The Thousand Islands is a rich paddling destination with endless day and extended trips through quiet back bays, meandering channels, and thrilling open waters. The routes described in this guide represent some of the best areas for paddlers to begin their explorations in the fantastic Garden of the Great Spirit.

Paddlers will enjoy premiere island and mainland campsites, beaches and trails. The inns and restaurants of the historic Thousand Islands villages beckon travelers to stay and discover the hidden past of this legendary place.

ABOUT THE GUIDE BOOK
The Thousand Islands Water Trail is divided into 9 paddling routes, organized to follow the flow of the river from Kingston, in the west, to Brockville, in the east. They are somewhat artificial in that the river can be paddled in any direction and in thousands of combinations. Routes are constructed as half-day and full-day excursions and directly abut one another to allow for extended tripping. Printing this Introduction and Routes 1-9 will give you a complete guide book. The maps are most useful if you arrange to print them in colour. Detailed listings of camping, marinas, outfitters and on-shore accommodation are updated regularly and can be printed directly from the web site.

DAYTRIPPING
The Thousand Islands are a wonderful place for daytripping, offering convenient half-day and full-day excursions along its length. Do not under-estimate the planning required for a short trip and be prepared for an extended stay if conditions worsen or other challenges arise. Day paddlers must carry all gear listed as required equipment, and should prepare for unexpected circumstances by following the recommendations provided for extended tripping.

EXTENDED TRIPPING
Wear a drytop or full wetsuit to ensure warmth in the event of capsize. The Victoria Day weekend in May is the unofficial opening day for boating in the islands. The summer season is in full swing by June when the average air temperature on the islands is 15 C and the water reaches 11-12 C. In August the average air and water temperatures rises to 21 C and 18-19 C. Some of the nicest paddling days greet September trippers,
and if you are prepared for cold-water travel and frosty evenings, the sunny days in October await adventurous paddlers.

Paddlers planning extended tripping should take into account the direction and strength of the water’s current and the winds that create its chop. The prevailing winds in the Thousand Islands are westerly. With the large fetch on Lake Ontario to the southwest, winds gather speed and power over the big water, and are funneled through the river valley. Winds tend to build through the day due to the sea breeze effect. The sun heats the land causing the air to rise, pulling the cooler air off the lake and river. This effect is reversed as evening approaches, when the land temperature falls and eventually becomes cooler than the water. A gentle land breeze often blows through the island pines overhead at night. Thunderstorms are infrequent in the Thousand Islands, however they can build very rapidly and are often very powerful. Get off the water if you suspect a storm is approaching, and find shelter under one of the picnic shelters (usually located within a few strides of the docks in the centre of an island).

Water currents only pose a challenge for paddlers in a few isolated locations on the St. Lawrence. Swift currents will be encountered at the Raft Narrows and International Rift. Just off Ivy Lea, the river narrows and as the flow is funneled, the velocity of the current increases. The International Rift is a tiny, winding route that pulls vessels downriver between Hill and Wellesley Islands and into the shallow, sheltered Lake of the Isles. Despite its name, the Raft Narrows is actually the wider passage on the river at Ivy Lea, only presenting challenging currents above Georgina, Constance and Rabbit Islands. The channel that lies north of Georgina Island is home to the Thousand Islands sill, the cause of the boiling waters for which the area is famous. At that point, the riverbed far below the water’s surface drops over a giant underwater waterfall. The swirling waters can quickly alter your course and may unexpectedly hurl a vessel port or starboard. The river drops from a depth of roughly 10 m to more than 70 m over the course of a few paddle strokes. Paddlers heading downstream should be aware of these potential hazards, but should be able to navigate the route by staying close to shore (hugging the mainland as you pass beneath the International Bridge to avoid the bubbling, swirling current created by the Thousand Islands sill). Those heading upstream should also stay close to shore, and expect tough paddling through this section.
Overnight arrangements may entail camping or accommodations at bed and breakfasts, inns, or hotels and motels along the river corridor. Reservations should certainly be made well in advance for all accommodations. Keep in mind, island camping at the sites maintained by St. Lawrence Islands National Park is first come-first served. Be sure to arrive early to a site, especially if there are few island camping options on the route you are paddling. Camping on the mainland at private establishments and at Ivy Lea Campground should be booked well in advance.

It is necessary to be continuously conscious of the need for contingency planning when paddling the St. Lawrence River. Be aware of your location at all times, and be aware of the nearest safe egress point, in the case of an emergency. Often these safe spots will be national park islands where shelter and warmth (and often assistance) are easily found. Other times it may be necessary to make an emergency landing on the property of a private landowner. In a case such as this, please respect the rights of the property owner.

MAPS AND CHARTS
The 10 thematic maps in this guidebook are an excellent resource for planning and research, but do not contain sufficient detail for river travel. Please do not rely solely on these maps. The NTS Topographic Map, CHS Hydrographic Chart and Waterproof Chart references are provided for each route. Carry a topo map or chart and consult it frequently. Maps and charts can be purchased online, ordered by telephone and obtained from marinas, outfitters and other local suppliers.

ACCESS POINTS
The best launch and egress points for each route are identified for paddlers to access the river from the Canadian mainland. In most cases, these are public facilities such as boat launches, parks and marinas. Look for roadside signs indicating boat launching ramps.
STAYING IN 1000 ISLANDS COMMUNITIES
After a day on the water exploring the islands, consider spending your evening exploring one of the beautiful communities on the mainland with a stay in one of the fine accommodations of the region. Historic B&B’s, inns and hotels offer a full range of services for paddlers. Many are on the water and others a few steps away. Staying on the mainland reduces the impact of visitors on the islands and can be a lot more comfortable in the spring and fall. Information is available from the tourism information centres listed on the preceeding page and an accommodation listing may be printed directly from this web site by following the link to www.paddle1000.com/info/listings1.htm

NEED EQUIPMENT, LESSONS OR A GUIDE FOR YOUR TRIP?
A directory of outfitters is included in the body of the web site so that it can be readily updated and easily printed. You can follow this link to it www.paddle1000.com/paddling/outfitters.htm

Most of the access points identified are appropriate for both day-tripping and extended trips. However, a few are only suitable for day-tripping, as no overnight parking is available. In some cases inns, motels, B&B’s, marinas and canoe clubs may provide suitable access points for members and guests. Be sure to confirm this with service providers, upon making your reservations. A listing of marinas, launch ramps and services for paddlers may be printed directly from the web site. www.paddle1000.com/info/listings3.htm

TRIP LENGTH & DISTANCES
Distances for routes are provided in kilometers, trip length is described in terms of half day, full day or extended trip. Be mindful that these are estimates based on paddling the routes in many conditions, solo and with groups; be sure to have a contingency plan for unexpected events or inclement weather.

EXTENSION
Each route abuts at least one other route, and possible extensions are noted where routes may be combined for extended trips. Generally the river is most easily paddled from west to east (Kingston-Brockville), taking advantage of the prevailing winds and water current. However, all routes can be paddled in any direction. Safe, sheltered paddling can usually be found by taking advantage of the leeward side of islands.

HAZARDS
In addition to the general safety considerations outlined in this introduction, the specific hazards that may be encountered such as busy channel crossings, cable ferry routes, and sites where strong winds frequent or fast-moving currents lie are clearly marked and described for each route.

POINTS OF INTEREST
The points of interest noted in the route descriptions are special areas of the Thousand Islands that are reminders of the region’s rich natural diversity and cultural heritage. These include quiet trails and sandy beaches, secluded bays, hidden channels, unique geological formations, mysterious petroglyphs, historic architecture, submerged wrecks, and abandoned homesteads. Points of interest are special places, often hidden and easily overlooked by those unfamiliar with the islands. They are noted here to enrich your paddling experience!
SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS
For safe paddling in the Thousand Islands, it is necessary to be mindful of several considerations.

Paddle with friends. Only very experienced paddlers (with a failsafe roll, strong knowledge of several self-rescue techniques, and trustworthy navigation skills) should paddle alone in the Thousand Islands. Group paddling is strongly recommended, to create a safer paddling scenario where partners can assist in navigation, capsize events or first aid situations.

Watch for other vessels. The St. Lawrence River is a busy place full of recreational motor craft, sailboats, and commercial touring boats, not to mention ocean-going vessels. The recreational channel is marked by red and green buoys on the water, and is clearly indicated on the route maps that highlight the Thousand Islands Water Trail. Boat traffic is especially busy near the marinas and harbours of Kingston, Gananoque, Ivy Lea, Rockport and Brockville. The St. Lawrence International Seaway Channel is a definite consideration in trip planning. Plan to steer clear of it! At Ironsides Island, westbound the shipping channel splits into two channels diverting most of the traffic south in the American Shipping Channel of the river. Eastbound from Ironsides, all traffic uses a route that lies mainly in Canadian waters and is especially hazardous in the narrow waters off Brockville.

Watch for rocks. The hundreds of submerged shoals in the river shouldn't provide too much difficulty for paddlers. In fact these areas are often clear of all other type of vessel and can usually be navigated by paddle. However, be weary of shoals when high winds gather large waves that can break in an erratic manner on shoals.

Beware strong currents. In places where the river channel narrows, the river current can be swift. Areas of strong currents are identified clearly on route maps. Paddlers should avoid paddling directly through these areas, and should rather stay nearshore to minimize the risk of a capsize.

Respect stormy weather. Storms brew very quickly over the St. Lawrence. If it looks like weather approaching, it will very likely arrive before you expect it. Have a map case on deck, and be aware of your location on the water at all times so that you can quickly determine the best location to land and the fastest route to it. Emergency landings ashore or on the islands should be made on public lands, but in cases of grave danger do what is necessary to be safe. Landowners of the region

FLOAT PLAN
A float plan is a record, prepared in trip planning, that provides a complete set of information (intended to be shared with all paddlers on trip) that is invaluable to search and rescue personnel in the case of an emergency.

It is essential that paddlers prepare a float plan for tripping in the Thousand Islands region. A copy of this document should be carried by all members of the group on trip, and left with at least one trusted individual. It will detail the journey precisely as it is planned, including the estimated departure and arrival dates, times and locations. The float plan should also contain information on the group (size, number of craft, craft descriptions) and a description of each member of the group (identity, paddling skill level, allergies or conditions and first aid abilities). Contact information for the next of kin of all group members should also be contained in the document, as well as the contact information of the responsible individual on shore.
will often be quick to come to your assistance.

