



The Great Florida Birding Trail
is a project of the
Florida Fish and Wildlife
Conservation Commission



WEST FLORIDA BIRDING TRAIL



In partnership with :



Wildlife Foundation of Florida



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



Florida Park Service



Florida Department of Transportation



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



The Great Florida Birding Trail

www.FloridaBirdingTrail.com



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Florida Fish and Wildlife
Conservation Commission
MyFWC.com



CITY LOCATOR

<u>City</u>	<u>Map</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Map</u>
Bradenton	Q	Largo	M
Brooksville	K	Madison	A
Cedar Key	G	Micanopy	D
Clearwater	M	New Port Richey	L
Cross City	F	Perry	E
Crystal River	H	Ruskin	P
Dade City	K	Spring Hill	L
Fanning Springs	F	St. Petersburg	N
Gainesville	C,D	Tampa	M,O
High Springs	C	Tarpon Springs	M
Homosassa Springs	I	Wauchula	R
Inverness	J	White Springs	B
Lake City	B		

How were these sites selected?

Each of the sites in this guide was chosen for its bird-watching characteristics, accessibility and ability to withstand birder use. This is not to say there aren't other places to watch birds, from new sites that have opened since this printing, to nontraditional sites such as landfills that did not meet the trail's criteria. In other words, keep your eyes peeled! Some of the best birding opportunities are fleeting and spontaneous. You never know what you may find!



Loaner optics are available free of charge at all Gateways, as well as at additional sites as marked in the site descriptions!

Gateways

Gateway sites provide more extensive trail-related resources, have loaner optics available on-site, and act as hubs of regional birding information. The West Florida section has two gateways: Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park (site #19) near Gainesville and Fort De Soto County Park (site #91) in St. Petersburg. The East Florida section has three gateways: Fort Clinch State Park (Fernandina Beach), Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge (Titusville) and Tenoroc Fish Management Area (Lakeland).

The Panhandle section has two gateways: Big Lagoon State Park (Pensacola) and St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge (near Tallahassee). The South Florida section has two gateways: Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary (Naples) and Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge (Boynton Beach).

Each of these sites has staff on hand to answer questions about the trail, kiosks with information about the trail structure and their visitor centers offer information about birding classes and events occurring across the state. Hop on the Birding Trail at a Gateway and get off to a flying start!

Birder Vocabulary

Some words used in this guide are specific to birders and birdwatching. Bone-up on the following lingo so you'll blend in at your next birding dinner party!

Bayhead: forested wetland (swamp) usually dominated by evergreen trees and shrubs

Birding by ear: the ability to identify birds by their song or call

Ecotone: the interface between two habitat types

Fallout: the sudden appearance of large numbers of migratory birds, usually songbirds, as a result of a storm or cold front

Forage: to look for food

Kettle: a dense group of birds circling in a warm-air thermal to gain altitude (e.g. raptors in migration)

Overwintering: describes any bird that spends the winter in Florida but breeds elsewhere

Peeps: slang for any number of small shorebirds that forage in mixed flocks

Scoping: scanning with a spotting scope

Stoop: to plunge dramatically in flight, as in hunting peregrine falcons

Stopover: a location where birds rest and feed before continuing on their migration

Wrackline: the line of seaweed and flotsam at the high tide line on beaches

Map

A River Bluffs Cluster

1 Ladell Brothers Outdoor Environmental Center

Once inside this unlikely jewel, you'd hardly believe you're at North Florida Community College. Three, half-mile mulched trails and boardwalks crisscross the pine forest. They run past a marsh pond, through a black gum-red maple swamp and across a small stream whose gurgles draw seasonal songbirds. Open field and pond habitats also present. Loaner optics are available in the college library.

DIRECTIONS: Located on the north end of North Florida Community College's campus, on US 90 1 mi. west of downtown Madison. Turn at NFCC's main entrance. Park and get specific directions at the administration building.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 973-1645
www.nfcc.edu



J F M A M J J A S O N D

2 Twin Rivers State Forest

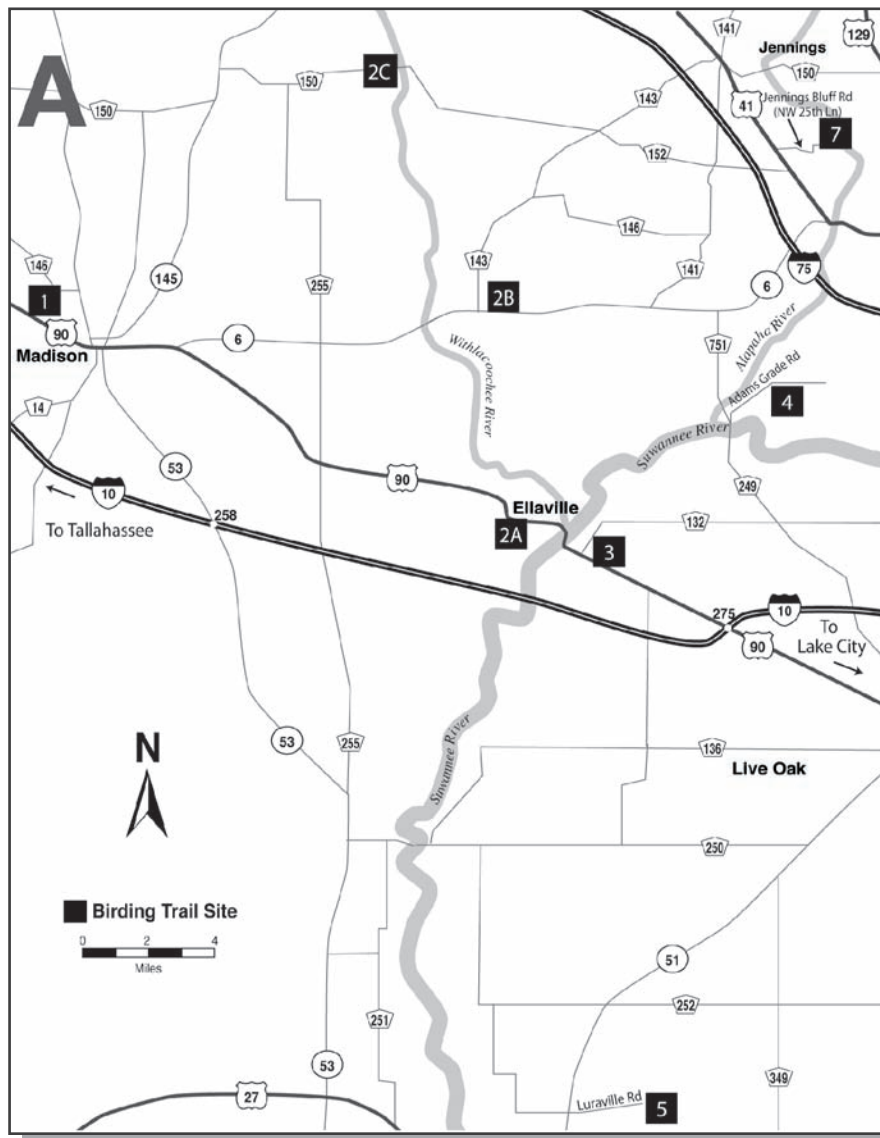
DESCRIPTION: The Ellaville Tract borders the west shore of the Suwannee at its confluence with the Withlacoochee. Its sandhills are home to turkey and Cooper's hawks and lead down through xeric oak hammocks to the river: a pleasant hike with moderate bird diversity. Blue Springs Tract is a rare example of a longleaf-wiregrass community. This fire-dependent habitat is home to bobwhite and brown-headed nuthatches; also, it demonstrates what Florida's uplands looked like before the arrival of Europeans and the era of fire-suppression. Area is closed to birding during some managed hunts in fall and spring; call for dates. The new Sullivan tract offers birding by canoe on the Withlacoochee - watch for wading birds and kingfishers.

DIRECTIONS: Ellaville (A): entrance is on the south side of US 90, 0.4 mi. west of the Suwannee River Crossing. Blue Springs Longleaf (B): located on the north side of CR 6, 0.4 mi. east of its intersection with CR 143. Sullivan (C): From US 90, go north on CR 255; turn right (E) on CR 150; parking is 3.5 mi. on right (S) side road before bridge.

Open dawn to dusk. (386) 208-1460 www.fl-dof.com/state_forests/



J F M A M J J A S O N D



3 Suwannee River State Park

The best trails at this site parallel the bluffs of the Suwannee River, through hardwood hammocks laced with holly and obscure "cedar elms." Watch for songbirds in migration like magnolia warblers, ruby-crowned kinglets and hermit thrushes. Longer, more rustic hikes are available across the river on the Big Oak Trail. Monthly bird walk every 4th Saturday of month; meet at ranger station at 8 AM.

DIRECTIONS: Park is located 11 mi. west of Live Oak on US 90, just east of the Suwannee River.

Open 8 AM to dusk. (386) 362-2746 www.floridastateparks.org



J F M A M J J A S O N D

4 Holton Creek Tract

DESCRIPTION: The Florida Trail follows the Suwannee River through Holton Creek Wildlife Management Area's gorgeous old-growth bottomland forest, offering nice vantages from occasional bluffs. Songbirds like parulas and yellow-throated warblers breed here, and blue-headed vireos and hermit thrushes are sure to make an appearance in fall and spring. Limited hunting closes the area to other uses 6 weekends per year.

DIRECTIONS: From Live Oak, take CR 249 northwest across the Suwannee River and make the second right onto SW 67th Dr. (Adams Grade Rd.) Go appx. 1 mi. and turn right on dirt entrance road to the property.

Open dawn to dusk. (386) 362-1001

www.srwmmd.state.fl.us and

<http://myfwc.com/recreation/cooperative/holtoncreek.asp>



5 Peacock Springs State Park

The entrance road to this small state park winds through hardwood bottomland all the way to the springs. Popular for scuba diving and swimming, this site is best birded in the morning. Good habitat abounds for migrant songbirds like Swainson's thrushes, but height of the canopy can cause "warbler neck." Ability to bird by ear helpful.

DIRECTIONS: From Live Oak, drive 17 mi. southwest on SR 51 and turn left (E) on Luraville Rd./180th St. Park is 2 mi. ahead on right (S).

Open 8 AM to dusk. (386) 497-4690 www.floridastateparks.org



6 PCS Waterfowl Management Area

Settling ponds at this industrial property near White Springs offer varying depths of water which attract everything from white pelicans to black-bellied whistling ducks, rafts of migratory ducks and occasional rarities like red-necked phalaropes and black terns. A bird extravaganza, access is available only to groups by advance reservation on the first and third Saturdays of October, February, March, April and May. Individual birders may call and ask to join a group with an existing reservation. Groups can drive/hike the dikes around the settling ponds.

DIRECTIONS: Given with reservations. (386) 397-8313



7 Jennings Bluff Tract

Entrance road leads gradually down through hardwood forest to a trail along the slow, tannic Alapaha River (emphasis on the 2nd syllable). Bobwhite, Acadian flycatchers, yellow-throated vireos and yellow-billed cuckoos all breed here in summer. Migratory songbirds pepper the woods in spring and fall.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of SR 6 and US 41, drive northwest 2 mi. to Jennings Bluff Rd./NW 25th Ln. Turn right; follow road about 1.5 mi. to the entrance road on the left (N) side.

Open dawn to dusk. (386) 362-1001 www.srwmmd.state.fl.us



8 Big Shoals Public Lands

The main entrance offers access to some sandhill and hammock roads through the property, with trails down to the river. River entrance has best trail, leading along the river to some wet lowlands good for songbirds. The area around the river entrance, bordering the namesake Big Shoals, excludes hunting year-round.

DIRECTIONS: Main entrance (A) located appx. 1 mi. northeast of White Springs on the southeast side of CR 135. Big Shoals river entrance (B): From US 41 in White Springs drive northeast on CR 135 appx. 4 mi. to Old Godwin Bridge Rd. Turn right and follow the road to the entrance at the end.

