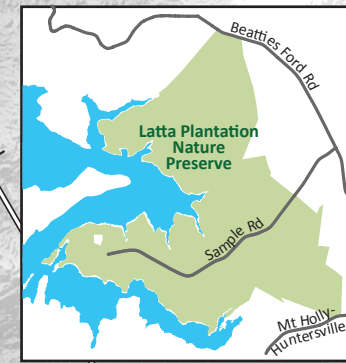
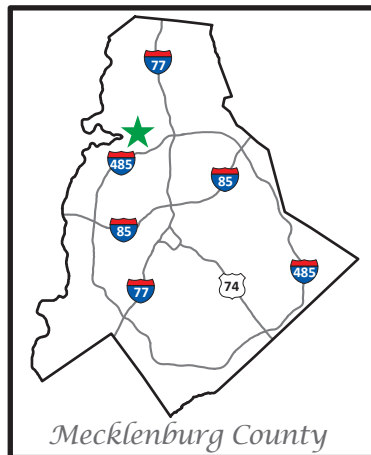




**Mecklenburg County
Park and Recreation**
*The Natural Place
To Be...*



**Latta Plantation Nature
Preserve**
5226 Sample Road
Charlotte, NC 28078
704.875.1391
www.parkandrec.com



Legend:

Horseback and Hiking Trails

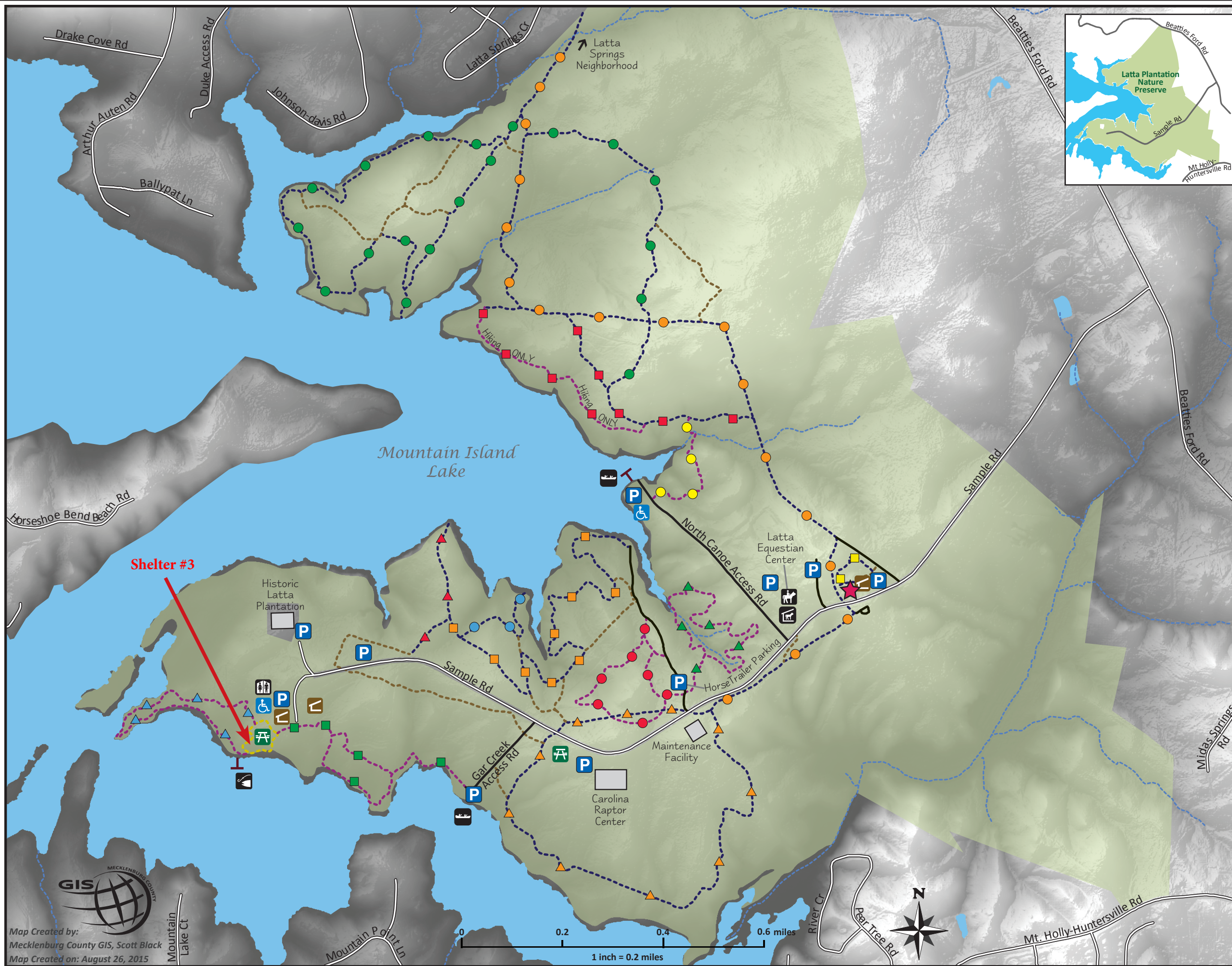
- Split Rock Trail1.15 miles
- Cove Trail2.54 miles
- Hill Trail2.21 miles
- Shady Trail1.60 miles
- Buzzard Rock Trail0.3 miles
- Catawba Trail1.25 miles
- Laura's Trail0.3 miles