Stay warm. Cold and wet is a dangerous combination in any wilderness situation. Be sure to be cold weather ready when paddling the river during all seasons. Water temperatures are cold in all months except June-August, and air temperatures can be cool on summer evenings.

Stay in touch. When paddling the Thousand Islands, be sure to carry appropriate communication equipment. A VHF radio is the standard communication device for boaters, but may prove too bulky for paddlers. A cell phone is far more convenient, and is effective for the region has good cellular phone coverage.

Be seen. Be visible when you are on the water so that fellow boaters can see you. Use common sense to improve the chances of being quickly seen on the water—wear colourful clothing, use navigation lights in conditions of poor visibility, or paddle as a group. For signaling an emergency, carry a waterproof high-beam flashlight, or better yet at least 3 flares (smoke or fire)

Be heard. Three short whistle blasts will signal to others in the immediate vicinity your distress. VHF radio channel 16 is used for EMERGENCY and CALLING purposes only. In case of grave and imminent danger, use channel 16 and repeat MAYDAY three times. When you require assistance but face no immediate danger, use channel 16 and repeat PAN PAN three times. With a cellular phone, dial *16 for the Canadian Coast Guard Rescue Coordination Centre. Give a vessel description, position, nature of problem, and type of assistance required. Contact Marine Search and Rescue (1-800-267-5111) in an emergency situation when a fellow paddler or other boater is missing and presumed overboard.

Be safe. The Safe Boating Guide is published by the Canadian Coast Guard. It encourages boaters to manage their own safety by avoiding unnecessary risks and planning each trip with safety in mind. The Guide stresses 5 easy rules, all relevant for paddlers: Buckle Up (your PAD); Drive (Paddle) Sober; Look First; Wear the Gear; Get Trained. Recreational users should consult this publication. It is available free of charge at 1-800-267-6687 www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca

**DRINKING WATER SAFETY**
Utilize a water purification system to ensure your drinking water supply is safe for consumption, free of bacteria and viruses. Water purifiers are fast, efficient tools for adventure travel that reduce the need to build or maintain a campfire, thus reducing the petrofuel or fuelwood draw. If your party is not equipped with a purifying device, water may be boiled for ten minutes to reasonably purify the supply.

**FISH CONSUMPTION GUIDELINES**
Fishing seasons are strictly defined for all fish species of the St. Lawrence. Anglers require a fishing licence (available in all villages along the river at various businesses). Anglers who intend to consume fish from the river should consult the annual Sport Fishing Guide for Ontario waters. It outlines season, catch limit, and consumption guidelines. Complete information on fishing in Ontario can be found at Let’s Fish Ontario www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/fishing/
PADDLING CONSIDERATIONS
The St. Lawrence river is used by all types of watercraft, from canoe and kayak to pleasure cruiser to ocean freighter. Several rules guide river travel. Primary is the “paddle-sail-power” right of way hierarchy that gives priority to self-propelled craft, then sail-powered, and finally motorized craft. While this rule is in the paddler's favour, it is often forgotten. Be cautious when approaching other craft. Note that this rule does not apply to freighters! Most tonnage rules. Steer clear of these vessels, and exercise extreme caution!

Stay close to shore. To minimize the hazards associated with other watercraft, stay close to shore and away from the recreational boating and shipping channels.

Cross cautiously and quickly. When the need arises to cross a recreational or shipping channel, do so with caution by checking in all directions for approaching vessels. If the crossing is clear, gather the group to cross the channel in a pod so as to minimize the time necessary for the first and last paddler in the group to make the crossing, keeping a brisk paddling pace.

Stay to starboard. If you alter your route in response to an approaching vessel, steer to your right. This is a standard convention that you should assume other vessels will assume in their approach. If both vessels steer to starboard, hazardous collisions will be reduced!

Assist in distress. If you happen to be in the vicinity of another in distress, be quick to respond. Ensure that the scene is safe for you to assist. Use your communication equipment to contact the professional response facilities onshore.

Be mindful of other people you encounter on the water. The majority of islands in the river are private property, and while many islands owners are happy to say hello and may even welcome you ashore for a friendly chat, please respect their privacy. Also, remember to respect the privacy of other boaters who may be anchored for the evening in a sheltered bay. Give a wide berth as you paddle the channels.

“LEAVE ONLY PADDLE STROKES”
No trace recreation involves identifying the traces you may leave behind and eliminating them through creative solutions. Excellent information is available from “Leave No Trace” www.lnt.org

One of the simple pleasures of paddling is the chance to land your vessel and stretch your legs but keep the potential impact in mind when launching or landing your kayak. Paddlers are encouraged to use the “dock-rock-sand” method for selecting a landing site. Docks are located on most of the islands highlighted in the route descriptions. When space is available, dock landings provide sheltered, predictable egress points where landing poses no impact to island shorelines. (The yellow line access on national park island docks is reserved for park and emergency vessels. It is often available for paddlers to quickly disembark before carrying craft and gear to a nearby campsite. Carry your vessel to the campsite or tether to visitor dock space for the evening (fee applies for the latter). Please do not drag boats on the fragile shorelines.

If there is no dock, please be mindful of your impact when landing on shorelines. Rock (cobble or bedrock) beaches are common throughout the region and offer landing sites that are more resilient than sand beaches. Pay close attention to beach flora if you land on sand beaches. Some of the rarest species that inhabit the region grow in beach habitats, and may easily be trampled. Please ensure that you select an appropriate landing site that is free of vegetation. Finally, enjoy exploring the wetlands of the river from your vessel, but do not land in marsh shoreline habitats, as these areas are extremely fragile.
CAMPING
Public and private camping facilities serve paddlers in the Thousand Islands. A listing may be downloaded directly from this web site by following the link below. The paddling routes rely primarily on public campsites on the islands of St. Lawrence Islands National Park, the Parks of the St. Lawrence campground at Ivy Lea, and the municipal park islands that lie off Brockville. Please contact these organizations directly to obtain the most current information regarding services, facilities, fees and regulations.

St. Lawrence Islands National Park
(613) 923-5261
http://parkscanada.pch.gc.ca/parks/ontario/st_lawrence_islands/st_lawrence_islands_e.htm

Parks of the St. Lawrence
(800) 437-2233
www.parks.on.ca/campout/index.htm

City of Brockville
(613) 342-8772
www.brockville.com

Listing of private and public campgrounds in the 1000 Islands
www.paddle1000.com/info/listings2.htm

ISLAND CAMPING
When on land, please abide the simple tenet “stay on trail.” Island ecosystems are fragile and innocent wandering can lead to trampling of rare flora and may be unsafe (poison ivy grows on many islands and tree branches may be snagged overhead). The trails outlined in the route descriptions are located on islands managed by St. Lawrence Islands National Park. The national park designs and maintains its trails to minimize environmental impact and ensure safety for hikers. For the same reasons, please camp only in designated places.

“Pack in, pack out” refers to all solid wastes that cannot be burned. This rule is especially important for paddlers to abide by when visiting island and sites. Minimize your garbage waste by reducing the number of cans, bottles and plastic/foil wrapping you use in purchasing and packing the food for your trip. All national park island campsites have privy facilities. When you have been given permission to camp on private property or find yourself somewhere where there is no privy, human waste may be deposited in catholes dug 10-15cm deep and at least 75m from water. Pack out toilet paper and sanitary products and cover and disguise hole. Better yet, carry out your waste out too. There are lightweight portable systems available to make this easier.

Open fires are not permitted on national park islands. Campers are encouraged to use gas stoves for cooking. Fires must be contained within designated fire rings and stands on campsites or in the woodstoves located in shelters. Please burn wood provided at the site or purchased from island attendants; refrain from gathering fallen wood as this causes undue stress on the forest ecosystem. The health of these natural systems relies on natural processes like decay and soil replenishment to continue unimpeded. The fallen branches, trees and leaves also provide important habitat for the rich diversity of wildlife of the islands.

Do not use the river for washing dishes. Use your three largest containers and wash dishes at least 75m from water. Practice the three wash system; washing using phosphate free biodegradable soap, rinse and dip (in bleach solution) all dishes. Strain wash basin of all small food particles and pack these out along with any packaging and large food scraps. Combine all liquids and scatter over the ground (preferably somewhere with at least 5cm soil cover).
The Thousand Islands is the scene of remarkable transformation. The islands, islets and shoals that comprise the Thousand Islands, stand stubbornly today following ages of geological history that has seen the region changed from a sea floor to a mountain range. Indeed, the islands are the remnant peaks of an ancient mountain chain, first scoured and shaped by successive glacial advances and then inundated by the floodwaters of the Great Lakes.

The complex geology of the region includes a remarkable diversity of formations and landforms. Within the granite-dominated landscape distinct rock formations lie scattered: folded gneiss dots Mulcaster Island; Gordon Island is underlain by sandstone, visible in shoreline bluffs; limestone beaches surround Cedar Island. Throughout the region, unique landforms add diversity to the topography: Grenadier and Hill Islands are large, narrow eskers; the whaleback shape of Mermaid Island was formed by glacial polishing and scour; potholes were literally dug out of the rock on Bostwick Island; the polished northeast facing slopes and jagged western facing cliffs clearly show the direction of glacial movement.

The Frontenac Axis is a narrow granite spur of the Canadian Shield that bisects the region and provides the rugged character for which the Thousand Islands are renowned. The continental landform is ecologically significant due to connectivity it provides, linking the northern forest of the Algonquin highlands with the rugged Adirondack Mountains. Although the waters of the Great Lakes can be a barrier to migrating flora and fauna, the St. Lawrence River funnels the water into a narrow channel here, and the islands form stepping stones shortening distances across the river. Thus, the Axis provides a corridor for wildlife movement that maintains the integrity of the region and the wild regions to the north and south. The Frontenac Axis stands wild today because its rugged topography of rock and wetlands made much of the region poor farmland for early settlers and held only scattered pockets of large forests for timber barons. The region remains wild thanks to caring stewardship initiatives undertaken by the active conservation community that includes federal, provincial and
STEWARDSHIP
The natural and cultural heritage of the Thousand Islands is highly valued by residents and visitors alike. Protection to ensure that the heritage of the region is not threatened is afforded to several special places. Public land stewardship is undertaken by St. Lawrence Islands National Park and the Parks of the St. Lawrence. These parks balance natural heritage protection with recreational use and enjoyment. Sensible rules and guidelines are established to ensure that the natural environment and high-quality recreation opportunities are preserved. Be sure to familiarize yourself with this information before tripping in the region.