Open 8 AM to sunset. (386) 397-2733 www.srwmmd.state.fl.us



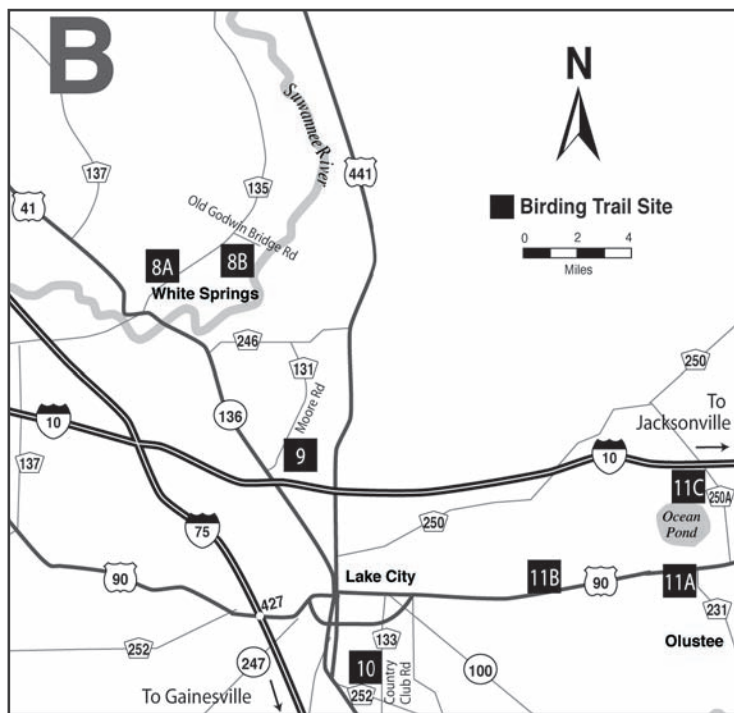
9 Falling Creek Falls

Check the boardwalk through lowland forest for migratory songbirds and visit the view of the creek's "whitewater." Rapids are so uncommon in Florida, these could be considered "waterfalls." Good for beginners to stroll in migration, this site is worth a quick stop if you're in the area.

DIRECTIONS: From Lake City, drive northwest on US 41 under I-10 and turn right (E) onto Falling Creek Rd. (CR 131). Site will be appx. 2 mi. ahead on the right.

Open 8 AM to dark. (386) 362-1001 www.columbiacountyfla.com





south side of US 90. Mt. Carrie Trailhead (B) is 4 mi. west of HQ on the north side of the road. To reach Ocean Pond Campground (C), drive 2 mi. east of HQ to CR 250A. Turn left (N) and continue 3 mi. to the north to FR 268. Turn left (S) and road will end at campground.

Open 24 hours/day. HQ open 7:30 AM to 5 PM Mon.-Thurs.;; 7:30 AM to 4 PM Fri. (386) 752-2577
www.fs.fed.us/r8/florida/recreation



12 Ichetucknee Springs State Park

This site is popular for river tubing in warm weather, and can be very crowded on weekends. Regardless, this clear spring run winds through hardwoods past limpkins and Mississippi kites; Blue Hole Trail at the north entrance leads through floodplain lowlands; the Trestle Point/Pine Ridge nature trails are a little higher ground, with sandhills offering turkeys and singing Bachman's sparrows. South entrance also has trails; Tram Rd. is easy going, open only Oct.-Apr.

DIRECTIONS: North entrance (A): From Ft. White, take SR 47 north 2 mi., turn left (W) on CR 238 (Elim Church Rd.), go 3.5 mi., entrance is on left (S). South entrance (B): From Ft. White, take US 27 northwest 4 mi.; entrance is on right (N) before the river.

Open 8 AM to sunset. (386) 497-4690
www.floridastateparks.org/ichetuckneesprings/



13 O'Leno State Park and River Rise Preserve State Park

Main entrance: Trail traverses river through hardwood lowlands 1.5 miles to a sinkhole where the river goes underground. Trails through mesic uplands off Bellamy Rd., esp. Paraner's Loop, showcase migrants like black-throated blue warblers and breeders like Acadian flycatchers. South entrance trail leads 1.5 miles to where the river re-emerges.

DIRECTIONS: Main entrance (A) located 6 mi. north of High Springs on the east side of US 441; Bellamy Rd. Trails (B): Drive appx. 1 mi. south of Main Entrance on US 441, and turn left (E) on Bellamy Rd. Parking area and trails on the left (N) side, 2 mi. ahead. South entrance (C) appx. 4 mi. south of Bellamy Rd (1 mi. north of the river) on the east side of US 441.

Open 8 AM to sunset (386) 454-1853
www.floridastateparks.org/oleno/ and
www.floridastateparks.org/riverrise/



10 Alligator Lake Recreation Area

From the north end of the parking area, hike the 3-mile perimeter loop trail. This dike passes fields that retain water and host shorebirds and sparrows. After 1 mile, the dike dives into hardwood hammock good for songbird migrants like Baltimore oriole, then follows the cypress-lined lake edge. Waterfowl hunters present on Tues. and Thurs. in fall/winter.

DIRECTIONS: Drive US 90 east out of Lake City and turn south on Country Club Rd./CR 133. Parking area is marked appx. 1.5 mi. south on the right (W) side of the road.

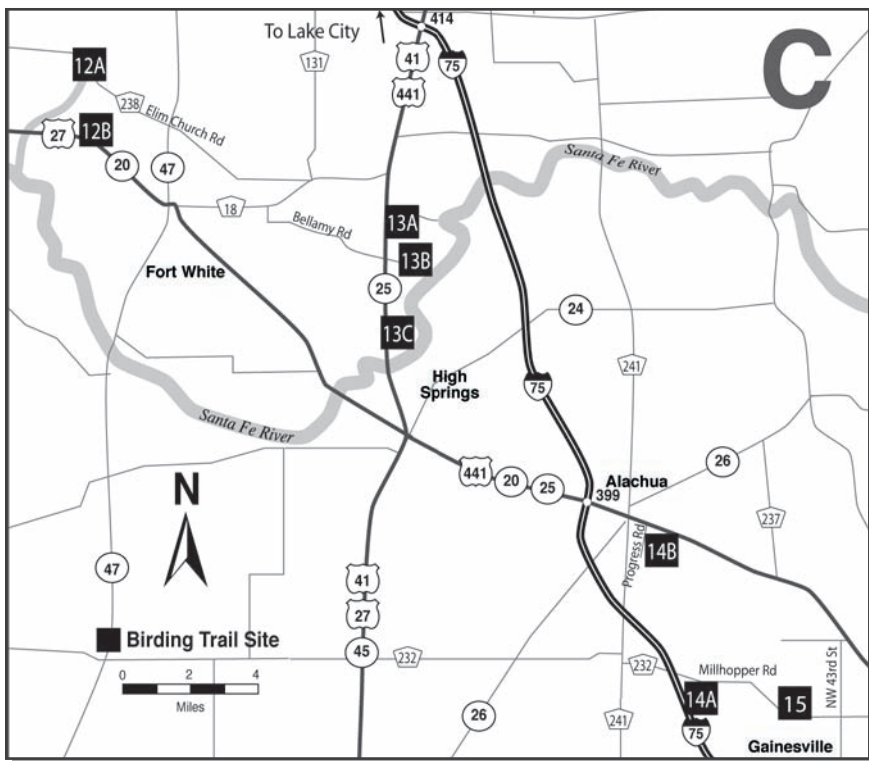
Open 11 AM to 7 PM Wed.-Fri.; 8 AM to 7 PM Sat.-Sun.
(386) 719-7545 www.columbiacountyfla.com



11 Osceola National Forest

Stop by Forest HQ for a map, road closures and hunting seasons (especially busy Nov.-Jan.). At Mount Carrie Trailhead, hike the trail through a well-maintained longleaf pine stand, watching for bluebirds, pine warblers and red-cockaded woodpeckers (cavity trees are ringed with white paint). At the Ocean Pond Campground, walk the shoreline, scoping for ducks and wading birds. A segment of the Florida National Scenic Trail crosses the campground entrance road and to the west, leads through hydric hammock good for migratory songbirds in fall and spring.

DIRECTIONS: Forest Headquarters (A) is located about 11 mi. east of the intersection of US 441 and US 90 in Lake City, on the

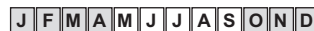


15 Devil's Millhopper Geological State Park

A series of boardwalks allows you to bird the slopes of a massive sinkhole 120 feet deep and 500 feet across. The lush hardwood slope forest is good for skulking songbirds like the veery and eastern towhee, and brown creepers have been found here in winter. Birding by ear skills can be helpful, although not necessary.

DIRECTIONS: Park is on Millhopper Rd., 0.25 mi. west of NW 43rd. St.

Open 9 AM to 5 PM, year-round.
(352) 955-2008
www.floridastateparks.org/devilsmillhopper/

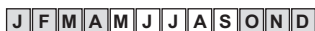


14 San Felasco Hammock Preserve State Park

South Entrance: Bird the hiking trail through hardwood hammocks punctuated with sinkholes, especially in migration. Local breeding birds include wood thrush, hooded warbler, yellow-throated vireo and red-headed woodpecker. North Entrance: improved pasture good for sparrows, raptors and other grassland birds. Check oak edges in migration also.

DIRECTIONS: South entrance (A) is located just east of the intersection of Millhopper Rd. (CR 232) and I-75 in northwest Gainesville. Parking area and a nature trail are located on south side of the road; more extensive hiking trails on north side of road. North entrance (B): From Alachua, follow US 441 southeast about 1 mi. across the railroad tracks. Turn right (S) on Progress Blvd., and follow to the trailhead at the end.

Open 8 AM to sunset. (386) 462-7905
www.floridastateparks.org/sanfelascohammock/



16 Gainesville Regional Utilities' Chapman's Pond

From the elevated overlook, scope the large holding pond for a possible 16 duck species in winter, wading birds year-round, as well as shorebirds in the shoulder months of migration. Mississippi kites are common in summer. Adjacent forest hosts migratory songbird species, including orange-crowned warblers in winter/spring.

DIRECTIONS: From I-75 in Gainesville, take Archer Rd. (SR 24) southwest 2 mi. Turn right (N) onto SW 75th St. Go 1.2 mi. and turn right (E) on SW 41st Pl. Veteran's Park will be on the left (N) side of the road. Parking area is on the left (N) side of the road, 0.75 mi. ahead, across from the water reclamation facility.

Open 24 hours/day, 365 days/year. (352) 393-6701 www.gru.com



17 Morningside Nature Center

Morningside features longleaf pine savanna, a popular bird blind and an educational nature center. Blind offers good looks of common birds like goldfinches and eastern towhees. Hiking trails have same, plus savanna specialties like common yellowthroat, brown-headed nuthatch and eastern bluebird. Check web for educational program schedule.



DIRECTIONS: From Waldo Rd. (SR 24) in Gainesville, go east on University Ave. (SR 26) 1.9 mi.; entrance is on the left (N) side of the road.

Open daily, except major holidays, 9 AM to 5 PM.
(352) 334-2170 www.natureoperations.org



18 Newnans Lake: Palm Point Park

This peninsular park on the west shore of Newnans Lake offers the usual FL waterbirds year-round, but is known locally for its songbird fallouts in migration. Outside of migration it warrants a quick stop; during Sept.-Oct. and April, it is a destination unto itself. During periods of low water, the lake has hosted shorebirds rarely seen in the area otherwise.

DIRECTIONS: From Gainesville, take University Ave. due east until it dead ends at SE 55th Blvd. at Newnans Lake. Turn south on SE 55th Ave (Lakeshore Dr.). Palm Point parking area will be on the left (E) side of the road about a mile south, just as the road takes a wide curve to the west.

Open daily, except major holidays, sunrise to sunset.
(352) 334-2231 www.natureoperations.org



19 Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park Gateway*

This park encompasses a 15,000-acre basin marsh and wet prairie ringed with hardwood hammock. Main Entrance: pick up a map, check for recent sightings, Chacala Trail has nice uplands. LaChua Trail: good winter sparrow habitat (white-throated, swamp, song, vesper and more), hawks, waterfowl and quick entrée to the prairie wetland. Bolen Bluff: trail winds through hardwood hammock thick with warblers fall through spring, with viewing platform on prairie. Large numbers of sandhill cranes winter here, Nov. to March.

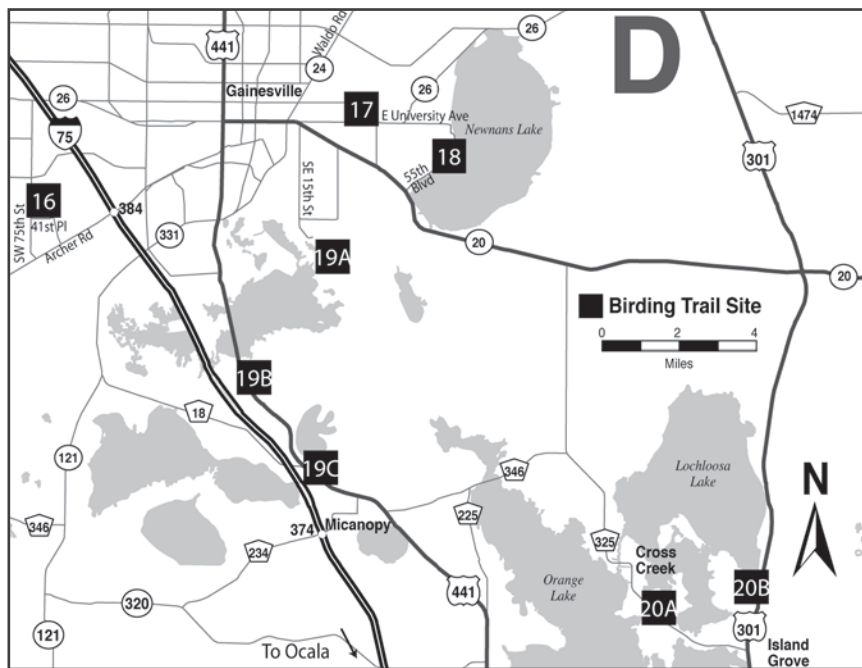
DIRECTIONS: LaChua Trail (A): From Gainesville, take SR 26 (University Dr.) east of town and across Waldo Rd. (SE 11th St.). Turn right (S) on SE 15th St. and continue straight through the three-way intersection, through the gate and down Camp Ranch Rd. to the DEP regional HQ. Trail begins to right of stone interpretive center. Bolen Bluff Trail (B): Located on the east side of US 441, 4.3 mi. south of the intersection of SR 331 and US 441, on the south side of Gainesville. Main Headquarters (C): Located on the east side of US 441, appx. 4 mi. south of Bolen Bluff Trail, just north of Micanopy.

