Canoe Trail

- Main Loop
- Xplore_LG_Ext
- Xplore_CrosswayBayou
- Xplore_CarlooseBayou
- WAYPOINT
- ⋯ Island_shortcut
- Public_Land

Graveline Bay and Bayou Coastal Preserve
 Jackson County, Mississippi
 Mississippi Department of Marine Resources
 Feb, 2012

GRAVELINE BLUEWAY MAIN LOOP WAYPOINTS (blue trail on map)

As you enjoy the Graveline Preserve, please remember to respect private property and explore by land only within the public area boundary (shaded on map).

0miles – START from DMR boat launch on Octavia Road. Paddle down Graveline Bayou toward the Mississippi Sound. Strong tides keep this wide, deep bayou salty. Black needlerush is the main marsh plant. Watch the air for terns, gulls, and ibises. On the water, watch for alligators.

0.9mi - SHELL – Note the thick shell midden at Shell Landing, the product of generations of oystering. Today oyster harvesting is prohibited in Graveline Bayou, but look for abundant oysters that filter the bayou's waters.

1.1mi - LITTLGRAV – Turn left into Little Graveline Bayou. Along the forest, watch for perching osprey and kingfishers. On marsh edge, herons and egrets eat fish and fiddler crabs. Nutria and otters swim across the channel, and stingrays glide on the bottom.

2mi - MARSH – Little Graveline cuts through the marsh here. Note many small waterways where juvenile fish, crabs, and shrimp hide and grow, making Graveline a major “nursery of the Gulf.”

2.5mi - DOCK – Turn right toward the first dock, leaving Little Graveline for the canal past waterfront homes in the town of Gautier. It's fun to see how residents adapt to being on the water. If you like a less “civilized” path, take the shortcut (Waypoint 21) along an island.

3.2mi - BLUFF – After you pass a high bluff, keeping it on your left, our canal joins Graveline Bayou where it empties into the Mississippi Sound. Look for Horn Island on the horizon. The barrier islands have protected Graveline's marsh from storms, and from the oil spill of 2010.

3.4mi – BEACH – Rest on the sand spit, with a view of sound, island, marsh, bayou and beach. Here you can see least terns and black skimmers in summer, oystercatchers and plovers in winter, and brown pelicans year-round.

3.5mi - BAYOU – Paddle up Graveline Bayou toward the boat launch. This is a favorite fishing spot for redfish, speckled trout, and flounder. Dolphin may swim up the bayou chasing fish. Watch for northern harrier (marsh hawk) cruising just above the marsh grass after rice rats.

4.5mi - BACK – Pass Little Graveline Bayou and back-track to the boat launch (END). If it's late in the day, sunset on the bayou is spectacular. On these banks, archaeologists have found pottery and stone tools from people who lived here 3000 years ago. Take time to think how they lived, and why this rich ecosystem is worth preserving. Come back soon! (5.5 miles total).

MORE PATHS TO EXPLORE IN GRAVELINE. Explore on your own Graveline's many secrets. Keep in mind that not all waterways are navigable at low tide! Take water and bug spray, and of course bring out your trash. Some recommended paths (shown on the map):

Xplore_LittleGraveline_Extension (adds 2.5 miles to main loop): This quiet, wooded spur off the main loop gives more opportunities to see wildlife.

Xplore_Carloose_Bayou (5 mile round trip). Edge through Graveline Bay, up Carloose Bayou past residences and woods. A less “wild” path. Good fishing.

Xplore_Crossway_Bayou (4.5 mile round trip). Across Graveline Bay (very shallow – just 3 feet), through the marsh to Belle Fontaine Road causeway. Great birds, often alligators. The twists and turns can be confusing, so keep oriented to distant landmarks.