Private land stewardship is undertaken by caring individuals in the region, supported by the Thousand Islands Heritage Conservancy, Leeds County Stewardship Council, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, the Nature Conservancy of Canada, among many other organizations.

As a visitor to the Thousand Islands you can contribute to the stewardship effort by striving to attain the highest standard of low-impact practice, learning more about the ecology of the region, or supporting one of the conservation organizations that work to ensure this tiny jewel of the St. Lawrence remains. Links to many of these conservation organizations are provided in the body of the web site at www.paddle1000.com/islands/links.htm

municipal agencies working in concert with local partners such as land trusts and landowners associations.

The Thousand Islands is a remarkably biodiverse region that hosts a rich and complex ecology characterized by thick woods, rocky outcrops and river marshes. Mature mixed forests of hemlock, white pine, pitch pine, red and white oak, maple and birch fill the forests with vibrant life. The region is a tension zone of rapid transition between northern and southern forest that supports plants and animals from several different geographic regions. The Thousand Islands ecology is strongly affected by several inter-related factors that combine to create a richly diverse ecoregion. As the confluence of east-west and north-south wildlife movement corridors, species characteristic of several forest zones inhabit the Thousand Islands. Some forest communities are favoured, while others are hindered, by the acidic soils of the granitic bedrock that contrast sharply with the alkaline soils associated with neighbouring lowlands. The dominant east-west orientation of the islands creates a distinct north aspect and south aspect on larger islands. This creates unique microclimates, or slight differences in temperature and moisture, which provide subtle habitat variations for wildlife to carve a niche. Finally, the presence of Lake Ontario immediately adjacent to the region has the effect of a 'heat sink'; it moderates the local climate of the Thousand Islands. Notable examples of species which are common in the region, but rare in the rest of Canada include: Rue Anemone; the Black Rat Snake (Canada’s largest reptile); Pitch Pine (a southern species whose range extends along the Frontenac Arch to just north of the 1000 Islands); the Least Bittern (a wading bird whose wetland habitats are decreasing elsewhere within its northern range); and a small population of deerberry that remains on some islands in the area.
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Many others attended meetings and provided photographs, information and advice. We appreciate all the help and encouragement we received and hope that through this collective effort many more people will come to experience the joys of paddling in the Thousand Islands.

Thanks

John, Leif, Jim & Russell

THE THOUSAND ISLANDS WATER TRAIL PROJECT TEAM

Leif Helmer, author of the guidebook, was born in Kingston, raised in the country near Merrickville, and schooled at Queen’s University. On the team at St. Lawrence Islands National Park for several years, Leif Helmer is a life-long resident and member of the greater 1000 Islands community. An ardent paddler, and committed environmentalist, Leif enjoys splitting his leisure time between lacing up his hiking boots and squeezing into the cockpit of his sea kayak. He is presently living on Nova Scotia’s beautiful and wild south shore, where paddling and hiking routes abound, but a little bit of the St. Lawrence river still runs in his veins! He can be reached at leif_helmer@hotmail.com

Russell Turner designed the web site and manages it on an ongoing basis. He can be reached at the MIRUSCO rturner@mirusco.com Ph: (705) 876-9935

Cartographer, Jim Todd, produced the spectacular maps for this project. You can contact him via todd@tartannet.ns.ca Ph: (902) 532-5009

Project Manager, John Good, specializes in interpretation, marketing, community relations, fund raising and partnership development for heritage organizations. He can be reached at john.good1@sympatico.ca Ph: (705) 652-8778

DISCLAIMER

The Thousand Islands Water Trail, Thousand Islands Community Development Corporation, and Thousand Islands St. Lawrence River Marketing Partnership and other individuals, organizations and agencies associated with the project assume no liability for accident or injury that may occur. While every attempt has been made to fully describe the general safety considerations for paddling the St. Lawrence and the specific hazards that may be encountered, this guide is not an exhaustive account of Thousand Islands paddling. There are risks associated with paddling; weather and water conditions can change without warning, and other vessels on the river can pose serious hazards to paddlers. The responsibility for safety lies solely with the user of this guidebook.
Cedar Island’s proximity to Kingston, abundant picnic sites and fine walking trails make it a popular destination for a leisurely day on the Water. The Cathcart Redoubt, a short walk from the dock, was an important part of the defenses of Kingston and the Rideau Canal.

The waters near historic Kingston hold a wealth of short and extended paddling trips for beginner through expert paddlers. The protected marshland channels of the Cataraqui River offer unique sites for bird watching, or practicing your technique for the larger waters of Lake Ontario. When the wind on the lake is up, the waters off Kingston’s shore are coloured by all manner of sailboats and windsurfers harnessing its power. The Wolfe Island shores offer plenty of spots to explore and Big Sandy Bay is a popular destination for paddlers to surf the rolling waves. Cedar Island is a popular destination for daytrippers and paddlers beginning a trip into the heart of the 1000 Islands. Downriver, Milton Island is a wonderful place to end a day of paddling, walk the trails and set-up camp before watching the sun fade over Lake Ontario.

**DEPARTURE POINT**
An ideal access point for this route is the public boat launch at the Cataraqui Canoe Club, beside the Woolen Mill Building just off Rideau Street. It offers a launching ramp, docks, and ample free parking. A public telephone is located inside the entrance of the Woolen Mill building.

**TRIP LENGTH**
A return trip to the pleasant destination of Cedar Island is a good day paddle. The sandy beaches on Wolfe Island are a fine destination for a full day paddle, but should only be attempted when the winds are light. Paddlers travelling from Kingston to Milton Island should make an early start and allow a full day for paddling.

**DISTANCE**
It is 3.5 km from the Canoe Club to Cedar Island. It is another 5 km between Cedar and Milton Islands.
**WRECKS OF THE RIVER**

When war broke out in 1812, between Britain and the United States, British Commander James Lucas Yeo saw the advantages of a gunboat flotilla to defend the river and access to the Great Lakes at Kingston. In letters to his senior officers he recommended a fleet of gunboats over more prestigious warships. He asked for, and received nine, which he assigned to three sections of the river; Kingston, Gananoque and Prescott.

Gunboats were not glamorous craft; however their ability to carry up to three cannons and an entire troop of soldiers, while drawing less than a meter of water, made them eminently suitable for the Thousand Islands. However, their broad, flat hulls also made them vulnerable targets as they were difficult to manoeuvre in the windswept Great Lakes.

Today several gunboats are among the wrecks on the riverbed of the mighty St. Lawrence. Visit the Historic Gunboat Exhibit at the Mallorytown Landing day use park, and the Maritime Museum of the Great Lakes at Kingston www.MarMus.ca to learn more about this part of our history.

**POINTS OF INTEREST**

**Cataraqui Marsh**
The winding channels of the Cataraqui River are lined with dense cattail marshes. The recreational boating channel lies between these rough shorelines, allowing powerboats to navigate the shallow waters. Paddlers are not bound by the channel markers, and can freely explore the marshland shores, a special place for viewing wildlife especially marsh birds. Brilliant red-wing blackbirds, boisterous wrens, and enterprising beavers inhabit this rich river marsh habitat.

**Kingston Mills**
The Rideau Canal is a historic waterway constructed in 1826 to allow safe passage of supplies and troops from Kingston and Lake Ontario to the Ottawa River. It operates today as the world's oldest, continuously operational canal. Discover the sights and sounds of Canada's history with a visit to the restored Blockhouse that guards Kingston Mills, the first of a series of lock stations that traverses eastern Ontario. A full day can be spent travelling the winding marshes of the Cataraqui River, and paddlers may embark on a trip up the Rideau Waterway from here. Camping is available on the Kingston Mills lockstation grounds. Call 1-800-230-0016 or visit http://parkscanada.pch.gc.ca/rideau

**Navy Bay**
The Royal Military College and Old Fort Henry flank this small bay of Lake Ontario. When the winds are particularly strong, you may need to hug the shores on the way out to Cedar Island.

**Old Fort Henry**
From its foundation atop Point Henry high above the city, historic Fort Henry protected the naval dockyard at Point Frederick, the entrance of the Rideau Canal and the town of Kingston. Today sentries stand guard at the entrance to this 19th century British military fortress, where the present day has been replaced by British garrison life during the year of Canada's confederation. Venture in to Navy Bay and steal a glimpse of the stronghold as it might have appeared to invaders approaching on the water. Call 1-800-437-2233 or visit www.parks.on.ca/fort
Cedar Island
Cedar Island is one of the most westerly islands of St. Lawrence Islands National Park. It lies only 250m offshore of Cartwright Point, a short paddle from Kingston Harbour. The pink granite cliffs lining the steep southern slope of the island are a striking contrast to the limestone shelf that lines the island’s northwest shore. Paddlers will find the 2 sheltered dock sites on the northeastern corner of Cedar Island the easiest spots to disembark. From here trails leads through an old hardwood forest of oak, ash and hickory, leading to Cathcart Redoubt. The island’s proximity to Kingston, abundant picnic sites, and numerous trails make it a popular destination for a leisurely day on the water. Four campsites on the island allow paddlers on extended trips to spend a night under towering pines surrounded by the waves of Lake Ontario. Cedar Island boasts a spectacular view of Fort Henry and historic Kingston Harbour, best enjoyed in the early morning light or fading sunset.

Cathcart Redoubt
The strategic location of Cedar Island made it important to the defence of Kingston during the War of 1812 and later during the Oregon Crisis. In 1847 Cathcart Redoubt was erected on the western end of Cedar Island, with other Martello Towers on the waterfront to reinforce British defenses. These towers are recognized as a National Historic Site. A short walking trail from the docks on Cedar Island leads to this historic structure. Note the interesting difference in vegetation as you near the tower. The western half of the island was completely cleared of trees when the tower was operational to allow 360 degree visibility.

Milton Island
Milton Island guards the western entrance to the Bateau Channel. This long, heart-shaped island hosts a mature mixed forest of white pine and red oak, interspersed with hemlock. Blueberry and serviceberry shrubs line the ground. Paddlers can easily access Milton Island in the sheltered bay at the east side of the island. Its quartzite shores host a diversity of microflora, including brilliant orange lichen that gives the island a unique tone.

HAZARDS

Kingston Harbour
All sorts of recreational craft and tour boats make Kingston Harbour a busy spot all summer long. Be sure to exercise caution as you approach or paddle past.

Wolfe Island Ferry
A large car and passenger ferry traverses the waters off Kingston to join Wolfe Island and the mainland. These large vessels create a large wake and move at a surprising speed. Exercise caution when in the vicinity of the ferry terminals, or better yet stay clear of the activity by paddling the eastern side of the Cataraqui harbour as you cross under the highway bridge.