LaChua: Open 8 AM to 5 PM, Mon.-Fri., closed holidays;
Bolen and Main Entrance: Open 8 AM to sunset all year.
Park office: (352) 466-3397; Visitor Center: (352) 466-4100

www.floridastateparks.org/paynesprairie/



* See "Gateways" on page 1 for more information.



20 Lochloosa Wildlife Conservation Area

Cross Creek Trail: hike the trail to the marsh overlook, watching for turkey, bobwhites and red-shouldered hawks along the way. Marsh hosts ducks, bitterns and a variety of waders. Burnt Island: road leads past cypress domes through hydric hammock to a lake overlook. Listen for migrants along the way; bald eagles and osprey frequent the lake. This area is hunted heavily fall through spring; wear blaze orange and use caution.

DIRECTIONS: Cross Creek Fire Station Trail (A): Trail and parking adjacent to fire station on south side of the community of Cross Creek. Burnt Island Access (B): located 1.5 mi. north of city of Island Grove and CR 325 on west side of US 301.

Open sunrise to sunset. (386) 329-4410
www.sjrwmd.com





Map
E Aucilla Cluster

21 Aucilla Wildlife Management Area:
Aucilla Sinks Trail

North and south of Goose Pasture road, the Aucilla River goes underground and re-emerges again and again, as the Florida National Scenic Trail follows it through a beautiful hardwood forest, past pockets of flatwoods and pools of swirling water. Wood thrushes call in the canopy and hooded warblers breed here; birding by ear skills can be helpful. Be prepared for bugs in warm, wet weather.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of CR 14 and US 98 in NW Taylor Co., drive west about 2 mi. to Powell Hammock Rd. Turn right (N) and drive 4.4 mi. to Goose Pasture Rd. (FR #5049). Turn left (W) and go exactly 1 mi. Park on the right (N) side of the road, across from the Florida Trail access.

Open dawn to dusk. <http://myfwc.com/recreation/aucilla>



22 Big Bend Wildlife Management Area:
Hickory Mound Impoundment

The long entrance road is unimproved so take your time; the wait is well worth it, once you reach this wild area. Good dike roads surround the impoundment and give good vantages of the brackish marsh, scattered islands of palms and oaks and the wintering ducks and shorebirds. The southernmost edge overlooks neighboring saltmarsh; the northernmost edge tunnels through thick, gorgeous coastal hardwood swamp. Boat launches are available. Hunting use within the impoundment is usually very low.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of US 98 and Cow Creek Grade in southwest Taylor Co., drive south 8 mi. to the loop road around the Hickory Mound Impoundment.

Open dawn to dusk. (386) 758-0525
http://myfwc.com/recreation/big_bend/recreation.asp

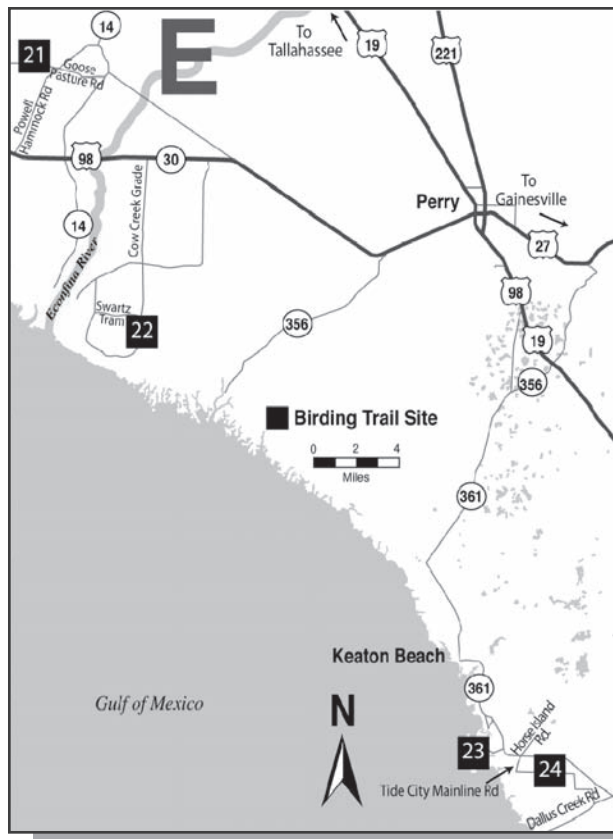


23 Big Bend Wildlife Management Area:
Hagens Cove

Pretty pine flatwoods on the entrance drive shelter turkeys and brown-headed nuthatches; the jewel of this area is the new (2006) viewing tower which overlooks marsh, mudflats and the Gulf. Numerous shorebirds like avocets and dowitchers feed in the shallows, along with wading birds and wintering ducks in open water. A scope can be helpful.

DIRECTIONS: From Keaton Beach, take CR 361 southeast appx. 5 mi. Entrance road (Hagens Cove Rd.) will be on the right (W) side of the road.

Open dawn to dusk. (386) 758-0525
http://myfwc.com/recreation/big_bend/recreation.asp

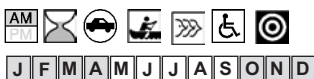


24 Big Bend Wildlife Management Area:
Tide Swamp Unit

A new 9-mile, one-way driving tour offers excellent access to the scenic coastal hardwoods and managed pine forests. Foot/bicycle traffic is welcome year-around--numerous tram roads meander through the area (note: some gates may be locked). Vehicular access to Horse Island Rd. is only during hunting season. Songbirds like golden-crowned kinglet, prothonotary and Swainson's warblers are possible. Bird via canoe/kayak on the Big Bend Saltwater Paddling Trail- launch from the Dallis Creek Landing boat ramp. For safety, if hiking during hunting seasons, wear blaze orange (esp. early morning/late evening). Check station operators can advise you on daily hunting use levels. For a free site recreation guide/map call (850) 488-5520.

DIRECTIONS: A) driving tour: from Keaton Beach, take CR 361 southeast appx. 12 mi. Turn right (S) on Dallis Creek Rd. at hunter check station. Follow the driving tour signs until Tide City Mainline rejoins CR 361 9 mi. north. B) Horse Island Rd.: from Keaton Beach, take CR 361 southeast appx. 6 mi. Turn right (S) on Tide City Mainline and park at northernmost hunter check station.

Open dawn to dusk. (386) 758-0525
http://myfwc.com/recreation/big_bend/recreation.asp



Map


 Lower Suwannee Cluster

25 Road to Nowhere

This undeveloped road runs for 12 miles nearly all the way to the Gulf. Bird the road margins, scanning pools for waders, flats for shorebirds like red knots, hardwoods for songbirds and the black needle rush marsh for elusive black rails. Do not leave the road; much adjacent land is privately owned. Beware of the soft road shoulder and traffic.

DIRECTIONS: From CR 51 in Steinhatchee, take CR 361 south-east out of town and follow it appx. 12 mi. toward the Gulf.

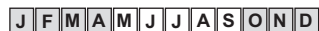
Open 24 hours/day.


26 Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge (North end)

Shired Island Beach access offers trails through coastal hammock past mudflats and open beach good for everything from wintering shorebirds to songbird migrants making landfall in spring. Dixie Mainline is a 9-mile driving/biking/walking road through pine flatwoods, bottomland hardwoods and marsh. Gorgeous birding, but be aware that hunting use is high on this area Oct./Nov., when biking/hiking are not advised. Fishbone Creek offers a platform vantage of saltmarsh. Salt Creek has an ADA-accessible boardwalk to the marsh where bald eagles frequently nest. Always something to see here year-round, but be prepared for biting insects in warm weather.

DIRECTIONS: Shired Island Beach (A): Follow CR 351 from Cross City to CR 357. Turn southwest and follow it all the way to the Gulf. Dixie Mainline Termini (B) are on CR 357 (5 mi. from the Gulf) and CR 349 (3 mi. from the Gulf). Fishbone Creek (C): Entrance is on the north side of CR 357 1 mi. southwest of the entrance for Dixie Mainline. Salt Creek (D): From the CR 349 terminus of Dixie Mainline, go north 0.5 mi. and turn left (W); park at end of road (do not block gate).

Open 24 hours/day. (352) 493-0238
www.fws.gov/lowersuwannee


27 Hart Springs Park

This small county park is mostly used for swimming in warm weather, but offers a nice boardwalk through bald cypress along the Suwannee River. Wood storks and pileated woodpeckers, prothonotary warblers and bald eagles are all possible. Trails through thick xeric hammock lead to some open areas for meadowlarks and bobwhites.

DIRECTIONS: From Fanning Springs, travel 2 mi. east on SR 26. Turn left (N) on CR 232, and go to CR 344. Turn left (W), the road dead ends at the park.

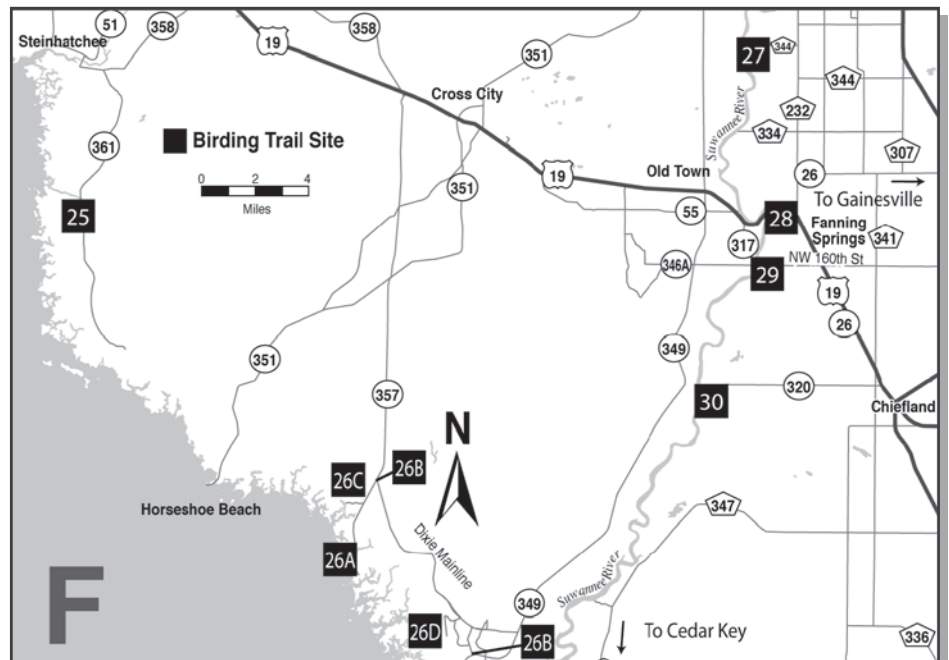
Open 9 AM to sunset. (352) 463-3444


28 Fanning Springs State Park

This small park known for its swimming has good birding too. A boardwalk runs through cypress trees down to the spring and returns through mesic hammock. Eastern phoebes snatch insects in open areas and a brief nature trail behind the bath house runs through broadleaf forest nice for migrants in season, Mississippi kites in summer.

DIRECTIONS: On the west side of US 19 in Fanning Springs, 0.5 mi. south of the Suwannee River bridge.

Open 8 AM to sunset. (352) 463-3420 www.floridastateparks.org



29 Andrews Wildlife Management Area 

This area's old-growth hardwoods and open understory are good for turkey and migrants like worm-eating warblers and Eastern wood-pewees. Suwannee River frontage offers waterbirds, and there is an extensive system of roads passable to 2WD. Intimate hiking trails access more remote areas with state champion trees. Hunting closes area to birding 13 weekends from Sept. to Apr. Call for dates.

DIRECTIONS: From Fanning Springs, travel 2.5 mi. south on US 19 to NW 160th St. Turn right (W) and follow the road to the site at the end.

Open dawn to dusk. (352) 493-6020
<http://myfwc.com/recreation/andrews>

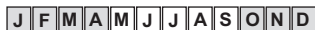


30 Manatee Springs State Park 

A boardwalk meanders from the spring along the run to the Suwannee River, through a cypress stand good for migrants and prothonotary warblers. Watch the far shore for cryptic limpkins. At the river, there is a large vulture roost, as well as an opportunity to view waders and ducks on the river. The spring is popular with swimmers. River offers more birding opportunities than upland nature trails.

