

Health and Safety Tips

Swimming

Use caution when swimming and never swim alone. Strong currents flowing parallel to the beach, tides flowing to and from the beach, and sudden drop-offs in the surf can be dangerous for swimmers and waders alike. If caught in a riptide, do not panic. Swim parallel to the beach until you are free from the flow, then swim to shore. Do not attempt to swim to shore against the flow. You will not make it.

Hazardous materials

These periodically wash ashore and range from 55-gallon barrels containing unknown substances to used medical products. If you come upon hazardous materials, note the location and alert a park ranger.

Metal detectors

Possession or use of metal detectors is prohibited in the park. Items such as seashells and driftwood, washed in by the tide, may be collected as long as the items are not used for commercial purposes. All other collecting is prohibited. Collection of live sea creatures is prohibited.

Pets

Pets must be on a leash and under physical restraint at all times. Pets are not permitted at the Malaquite Visitor Center area, including the designated swim beach in front of the visitor center. Pet waste is becoming a growing problem. Please clean up after your animals.

Gray water and sewage

Gray water and sewage must be disposed of only at the dump station at the Malaquite Beach campground.

Driving

Beaches are Texas public highways. Only street legal and licensed vehicles may be driven in the park. All-terrain vehicles (ATVs), UTVs, go-carts, golf carts, and dune buggies are prohibited. Driving in dunes, grasslands, or mudflats is prohibited. Drive with caution and strictly observe posted speed limits. Pedestrians have the right-of-way at all times and do not always watch for approaching vehicles.

Portuguese Man-of-War

These amazing creatures are found at the park throughout the year. These attractive, blue jellyfish like creatures cause a painful sting, which is usually accompanied by redness and some swelling of the affected skin area. If stung, seek first aid. A very small percentage of those stung will experience an allergic reaction, which can cause difficulty breathing, numbness in the arms, legs or elsewhere, severe pain, and/or disorientation or unconsciousness. Visitors experiencing these or other symptoms should notify a park ranger immediately and seek medical attention.

Sting Rays

These relatives of the shark; can inflict a puncture wound in the lower leg that can be extremely painful. If you are in the water, we recommend doing the "sting-ray shuffle"; instead of walking, shuffle along, so instead of stepping on a sting ray you actually nudge it, thereby causing it to swim away.

Rattlesnakes

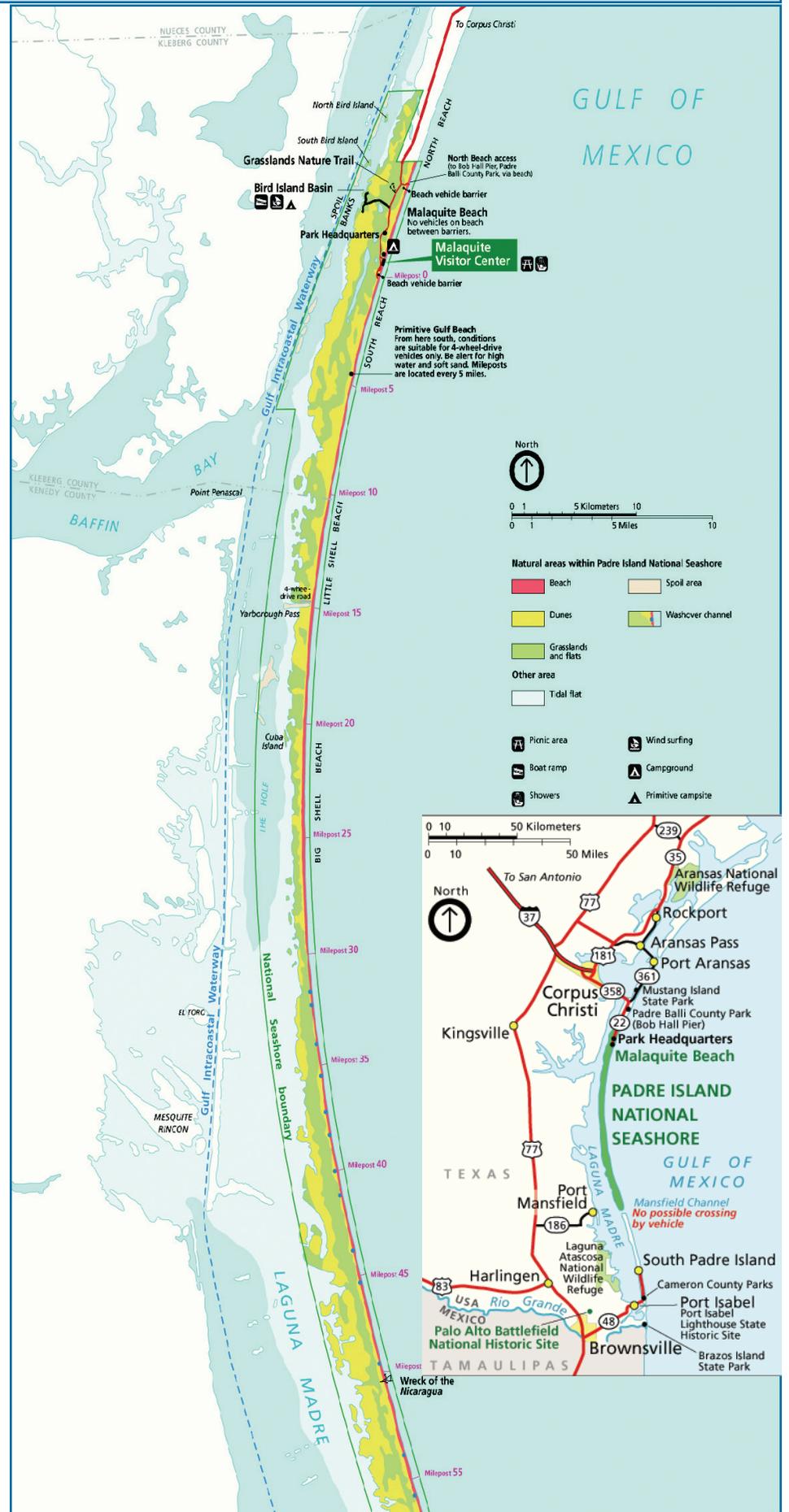
Rattlesnakes live in the dunes, grasslands, and mudflats. Visitors should use extreme caution when walking in these areas.

Hunting

Hunting is not permitted in the park, except for the taking of waterfowl in the Laguna Madre in accordance with applicable state and federal regulations. Transporting lawfully taken wildlife, including exotic species, through the park is prohibited, except for waterfowl and fish.

Loaded firearms are strictly prohibited. A Concealed Handgun License, issued under the authority of the State of Texas, or another state is not valid at Padre Island National Seashore.

Jet skis, air boats, and kite surfing are prohibited.



IN CASE OF MEDICAL EMERGENCY

If you have a medical emergency during your visit, contact a park ranger immediately or go to the First Aid station at the Malaquite Visitor Center. If an employee is not immediately available, you may summon assistance for any emergency by dialing 911.

The closest hospital is Bay Area Medical Center, located at the corner of South Padre Island Drive and Rodd Field Road in Corpus Christi. This facility is 24 miles from the visitor center.