Exposed Crossing
The route includes a brief crossing from the mouth of the Cataraqui River at Point Frederick to Cedar Island. This short stretch is fully exposed to the southwesterly winds that develop across the long fetch off Lake Ontario. Check the waters as you near Point Frederick and be prepared to use good bracing technique if the winds are up.

Tour Boats
The route to Cedar Island is often shared by tour boats that operate out of Kingston harbour. These vessels use the recreational channel and can pose a hazard to paddlers. An especially dangerous spot lies off the northeastern corner of Cedar Island, near Whiskey Island.
especially vibrant in the early evening. As a national park island, it offers a full range of facilities for paddlers including some ideal campsites (3) on the water and a densely wooded trail to explore the island perimeter. Paddlers destined for routes downriver should camp at Milton Island, or use mainland accommodations, as there are few facilities on the lengthy Bateau Channel route.

**Big Sandy Bay**
Big Sandy Bay on the southwestern tip of Wolfe Island is a favourite destination for hikers and paddlers alike. It is nearly as difficult to access by land as by water, but is a great place to surf the large rolling waves of Lake Ontario. The long, open crossing from Kingston Harbour to the western tip of Wolfe Island can be very difficult when the winds are strong.

**EXTENSION**
Downriver from Milton Island, the lengthy Bateau Channel route (#2) leads to the heart of the Thousand Islands, while across the harbour lies Wolfe Island surrounded by the big waters of Lake Ontario. Northward, along the Cataraqui river lies Kingston Mills the first lockstation of the historic Rideau Canal, as it begins its long journey across eastern Ontario to Ottawa and the national capital region.

**KINGSTON**
Kingston, the westernmost access point on the Thousand Islands Water Trail is one of Canada’s oldest settlements and its first capital. Among its many attractions it boasts more than a dozen, art galleries, museums and historic sites. Kingston has an impressive number of fine restaurants, many featuring outdoor patios and terraces. Many inns, hotels, motels and B&B’s are found here, just a short hop from the water’s edge. If you need to buy or rent equipment several of the outfitters listed in this guide are found in Kingston. A listing of guides and outfitters may be downloaded directly from the web site at www.paddle1000.com/paddling/outfitters.htm
A wonderful farmer’s market, that operates just behind city hall, is a great place to pick up a few things for snacks and meals.

Visit the Tourist Information Centre in the old train station, on the waterfront, across from the City Hall or contact::
Kingston Tourism Information Office
1-888-855-4555
http://www.kingstoncanada.com
The shoreline marshes of the Bateaux Channel team with life. Wetlands provide breeding habitat for amphibians, fish and small mammals.

The Bateau Channel is a long, narrow stretch of the St. Lawrence River that separates Howe Island and the Canadian mainland. Working fields, young forests, summer cottages and cobble shorelines line the channel. This sheltered route is best utilized by paddlers wishing to access the Admiralty Islands, downriver, or the Kingston Isles that lie upriver. Paddlers can explore marsh-lined bays, relax on sunny beaches and stroll beside shallow creeks.

DEPARTURE POINT
The westerly access point at Treasure Island Marina is a secure launch site that allows paddlers to get a taste of the open waters before embarking on the more sheltered journey down the Bateau channel route. Follow Highway 2 east of Kingston, approximately 8 km, to reach the marina and boat launching facility. Grass Creek Park, is another ideal launch site, located midway through the Bateau Channel and closer to the heart of the islands. This municipal picnic park is located beside the MacLachlin Woodworking Museum, approximately 16 km east of Kingston along Highway 2. The launch site lies on the western bank of Grass Creek, just a stone’s throw to the St. Lawrence.

TRIP LENGTH
A full-day should be set aside to paddle this connecting route.

DISTANCE
Seventeen kilometers separate Treasure Island Marina and Bishop’s Point. From the Grass Point Park access to Bishop’s Point at the eastern end of the channel is a 10 km trip; it is a 7 km trip westward to the Treasure Island Marina. Paddlers already on the water will approach the route from Milton Island, 5 km upriver from Treasure Island, or from the Admiralty Islands route that directly abuts the Bateau Channel.
RIVER MARSHES

The river marshes of the Thousand Islands host a remarkable diversity of plant and animal life. Marshes are a place of amazing activity at all times of the day, but particularly at dawn and dusk. Watch for deer, beaver, muskrat and raccoon to venture to the water under the thick cover of the shore. The cattail marshes and rocky shorelines that fringe the river in shallow, sheltered bays provide habitat for common birds like mallard and wood ducks, great blue heron, belted kingfisher, and common loon. Rarer species that one might find include green heron, sora, bitterns and coots.

River marshes are also important grounds for the masters of the aquatic realm. More than 85 fish species have been recorded in the St. Lawrence, and many of these spawn or feed in marshes. The sport fishery of the region is inextricably connected to the health of the wetlands, leading many landowners to renaturalize developed shorelines.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Madoma Marsh
The shores of the Madoma Marsh are fringed with an extensive emergent wetland where you might spy a cagey mallard, hear a chattery swamp sparrow or feel a smallmouth bass escape the water for an instant.

Howe Island
Originally settled by Irish, Roman Catholic farmers, this large island once was home to more sheep than people! Wool, milk, and eggs were the currency of exchange. The present community on Howe Island reflects the historic settlement of the place. Remnant farms dot the island, although many farms have been replaced by seasonal cottages. The winter community of 400 people easily triples when the warm weather arrives.

Grass Creek Point
An extensive wetland, protected by Grass Creek Point, features a small stream leading inward (Northward) from the channel past the Woodworking Museum buildings. Grass Creek Point itself is private property and not open to visitors. (See map to avoid trespassing.) However, small craft are encouraged to explore the stream (Grass Creek) where you will be sure to see a Great Blue Heron stalking its prey among the shallow waters. A small picnic park on the western banks of the stream is a good place to stop for a meal or a snooze in the shade. The park boat ramp is also a fine launching site for paddlers to be dropped off, or as a rendezvous point.

MacLachlin Woodworking Museum
Located on the banks of Grass Creek is the MacLachlin Woodworking Museum. Stop in and explore 19th century life while enjoying exhibits and interpreted demonstrations of early logging, woodworking and home making trades. The large collection of early hand tools inside is quite impressive.

Johnson Bay Marsh
This large, winding bay has fooled many river travelers into thinking it was a channel to the open waters south of Howe Island. In fact this expansive bay is renowned for its rich muskrat trapping. It is a wonderful place to explore the diversity of wildlife found in the wetlands of the Thousand Islands.
HAZARDS

Cable Ferry
Two cable ferries connect the Howe Island community to the mainland. One ferry crosses the Bateaux Channel where it begins to narrow, past Cassidy’s Point. The other ferry joins Bishop’s Point, on the mainland, with Gillespie Point at the eastern end of Howe Island. Exercise caution here. **Be sure that the cable ferry is not in transit as you cross these points.**

Recreational Boating
Route #2 runs parallel to the recreational boating channel. Stay clear of other watercraft by paddling the shores of the mainland or Howe Island. This also give you excellent opportunities to watch wildlife in the wetlands along the way.

Trident Marina
The channel funnels to its narrowest point near Trident Marina, a private yacht club. The quiet coves of the mainland shore offer secluded spots to explore by paddle. As you pass the yacht club, be sure to steal a glance shoreward. The marine slips showcase some of the most beautiful craft on the river.

Bishop’s Point Beach
A small sandy beach lines the western face of Bishop’s Point. It's a great spot to rest and enjoy a refreshing swim after the long trip down the Bateau Channel. Daytrippers can use this spot to access the river, although vehicles must be left up the road a ways, as parking is not permitted on the point.

EXTENSION
The Admiralty Islands (route #3), a premium destination for kayak adventuring, lies at the eastern end of the Bateau Channel. Upriver are Milton, Cedar and Wolfe Islands and the big waters of Lake Ontario (route #1).
The Admiralty Islands, located just southwest of the historic village of Gananoque, offer a wealth of paddling destinations. The picturesque channels and sheltered back bays of this sprawling cluster of islands will provide enough adventures to easily fill an afternoon or full day. Wanderer's Channel invites a relaxed exploration, while Halfmoon Bay intrigues the imagination, and the warm sand beaches of Thwartway Islands' western shore are a refreshing place to cool off on a hot afternoon. Aubrey, Beaurivage and McDonald Islands are ideal places to view the sun setting over the open water, or to set up camp for an evening on the islands beneath towering oaks and rugged pines.

**DEPARTURE POINT**
Paddlers can easily access this portion of the Thousand Islands via the Lions Club Public Boat Launch in Gananoque. The adjacent Gananoque Municipal Marina offers several amenities for paddlers including overnight parking, pay phones, showers and ice! Several other marinas in the village offer easy access to the river with a full range of amenities offered.

**TRIP LENGTH**
A half-day paddling allows one to catch a glimpse of the beauty of this route, but better to spend a full day. From the Admiralty Islands several extensions to other routes are possible.

**DISTANCE**
It is a 5 km trip from the Gananoque municipal marina to Aubrey Island, via Wanderer's Channel.
**LAKE EFFECT**

Lake Ontario has a strong influence on the weather of the Islands. The moderating influence of the lake on the climate of the area is seen by comparing records for Kingston and Brockville. Kingston has a slightly cooler spring and summer and slightly warmer fall and winter. The humidity of the St. Lawrence Valley is roughly 15% greater on the islands than the mainland. Cloud development and storms are more common on the river in fall, winter and spring, due to the warm water retained in the lake. During the summer, as air temperature surpasses water temperature, the lake water cools the lower air layers that move through the Islands. This has a sheltering effect that yields fewer and less severe storms in the Thousand Islands, while massive storms rage over the lakes and mainland.

Aubrey Island provides a sheltered vantage point for storm-watchers. Watch from the cobble beach, or from one of the picnic shelters, as clouds build and lightning illuminates the sky.

**POINTS OF INTEREST**

**Wanderer’s Channel**

The name is a strong clue, to how one might best discover this sheltered channel that winds through the heart of the Admiralty Islands. Take the time to lose yourself in this magical place.

**Half Moon Bay**

Hidden along the southeastern corner of Bostwick Island is Half Moon Bay, the site of a Thousand Islands tradition like no other. Every Sunday in July and August around 4:30, as the afternoon sun begins to dip in the sky, religious services are conducted in an open-air church where the pews float, the pulpit is built of rock, and the cathedral walls grow from the ground. Each week services are conducted by a different denomination from the village churches in Gananoque. The bay is a special place to share this experience and it retains its special character for all explorers.