DIRECTIONS: From US 19 in Chiefland, turn west onto SR 320 and follow it to the park at the end.

Open 8 AM to sunset, 365 days/year. (352) 493-6072
www.floridastateparks.org/manateesprings/



den, and can be good for songbirds and shorebirds while affording excellent views of the salt marsh.

DIRECTIONS: River Trail (A): From Chiefland, take US 19 south to CR 347. Drive west on CR 347 12 mi. Here, CR 347 meets CR 330 at a stop sign. Continue to the left on CR 347. Five miles ahead on the right, follow signs to the nature trail at the Refuge HQ. Lower Suwannee Nature Drive (B, C): 1 mi. further on the right (W) side of CR 347 is the entrance to the Nature Drive. This driving trail returns to CR 347 approx. 4.0 mi. further south. Shell Mound (D): From Cedar Key, take SR 24 north to CR 347 and turn left (N). Follow CR 347 approx. 3 mi. to CR 326. Turn left (W) and follow the signs to the Shell Mound Trail at the end.

Open 24 hours a day. (352) 493-0238
www.fws.gov/lowersuwannee



32 Cedar Key Scrub State Reserve

The east end of this site features upland sandhills and scrubs, home to the elusive Florida scrub-jay and short-tailed hawks. The west end slopes down through Black Point Swamp to tidal creeks and salt marsh. This is a beautiful, rustic preserve. Come with water; prepare to hike. Limited hunting on-site Sept. - Nov. Call for dates.

DIRECTIONS: From Cedar Key, follow CR 24 out of town, and veer left onto CR 347. Entrance is 1 mi. ahead from this intersection, on the left (W) side of the road.

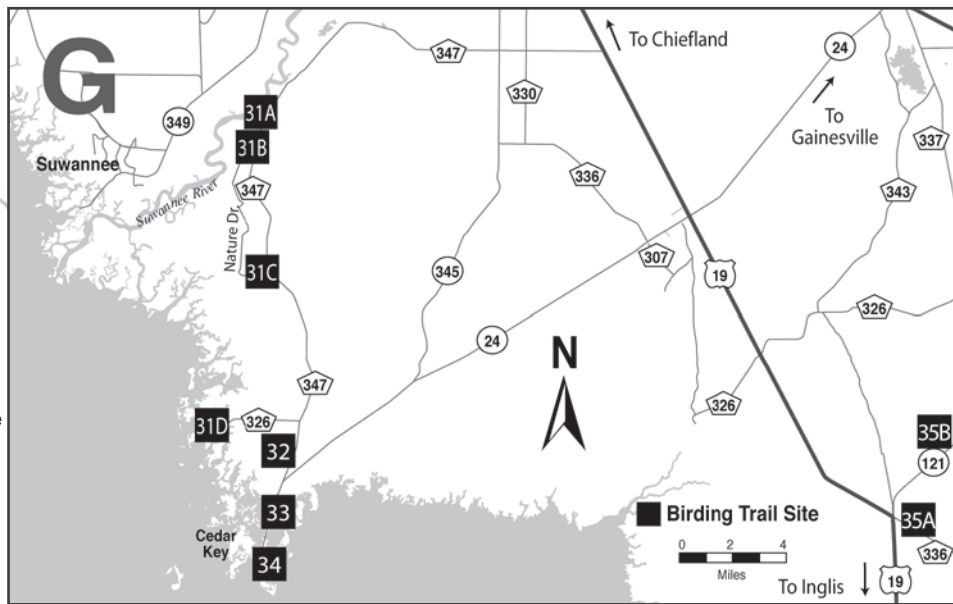
Open dawn to dusk. (352) 543-5567 www.floridastateparks.org



Map
G Cedar Key Cluster

31 Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge

River Trail is a brief lowland walk through a cypress and maple swamp to a boardwalk at the water's edge. For driving access, visit the Lower Suwannee Nature Drive through dark, cool lowlands good for songbirds. Tram roads off into the swamp offer the opportunity to get out and hike. Part of this area is open to hunting, so check seasons before you arrive. Shell Mound Trail winds around a Native American mid-



33 #4 Bridge and Fishing Pier

In late fall and winter, flats in the channels between the islands of Cedar Key host a tremendous diversity of shorebirds, and can be viewed from vantages like this one. Kayak concessions offer a unique access to the surrounding waters, where peregrines stoop on clusters of sandpipers and kettles of white pelicans soar on thermals. Roseate Spoonbills are summer treats.

DIRECTIONS: Take SR 24 towards Cedar Key. After crossing the first bridge to the keys, take the first left (E) onto SW 153rd Ct. Follow the road to the fishing pier/overlook at the end.

Open sunrise to sunset.



34 Cedar Key City Park, Marina & Fishing Pier

As long as you're in Cedar Key, you might as well check the waterfront for lingering night-herons on pilings in the marina or spotted sandpipers bobbing on the rocky shore. Sandy spits off the city park are teeming with peeps in winter.

DIRECTIONS: Drive SR 24 into Cedar Key and turn left at the first stop sign onto 2nd St. Go 3 blocks to A St. Park is on the corner of 2nd and A; A St. becomes Dock St. at Waterfront.

Open dawn to dusk.



35 Goethe State Forest

Get a map at Forest HQ or at trailheads. Most open forest roads are accessible to 2WD vehicles. Hunting pressure is heavy Nov.-Dec.; wear blaze orange (during hunts). Follow Gas Line northeast to Bee Hive Rd. Red-cockaded woodpecker cavity trees are ringed with white paint. Cow Creek and Black Prong roads also offer nice flatwoods, cypress domes and freshwater creeks. Extensive, rustic hiking/horseback riding trails are available.

DIRECTIONS: From Inglis, drive 10 mi. north on US 19. Merge right (N) onto SR 121 and go to the intersection with CR 336. Gas Line Rd. (A): make a right at stop sign (SE) onto CR 336. After appx. 2.4 mi. turn left (N) onto Gas Line Rd. Follow Gas Line 1 mi., then turn right (NE) on Beehive Rd. and continue another 1.3 mi. Turn around here or continue on foot. Cow Creek Rd. (B): From SR 121 and CR 336 intersection, cross CR 336 and continue appx. 1.2 mi. north on SR 121. Turn left (across from the state forest sign) onto Cow Creek Rd. Parking for cypress boardwalk is on left. HQ is located on the east side of forest at 9110 SE CR 337.

Open dawn to dusk. (352) 465-8585 www.fl-dof.com/state_forests



36 Bird Creek Park

While Bird Creek Park is at the end of Follow That Dream Trail (CR 40), the last 5 miles of this road wind through saltmarsh and tidal creeks to the Gulf at the end. Drive the road, watching for waders and stopping at pull-offs for better looks along the way. Several kayak put-in points offer nice access to the marsh; take water and insect repellent.

DIRECTIONS: From Inglis, take CR 40 9 mi. west to the park at the end on the Gulf.

Open dawn to dusk.



37 Cross Florida Greenway: Withlacoochee Bay Trail

This paved trail follows the south shore of the Barge Canal, ending at a Gulf overlook. Waders and shorebirds frequent the shoreline and sparrows hide in growth along the trail edges. Follow the trail to the left (S) side of the berm for a vantage of gorgeous salt marsh. Need boat access? A canoe launch is available near the west terminus of the trail; motorized boat launch is available on the east side of the bridge. Spoil islands directly offshore have shorebirds in fall/winter, including large groups of oystercatchers.

DIRECTIONS: Entrance is on the west side of US 19 on the south side of the Barge Canal north of Crystal River.

Open sunrise to sunset. (352) 447-1720 www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/



38 Cross Florida Greenway: Inglis Dam

At the dam, scope the reservoir for wintering ducks and loons; in spring/summer, barn swallows nest beneath the dam. Cross the dam to a loop trail through successional habitat, whose edges attract migratory songbirds. White-crowned, grasshopper, song, white-throated, field, chipping and vesper sparrows winter in grassy fields.

DIRECTIONS: From Inglis, travel south on US 19, cross the Barge Canal, and turn left (E) on Cornflower Dr. Go 1.5 mi. to Riverwood Rd., and turn left. Inglis Dam will be 0.25 mi. on left.

Open dawn to dusk. (352) 447-1720 www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/



39 Eco-Walk at Crystal River Preserve State Park

This pleasant 2-mile trail offers up a surprising diversity of birds, including yellow-breasted chats and Swainson's warblers in spring-time, soras and both bitterns in the ponds year-round, and Carolina, house and sedge wrens in fall/winter. Open areas are good for kestrels and red-shouldered hawks, as well as swallow-tailed kites in summer.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of Powerline Rd. and US 19 north of Crystal River, drive 1 mi. south to Curtis Tool Rd. Turn right (W) and follow to preserve entrance directly ahead.

Open sunrise to sunset. (352) 563-0450 www.floridastateparks.org

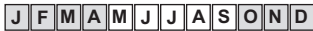


40 Crystal River Archaeological State Park

This small park has nice facilities and easy paved trails through hardwoods attractive to songbirds in migration. The river view from the top of an ancient shell mound is excellent for scoping for winter ducks and waders year-round along the waterline. Eagles, waterbirds and common songbirds make this a nice starter site for beginners.

DIRECTIONS: From CR 495 in Crystal River, take US 19 north 2 mi. to State Park St. Turn left and go to Museum Pointe Rd. Turn left; ends in parking lot.

Open 8 AM to sunset. (352) 795-3817 www.floridastateparks.org



41 Crystal Cove Trail at Crystal River Preserve State Park

The trail at this site follows a lime-rock path around a freshwater pond as well as saltwater marsh areas. Snipe and other shorebirds, wading birds and songbirds are possible. The site frequently has Mississippi kites in summer/fall. The Boy Scout Trail across the road offers hydric hammock good for songbirds, but birding by ear skills are essential.

DIRECTIONS: From Crystal River, take US 19 north to State Park St. Turn left (W) and go to Sailboat Point Rd. Turn left, second left is parking area for trailhead.

Open sunrise to sunset. (352) 563-0450 www.floridastateparks.org

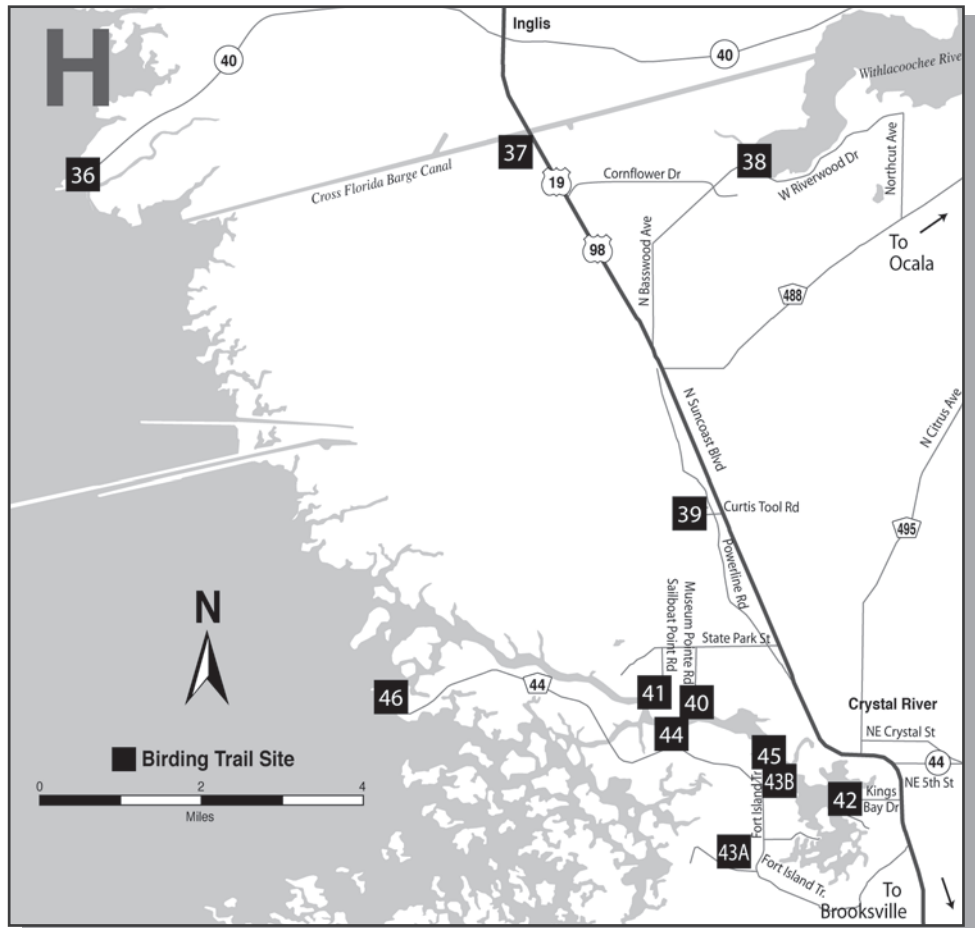


42 Kings Bay

A pleasant, cool-weather paddle at the headwaters for the Crystal River, this site hosts flocks of wintering lesser scaup, coots, and white pelicans. Wading birds like yellow-crowned night-herons, gulls, and bald eagles are frequently spotted. This area is also well known for its wintering population of manatees. Canoes are available from local dive shops. Significant open water makes this challenging on windy days.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of SR 44 and US 19 in Crystal River, drive south on US 19 five blocks to Kings Bay Dr. Turn right (W) and continue straight until you reach Pete's Pier boat ramp to launch your canoe.

