Chesapeake Bay – Thimble Shoal Channel
NOAA Chart 12256

A reduced-scale NOAA nautical chart for small boaters
When possible, use the full-size NOAA chart for navigation.

- Complete, reduced-scale nautical chart
- Print at home for free
- Convenient size
- Up-to-date with Notices to Mariners
- Compiled by NOAA’s Office of Coast Survey, the nation’s chartmaker
What are Nautical Charts?

Nautical charts are a fundamental tool of marine navigation. They show water depths, obstructions, buoys, other aids to navigation, and much more. The information is shown in a way that promotes safe and efficient navigation. Chart carriage is mandatory on the commercial ships that carry America’s commerce. They are also used on every Navy and Coast Guard ship, fishing and passenger vessels, and are widely carried by recreational boaters.

What is a BookletChart™?

This BookletChart is made to help recreational boaters locate themselves on the water. It has been reduced in scale for convenience, but otherwise contains all the information of the full-scale nautical chart. The bar scales have also been reduced, and are accurate when used to measure distances in this BookletChart. See the Note at the bottom of page 5 for the reduction in scale applied to this chart.

Whenever possible, use the official, full scale NOAA nautical chart for navigation. Nautical chart sales agents are listed on the Internet at http://www.NauticalCharts.NOAA.gov.

This BookletChart does NOT fulfill chart carriage requirements for regulated commercial vessels under Titles 33 and 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

Notice to Mariners Correction Status

This BookletChart has been updated for chart corrections published in the U.S. Coast Guard Local Notice to Mariners, the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency Weekly Notice to Mariners, and, where applicable, the Canadian Coast Guard Notice to Mariners. Additional chart corrections have been made by NOAA in advance of their publication in a Notice to Mariners. The last Notices to Mariners applied to this chart are listed in the Note at the bottom of page 7. Coast Pilot excerpts are not being corrected.

For latest Coast Pilot excerpt visit the Office of Coast Survey website at http://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/nsd/searchbychart.php?chart=12256

(Selected Excerpts from Coast Pilot)

Thimble Shoal Channel is a Regulated Navigation Area and draft limitations apply. A vessel drawing less than 25 feet may not enter the channel, unless the vessel is crossing the channel.

Little Creek is entered between jetties 8 miles westward of Cape Henry Light. Most of the creek comprises the U.S. Naval Amphibious Base; small craft use the west arm.

A dredged channel in Little Creek leads to a basin off the railroad terminal, 1.2 miles south of the jetties. In June 1998, the controlling depth was 20 feet in the channel and in the basin. The channel is marked by a 177°30' lighted entrance range and by lights.

Little Creek Coast Guard Station is eastward of the railroad terminal. Naval danger zones and restricted areas extend northward from the vicinity of Little Creek to the edge of Thimble Shoal Channel.

Old Point Comfort is the site of historic Fort Monroe. The Chamberlin Hotel is an excellent landmark. Old Point Comfort Light (37°00.1'N, 76°18.4'W), 54 feet above the water, is shown from a white tower. Only Government craft can tie up at the wharf on the south waterfront of Old Point Comfort.

A naval restricted area extends eastward and southward of Old Point Comfort, and a danger zone of an army firing range extends to seaward from a point 1.5 miles northward of the point.

Willoughby Spit is a narrow barrier beach 1.3 miles long in an east-west direction. About midway between the spit and Old Point Comfort, on the opposite side of the entrance, is Fort Wool which is on the south edge of the main ship channel; a light is shown from a small gray house on the north side of the island.

The 45-foot-wide small-boat openings in the south approach bridge to Hampton Roads Tunnel have clearances of 10 feet.

Willoughby Bank with depths of 3 to 7 feet, extends east-northeastward along the edge of the main channel for about 2.5 miles from Fort Wool. Willoughby Bay on the inner side of Willoughby Spit, has general depths of 7 to 12 feet. On the south side of the bay are the prominent buildings of the Norfolk Naval Base and the Naval Air Station. A marked channel, 0.4 mile westward of Fort Wool, leads to a small-boat harbor behind Willoughby Spit. In August 2000, the midchannel controlling depth was 5.3 feet to Daybeacon 3, thence 10 feet to the harbor. Some supplies, fuel, and berthing are available.

The western and southern part of Willoughby Bay is a restricted area. The northern part of the bay is a small-craft anchorage. Naval and general anchorages are south of Thimble Shoal Channel. (See 110.1 and 110.168, chapter 2, for limits and regulations.)

Thimble Shoal Channel is a Regulated Navigation Area and draft limitations apply. A vessel drawing less than 25 feet may not enter the channel, unless the vessel is crossing the channel. (See 165.501, chapter 2, for limits and regulations.)

Naval danger zones and restricted areas extend northward from the vicinity of Little Creek to the edge of Thimble Shoal Channel. (See 334.310 and 334.370, chapter 2, for limits and regulations.)
Lateral System As Seen Entering From Seaward

PORT SIDE
ODD NUMBERED AIDS
- GREEN LIGHT ONLY
- FLASHING (2)
- OCCULTING
- QUICK FLASHING
- ISO

PREFERRED CHANNEL
NO NUMBERS – MAY BE LETTERED
- PREFERRED CHANNEL TO STARBOARD
- TOPMOST BAND GREEN
- GREEN LIGHT ONLY
- COMPOSITE GROUP FLASHING (2+1)

PREFERRED CHANNEL
NO NUMBERS – MAY BE LETTERED
- PREFERRED CHANNEL TO PORT
- TOPMOST BAND RED
- RED LIGHT ONLY
- COMPOSITE GROUP FLASHING (2+1)

STARBOARD SIDE
EVEN NUMBERED AIDS
- RED LIGHT ONLY
- FLASHING (2)
- OCCULTING
- QUICK FLASHING
- ISO

For more information on aids to navigation, including those on Western Rivers, please consult the latest USCG Light List for your area. These volumes are available online at http://www.navcen.uscg.gov
Note: Chart grid lines are aligned with true north.

