

cycling guide



bicycle shops & repair supplies

Trek Bicycle Store Punta Gorda

TrekBikesFlorida.com

Trek Bicycle Store Port Charlotte

TrekBikesFlorida.com

Bikes & Boards

BikeGoodies.com

Real Bikes Englewood

RealBikesEnglewood.com



eco-friendly tips

- Use reusable water bottle/food containers and dispose of waste properly
- Leave what you find
- Never feed or handle wildlife

Your Guide to Cycling in the Area



The Charlotte Harbor Gulf Island Coast

PureFlorida.com

Leave only tire tracks. Take only pictures.

TEAM Punta Gorda bike loaner program

No bike? No problem! **Punta Gorda** provides a fleet of **free-to-the-public loaner bikes** at multiple sites around the city. The process is simple: Show your ID and credit card, sign a release form, receive your helmet, lock and cable and bike, and off you go! The loaner program, the **first of its kind in Florida**, began in 2010. **Thousands of riders** from around the country and around the world enjoy touring on these **canary yellow bicycles** every year.



locations

Fishermen's Village
Lashley Marina
Four Points by Sheraton
SpringHill Suites

for more info, visit

TeamPuntaGorda.org/free-bike-program



pedal your way through a natural paradise

There are a couple of things you won't see in Charlotte County, like no high-rise condos on the beach and no big ships in the harbor (the water is too shallow). You will see, however, nature at its most abundant. The state began protecting the harbor shoreline in 1977, thereby creating the third largest park in the state: Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park. Over 100 miles of shoreline is protected, preserving one of the most fertile estuaries in the world. For the cyclist, that means the trails teem with flora and fauna.



You don't have to be a biking botanist to appreciate the lush and varied foliage. In Babcock-Webb Wildlife Management Area, for example, the rare and endangered pawpaw produces beautiful, fragrant white flowers each spring. In winter, cyclists can spin by citrus orchards brilliant with sun-drenched oranges. Throughout the year, spectacular, dinner plate-sized hibiscus bloom throughout History Park in Punta Gorda, while pines and palms, banyans and blossoms dot the tropical landscape.

Plus, there's enough wildlife to turn a trail ride into a two-wheeled safari. Seven sections of the Great Florida Birding Trail are within the county. Egrets, you'll see a few, plus eagles, ibis, pelicans, herons: the list is a long one. Along the waterfront, easily visible from the trail could be dolphins, manatees, even rays. If there's fresh water, a gator could be soaking or sunning. On four legs, there might be bears, bobcats or boars, and that's just the b's.

Charlotte County

has **858** diverse square miles to experience from the seat of a bicycle. Riders can explore the **Gulf Coast** on Manasota Key in the northwestern part of the county or the wet pine flatwoods in the southeastern part. In between there are rides through classic Florida neighborhoods and **tropical** wildernesses, along **waterfronts** and down **historic** trails.



The Cape Haze Pioneer Trail is a good place to start. The trail follows the route of the Charlotte Harbor and Northern Railroad, built to haul phosphate mined along the Peace River to the deep-water port at the southern tip of Gasparilla Island. The trailhead, about a block south of the intersection of state road 776 (McCall Road) and county road 771 (Gasparilla Road), is the location of the historic wood frame Placida

Bunkhouse, built by the railroad around 1907 to house its employees. The trail runs 6.8 miles and terminates near the Boca Grande Causeway.

Worth the Trip

Babcock/Webb Wildlife Management Area — this 65,758-acre gem is one of the last remaining wet pine flatwoods in Southwest Florida.

Across the causeway on Gasparilla Island, the Boca Grande Bike Path continues along the former rail bed to the south end of the island.



Bicycle clubs frequently stage rides in the neighborhoods of Cape Haze, Englewood, Rotonda and South Gulf Cove. You'll find friendly communities and dedicated bicycle lanes. For a view of the beaches and the Gulf, pedal from Englewood Beach to Stump Pass on Manasota Key or check out Don Pedro/Knight Island, only accessible by ferry. The ferry is located at 7092 Placida Road. The toll per bicycle is \$10.00.

With harbor-front trails, historic neighborhoods and unspoiled wildlife areas, Punta Gorda has many options.

In town, dedicated hike and bike trails run past History Park, with beautifully landscaped grounds and original buildings from the early days of the area. Rides along the waterfront can include stops at popular Fishermen's Village, Gilchrist Park, TT's Tiki Bar & Grill and Lashley Park. You can also ride over the twin bridges that span Charlotte Harbor and the Peace River.



INSET AREA SHOWN



Charlotte
County

Sarasota
County

Visitor's Bureau

Charlotte
Sports Park

41

776

776

Rotonda

771

• Knight Island

775

Placida

↓ To Boca Grande

Charlotte Harbor
Preserve State Park

Charlotte
Harbor





Cycling Routes

- Washington Loop
- Punta Gorda Bridges
- Babcock-Webb MWA
- Tour de Punta Gorda
- Harborwalk
- Linear Park
- Shreve Street Trail
- US 41 Trail
- Cape Haze Pioneer Trail
- Bike Lanes



Fred C. Babcock/Cecil M. Webb
Wildlife Management Area



bicycling safety



Always wear a helmet to lessen the impacts of a crash and an injury. A bicycle rider or passenger under 16 years of age **MUST** wear a helmet under Florida Law.



Headsets, headphones, or other listening devices other than a hearing aid are prohibited when riding.



Headlight and taillight are required for operation of a bicycle from dusk until dawn.



Cyclists are considered vehicles under Florida Law and must obey all traffic controls and signals.



Use arm and voice signals to indicate intended movements and warn of approaching hazards.



When riding on sidewalks or in crosswalks, cyclists must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians and give an audible signal before passing on the left.



Ride single file, if possible, to avoid possible collisions with other trail users.



Carry personal identification with an emergency number.