Open 24 hours/day. (352) 563-2088 www.citrusbirdingtrail.com



43 Fort Island Trail, Crystal River Preserve State Park

A series of public lands (on map as 43A, and B) managed by Crystal River Preserve State Park are accessible from this road. Each offers a hike through brief upland habitats good for ground doves and nighthawks, out to tidal marshes good for waders, clapper and king rails, Nelson's sharp-tailed sparrows and more. Summer is buggy; there's something to see in every month.

DIRECTIONS: From US 19 south of Crystal River, turn west on Fort Island Tr., which runs to the Gulf through the Crystal River Preserve State Park. Trails at (A) Dixie Shores (mile marker 2.5), (B) Redfish Hole (mile 4.0) complement the Fort Island Trail Park and the Fort Island Gulf Beach and Hammock.

Open dawn to dusk. (352) 563-0450
www.floridastateparks.org/crystalriverpreserve/



44 Fort Island Trail Park

Worth a quick stop on your way down Fort Island Trail (site #43), to bird and use the facilities. Check for shore and wading birds from the pier, as well as wintering ducks and loons in the river. Vegetated edges can attract songbirds, but waterbirds are this site's stronger suit.

DIRECTIONS: Located 5 mi. west of US 19 in Crystal River on north side of Fort Island Tr.

Open 6:30 AM to dusk. (352) 527-7677
www.bocc.citrus.fl.us



45 Nature Coast Canoe and Kayak Trail

This water trail winds for 20 miles through saltmarsh from Fort Island Trail Park south to Chassahowitzka River Campground. Rails, wading birds and eagles can be seen along the way. Download a map ahead of time; trail is marked by numbered signs with crossed paddle symbols. Be aware that some channels are shared with larger, faster craft.

DIRECTIONS: Launches include Fort Island Trail Park and the Chassahowitzka River Campground in Homosassa.

Open 24 hours/day.
www.citruscounty.com/info_tourism/boating.htm



46 Fort Island Gulf Beach

While the cooler months are best, this site is good anytime for shorebirds along the beachfront. Flocks of skimmers, terns and gulls loaf on the sand and American oystercatchers pace the waterline. Marsh wrens and clapper rails can be heard in the marsh across the road; watch for cruising northern harriers in winter.

DIRECTIONS: From US 19 in Crystal River, take CR 44/Fort Island Tr. west 8.9 mi. until it ends at the park.

Open 6:30 AM to dusk. (352) 527-7677
www.bocc.citrus.fl.us



47 Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park

From the parking area, a paved walking trail leads off to the west through hardwood hammock and wetlands where you can find yellow-bellied sapsuckers and black-and-white warblers, among other winter birds. At the extreme west end, either pay a fee to visit the park proper, or loop back to the parking lot via Pepper Creek on the park's pontoon boats.

DIRECTIONS: In the town of Homosassa Springs, on the west side of US 19 just south of CR 490A (Grover Cleveland Blvd.)

Open 9 AM to 5:30 PM. (352) 628-5343
www.floridastateparks.org/homosassasprings/



48 Bluebird Springs

This small park centers around a spring and is surrounded by wet, broadleaf forest. Worth a quick stop in migration if you're in the area, bird the edges for migrants like orioles, tanagers and mixed warbler flocks. A brief trail leaves off from the southeast corner of the spring and penetrates into the hammock.

DIRECTIONS: From Homosassa Springs, drive south on US 19 to CR 490/W. Yulee Dr. Travel southwest 0.7 mi. to Noontide Ave., then left onto Bluebird Springs Ln.; park is at the end.

Open 6:30 AM to dusk.
www.bocc.citrus.fl.us



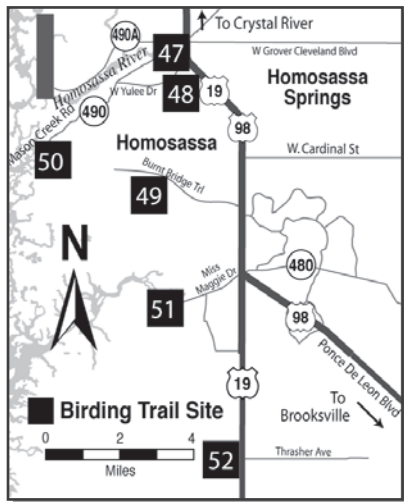
49 Homosassa Tract of the Withlacoochee State Forest: Rooks Trail

This approximately 3-mile roundtrip trail runs primarily through improved pasture, past some ponds, through hardwood swamp and a sandhill. Excellent for a casual hike, you're likely to see or hear turkeys, eastern meadowlarks and northern bobwhites, as well as a diversity of migratory songbirds like blue-headed vireos and blue grosbeaks.

DIRECTIONS: 4 mi. south of Homosassa Springs, turn west by the fire tower on Burnt Bridge Trail. Continue straight 1.5 mi. to parking area.

Open sunrise to sunset. Closed to other uses during turkey hunts.
(352) 382-2822 www.fl-dof.com/state_forests/





50 Mason Creek Trail

Mason Creek leads to the Chassahowitzka National Wildlife Refuge, which is accessible by canoe, kayak, or motorboat, although it can be extremely shallow during the winter. Mason Creek winds through salt marsh and past mudflats and hardwood hammocks. Fall through spring is best, for comfort as well as for spotting wintering

royal terns and bald eagles. Bring your own boat and drinking water.

DIRECTIONS: From Homosassa Springs, take W. Yulee Dr. southwest from US 19 to the town of Homosassa, and continue southwest on Mason Creek Rd. This ends at a boat ramp.

Open 24 hours. (352) 563-2088

www.fws.gov/chassahowitzka and www.citrusbirdingtrail.com



51 Chassahowitzka River Trail

At the campground, bird the hydric hammock around the parking area for songbirds in migration, then launch your canoe. On the way to the Gulf, you will wind through hydric hammock, salt marsh and mudflats and barrier islands thick with wading birds, shorebirds, gulls, terns, eagles and more. Shallow water in some places limits the propeller boat traffic; airboats are sometimes present.

DIRECTIONS: From the town of Homosassa Springs, drive south on US 19 appx. 6 mi. to the traffic light for US 98. Turn right (away from US 98) onto Miss Maggie Dr. Follow the road past the campground to the boat ramp at the end, where you can launch your canoe.

Open 24 hours/day. (352) 563-2088

www.fws.gov/chassahowitzka and www.citrusbirdingtrail.com



52 Chassahowitzka Wildlife Management Area

Entrance road slices through sandhill and flatwoods. Trails begin at the end of Indigo Rd. Swamp Grade is also nice birding; walk the

road, checking the tram spurs leading into the largest hardwood swamp south of the Suwannee River. Prothonotary warblers, pileated woodpeckers and other floodplain birds are likely. Very rustic, bring insect repellent.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of US 98 and US 19, drive 4 mi. south. Entrance will be on the right (W) side of the road.

Open dawn to dusk. <http://myfwc.com/recreation/chassahowitzka>



53 Marsh Bend Park

Check the shoreline at this small park for limpkins. A boat launch allows access to a tributary of Lake Panasoffkee, and adjacent hardwood hammock makes birding the edges of the property worthwhile in migration.

DIRECTIONS: From I-75, drive northwest on CR 470 N 4 mi. After passing through the town of Lake Panasoffkee, the park entrance will be on your left (W) on the far (N) side of the river bridge.

Open dawn to dusk. (352) 793-3624 <http://sumtercountyfl.gov>



54 Lake Panasoffkee Wildlife Management Area

This popular hunting and equestrian area can be nice birding in cool weather, too. Check oaks near parking for red-headed woodpeckers, and follow the loop trail through open pasture, watching for kestrels, meadowlarks and killdeer. The spur to little Jones Creek is worth a peek for warblers. Area is closed during special opportunity hunts.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of I-75 and SR 44, drive west 3 mi. and enter via Jones Creek Trail on the left (S) side of the road.

Open dawn to dusk. (352) 796-721 www.swfwmd.state.fl.us



55 Fort Cooper State Park

Non-birders can enjoy this site's history, while you participate in a morning birdwalk (self-guided year-round; for a guided walk, call ahead for schedule). Wheelchair accessible paths wind through a hardwood hammock good for beginning birding in migration. The lakefront hosts waders and sandhill cranes, and rustic trails lead to sandhills, home to elusive Bachman's sparrows.



DIRECTIONS: From Inverness, drive south on US 41 to Eden Dr. Turn left (E) and turn right (S) at the stop sign at Old Floral City Rd. Park will be straight ahead, on the right (W) side of the road.

Open 8 AM to sunset. (352) 726-0315 www.floridastateparks.org



56 Flying Eagle Trail

This vast 10,000+ acre property is a mosaic of small lakes, marshes and swamps with scattered islands of forested uplands. The trail begins in improved pasture and crosses Moccasin Slough, bound for the marshes to the south. Everything from ducks to woodpeckers to raptors are possible; pack water, repellent and plan to hike.

DIRECTIONS: From Inverness, drive south on US 41 to Eden Dr. Turn left (E) and follow the road to the trails at the end.

Open dawn to dusk. Closed to birding during hunting season. (352) 796-7211 www.swfwmd.state.fl.us



57 Potts Preserve Trail

This 8,400-acre tract of wilderness offers oak hammocks, river frontage, marshes, pine flatwoods and improved pasture. Accordingly, the diversity of possible birds is tremendous. Scrub-jays, burrowing owls, swallow-tailed kites and wood storks have been seen on site. Plan on hiking several miles; bring water and insect repellent. Area is closed during special opportunity hunts.

DIRECTIONS: From Inverness, drive northwest on US 41 to Zephyr St. Turn right (E) and go three blocks to Ella Ave. Turn left (N), Ella will become Turner Camp Rd. (CR 581). Follow Turner Camp Rd. 5.4 mi. through a series of turns. At N. Dee River Rd., bear right at fork, continuing northeast on Turner Camp Rd. for 1.2 mi. to N. Hooty Point Rd.; follow N. Hooty Point Rd. to gate (on right).

Open dawn to dusk. (352) 796-7211 www.swfwmd.state.fl.us



58 Upper Withlacoochee River

The relatively undeveloped Upper Withlacoochee River is cold, clear and fast-moving. Black-crowned night-herons skulk on cypress knees, swallow-tailed kites wheel overhead and prothonotary warblers pick through Spanish moss. Bring your canoe, or charter a pontoon boat. Weekends get busy, sometimes with airboats.

DIRECTIONS: Boat launching is available at the public ramp where SR 44 crosses the river, as well as at the SR 200 river crossing.

Open 24 hours/day.



59 Withlacoochee State Forest, Two Mile Prairie Tract: Johnson Pond Trail

This 2.4-mile trail in the Withlacoochee State Forest winds through sand-hill and scrub habitats, past its namesake pond. In migration, watch for ovenbirds; Blackburnian, chestnut-sided and blackpoll warblers (among others); and 5 species of vireos. The uplands are home to red-headed woodpeckers year-round, and the pond hosts wood ducks, snipe and purple gallinules.

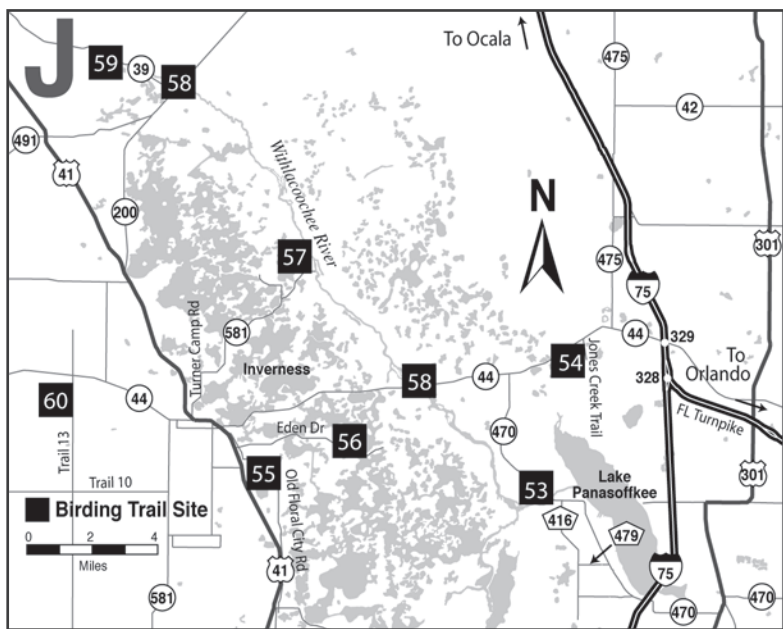
DIRECTIONS: Drive southwest on SR 200, entering Citrus Co. as you cross the Withlacoochee River. Turn right almost immediately onto CR 39. Site will be 2.5 mi. straight ahead, on the left (S) side.