**Aubrey Island**

Nestled beneath a towering deciduous canopy, this low granite island, on the western edge of the Frontenac Axis, supports an oak-maple-ash forest with scattered white pine and hemlock along the eastern slopes. Small bays on the east and west side are important herptile habitat - bullfrogs, water snakes, mudpuppies and painted turtles live here.

Paddlers will appreciate the secluded campsites on this magnificent island. Several sites on the southwestern side of the island can be reached from a spectacular granite beach. Others are just a few strides from the protected docks of Aubrey’s southern bay. Several secluded sites are found on the northern upland portion of the island, best accessed by paddlers from the docks of the northeastern tip, a favourite anchorage spot for sailboaters.

**Thwartway (Leek) Island Beaches**

Not to be missed is Thwartway Island, where the wave-washed granite has resisted waves of the open river, slowly capturing tiny sand particles to yield two
HAZARDS

Gananoque Municipal Marina
Boat traffic in this congested spot can be dangerous as larger vessels arrive and depart. A breakwater can obscure the view lines of other boaters. Travel as a group and be cautious when entering and exiting this busy spot.

Busy Channel Crossings
The waters of the Gananoque waterfront are shared by a variety of users. It is not unusual to find triple-deck cruise ships, jetskis, pleasure cruisers, sailboats and kayaks all vying for space. The confluence of two main recreational boating channels lies 300 m from the entry to the marina and can be a busy intersection on summer weekends! Be aware of other watercraft and exercise caution in channel crossings. The best approach is to stay near shore, where the passage is safer and the scenery is better.

Paddle west from the launch site, between the mainland and Ormiston, Cherry and Pike Islands, then cross the channel between Pike and MacDonald and continue west along the MacDonald Island shore.

Open Waters
Southwest of Aubrey and Mermaid Islands, the river widens considerably. With virtually no islands to provide leeward protection, the prevailing southwesterly winds can reach a mighty intensity here, throwing large 3-4 ft waves with a deceptive short chop.

Novice paddlers should be wary of this section of the route, especially if the winds are up. For skilled paddlers, the area can be an exciting arena to ride the waves and feel the might of the winds.

Mermaid Island Whaleback
The results of glaciation are no more apparent in the region than on Mermaid Island. Its entire form and character were literally carved by ice over rock. A roche moutonnée topography characterizes the island. It is an elliptical landform known as a 'whaleback'. The island demonstrates the power of ice! Sheer rock faces, a deep ravine, glacial gullies, and polished rock indicate the ancient presence of the ice. The east-west orientation corresponds to the dominant small and secluded sandy beaches. Thwartway is the perfect spot to visit late in the day to enjoy a spectacular sunset.

Parks Canada acquired this island in 1972 to protect a complete island ecosystem, with minimal human presence. There are very limited facilities on the island, save a privy near the beach and an old trail network. No camping is permitted on this island. The trip to reach Thwartway is well worth the effort, especially if one follows a sheltered route past Hay, Huckleberry and Juniper Islands to enjoy the emergent wetlands and abundant waterfowl that frequent the many islets.

Thwartway lies far south of Gananoque and as a distant outlier of the Admiralty Islands, it joins the group to the nearby Lake Fleet Islands.

Steamboat Channel
Several of the historic family cottages and grand boathouses of the region can be enjoyed as you paddle the Steamboat Channel between Forsyth Island and Hay Island. Note that this winding channel is frequented by pleasure craft and tour boats.
direction of force applied by the massive sheet. Despite generally poor soils on the island, an interesting range of trees stand on Mermaid, including red ash, white cedar, red maple, aspen, basswood, white pine, hemlock, white birch and wire birch. Although there is no camping, paddlers will enjoy Mermaid Island’s short hiking trail, picnic sites, deep water swimming and privy.

**Beaurivage Island**
A chance to stretch underworked legs is a necessary delight on Beaurivage Island where a stroll around the island’s perimeter features a young, open forest seemingly growing directly from the granite underfoot. Walk among fragrant sumac, raspberry, elderberry, lowbush blueberry, and juniper. Its central location within the Admiralty route, abundant campsites (8), and picnic shelters (equipped with a woodstove to warm you during surprise spring thunderstorms!) make Beaurivage a sound choice for paddlers to set-up a base camp from which to explore.

**EXTENSION**
The Lake Fleet Islands, a favourite destination for kayak adventuring, are a perfect extension to this route. Paddlers enjoying extended tripping in the region may arrive at the Admiralty group from the Bateau Channel route (#2) or the Lake Fleet route (#4).
The Lake Fleet Islands have some of the rarest and most unique flora in the region. Endymion Island is home to many unique species, including Pitch Pine. There is no camping allowed on this island to protect its fragile plant communities.

The Lake Fleet Islands stretch from the international boundary and the northern shore of Grindstone Island (USA) in a long narrow arc, northeasterly to Stave Island. The Lake Fleet arm reaches nearly 5 km, offering leeside shelter for paddling the route for either direction. The rugged islands of wind-swept white pine and rich hemlock gullies are reminiscent of our northern forests. Island names like Dumfounder, Bloodletter, Axeman and Deathdealer evoke strong images of the history of the place, forcing one to wrestle the imagination to stay in the present day. The national park islands, Camelot and Endymion are premiere destinations for paddlers looking to explore the most secluded spots in the 1000 Islands.

DEPARTURE POINT
Paddlers will reach the Lake Fleet route from the westerly Admiralty Islands route (#3), or easterly Navy Islands route (#5). Please consult departure point information for these routes.

TRIP LENGTH
A full day of paddling could well be spent here and the best way to enjoy the Lake Fleet is by spending an overnight on Camelot Island. If the weather is fair, it is possible to power through this route and reach the Admiralty or Navy Islands for the evening.

DISTANCES
The paddle from Thwartway Island to Camelot Island is 2 km. From Camelot Island to the Navy Group is 4 km. To reach Camelot from Gananoque is a 5 km paddle across an exposed stretch of the river.
FRAGILE HABITATS

The region’s remarkable diversity of flora is highlighted by several rare plants, found nowhere else in Canada. They exist on the outermost limits of their range in the Thousand Islands. As flora that have evolved in warmer climes, these plants are often severely stressed by the region’s short growing season and cold, icy winters.

An example is Deerberry, a close relative of blueberry, that is nationally rare. A short shrub that displays tiny white bell-shaped flower, it demonstrates a southern affinity, growing on sunny, southwest facing slopes in only a few places in the region. A rocky knoll on the western tip of Grenadier Island and a sunny ridge-top on the south face of Endymion Island support small patches of this shrub. Be careful to stay on trails, to avoid trampling the plants.

Points of Interest

Camelot Island
Rocky cliffs, great bowed white pine, deep water swimming, and the island’s relatively remote location make Camelot a perfect destination for paddlers. Camelot is a rugged, well-forested island that is home to a wealth of our avian companions. Listen to the sparrows, orioles, wrens and warblers along the relaxing hiking trails that skirt the island perimeter. Six campsites make it a strategic place for paddlers to use at the end of the route. Establish a campsite early in the day, if possible, to ensure a spot. A dinghy dock in the southwest bay leads to several quiet campsites, a privy and a picnic shelter. If you spend the night don’t be spooked by the hoots of a great-horned owl rumoured to reside in the depths of the woods.

Endymion Island
The warm southern aspect and thick moist wetlands of Endymion Island create as diverse an island habitat as any found in the Thousand Islands. Several rare species including pitch pine and deerberry are found here. Red oak, pine, and juniper shroud the island's rocky western end, while willows and swamp maples compete for a foot hold on the eastern flank.

A short walking trail connects two docks on the south face of Endymion. No camping is permitted on this fragile island, and other facilities have been minimized to reduce visitor impact. It is a good place to stretch your legs or rest, en route to Camelot or the Admiralty Group.

Grindstone Island
The rocky northern shore of Grindstone Island is only a stone's throw from this route, at times as close as 300 m from the Canadian Islands. Paddlers should be aware of Canoe Point State Park, located on the northeastern tip of the island, a good spot to find shelter in case rough weather erupts. Information is available at www.nysparks.com

The small sand beaches on the western face of Thwartway Island support a population of beach bean, another southern species that grows in the Thousand Islands. If you land at Thwartway take care not to inadvertently beach your boat or place a picnic blanket on top of this rare and fragile plant.
**HAZARDS**

**Shipping Channel**
The Canadian Middle Channel lies just south of the Lake Fleet arm, and bisects the route in a narrow path near the end of the island chain. The channel runs between Camelot and Dumfounder, and Bloodletter and Niagara. Be sure that no large vessels are approaching as you prepare to cross the shipping channel in a safe and expeditious manner.

**Channel Crossings**
The recreational boating channel bisects this route in many places. Be aware of other watercraft and exercise caution in channel crossings.

**Open Waters**
Between the Admiralty Islands and the Lake Fleet group, lies a large stretch of open water. The crossing from Thwartway to The Punts is long and can be strenuous or impossible when the winds are up. A sheltered route might be found by skirting the northern shore of Grindstone Island, but be sure to have a contingency plan if you find that the waters are too rough to proceed. **Novice paddlers should be wary of this section of the route.**

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**EXTENSION**
This portion of the Thousand Islands is best appreciated as a destination from the nearby Navy or Admiralty groups. Thwartway (Leek) Island and the Admiralty group lie west of this route, while Stave Island and the Navy group form the easterly bounds.

**Sugar Island**
Sugar Island is the summer home of the American Canoe Association. Camping facilities exist for members, and the club welcomes several dozen paddlers each year to its Encampment event. Join the ACA at [www.aca-paddler.org](http://www.aca-paddler.org) Stop in for a visit and greet your fellow paddler!

**Prince Regent and Princess Charlotte Islands**
As you paddle the southern shores of Prince Regent and Princess Charlotte Islands, the craggy form of pitch pine tree will undoubtedly catch your attention. Pitch pine is the rarest tree in Canada. It is at the extreme northern edge of its range here and its population size is generally decreasing in the region. On these islands, however, the species is regenerating. The stand is of uneven age, with several healthy young saplings, amongst the older trees.