Hiking Trails ONLY

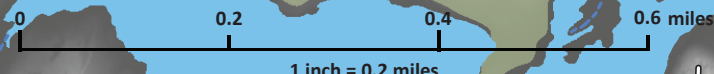
- Treasure Tree Trail0.7 miles
- Beechwood Trail0.9 miles
- Audubon Trail0.8 miles
- Cattail Trail0.8 miles
- Piedmont Prairie Trail0.3 miles
- Picnic Loop Trail0.3 miles
- Nature Walk Trail0.2 miles

Map Features

- Service Road
- Horseback & Hiking Connector Trails
- Streets
- Creek/Streams
- Latta Plantation Nature Preserve Boundary
- Canoe Launch
- Fishing
- Horseback Riding (guided tour)
- Nature Center w/ Restrooms
- Parking
- Picnic Area
- Pier/Dock
- Restrooms
- Reservable Shelter
- Stable
- Wheelchair Accessible



Map Created by:
Mecklenburg County GIS, Scott Black
Map Created on: August 26, 2015



Latta Plantation Nature Preserve



Latta Plantation Nature Preserve

5226 Sample Road

Huntersville, NC 28078

704.875.1391

www.parkandrec.com

Hours of Operation

Latta Plantation Nature Preserve

Open Daily 7:00 am until sunset

Latta Plantation Nature Center

Monday-Saturday 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve & Christmas

Directions

Traveling North on I-77

Exit 18, WT Harris Blvd. Turn left and

proceed 1.7 miles west to Mt. Holly-Huntersville Rd.

Turn left and go 1.2 miles to Beatties Ford Rd.

Turn right and proceed north 1.5 miles to Sample Rd.

Turn left onto Sample Road and continue 1 mile to the preserve entrance.

Traveling South on I-77

Exit 25, Hwy. 73/Sam Furr Rd. Turn right and proceed

Avenue for another 1.9 miles to Beatties Ford Rd.

Turn left and proceed 5.1 miles to Sample Road.

Turn right onto Sample Road and continue

1 mile to the preserve entrance.

Latta Plantation Nature Preserve

is Mecklenburg County's largest nature preserve and protects over 1,345 acres of natural communities including the Beatties Ford Basic Forest natural heritage site. The preserve forms a green peninsula extending into Mountain Island Lake, the drinking water source for over 900,000 residents in Mecklenburg and Gaston counties. Its diversity of natural communities includes upland and bottomland hardwood forests, open fields, streams, and a Piedmont Prairie restoration site protecting the federally endangered Schweinitz's sunflower. The preserve is part of the Mountain Island Lake Important Bird Area, designated by the National Audubon Society due to its diversity of wintering water fowl, breeding and migratory songbird species, and protection of bottomland hardwood forests, a threatened natural community in North Carolina.