Open dawn to dusk. (352) 489-6507 www.fl-dof.com/state_forests/



60 Withlacoochee State Forest: Citrus Tract

From Holder Mine Trailhead, walk west on hiking trail; red-cockaded woodpecker clusters occur on both sides, with best just west of Trail 13. Cavity trees are ringed with white paint for monitoring. Other birds include Bachman's sparrow, turkey, bobwhite, and a diversity of songbirds in migration. Five miles south of Trail 10, turn



left (NE) to Tillis Hill for forest map. Wear orange during hunting seasons (trails closed during general gun season). Trails 13 and 10 are passable to two-wheel drive vehicles.

DIRECTIONS: From Inverness, drive 1 mi. west on SR 44, and turn left (S) onto SR 581. Go south 2.5 mi. and turn west into the forest on Trail 10 to Holder Mine Trailhead.

Open sunrise to sunset. (352) 754-6896
www.fl-dof.com/state_forests/



Map

K Green Swamp Cluster

61 Withlacoochee State Forest: McKethan Lake

Entrance road circles McKethan Lake's park-like margins shaded by large live oaks. A nature trail leaves off from the entrance pay station and crosses the road several times as it winds through the lovely hardwood hammock surrounding this site. Lake has herons and egrets and sometimes wood storks; woods host songbird migrants like black-throated blue and chestnut-sided warblers.

DIRECTIONS: From downtown Brooksville, take US 41 north out of town appx. 7 mi. After crossing CR 476, the McKethan Lake Recreation Area will be 0.5 mi. on the left (W) side of the road.

Open dawn to dusk. (352) 754-6896
www.fl-dof.com/state_forests/index.html



62 Richloam State Fish Hatchery

Tucked into the vast Green Swamp, this fish hatchery might seem an unlikely birding spot. Instead, its ponds offer a begrudging buffet to waders like black-crowned night-, great blue, little blue, and tricolored herons, as well as wintering shorebirds. Sandhill cranes trumpet overhead, and bordering forest provides songbirds of many varieties. Watch shallow ponds for wood storks and limpkins, and entrance road for turkeys.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of SR 50 and SR 471, drive 5 mi. south to CR 788. Turn left (E); site will be 0.5 mi. ahead.

Open dawn to dusk. (352) 583-3545
<http://myfwc.com/fishing/offices/richloam.html>

CLOSED FOR CONSTRUCTION UNTIL EARLY 2007



63 Withlacoochee River Park

This county park features sandhill bluffs overlooking the Withlacoochee River, as well as a small wet prairie and some seasonal wetlands. A nice complement to nearby Green

Swamp West, this park is a microcosm of that larger property, with amenities like picnic shelters and restrooms for family birding.

DIRECTIONS: From either US 98 or CR 35A/Old Lakeland Hwy. in Dade City, take River Rd. east appx. 4 mi. and turn right (S) onto Auton Rd. Park entrance road (Withlacoochee Blvd.) is 0.2 mi. ahead on the left (E).

Open dawn to dusk. (352) 521-4104

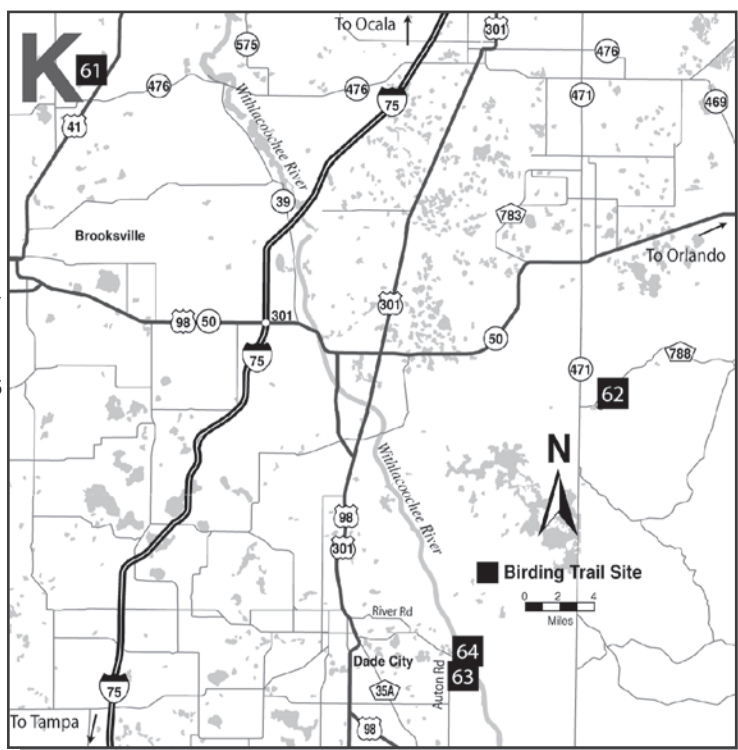


64 Green Swamp West

This 37,000+ acre property safeguards the Green Swamp which gives rise to the Withlacoochee River, while providing excellent recreational access to upland pasture, sandhills, cypress domes, riverfront and "Wildcat Swamp." A series of roads fan out from the entrance; a bike makes the size of this site more manageable. Area is closed during special opportunity hunts.

DIRECTIONS: From either US 98 or CR 35A/Old Lakeland Hwy. in Dade City, take River Rd. east appx. 4 mi. just past the intersection with Auton Rd. and cross the Withlacoochee River (River Rd. becomes Ranch Rd.). Parking area is just ahead on the left.

Open dawn to dusk.
www.swfwmd.state.fl.us





65 Chassahowitzka Wildlife Management Area: Weeki Wachee Tract

SITE CLOSED

For more information visit

<http://myfwc.com/recreation/chassahowitzka/>

66 Alfred McKethan Park (Pine Island)

Park and walk the sandy beach, scanning the mudflats for loafing terns and winter shorebirds like short-billed dowitchers; listen for marsh wrens and clapper rails, and wintering mergansers and loons in the open water from the pier. Area can get busy in summer and on weekends. One of the best shorebird sites in Hernando Co.

DIRECTIONS: From US 19 and SR 50, drive west on CR 550 5 mi. to where the road veers right (NW) onto CR 595 (Pine Island Dr.). Follow CR 595 2.5 mi. to the park at the end.

Open 8 AM to 9:30 PM. (352) 754-4027

www.co.hernando.fl.us/parks_rec/parks



67 Bayport Park

Worth a quick check, drive the hammock road into the park listening for songbirds and scan the salt marsh and flats for waders like wood storks, shorebirds like spotted sandpipers, as well as clapper rails. In winter, scope the open water for horned grebes and loons. Weekends and summer can be busy at this site.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of SR 50 and US 19, drive west on CR 550 8.8 mi. to the park at the end.

Open 24 hours. (352) 754-4027

www.co.hernando.fl.us/parks_rec/parks



68 Linda Pedersen Park

This park warrants a quick look at the brackish marsh for wood storks and other waders, as well as swamp sparrows. A hammock on-site offers a haven worth checking in migration for a variety of songbirds.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of SR 50 and US 19, drive west on CR 550 4 mi. to Shoal Line Blvd. (CR 597). Turn left (S) and follow road appx. 2.4 mi. Park is located on both sides of the road.

Open dawn to dusk. (352) 754-4027
www.co.hernando.fl.us/park_rec/parks



69 Weekiwachee Preserve

This large property offers more than 5 miles of improved trails past lakes, sandhills and scrubby flatwoods. Grassy areas around the pit lakes can be good for winter sparrows. Please respect areas closed for ground-nesting birds like least terns and Wilson's plovers in spring and summer. Visitors may drive into property the second Saturday of each month.

DIRECTIONS: From intersection of US 19 and SR 50, drive 5 mi. south to Osowaw Blvd. (CR 595). Turn right (W) and go 0.5 mi. to the entrance road on the right (N). Turn right, and follow entrance road to the parking area 1 mi. ahead.

Open 24 hours/day. (352) 796-7211

www.swfwmd.state.fl.us



70 Crews Lake Park

This delightful little park offers a high tower overlook of Crews Lake, where overwintering waterfowl like least sandpipers, ring-necked ducks and dunlin loaf and forage. Sedge wrens call from grassy margins and migratory songbirds like bobolinks exploit the edges between the wetland and oak hammock. A must-see.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of the Suncoast Parkway and SR 52, drive east to the first left turn (Shady Hills Rd.). Turn left (N), drive 3.2 mi. and bear right on Lenway Rd. After 0.5 mi., turn right (E) on Crews Lake Rd. and follow it to the park at the end.

Open dawn to dusk. (813) 929-1260.



71 Werner-Boyce Salt Springs State Park

This vast park stretches as far north as CR 52. A one-mile scrub trail is currently open; a wheelchair-accessible boardwalk will soon be constructed across a shady, freshwater slough, and trails will resume on the other side, leading all the way to the Gulf. Bring water and insect repellent. Monthly bird walks are available; call for details.

DIRECTIONS: Drive north of the Gulf View Square Mall on US 19 north of Port Richey, and turn left onto Scenic Drive. Follow Scenic Dr. north to its intersection with Cinema Dr. Trail head will be on the left (W) side of Scenic Dr.

Open 8 AM to sunset. (727) 816-1890 www.floridastateparks.org



72 Robert K. Rees Park at Green Key

This compact peninsular park is a birding gem, with clapper rails, reddish egrets and roseate spoonbills likely year-round; wintering shorebirds, marsh and sedge wrens; and a tendency for remarkable songbird landfall events in spring migration. The entrance gate area can be excellent for hordes of spring migrants near dawn in April (bring insect repellent). Gray kingbirds also breed here.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of Main St. and US 19 in New Port Richey, drive north one block and turn left (W) on Green Key Rd. Follow road to the park at the end.

Open dawn to dusk. (813) 929-1260



J F M A M J J A S O N D

73 Jay B. Starkey Wilderness Park

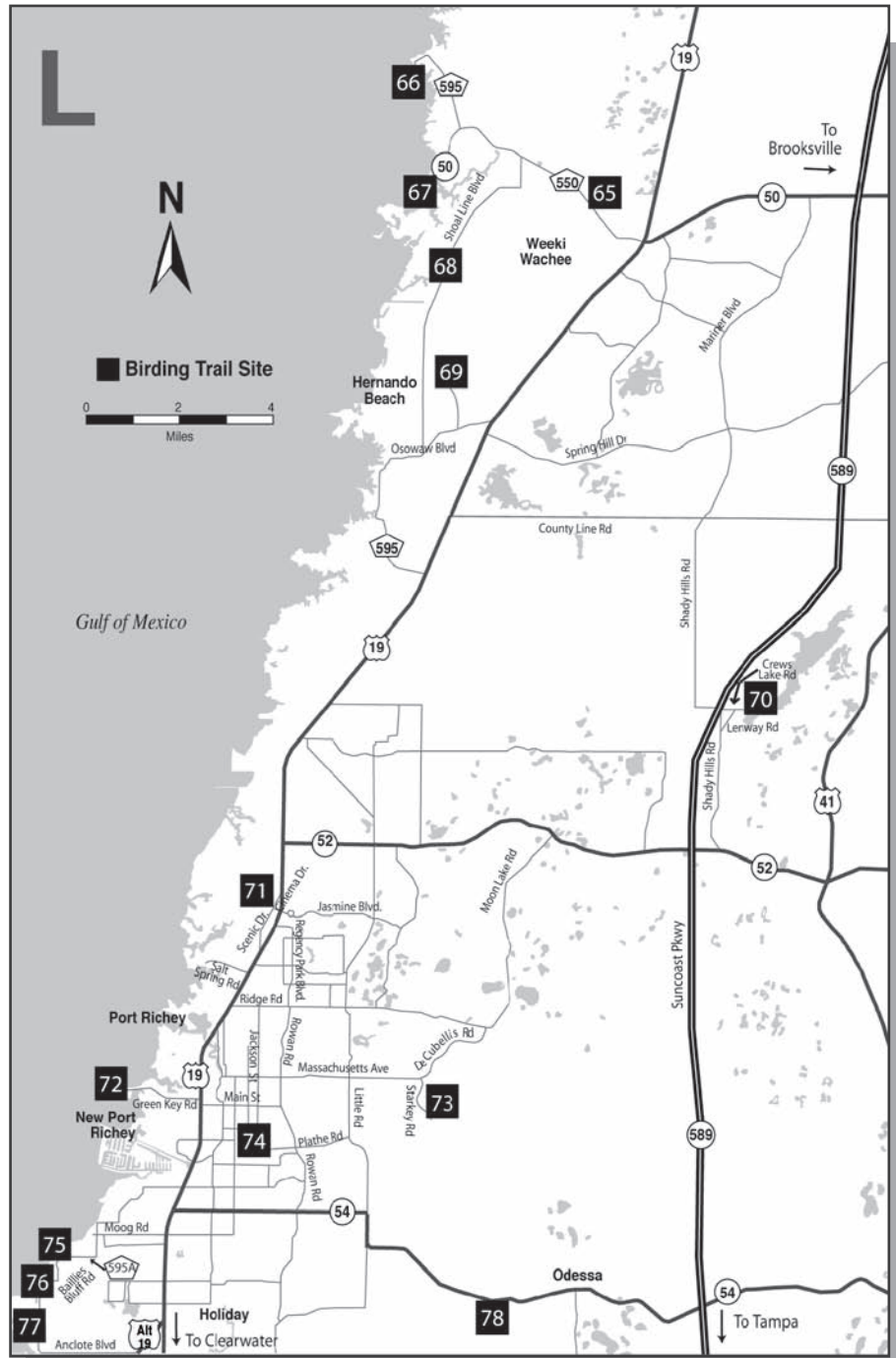
Behind the nature center, bird the boardwalk out across the floodplain forest to the Pithlachascote River. The best birding by far is along the paved bike trail. A bike helps cover ground; listen for brown-headed nuthatches and Bachman's sparrows as you pedal through flatwoods past occasional cypress domes. In nice weather, there are bird walks on the first Saturday of each month. Loaner optics available at nature center.