**Jackstraw Shoal**
The small islands and islets that surround the Jackstraw shoal are colonized by ring-billed and herring gulls for nesting. Recently, double-breasted cormorants have begun to use these colonies. Paddling past these loud and crowded rocky homes, one can expect to see all sorts of activity! Be sure not to disturb the birds by approaching too closely.
The Navy Islands are a nearshore island cluster that features quiet bays, innumerable islets and a maze of tiny, back channels seemingly designed for paddlers. Mulcaster Island lies in the midst of this island group, offering quiet campsites, deep water swimming and interesting forest trails. It is a favourite destination for paddlers exploring this route.

**DEPARTURE POINT**
The Ivy Lea Campground offers excellent mainland camping and is an ideal launch site that positions paddlers on the protected waters of legendary Smuggler’s Cove. Park information is available at [www.stlawrenceparks.com/ivylea.htm](http://www.stlawrenceparks.com/ivylea.htm) or shorter day-trips, the Parks of the St. Lawrence, way-side park at Halstead’s Bay is also a good access point, although the launching is off a rock beach. Those embarking on extended trips in this region should consider secure departure points offered by the many inns and marinas in the Ivy Lea Village vicinity that maintain boat launches and offer overnight parking facilities.

Paddlers already on the water can easily access the Navy Islands from the westerly Admiralty Islands route (#4), or easterly Raft Narrows route (#6).

**TRIP LENGTH**
A full-day of paddling is easily filled here, and nearby camping and accommodations allow paddlers to use this area as a base for adventures further astream.

**DISTANCES**
Departing from Halstead’s Bay Park, paddlers travelling downriver will arrive at Mulcaster Island after a sheltered 3 km trip, while those heading southwest to Gordon Island should expect a more exposed 5 km paddle.

Two kilometers separate Ivy Lea Park and Ivy Lea Village. From the village to Mulcaster Island is a 4 km paddle.
The Ivy Lea area, the centre of the Frontenac Axis, is the perfect place to ponder the area’s mysterious geological history. Here the channels are narrow and the river is dominated by large islands that nearly connect the northern and southern shores.

The natural landscape of Southern Ontario has been altered and fragmented since European settlement to meet our economic and social development needs. Due to the rugged character of the Frontenac Axis, the Thousand Islands region was not altered as significantly. It remains a semi-wild area with much of its ecosystem structure and function intact.

The Thousand Islands provides landscape-level connectivity allowing the movement of wildlife such as lynx, wolf and bear, between the wild areas of the Algonquin Highlands and Adirondack Mountains.

**POINTS OF INTEREST**

**Gordon Island**
Gordon Island lies just 1 km offshore of Sturdivant’s Point, downriver from Gray’s Beach, and 1.5 km north of Sugar Island. The thin sandstone layer that underlies Gordon Island makes this place an anomaly in the Thousand Islands. Extensive sandstone bluffs can be viewed along the island’s southern and western shores. The island can quickly be distinguished from the water, for it lacks any substantial relief. The tree tops are a uniform height because the granite ridges and cliffs, characteristic of neighbouring islands, are absent. The hardwood forest community on the island hosts a rich diversity of flora, including a colorful wildflower bloom each spring.

The archaeological evidence found on Gordon Island suggest that humans began to use this spot 9000 years ago; just after the last ice age. A complex of ancient campsites, the most important archaeological find ever made in the Thousand Islands, indicates that the island may have been a seasonal stopover used by aboriginal people following game, a site close to rich fishing grounds, or a gathering place for trade.

There are 5 campsites on the island for your use! These are best accessed by the docks at the northwestern corner or southern face. A spectacular sunset view awaits campers who choose the quiet site atop the bluff at the island’s western tip.

**Mulcaster Island**
Mulcaster is a hidden gem within the Thousand Islands. Its secluded campsites, winding trail, and deep water swimming make it a favourite destination for a picnic or setting up a base camp for further paddling. The trail network is a showcase for the remarkable forest diversity the island boasts. The trail climbs gently atop the southwest granite face, among pitch pine, red cedar and juniper,
winds across the central ridges of the island through towering hardwoods, past cool wetlands and hemlock gullies and around the sheltered bays on the eastern end of the island. Three campsites are located a few strides from a granite cobble beach on the south shore of the island.

**Raptors**
Keep an eye open overhead for raptors of all sorts. Osprey are particularly vocal as they circle above the river, spying for a fishy meal. Keep watch for others too. Northern goshawk, Cooper's and red-shouldered hawks, and even bald eagles have been reported in the vicinity.

**Stave Island**
Stave Island is a large, forested island that is fringed with marshes. Its considerable size, diverse habitats and abundant wildlife combine to make it a valuable ecological treasure. The Nature Conservancy of Canada, a national, non-government, heritage organization, was instrumental in protecting it. Stave Island marks the southwestern end of the Navy Islands, as paddlers approach the Lake Fleet Islands.

**Landon Bay Cliffs**
Landon Bay leads off the St. Lawrence, under the highway bridge. Great granite and gneiss cliffs surround paddlers as they follow the cut deeper into the rocky uplands that split, beneath Fitzsimmons Mountain, to form this sheltered bay. The nearby wetlands are recognized as provincially significant, and provide spawning areas for muskie and pike. The upland areas surrounding the bay contain the rare Hudson’s Bay currant and winged sumac.

Daytrippers frequently use Landon Bay to test the waters, and practice technique before heading out on the Navy route. Parking alongside the bike path on the north side of the Thousand Islands Parkway is available, but vehicles should not be left here when on extended trips.

**EXTENSION**
The natural extension of a tour in the Navy Islands is the Lake Fleet route (#4) that extends southwestward to spectacular Camelot and Endymion Islands. Downstream, the Raft Narrows route (#6) leads to the heart of the Thousand Islands, and to beautiful Rockport, while the mysterious Lost Channel disappears into Lake of the Isles.

**HAZARDS**

**Channel Crossings**
The recreational boating channel bisects this route in many places. Be aware of other watercraft and exercise caution in channel crossings. The Gananoque Narrows between Stave and Prince Regent Islands is particularly busy, however the channel is a speed zone (15 km/h) for power boats, and visibility is good in both directions.

**Open Waters**
Paddlers heading out from Halstead’s Bay may encounter large waves that build across the exposed stretch of water offshore. Also be prepared for an open water crossing to Gordon Island. Use a steady bracing stroke and stay close to paddling companions.

Carrying nautical charts or topographic maps and consulting them regularly, will help to get you to your destination safely.
The Thousand Islands International Bridge spans the river, including the picturesque Lost Channel, between Hill Island and the Canadian mainland.

The Raft Narrows route leads paddlers through the heart of the Thousand Islands, past Hill Island, and through the sheltered passage of Lake of the Isles. Between the tiny communities of Ivy Lea and Rockport, the St. Lawrence river reaches its narrowest point in the Raft Narrows, a busy section where the traffic overhead on the International Bridge seems surreal in the beautiful surroundings. The legends dance along the mysterious Lost Channel, echo off the rocky shore of Constance Island and whistle through lofty pines somehow secure atop solid granite. Ample camping on the mainland at Ivy Lea Campsite and island sites on Georgina lure paddlers to stay at the midway point of the 1000 Islands Water Trail.

**DEPARTURE POINT**
The Ivy Lea Campgound is an ideal access point for paddlers on day and extended trips in the Ivy Lea region. Secure parking is available, at this fully serviced park facility, with a nearby general store. The wayside-park at Halstead's Bay is also a suitable launch point for shorter day trips, however it lacks an easy launch site (you have to launch off a rock beach) and no secure overnight parking is available. Those embarking on extended trips in this part of the Thousand Islands will find that many marinas and inns maintain boat launches and offer secure overnight parking facilities.

**TRIP LENGTH**
A half-day of paddling is easily filled on this leisurely loop that skirts the shores of Hill Island. Nearby island and mainland camping and accommodations easily permits extended stays.

**DISTANCES**
The return trip from Ivy Lea Village around Hill Island is roughly 18km. This trip is shortened by using the launch at Ivy Lea Campground.
WARTIME LEGENDS
Legend has it that the narrow cut between Wellesley and Wallace Islands, known as the Lost Channel, gained its name after British soldiers lost here following an ambush engineered by the French. In August 1760, the largest military force ever assembled on the river set out downriver to attempt a surprise raid of the French Fort de Levis, east of present-day Prescott. As the fleet neared Wellesley Island, a French bateau was spotted hastily tracking eastward to warn the Fort of the impending attack. One of the warships, the Onondaga, set out in pursuit. The chase led through the channel near Lyndoch and Wallace Islands, where the French bateau vanished. As the river currents began to boil around the ship in the narrow and treacherous channel, the Onondaga came under attack of a French ambush and a fire fight of cannon, muskets and arrows ensued. One ship was lowered from the Onondaga to head back upriver to warn the rest of the British fleet, while another was tasked with navigating the swift currents downriver to lead the Onondaga to safety. The Onondaga followed the small boat safely downriver, but the other envoy ship was not so successful. A smashed yawl bearing the Onondaga moniker was found years later at the head of the swift channel between Constance and Georgina Islands.

POINTS OF INTEREST
Lost Channel
The Lost Channel passes under the second span of the Thousand Islands International Bridge, near Georgina and Constance Islands, amidst the myriad channels created by the numerous small islands.

Georgina Island
Microclimate describes the small but significant differences that exist within the same locale-in this case on the same island! Vegetation is quickly affected by tiny variations in habitat, and this microclimate phenomenon of the Thousand Islands ecology is readily apparent as you walk the trails of Georgina Island.

The island’s rocky southwestern slope is exposed to direct sunlight and heavy winds that combine to create a habitat that only hardy species can prosper. A pitch pine and red oak forest dominates the western end, and gradually gives way to a pure pitch pine stand on the southwestern tip of the island. Other species with a southern affinity found on Georgina include milk vetch, hairy bush clover and southern arrowwood. The gently sloping northern side of the island is sheltered from sun and most winds. Lofty hemlock and white pine sway overhead to provide a dense shade, yielding a moist and cool habitat that supports species typical of northern forests like yellow clintonia. The island is home to 12 rare plant species including Indian cucumber root and pink lady’s slipper, an uncommon orchid that sends its roots into the moist soils near a seasonal pool.

Large docking facilities in small bays on the north and south face of the island provide ample room to land and stroll. Follow the directions on the trailhead and enjoy the trails that loop the island. The two campsites on Georgina are part of limited island camping on this route.
**Batterman’s Point**
Stop in at the picnic pavilion built on a tiny piece of rock on the northeast corner of Hill Island.