Latta Plantation Nature Preserve offers endless opportunities for outdoor recreation. Visitors can literally spend the entire day at the preserve. Canoe and kayak enthusiasts will find two landing areas that provide access to Gar Creek and Mountain Island Lake. Anglers will find numerous fishing opportunities on Mountain Island Lake (see fishing). Three reservable (30 person) picnic shelters and an accessible trail with eight picnic platforms that provide picnic opportunities with restrooms nearby. For more information call **704.875.1391** or visit www.parkandrec.com

Fishing and Boating

Fishing is allowed on Mountain Island Lake, but all anglers must purchase a valid North Carolina fishing license. North Carolina fishing licenses can be purchased at www.ncwildlife.gov or through area retailers. Canoe and kayak enthusiasts will find two landing areas that provide access to Gar Creek and Mountain Island Lake. At the North Canoe Access, you'll find an accessible canoe/kayak launch with a floating dock for universal access. For more information call **704.875.1391** or visit www.parkandrec.com

Trails

Latta Plantation Nature Preserve has 16 miles of trails offering hikers, nature enthusiasts, and horseback riders the opportunity to explore a variety of terrain while enjoying scenic views of the lake, forests, and streams. It is the only Mecklenburg County property open to horseback riding. **Bicycles are permitted ONLY on paved roads within the preserve.** Dogs are welcome on preserve trails, but must remain on a six-foot leash at all times. Visitors bringing their own horses can park in the designated horse trailer parking lot. All trails are clearly marked with color symbols.



Horseback & Hiking Trails

Split Rock Trail - 1.15 miles ■

Accessed from either Hill or Piedmont Prairie trails, this moderate trail skirts the southern edge of the Piedmont Prairie restoration site, where the endangered Schweinitz's sunflower can be seen in bloom from mid-September to mid-October. Its looped section contains more rocky terrain that is not accessible to horseback riders, but does offer excellent views across Mountain Island Lake of Buzzard's Rock and Wash Rock overlooks.

Cove Trail - 2.54 miles ●

This moderate trail can be accessed from Hill or Split Rock trails. Heading north from the Piedmont Prairie restoration site, the trail crosses a powerline right-of-way and then traverses the southern border of the Beatties Ford Basic Forest natural heritage site. Its looped section contains very rocky terrain that may not be suitable for all horseback riders, but does offer beautiful views of Mountain Island Lake.

Hill Trail - 2.21 miles ●

This moderate trail starts at the southern terminus of the horse trailer parking lot, the trail primarily follows powerline right-of ways and gravel maintenance roads before traversing the eastern edge of the Piedmont Prairie restoration site and eventually the western edge of the Beatties Ford Basic Forest natural heritage site. Along the prairie's edge from spring through fall, look for fence lizards and, less common, six-lined racerunners. The trail's northern terminus at the Latta Springs neighborhood provides the only public access to the nature preserve outside of the main entrance on Sample Road.

Shady Trail - 1.60 miles ▲

Accessed across the main road from the horse trailer parking lot, this easy loop begins in a young mixed pine-hardwood forest. The trail heads south towards Gar Creek where views of the inlet into Mountain Island Lake can be seen during the winter months. The trail skirts the edge between bottomland hardwood and upland hardwood forests before turning back north, crossing the main road and returning to the horse trailer parking lot via a powerline right-of-way.

Buzzard Rock Trail - 0.3 miles ▲

An easy trail that passes through a mixed pine-hardwood forest in route to an overlook high above Mountain Island Lake. The Buzzard Rock overlook consists of a large, wooden deck nestled between a cluster of huge diorite boulders. To preserve vegetation and minimize erosion around the overlook, horses must tie off at a hitching post located 100 feet before the deck.

Catawba Trail - 1.25 miles ■

Accessed from the Buzzard Rock parking lot, this easy trail passes through both upland hardwood and bottomland hardwood forests. The trail provides excellent views of Mountain Island Lake. A connector trail can be used to reach the horse trailer parking lot, providing access to Shady Trail which can be used to travel west back towards the Buzzard Rock trail.

Laura's Trail - 0.3 miles ●

Officially named in 1998 in memory of Laura Anderson of the Carolina Berg Wanderers this easy trail passes through an upland hardwood forest with some of the largest tulip poplar trees in the nature preserve. The trail terminates at a large cluster of diorite boulders, known as the Wash Rock overlook, providing excellent views of Mountain Island Lake. Wash Rock was named after the rock upon which, legend has it, early settlers of the area washed their garments. To preserve vegetation and minimize erosion around the overlook, horses are restricted from entering the trail's final 500 feet.