DIRECTIONS: From US 19 north of Port Richey, take Ridge Rd. east 3 mi. to Little Rd. Turn right (S) and drive 2 mi. to DeCubellis Rd. across from Massachusetts Ave. Turn left (E); drive 0.5 mi. to Starkey Rd. Turn right (S). Entrance (via Wilderness Park Blvd.) will be on left (E).

Open dawn to dusk. (813) 929-1260



J F M A M J J A S O N D



74 James E. Grey Preserve and Pithlachascotee River

This 80-acre park opened in 2003 and already has a site checklist of 140+ species. Hike the river trail or paddle the river, which changes quickly from a wide waterway to a winding stream over-arched with vegetation. Bald eagles and short-tailed hawks nest nearby and are often seen here. Look for yellow-crowned night-herons and limpkins by the water; migrants like cedar waxwings in the canopy. A boardwalk and more hiking trails will be added in 2007.

DIRECTIONS: From US 19 in New Port Richey, drive east on Main St. about 1.0 mi. to Jackson St. Turn right (S) and go to Louisiana Ave. Turn left (E) and go to the end at Carpel Dr. Turn right and go to the end at Baker Rd. Turn right (S) and go to the end at Plathe Rd. Turn left (E) on Plathe and go 100 yds. to entrance, park and walk into preserve. Alternate: from SR 54, go north on Rowan Rd., turn left (W) on Plathe Rd., follow Plathe to entrance.

Open dawn to dusk. (727) 841-4563



75 Key Vista Nature Park

This small nature park provides hiking trails through sand pine uplands, a viewing tower of mud flats where shorebirds and waders feed at low tide, as well as a sand beach on the south side of its peninsula for loafing terns and skimmers. Good for songbird fallouts in migration, this site is also nice for wintering waterbirds.

DIRECTIONS: From US 19 in Holiday, drive southwest on Alt 19 1 mi. and turn right (W) on Anclote Blvd. Follow road 2 mi. to CR 595A. Turn right (N). Key Vista will be on the left (W) 1.5 mi. ahead.

Open dawn to dusk. (813) 929-1260



76 Anclote Gulf Park

An extensive fishing pier gives good access to mudflats and open water for wintering ducks, feeding shore and wading birds, as well as flyovers from terns and gulls. In winter, scope for bufflehead, common loons and horned grebes out to sea. Like many coastal areas in Pasco County, gray kingbirds are possible in summer.

DIRECTIONS: From US 19 in Holiday, drive southwest on Alt 19 1 mi. and turn right (W) on Anclote Blvd. Follow road 2 mi. to CR 595A/Baillies Bluff Rd. Turn right (N) on CR 595A. Anclote Gulf Park will be on the left (W), north of the powerplant.

Open dawn to dusk. (813) 929-1260



77 Anclote River Park

A small park with waterfront worth checking for reddish egrets and black-bellied plovers on flats and in shallows of the Anclote River. Osprey nest nearby, as have great horned owls in past years. This site has a popular boat launch that can get very busy on weekends; come early, or on a weekday.

DIRECTIONS: From US 19 in Holiday, drive southwest on Alt 19 1 mi. and turn right (W) on Anclote Blvd. Follow road 2 mi. to CR 595A/Baillies Bluff Rd.. Turn right (N). Park will be on the left, south of the powerplant.

Open dawn to dusk. (813) 929-1260

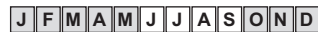


78 JB Starkey's Flatwoods Adventures

This private ranch invites visitors interested in Florida's ranching history. Covering vast acreage in improved pasture, cypress domes, riparian woodlands and well-managed pine flatwoods, this site is interesting from birding and historical perspectives. Early morning tours are sure to spot large groups of wild turkey as well as a diversity of wading birds like wood storks and bald eagles. Watch posts and wires along the way; this area is known for scissor-tailed flycatchers in winter. Call to schedule a tour for your group of six or more, or to join an existing reservation.

DIRECTIONS: Located on SR 54 9.3 mi east of US 19, or 8.5 mi. west of US 41, on north side of the road.

Access by appointment. Toll-free (877) 734-9453
www.flatwoodsadventures.com



79 Lake Rogers Park

A 2.5-mile trail circles the lake, from which you can watch for osprey fishing in the lake and egrets wading in the shallows. Check for songbirds in Oct. and April. A nice, easily accessed park, good for beginners.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of Gunn Hwy. (CR 587) and Veterans Expwy (CR 589) on the northwest side of Tampa, drive north on Gunn Hwy. appx. 4 mi. Turn left on N. Mobley Ave. Park will be 0.5 mi. ahead on the left (S) side of the road.

Open 8 AM to 6 PM. (813) 264-3917.



80 Upper Tampa Bay Park

Explore the hammocks and mangrove edges either on foot or by canoe. Gray kingbirds are occasional and mangrove cuckoos may be seen in summer. Scan the mangroves for black- and yellow-crowned night-herons, plus waders including spoonbills. A nice complement of songbirds is possible; waterbirds are site's strength.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of Hillsborough Ave. (CR 580) and Memorial Hwy. (CR 576) in west Tampa, drive northwest 4 mi. on

CR 580. Turn left (S) onto Double Branch Rd. (just after crossing bridge) and go 0.4 mi. to park entrance.

Open 8 AM to 6 PM; Nature Center open 9 AM to 5 PM. (813) 855-1765



J F M A M J J A S O N D

81 Brooker Creek Preserve

Visitors now have two hiking trails to enjoy. The rustic Friends Trail (1.75 miles; open sunrise-sunset) traverses upland flatwoods (warblers and turkeys), freshwater marsh (wading birds and sandhill cranes), open areas (bluebirds), and shady hydric hammock.

Marsh overlook is 0.25 miles from trailhead. A new trail system near the BCP Environmental Ed. Center (open Wed.-Sun.), provides 4 miles of trails through pinelands and swamps. Elevated boardwalks allow hiking around Brooker Creek. Trail access times vary-call ahead for hours.

DIRECTIONS: (A) Friends Trail - from intersection of McMullen Booth/ East Lake Rd. (CR 611) and Keystone Rd. (CR 582), drive east 1.5 mi. to Lora Ln. Turn right (S) and follow road to trailhead posted at the end. (B) BCP Trails - From the same above intersection, drive 2.5 mi. to the entrance of BCP and follow the 1-mi. road to Center parking lot.

Open 7 AM to dusk. (727) 453-6900; 453-6800 (center)
www.pinellascounty.org/environment



J F M A M J J A S O N D

82 John Chesnut Sr. Park

Hugging the east shore of Lake Tarpon, this park has traditional recreation areas as well as nature trails through flatwoods and oak hammocks, and boardwalks through cypress edge and freshwater swamp. Limpkins and other waders frequent the shoreline. Check boardwalks for songbird flocks in migration and through winter.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of US 19 and Tampa Rd. in Palm Harbor, drive east 2 mi. to McMullen Booth/East Lake Rd. Turn left (N) and drive 2 mi. Park will be on the left (W) side of the road.

Open 7 AM to dusk. (727) 669-1951 www.pinellascounty.org/park



J F M A M J J A S O N D

83 Honeymoon Island State Park

Watch the causeway waterfront for shorebirds, then follow the entrance road to the parking area at the end. The Osprey Trail is well-known for songbird migrants in its slash pine forest. Pelican Trail along Pelican Cove, as well as the park's beaches, offer excellent views of resident wading birds and migratory shorebirds. Two observation decks provide good viewing at low tide. Five plover species use this park during an average year.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of Curlew Rd. (CR 586) and Bayshore Blvd. (Alt. 19) in north Dunedin, drive west on SR 586 2.5 mi. to park at the end.

Open 8 AM to sunset. (727) 469-5942 www.floridastateparks.org



J F M A M J J A S O N D

84 Caladesi Island State Park

This park is only accessible by boat; a ferry runs from neighboring Honeymoon Island State Park at regular intervals. An oak hammock in the interior can be good for songbird migrants and the shore shelters wintering shorebirds like red knots and piping plovers as well as breeders like American oystercatchers. A diversity of terns, gulls and waders are also present.

DIRECTIONS: Ferry: From the intersection of Curlew Rd. (CR 586) and Bayshore Blvd. (Alt. 19) in north Dunedin, drive west on CR 586 2.5 mi. to Honeymoon Island State Park at the end. Ferry runs between Honeymoon and Caladesi at regular intervals. Private boat: Follow Hurricane Pass channel markers to marker 14. Steer a 210-degree heading for appx. 1 mi. to park's entrance channel.

Open 8 AM to sunset. (727) 469-5918
www.floridastateparks.org/caladesiisland/



J F M A M J J A S O N D

85 Hammock Park

This lovely little park encompasses a small sand pine scrub at its southernmost point, wetlands and hydric hammock through its middle and is bounded on the north by a tidal creek and marsh. Tri-colored herons and osprey can be found in warm months; Fern Trail is known for having banner days in fall migration. Educational program schedules are posted on the Web.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of Curlew Rd. (CR 586) and Bayshore Blvd. (Alt. 19) in Dunedin, drive south on Broadway 1 mi. and turn left (SE) onto Mira Vista Dr. Drive to the "T" and turn left (N) onto San Mateo Dr. Park will be ahead, 0.25 mi. on the right.

Open 7 AM to dusk. (727) 298-3271
www.dunedingov.com



J F M A M J J A S O N D

86 SR 60 Memorial Causeway Rest Stops (on map as 86 A, B & C)

Fess up: you bird while you're driving, don't you? You might as well just pull over at these three roadside spots then, and take in the view of shorebirds, terns and gulls and waders like roseate spoonbills. Wintering shorebirds cluster along these causeways and are fairly habituated due to the high volume of cars and pedestrians.

DIRECTIONS: Three stops on Hwy 60: (A) on the south side of the Courtney Campbell Causeway just east of the bridge; (B) on the south side of the Courtney Campbell Causeway just west of the bridge; (C) on the east side of the first bridge after leaving Clearwater Beach (south side of the road).

Open 24 hours/day.



J F M A M J J A S O N D

87 Sand Key Park 

A quick access to Clearwater Beach, scan the winter surf for loons, and the beach for semipalmated plovers and American oystercatchers. Waders and ducks frequent the small brackish pond and white ibis feed on the pond's vegetated margins.

DIRECTIONS: From Clearwater Beach, drive south on CR 699. After crossing the bridge onto the next island (Sand Key), park will be on right.

