

REMEMBER:

The Institute for Marine Mammals (IMMS) is a non-profit organization established in 1984 for the purposes of public education, conservation, and research of marine mammals and sea turtles in the wild and under human care. Located in Gulfport, MS, IMMS is the premiere organization in the Mississippi-Louisiana-Alabama sub-region of the Gulf Coast with capability and expertise to care for sick and injured marine mammals and sea turtles. Additionally, IMMS promotes public awareness of marine conservation issues through its involvement in the community. IMMS encourages the public to be good stewards of the environment and continuously work to improve the quality of life on the Gulf Coast.



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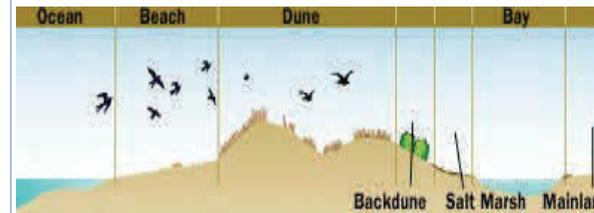
Mississippi Barrier Islands



Gulfport, Mississippi

What is a Barrier Island?

Barrier Islands are long narrow, offshore deposits of sediment/sand that consist of quartz and feldspar that are parallel to the coastline. The Mississippi Gulf Coast Barrier Islands are separated from the mainland, by a shallow sound (MS Sound). Barrier islands are often found in chains stretching across a coastline. Some barrier islands can stretch to be 100 miles long. On average the barrier islands on the Mississippi Gulf Coast range from 8 to 13 miles long. The longest of the chain of Mississippi islands is Horn Island. Barrier islands serve as protection to the coastline from hurricanes and damaging storms and to harbor several habitats that are refuges for wildlife. The current theory concerning the formation of barrier islands is that they were formed approximately 18,000 years ago during the last Ice Age. The barrier islands are constantly changing and primarily moving from east to west. The sediment or sand is being eroded from the east end of the islands and being deposited on the west end, (with the exception of a portion of Cat Island forming north to south) causing a gradual change in location, approximately one mile every hundred years.



<http://science.howstuffworks.com/>

<http://www.mikehorn.com/en/yep/pangaea-classroom-club/chapter-8---barrier-islands-and-coastal-mapping/>

Horn Island



Physical Location:

Jackson County N30 14'30 W088 41'21"

Horn Island is the largest of the four Mississippi barrier islands. Horn Island is a total of 12 miles long and is roughly two-thirds of a mile wide. The sediment (sand) consists of quartz and feldspar that once was solid rock from the Appalachian Mountains. Horn Island extends parallel east and west along the coastline. The east end is approximately eight miles south of Pascagoula, MS and the west end is roughly nine miles south of Ocean Springs. Horn Island is the perfect island if one is wanting to "island hop." Petit Bois is estimated to be five miles east and East Ship Island is approximately six miles west of Horn Island. The island serves as a rookery (nesting ground) for a wide variety of sea birds and migratory birds including osprey and bald eagles. The interior of Horn Island has an abundant amount of lagoons, marshes, and ponds. There are only a few places where one can actually hike across the island.



<http://barrierislandsms.com>

Petit Bois Island



Physical Location:
Jackson County, N30 12' W0882 28'

Petit Bois, meaning “little woods” in French, has been a part of the Gulf Island National Seashore since 1971 and was designated as wilderness area in 1978. Petit Bois Island is the second largest Mississippi barrier island in terms of land mass. Petit Bois is six miles long and consist of estuaries, ponds/lagoons, and very few slash pines in the center of the island.



<http://www.dmr.ms.gov/mississippi-gems>

Ship Island

Pre -Katrina



Post-Katrina

Physical Location:
Harrison County, N30 12'33" W088 57' 56

Ship Island is one of four Barrier Islands managed by Gulf Island National Seashore. Ship Island is open to the public for visitation via a ferry running to and from West Ship Island in the spring, summer, and fall. There are restroom facilities, a snack bar, a ranger station, and a Civil War fort (Fort Massachusetts) located on the island. Ship Island is currently in three sections, connected by narrow, tidal sandbars. The island is eight miles long and the topography is low and sandy except at the east end. The unique location provides a great place for nesting, feeding, and wintering habitat for numerous types of migratory bird species, such as the brown and white pelican. Ship Island is also known as a rookery to the black skimmer bird.



<http://www.dmr.ms.gov/mississippi-gems/253-ship-island>

History of Ship Island: Military Significance

Ship Island has played an important role in the history of the Gulf Coast. In 1699 the island was named by French explorers. Soon after the island was discovered, it became an important port for French Louisiana. Many colonists took their first steps on American soil at Ship Island. The island is considered the “Plymouth Rock” of the Gulf Coast. During the war of 1812, sixty British ships, with nearly 10,000 troops gathered near Ship Island after a defeated attempt to take New Orleans. During the



Civil War, Union soldiers were placed on Ship Island and served as

a volunteer force for the war from the New England states under General Butler. The 9th Connecticut and the 26th Massachusetts groups were the first of 27 Union infantry regiments to see service on Ship Island during the Civil War. In addition to these regiments, six batteries of light artillery and a battalion of cavalry spent time on the sandy outpost. Each of these units stayed for varying lengths of time; some for only a few days; others for several weeks; and one, the African-American 2nd Louisiana Native Guards, for almost three years.



<http://mshistory.k12.ms.us/articles/211/union-soldiers-on-ship-island-during-the-civil-war>

<http://www.mlc.lib.ms.us/services4generalpublic/MSTrivia-FortMassachusetts.html>

Cat Island



Physical Location:
Harrison County N30 13' W 089

Cat Island is located approximately eight to ten miles off the Mississippi Gulf Coast and has a land mass of 2,802 acres. Cat Island received its name due to the abundant number of raccoons found on the island in the early 18th century. The Spanish settlers mistook the raccoons for “cats.” The island has an unique “T” shape formed by the currents of the Gulf of Mexico and Mississippi Sound. On Cat Island one could find sandy beaches along the shoreline, backed by a forest of pines and live oak trees, as well as bayous and marshes. The bayous and marshlands serve as a home for the American alligator, birds, and of course the famous “cats.” The island has the reputation for being a harbor to smugglers and pirates in the 1800s -1920s.



http://www.catislandpirate.com/catislandpirate.com/Cat_Island_History.html