**Darlingside**
In the 1840s, the general store at Darlingside served the needs of Thousand Islands residents and visitors. Built in 1843, the store is Georgian style and features finely carved wood finishings. Today Darlingside is a historic site to be admired as you paddle Raft Narrows.

**Smuggler’s Cove**
The infamous smuggling days on the river saw this deep, narrow cove a favourite of horse thieves and rum-runners. Virgin Island at the mouth of the cove hid most comings and goings from easy view of constables that may have patrolled the waters, but didn’t stop the illegal activity from taking place. Of course the authorities were wise to this and were not below posing undercover as fishermen or trappers working the bay! Look for Smuggler’s Cave at the end of the cove - a depot rumoured to house Spanish bullion, caseloads of Prohibition-era booze, and untold other contraband. Today, the east side of Smuggler’s Cove is the site of Ivy Lea Campsite, a perfect spot to pull out for the evening.

**Lover’s Lane**
Paddle the narrow cut of water that divides the picturesque shorelines rimmed with hemlock and white pine, through Lover’s Lane in the tiny channel on the north side of Ivy Island. Can you guess how this place was named?

**Petroglyphs**
As you cruise the shoreline at the Raft Narrows, keep an eye to the granite walls for petroglyph images. First Nations used granite as canvas and some of their ancient artwork remains on display today.

**Extension**
Extended trips upstream to explore the Navy Islands (#5) and Lake Fleet Arm (#4) are reasonable extensions to consider for adventure paddling. For those continuing eastward, the Grenadier Island route (#7) begins in Rockport, just a short paddle downriver.

**HAZARDS**

**Rough Waters and Fast Currents**
The current quickens near Georgina Island as the river plunges over an underwater waterfall north of the island. The narrow channels on the west and south ends of the island also carry a rapid flow of water.

In the International Rift the current can accelerate a paddler’s pace considerably. If eastbound, exercise caution as the currents whisk you through this narrow cut. Lean, rudder or brace as you see fit! If heading westbound, power up through the cut staying close to shore to avoid any craft heading downstream under current power! Stay near shore and be ready to use a bracing stroke as you paddle.

**Recreation Channel**
The recreational boating channel bisects this route in many places. Be aware of other vessels and be careful crossing the channel.

**Tour Boats**
Several tour boats operate out of Rockport and Alexandria Bay, and frequent this portion of the Thousand Islands. Give these vessels a wide berth, and don’t be surprised if several friendly folks wave, smile and snap a photo or two!

**Open Waters**
Paddlers heading downriver to begin the Grenadier Island route, must navigate a wide crossing between Club Island and Tar Island, just offshore of Rockport. This area is often busy with recreational craft and tour boats, and is known for its choppy waters. Be cautious here.
A bustling farming community once thrived on Grenadier Island, but today it’s mostly the summer people who remain. The bustle of activity on the island is now made by boaters, hikers and paddlers who fancy the warm sandy beaches, old fishing holes, vivid past, and abundant opportunities for observing wildlife. If the weather is fair, a circumnavigation of Grenadier Island is a splendid full-day paddle that brings you past extensive marshlands alive with noisy red-wing blackbirds, blue herons stalking prey, and perhaps an osprey circling overhead. Several landing points along the shores of Grenadier Island allow you to rest or stretch your legs on the trail network that connects human life on the island. National park facilities at the distant eastern and western tips of the island, and in the central northern and southern bays offer a full array of amenities. Awaiting you are quiet campsites, shaded picnic spots beside a sandy beach, and the historic picnic pavilion at the western head of the island where the sunsets are so peaceful!

**DEPARTURE POINT**
From the west, the boat launch in the village of Rockport is the most convenient access point that will place paddlers only a short paddle upstream of the western end of Grenadier Island. A small way-side park, located along the Thousand Islands Parkway, opposite Poole’s Resort Road, is a good launch site for daytrippers. However with roadside parking the only option, this site is not recommended for paddlers beginning an extended trip. The national park facilities at Mallorytown Landing offer the best access to the eastern end of Grenadier, although a lengthy exposed crossing is required.

**TRIP LENGTH & DISTANCE**
Several short day trips are possible to the many destinations on Grenadier. A full day of paddling is required to travel the perimeter of this long, narrow island. Distance around Grenadier is 16km - to reach the west end of the island from Rockport is 2 km, and the east end from Mallorytown is 2km. Both roundtrips from A9 or A11 are 20km.
RARE HERPTILES
The Thousand Islands has a great diversity of herptiles. Frogs, salamanders, snakes, and turtles are some of the wildlife you may encounter on your travels here. Rarely observed by the average land lover, but occasionally seen by keen explorers of the area, is the graceful black rat snake. The granite uplands of the Frontenac Axis are one of very few places in Canada where this fascinating reptile can still be found. Its distinguishing feature is its size: the black rat snake is Canada's largest snake reaching lengths of up to 2.5 meters or 8 feet. You are most likely to encounter this snake if you hike the warm, rocky ridges of the larger islands. The timid snakes are not poisonous and do not pose any hazard to humans. Please do not harm these beautiful snakes if you are lucky enough to encounter them.

POINTS OF INTEREST
Boldt Castle on Heart Island (USA)
This castle is the most famous of all mansions constructed in the Thousand Islands. Wealthy hotel baron George Boldt (owner of the Waldorf Astoria in New York), a devoted husband and romantic, commissioned the castle to be built as a Valentine's Day gift to his wife Louise. The island was renamed and its shoreline realigned to resemble the shape of a heart, and a castle with eleven buildings and a total of 120 rooms was planned. Sadly, Louise Boldt died a year before the castle was completed and George Boldt ordered construction halted, never to return to the unfinished castle. It was acquired by the Thousand Islands Bridge Authority, and was developed as a tourist attraction. www.boldtcastle.com

Head out from Rockport south-southeast towards the eastern tip of Wellesley Island, and follow then follow the Manhattan Group south to Boldt Castle. The 10 km trip should take most of the day. Note that this extension crosses the border; Canadians will have to present a passport or birth certificate upon landing at Boldt Castle and then report to customs at Rockport upon return. Be careful of tour boats en route to this extremely popular sightseeing destination, as well as recreational and shipping vessels in the busy American channel.

West Grenadier Trails
The short loop trail begins at the docks near the western tip of the island. It passes craggy pitch pine and creeping juniper trees as it gently ascends the ridge to the western head of Grenadier. Stop at a historic turn-of-the-century picnic shelter to admire a spectacular river scene, or enjoy an island picnic. Follow the trail further as it skirts along part of the rocky southern face of the island, before turning northward beneath a maple-oak hardwood community, bright with wildflowers. Watch for poison ivy, especially trailside through the hardwoods!
**HAZARDS**

**Rough Waters**
The water to the south of Grenadier Island is unprotected from strong winds. When the wind is up, paddlers may encounter very dangerous conditions that require strenuous paddling to overcome. Novice paddlers may prefer the more-sheltered northern side of the island.

**Recreation Channel**
The small craft route skirts the northern side of Grenadier, but don’t be surprised to meet powercraft along the entire route around this busy island.

**Shipping Channel**
The International Shipping Channel lies just off Long Schooner Island. The open water south of Grenadier Island is busy with large ocean-going craft. At Ironsides Island, the channel splits. The Canadian Middle Channel runs due west just off the western corner of Grenadier, and the American Channel continues southwest, behind Wellesley Island.

**Open Waters**
Paddlers heading downriver to begin the Grenadier Island route, must navigate a wide crossing between Club Island and Tar Island, just offshore of the village of Rockport. This area is often busy with recreational craft and tour boats, and is known for its choppy waters.

A similar crossing awaits paddlers departing from the national park mainland site at Mallorytown Landing, travelling south to Adelaide Island and the eastern end of Grenadier Island.

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**Central Grenadier** Beach
A warm, sandy beach awaits paddlers who arrive at “Central Grenadier”, the national park facility located on the southern side of the island in the small bay immediately west of Poverty Island. Look for the busy docks full of anchored boats! This destination offers several picnic shelters, plenty of campsites, full amenity washrooms and an extensive walking trail that leads through woods full of our avian companions and past an active beaver pond.

**Historic Architecture**
The old lighthouse at Sister Island, the cottages that line the southern shore of Grenadier at Pitch Pine Point, the boathouses on Tar Island, and the historic picnic pavilion circa 1900 are but some of the storied architecture of this place.

**Grenadier East**
A spectacular old oak stand beckons visitors to Grenadier East. Stroll past the Heffernan’s restaurant on the shore, explore the ice-house out back, or hike the trail network that connects to the old Township road that traverses the spine of the island. Three quiet campsites have recently been constructed for your enjoyment.

**North Grenadier - Tourist’s Delight**
River guides in the Thousand Islands made their fortunes from wealthy guests looking for adventure and delight in the natural splendour of the place. Sport fishing was the biggest attraction (no really it was that big!), though there was plenty of fun to be found. A restaurant served the best home grown food around from the eastern shores of Grenadier to hungry visitors. Before it burned down, Angler’s Inn (c. 1871), was a favorite stop for fisherman looking for a big haul of muskie. It was a favorite stop for dancers too! They gathered every summer Saturday night to socialize and enjoy the finest piano playing to be found.
Brooker's Creek
The marshy shoreline that rims the northeastern side of Grenadier from Squaw Island to Adelaide Island gives way at the mouth of Brooker's Creek. A quiet excursion into the marsh wetland complex will reveal the wonders of the region's shorebirds and marshbirds. The thick woods that meet the marsh are full of wildlife, and Brooker's Creek is a favorite place for viewing. At dusk listen for the deep croak of the rare least bittern.

Tar Island Pictographs
Try to find and then discern the meaning of the ancient paintings on the granite rock faces along the southwestern corner of Tar Island.

Agricultural Settlement
Remnants of Grenadier's farm community can be found as you walk the trail network. Imagine the horses on the cart track along the Municipal road between farms, or children skipping along to meet classmates at school.

Schooner Point Wreck
Ponder the mysterious fate of the shipwreck that lies just below the water's surface off Schooner Point, opposite Sister Island. Look for a floating plastic bottle that marks the spot.

Ironsides Heronry (USA)
This large island is owned and managed by the Nature Conservancy. Great blue herons nest in the treetops of Ironsides Island, in fact it is one of the largest nesting colonies in New York State, and is recognized as a National Natural Landmark. Written permission is required to land on the island, but the nests can easily be admired without disturbing the birds from the water. The tall, steep rusty cliffs that rise sharply out of the water provide the reason behind the island's name.