Printed at reduced scale. SCALE 1:20,000 See Note on page 5.
PROJECT DEPTHS

Channel legends and tabulations, where indicated, reflect the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) project depths. The channel may be significantly shallower, particularly at the edges. For detailed channel information and minimum depths as reported to USACE, visit NOAA Electronic Navigation Charts (ENC) survey and channel condition reports are available at http://www.navalchart.us.html.

DATA COURTESY OF NAVIER, USACE, AND MARINE LITERATURE.

SOURCE DIAGRAM

The masked areas represent the limits of the most recent hydrographic survey information that has been evaluated for charting. Surveys have been performed in this diagram by date and type of survey. Channels maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are periodically surveyed and are not shown on this diagram. Refer to: United States, Coast Pilot, Chapter 2, U.S. 312 existing, or at the recommendation of any chart

SOURCE

A 1990-2016 NOS Surveys full bottom coverage
B2 1970-1989 NOS Surveys partial bottom coverage
B3 1960-1989 NOS Surveys partial bottom coverage
f Miscellaneous Surveys

NOTE C

EMERGENCY RESTRICTED AREA

For the latest information regarding the regulations of any emergency restricted area, contact the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District Regulatory Branch at (757) 221-1563 or 757-766-7602.

NOTE H

LITTLE CREEK EXCLUSION ZONE

The Little Creek Exclusion Zone is a subset of an emergency restricted area. No vessel or persons may enter this area without permission of the Commanding Officer/In-Charge of the Little Creek Exclusion Area. Persons or vessels may motor other portions of the restricted area at any time, but are subject to inspections from designated law enforcement officers.

NOTE 13

CAUTION

The Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel Complex has several occasions suffered damage from vessels due to adverse weather conditions. Currents in excess of three knots can be expected in the area. Mariners transiting this area are urged to be particularly alert in regards to the weather situation. The National Weather Service provides 24 hour weather broadcastiong on 162.55 MHz. The Local Marine Service also transmits weather information at 600, 6700, 1300 and 1900 local time on 208 and 1400 kHz. Transmitting information are subject to change. See Notice to Mariners. Navigating in close proximity of the bridge-tunnel complex is discouraged.

SOUNDINGS IN FEET

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF CO
NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC\nNATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE\nCOAST SURVEY
FISH TRAP AREAS AND STRUCTURES

Mariners are warned that numerous uncharted duck blinds and fishing structures, some submerged, may exist in the fish trap areas. Such structures are not charted unless known to be permanent.

Regulations to assure clear passage to and through channels and nature channels, and to establish safe headings, are prescribed by the Corps of Engineers in the Code of Federal Regulations. Definite limits of fish trap areas have been established in some areas, and these limits are shown.

Where definite limits have not been prescribed, the location of fishing structures is restricted only by the regulations.
VHF Marine Radio channels for use on the waterways:
Channel 6 – Inter-ship safety communications.
Channel 9 – Communications between boats and ship-to-coast.
Channel 13 – Navigation purposes at bridges, locks, and harbors.
Channel 16 – Emergency, distress and safety calls to Coast Guard and others, and to initiate calls to other vessels. Contact the other vessel, agree to another channel, and then switch.
Channel 22A – Calls between the Coast Guard and the public. Severe weather warnings, hazards to navigation and safety warnings are broadcast here.
Channels 68, 69, 71, 72 and 78A – Recreational boat channels.

Getting and Giving Help — Signal other boaters using visual distress signals (flares, orange flag, lights, arm signals); whistles; horns; and on your VHF radio. You are required by law to help boaters in trouble. Respond to distress signals, but do not endanger yourself.

NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR) is a nationwide network of radio stations broadcasting continuous weather information directly from the nearest National Weather Service office. NWR broadcasts official Weather Service warnings, watches, forecasts and other hazard information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/

Quick References
Nautical chart related products and information — http://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov
Interactive chart catalog — http://www.charts.noaa.gov/InteractiveCatalog/nrnc.shtml
Chart and chart related inquiries and comments — http://ocsdata.nndc.noaa.gov/ids/inquiry.aspx?frompage=ContactUs
Chart updates (LNM and NM corrections) — http://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/mcd/updates/LNM_NM.html
Coast Pilot online — http://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/nsd/cpdownload.htm
Tides and Currents — http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov
Marine Forecasts — http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/marine/home.htm
National Data Buoy Center — http://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/
NowCoast web portal for coastal conditions — http://www.nowcoast.noaa.gov/
National Hurricane Center — http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/
Pacific Tsunami Warning Center — http://ptwc.weather.gov/
Contact Us — http://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/staff/contact.htm

GETTING AND GIVING HELP
— Signal other boaters using visual distress signals (flares, orange flag, lights, arm signals); whistles; horns; and on your VHF radio. You are required by law to help boaters in trouble. Respond to distress signals, but do not endanger yourself.

Distress Call Procedures
• Make sure radio is on.
• Select Channel 16.
• Press/Hold the transmit button.
• Clearly say: “MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY.”
• Also give: Vessel Name and/or Description; Position and/or Location; Nature of Emergency; Number of People on Board.
• Release transmit button.
• Wait for 10 seconds — If no response Repeat MAYDAY call.

HAVE ALL PERSONS PUT ON LIFE JACKETS!

This Booklet chart has been designed for duplex printing (printed on front and back of one sheet). If a duplex option is not available on your printer, you may print each sheet and arrange them back-to-back to allow for the proper layout when viewing.

NOAA’s Office of Coast Survey
The Nation’s Chartmaker