Hiking Trails ONLY

Beechwood Trail - 0.9 miles ▲

A moderate loop trail accessed from the horse trailer parking lot. This trail begins in a young, dry pine-hardwood forest and then proceeds along several seepage slopes through a mature hardwood forest containing oaks, red maples, tulip poplars, and some of the largest American beech trees in the nature preserve. Look for wildflowers along the rich, moist slopes in spring and early summer.

Audubon Trail - 0.8 miles ■

An easy trail accessed from the picnic area parking lot. Part of the trail passes through a mature bottomland hardwood forest containing sweetgum, pawpaw and tulip poplar trees while the remaining portions traverse a dry, early successional pine-hardwood forest. This trail has been designated a "Fairy House Trail" (contact nature center for details). A 0.4 mile spur trail leads to the Gar Creek canoe access.

Treasure Tree Trail - 0.7 miles ●

This easy loop trail is accessed from the horse trailer parking lot. This trail winds through various stages of forest succession including pine stands, a powerline right-of-way, hurricane-disturbed woodlands, and mature upland hardwood forest, providing the opportunity to view century old trees. Be sure to look for the unusually large and uniquely shaped sourwood specimen, a North Carolina Treasure Tree.

Cattail Trail - 0.8 miles ▲

Accessed from the picnic loop trail, this easy loop follows the edge of a peninsula along Mountain Island Lake. After passing through a mature hardwood forest containing tulip poplars, oaks, hickories, and sweetgum trees, the trail's westernmost point culminates under the canopy of several large water oaks.

Piedmont Prairie Trail - 0.3 miles ●

This moderate trail meanders through a mixed pine-hardwood forest, with occasional steep inclines, connecting the North Canoe Access with the southern edge of the Piedmont Prairie restoration site. Look for abundant Christmas ferns and spring wildflowers as the trail traverses several seepage slopes.

Nature Walk Trail - 0.2 miles ■

Enjoy a shady walk along this trail and learn about some of our local plants and animals. Within the loop you'll find a natural play area for kids with a playhouse, climbing structures, and plenty of opportunities for imagination and exploration.

Picnic Loop Trail - 0.3 miles ♿

This short, accessible paved trail provides access to eight picnic sites with primitive grills, a fishing pier, Cattail and Audubon trails.

Educational Programs

Latta Plantation Nature Center serves as the gateway to the nature preserve and is the source for educational programs and information on the preserve's natural communities, flora, and fauna. The center features live, native animals, a discovery hall, an outdoor amphitheater, and a gift shop. Outside, visitors can stop and observe nature in action at the National Wildlife Federation certified Backyard Habitat Garden which includes bird feeding stations, butterfly gardens, garden stream, and demonstration compost area. Self-interpretive trail guides are also available. **Carolina Raptor Center** is an education and rehabilitation facility dedicated to the conservation of birds of prey and home to the Southeast's largest eagle aviary. **Latta Equestrian Center** is a facility providing guided horseback rides, pony rides, horse shows, lessons, and a tack store. **Historic Latta Plantation** is a restored 19th century federal style home and living history farm of James Latta, public tours and interpretive programs available.

Nature Preserve Rules

- * Collection, removal, or disturbance of any natural or cultural object is prohibited.
- * All pets must be on a leash no longer than six feet.
- * No alcoholic beverages are allowed (except with a valid shelter reservation and permit).
- * Motorized and non-motorized vehicles are restricted to paved roads.
- * Effective March 18, 2015, Mecklenburg County parks and buildings will be tobacco-free. The tobacco-free designation includes cigarettes, e-cigarettes, smokeless tobaccos, water pipes, etc.
- * For your safety and the protection of the preserve, please walk with a friend and stay on designated trails. To prevent damage to fragile vegetation and erosion, do not create switchbacks or skirt wet areas.
- * Introduction of plants or animals to the nature preserve is prohibited.
- * All weapons except properly concealed firearms pursuant to valid permit.
- * No swimming or wading is allowed.
- * Avoid natural surface trails for a minimum of 24 hours after a heavy rain, snow, or ice storm even if closure notices are not posted.
- * Children under the age of 16 are required to wear a helmet while riding bicycles, skateboards, or rollerblades.