EXTENSION
Overnight camping on Grenadier Island allows paddlers to spend an evening and then continue on extended trips. The route lies downriver of the Raft Narrows route (#6), and upriver of the Mallorytown Landing route (#8).
The Mallorytown Landing Route includes some stretches of wide open river. Paddle close to shore for opportunities to view wildlife and admire historic waterfront homes and cottages.

The river begins to narrow, east of Grenadier Island, slowly funneling river travelers towards the Brock Narrows. On its way east, the waters pass the ominous form of Jorstadt castle on Dark Island, a busy bird colony at Ice Island, the serenity of Jones Creek and sandstone bluffs along the northern riverbank. Take some time to visit the sites along the way to enjoy this part of the water trail.

DEPARTURE POINT
A secure, full service launch facility at St. Lawrence Islands National Park Mallorytown Landing Beach is the best access point for this route.

TRIP LENGTH
A half- to full-day of paddling is required to explore the shores of the northern mainland, before reaching the western side of the Brock Isles.

DISTANCE
Stovin Island lies 18km downriver from the launch at Mallorytown Landing. A wide, 3 km open-water crossing from Mallorytown Landing leads south to Adelaide Island, and the Grenadier Island route. The village of Rockport is a 10km paddle upriver along the marsh shorelines and through the Tar Island Narrows.
RAPTORS

The kings of the sky are the raptors, and in the Thousand Islands you may be lucky enough to spot a red-shouldered hawk, sharp-shinned hawk, northern harrier, turkey vulture, bald eagle or osprey.

The return of the osprey is a truly remarkable story. These magnificent white-bellied birds eat a diet composed mostly of fish. They prefer nesting sites built of coarse sticks, sited high above the ground to allow a good vantage point. Chicks may be spotted poking their heads from the nest by late May, and will be ready to attempt first flight in July.

In the past decade, a series of platforms have been erected to provide suitable nest sites for the birds. All platforms erected have been home to mating pairs and over the years have been home to many fledged birds. With little room left on platforms, and many natural sites also occupied, young osprey have taken to building nests in some strange places. Don’t be alarmed if, while paddling past a navigation tower, or floating navigation buoy, you come face to face with the beautiful birds!

POINTS OF INTEREST

Mallorytown Landing
A boat launch ramp, floating docks, and beach site offer plenty of easy access to the river. Ample overnight parking is available on-site. Picnic tables and shelters, changehouses, and washroom amenities are available. The large sandy beach, and grassy grounds shaded by huge willows invite you to spend a while. A gift shop, interpretive exhibit and theatre are housed in the visitor’s centre. Helpful park attendants will answer any inquiries. No camping is permitted.

Historic Gunboat
The HMS Radcliff, a gunboat built in a Kingston shipyard in 1817, was the last ship on the shipyard inventory before the signing of the Rush-Bagot Treaty that limited the number of armed ships in the British and American fleets. As it was not needed for combat, the ship was transformed to a working vessel. In 1969 it was recovered from the river, and is now displayed in the St. Lawrence Islands National Park boathouse at Mallorytown Landing.

Ice Island
A large colony of common terns has recently returned to Ice Island following an active management program of St. Lawrence Islands National Park. In the early nineties, the St. Lawrence River common tern population was seriously threatened by a quick expansion in the number of gulls in the region. Ring-billed and herring gulls compete with terns for food and, most importantly, suitable nest sites.

Working in partnership with the landowner, national park staff installed an elaborate netting across the rocky island to prevent gulls from landing on the site. The netting allowed the smaller terns to land and the birds quickly established a successful colony. The common tern population in the Thousand Islands has significantly recovered and today terns are again common, gracefully flying overhead or stealthily diving head-first into the water to spear a fish.
Chimney Island
A dark legend surrounds this lonely island. In early pioneer days on the river it was home to a French guide and his new bride. The hardworking guide took up company with an aboriginal guide, and the two got on splendidly. So well in fact, that the native guide was invited to stay the winter in the cabin with the couple. Later that year, neighbours found the smouldering ashes of the cabin, the husband murdered by axe, and the wife no where to be found. The chimney of the burned out cabin was all that remained. The chimney that stands today is a replica of the original masonry for which the island is renowned.

Brown's Bay
Brown's Bay is a Parks of the St. Lawrence day use facility. The wave-washed sand beaches and shaded lawns beckon you to pull in for a swim or a picnic. Purchase ice, enjoy the changehouse and showers, or meet other paddlers at this convenient site. No camping is permitted. More information about Brown's Bay Park is available at www.stlawrenceparks.com/bb.htm

Whitney Point Bay
Be on the watch for mallards, geese, herons or the elusive least bittern in the river wetlands such as the marsh at Whitney Point Bay.

Jones Creek
Jones Creek was at one time known as Toniata River, in reference to a large and somewhat mysterious First Nations village that once existed nearby. Toniata appears on many early maps of the region, but no archaeological evidence has confirmed the location of the settlement. Paddlers who venture into Jones Creek will find a relaxing paddle among river marshes bustling with shorebirds. It holds some favored fishing spots for anglers, so don't be surprised if you share the scenery with others on the water.

Butternut Bay Village
In 1875, the St. Lawrence Central Campground was established by the Methodist Episcopal Church at Butternut Bay. Worshippers often arrived at the summer retreat by steamship to enjoy tranquil summer days. Visitors stayed in the boarding house or one of 30 cottages on the grounds. Paddle past Butternut Bay to marvel at the historic architecture reminiscent of days past.

HAZARDS
Rough Waters
Very few islands are found along this route, and shelter from wind and waves is limited. Be prepared for some rough water, and tiring paddling if the winds are up out of the east or west.
At the eastern end of the Thousand Islands and the edge of the Frontenac Axis, lie the 70 islands and 60 shoals that comprise the Brockville Narrows group. As the name implies, the river narrows considerably here to a width of only 1.4 km. The many small islands offer a scenic and relaxing route for daytrippers, just offshore from historic Brockville. Island day-use and camping facilities on Stovin Island and several municipal park islands make this route an ideal paddle for those seeking a relaxing day of paddling or a base to begin an extended trip.

**DEPARTURE POINT**
St. Lawrence Park, located along King Street on the western edge of the city, offers boat launching, parking and camping facilities. The park operates seasonally, and a small fee applies for parking.

Centrally located boat launching sites (with docks and ramp) at the foot of Home Street and Henry Street, provide easy access to the river with ample free parking, with a washroom, changehouse, and public telephone nearby.

**TRIP LENGTH**
A full day of paddling can be filled in this small section of the Thousand Islands. Numerous island camping facilities in the Brock Isles, permit overnight tripping in this narrow section of the river. Through paddlers heading upriver with plans to spend an evening camping on Grenadier, should depart early in the day from one of the islands in the western end of the Brock Isles, and allow a full day for river travel.

**DISTANCE**
Two kilometres separate Mollys Gut and Stovin Island, another 2.5 km will see you to shore at St. Lawrence Park.
POINTS OF INTEREST

St. Lawrence Park
Shaded by majestic oaks, graced with a sandy beach, and serviced with campsites, washrooms and a canteen, St. Lawrence Park is an ideal launch site for paddlers embarking on day-trips in the Brock Isles.

Henry Park
This lovely day-use park features several shaded picnic areas, with a change house, washroom, and pay telephone.

Skeleton Island
Skeleton Island is a close destination for paddlers to explore. It lies just east of the Park access point, behind Victoria and Mile Islands. A dock at the west end of the island is usually empty, but provides access to the island trails and is a nice place to quickly cool off on a hot afternoon.

Stovin Island
Stovin Island is the most easterly gateway to St. Lawrence Islands National Park. Several large docks on the south face of the island and two quiet campsites await paddlers who may be arriving from upriver before fully exploring the Brock Isles. The natural integrity of the island has been maintained by the careful management of the national park, and despite its popularity Stovin remains home to a rich diversity of forest species. Hike past sprawling juniper, over the granite ridges of white pine, and atop rocky cliffs where only the sturdiest tress dare send roots. Like many of the Thousand Islands, Stovin shows signs of the glacial scouring that was instrumental in sculpting much of the landscape.

HISTORIC CITY OF THE 1000 ISLANDS
As you paddle the narrow waters off Brockville, you may find your attention drawn from water to land by the scenic beauty of this small city steeped in history. Turn your paddling adventure into a learning adventure by admiring the fascinating architecture of the homes along the river's bank. On land, one doesn't have to travel far from the water to take a step back in time: visit Canada's first railway tunnel that used to deliver passengers and freight to the St. Lawrence River at Blockhouse Island; explore Fulford Place; take a summer evening 'ghost walk' stroll through town or stop in at the Brockville Museum to discover more about this river community’s remarkable past. Visit the Brockville Tourism Information Centre on Blockhouse Island or contact them in advance 1-888-251-7676  www.brockville.com
HAZARDS

Shipping Channel
The International Shipping Channel poses a real hazard along this entire route due to the narrowness of the river. The Shipping Lane lies between the Brock Isles and the Canadian mainland, directly parallel to the paddling route. Paddlers should be sure that no vessels are approaching and exercise caution when crossing this channel. For peace of mind (or to know what’s coming!), check the local newspaper to determine when vessels will be in the channel.

Recreational Boats
Brockville harbour is a busy place for pleasure craft and sailboats. Be aware of other craft, especially when launching and beaching.

Open Waters
Above Myers Island the route is fully exposed to prevailing southwesterly winds and can be rough paddling in anything but light conditions. Stick close to shore from De Watteville Island, past Lily Bay, Butternut Bay and on to Jones Creek east of Whitney Point.

Black Charlie, McCoy, Cockburn, De Rottenburgh, and Sparrow Islands
Docks, campsites and washrooms are located on all 5 of these destination islands. All are suitable for paddlers to enjoy a picnic, stroll the trails or spend an evening. Day use of facilities is free of charge, a fee applies to overnight camping facilities, which operate from May 15 to September 15. Reservations for these sites can be arranged in advance with the City of Brockville, Community Services Department. Call (613) 342-8772 and ask for Parks. Other municipal islands can be used to land (at docks provided or on small rock beaches), and stroll or find shelter to pull out of a storm.

Mollys Gut
As you travel the mainland shoreline, paddle in to Mollys Gut, a sheltered marsh shoreline between Hillcrest Point and De Watteville Island. This bay is a favorite spot to bird-watch, and a good place to spy a great blue heron lurking in the reeds. To stretch your legs, stroll Mollys Gut Island.