Open 7 AM to dusk. (727) 588-4852







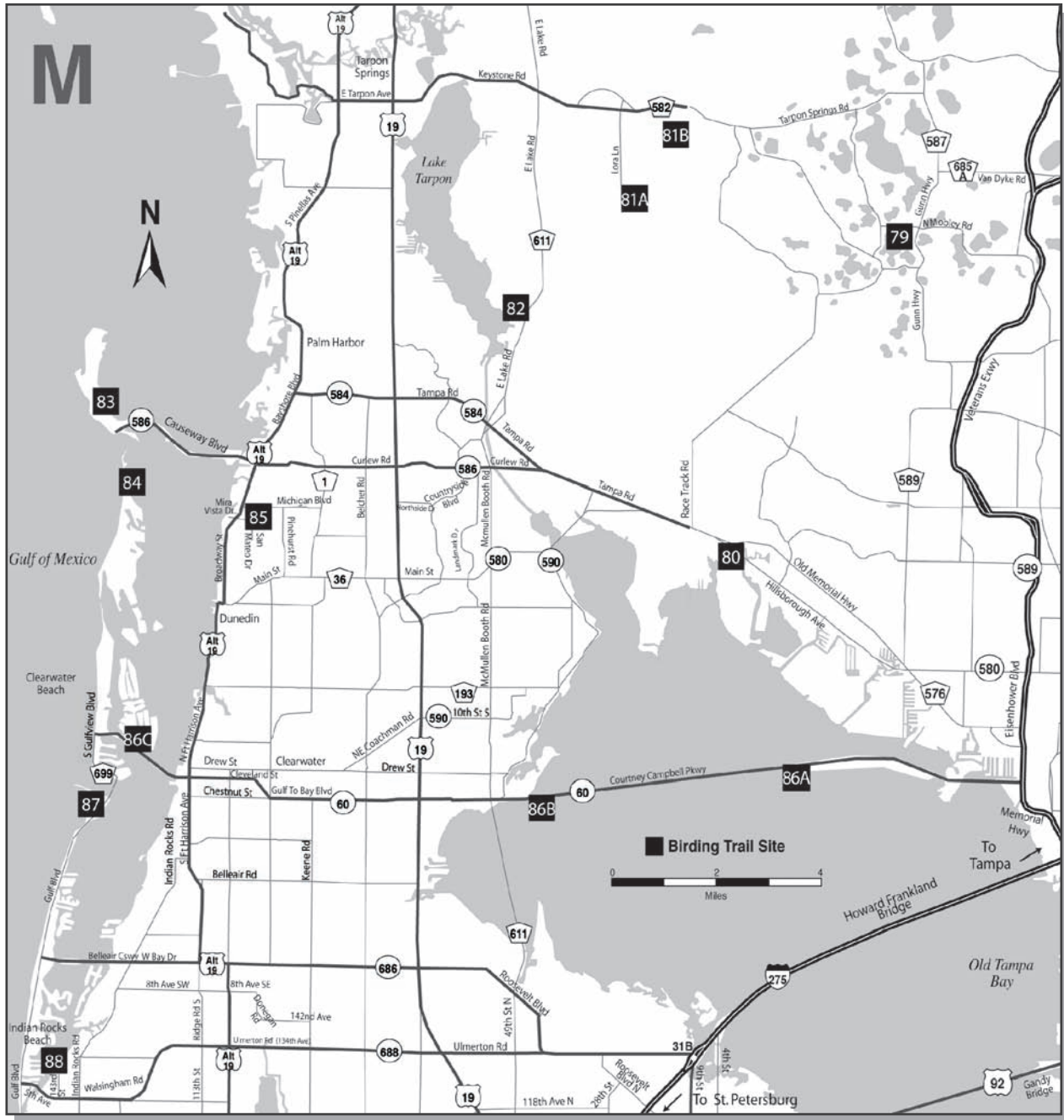










88 John R. Bonner Nature Park

A spot of green in urban Pinellas County, this small park's cool, shady hammock attracts migrating songbirds. Hike the trails looking for hooded warblers and hermit thrushes; a boardwalk through marsh out to open water can be good for waders also. Please avoid using tapes here, to minimize disturbance to stopover birds.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of Indian Rocks Rd. and Walsingham Rd. in Largo, drive west on Walsingham one block to 143rd St. Turn right (N) and follow the road to the park at the end.

Open 7 AM to 6:45 PM. (727) 518-3047 www.largo.com



89 Boca Ciega Millennium Park

This young county park has winding trails through flatwoods and bayheads, as well as a tall overlook of Boca Ciega Bay. From the tower, scope for reddish egrets, wood storks and shorebirds loafing and feeding in the tidal shallows. A trail east along mangroves leads to a viewing blind. Site's bird list has 171 species!

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of Alt. 19 and Park Blvd./SR 694 in Seminole, drive west 1.6 mi. on Park Blvd. until 125th St. N. Turn left (S) and drive to 74th Ave./Old Oakhurst Rd. N. Turn left (E). Park entrance will be on the right, 500 ft. ahead.

Open 7 AM to dusk. (727) 588-4882



90 Shell Key Preserve

While the occasional frigatebird circles, marbled godwits and Wilson's plovers ply their trades on the flats. Migrating peregrine falcons stoop on flocks of dunlin and short-billed dowitchers in October, and northern harriers prowl the marsh. The island becomes a nursery for everything from least terns to oystercatchers in the spring/summer; please respect signs restricting access to these areas. Shell Key can only be accessed by boat; a private ferry leaves from Pass-a-Grille.

DIRECTIONS: From St. Petersburg Beach, drive south on Gulf Blvd., and continue south to Pass-a-Grille instead of veering east to St. Pete. Gulf Blvd. becomes Pass-A-Grille Way. A ferry to Shell Key leaves from the pier on Pass-A-Grille Way between 8th and 9th avenues.

Open 24 hours/day. (727) 453-6900
www.pinellascounty.org/environment



91 Fort De Soto Park Gateway*

Sheltered mudflats harbor roseate spoonbills and reddish egrets, wintering shorebirds like whimbrels and white-rumped sandpipers line the shore, snowy plovers feed along the wrackline and gulls and terns loaf in the sun. Oddities show up here with some frequency. Migration is excellent, best in spring as songbirds make landfall. Orioles, indigo buntings and warblers flock in the East Beach Woods, the mulberry trees east of the Bay Pier, as well as the Arrowhead Picnic Area. Check the visitor center for recent sightings and the park bird finding guide/checklist. A must-see destination!

DIRECTIONS: Leave I-275 at exit #17 St. Petersburg, drive west on SR 682 (toll road) 2.5 mi to SR 679. Turn left (S) on SR 679 and follow road to park at the end.

Open dawn to dusk. (727) 582-2267

www.pinellascounty.org/park



* See "Gateways" on page 1 for more information.

92 Boyd Hill Nature Preserve

This diverse site offers lakefront access, hardwood hammocks, a freshwater marsh and upland scrub. A pleasant surprise in urban St. Petersburg, Boyd Hill's trails are popular, so weekday mornings are the best time to visit. Educational programs are available; a free bird walk leaves the library at 8:00 AM the first Saturday of each month.

DIRECTIONS: From I-275 in south St. Petersburg, drive east on 54th Ave. S. Turn left (N) on Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. (9th St. S) and continue to Country Club Way S. Turn left (W); entrance will be on the right, at the library.

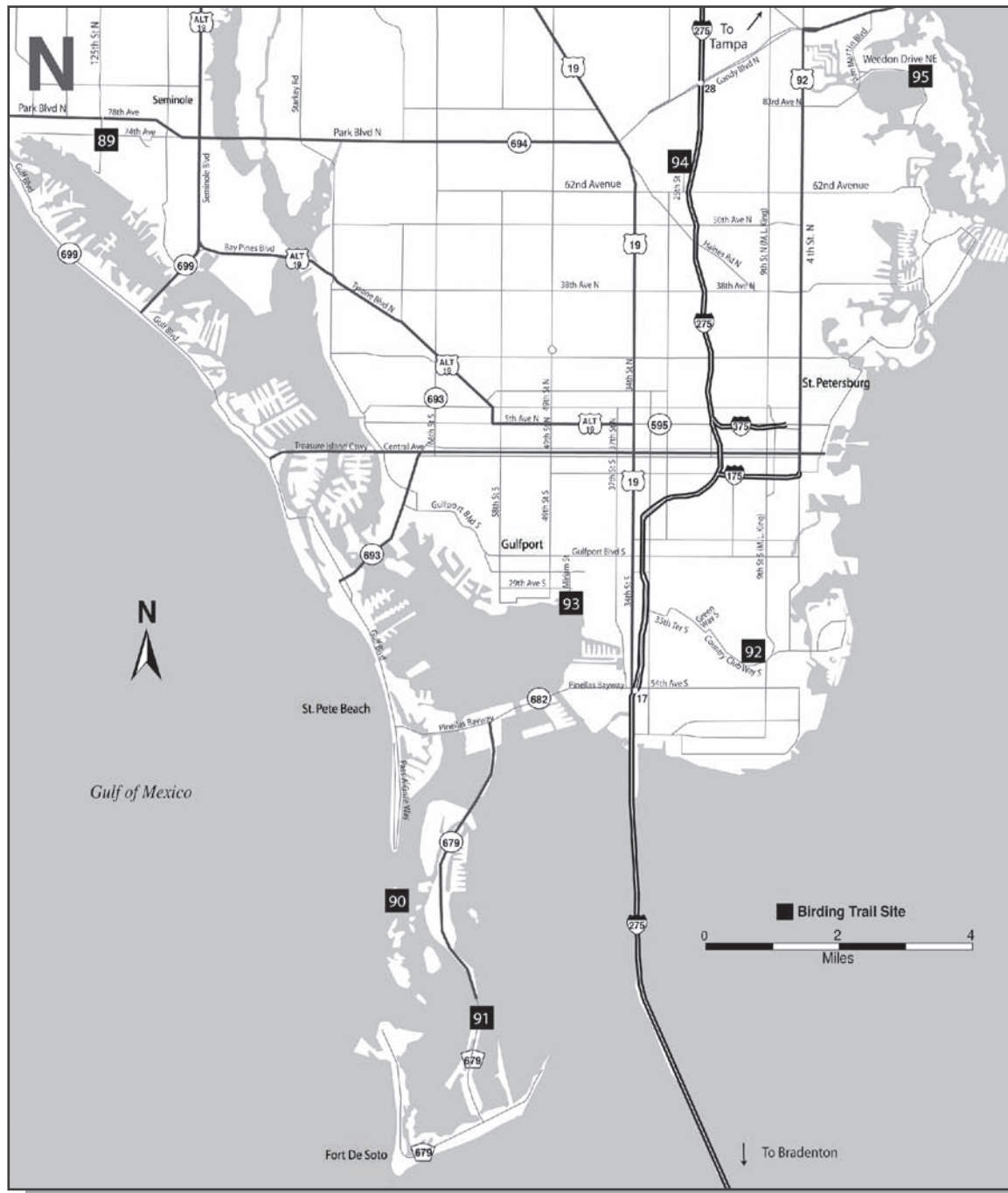
Open 9 AM to 8 PM Tues.-Thurs.; 9 AM to 6 PM Fri.;
7 AM to 6 PM Sat.; 11 AM to 6 PM Sun.
(727) 893-7326 www.stpete.org/boyd/



93 Clam Bayou Nature Park

Worth a quick stop, this waterfront park offers views of open water for wintering ducks and loons, mangrove edge for migrants and waders, as well as plunging terns, transient shorebirds and terrestrial birds like ground-doves and downy woodpeckers. Trails are paved with shell rock; boardwalk leads to the mangrove lagoons.





DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of US 19 and Gulfport Blvd. (22nd Ave. S) in southern St. Pete, drive west on Gulfport 1 mi. to 49th St. Turn left (S) and drive to 29th Ave. S. Turn left (E) and drive to Miriam St. Turn right (S); road ends at park.

Open dawn to dusk. (727) 893-1066
www.ci.gulfport.fl.us



94 Sawgrass Lake Park 

The large maple swamp and associated hardwood hammocks at this park are laced with boardwalks and trails, making the hunt for migrants like Blackburnian warblers comfortable and convenient. Waterbirds like little blue herons, wood storks and mottled ducks line the perimeter canal. Educational programs and an interpretive booklet are available.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of US 19 and Gandy Blvd. in north St. Pete, drive south 0.5 mi. to 62nd Ave. N. Turn left (E) and drive 0.75 mi. to 25th St. Turn left (N); park is at the end of the road.

Open 7 AM to dusk. (727) 217-7256

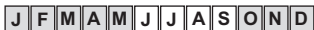


95 Weedon Island Preserve 

Boardwalk trails at the main parking area traverse mangrove edge of Tampa Bay, watch for waders and mangrove cuckoos. Continue on the upland trails through scrubby flatwoods, or canoe the site's two water trails. Education center on site is open Wed.- Sun.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of 4th St. N and Gandy Blvd. in St. Petersburg, drive east on Gandy 1 mi., and turn right (S) on San Martin Blvd. before crossing the causeway. Drive south 1 mi. and turn left (E) on Weedon Dr. NE. Follow road to preserve at the end.

Open dawn to dusk. (727) 453-6500
www.pinellascounty.org/environment

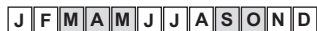


97 Al Lopez Park 

This small urban park is of interest for beginners to practice water-bird identification on its well-established trails. Yellow-crowned night-herons roost on the north side of the north pond. Warblers can be interesting in migration.

DIRECTIONS: From I-275 in Tampa, take Dale Mabry Blvd. (US 92) north 1.5 mi. to MLK Jr. Blvd. Turn right (E) and go 0.25 mi. to Himes Ave. Turn left (N); park entrance will be 0.5 mi. on left.

Open 5 AM to 10 PM. (813) 931-2121
www.tampagov.net/dept_Parks/

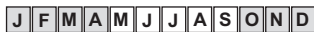


98 McKay Bay Nature Park 

From parking area, walk east to boardwalk through mangroves to the mudflats of McKay Bay. Shorebirding can be excellent but difficult; a spotting scope is helpful. Then walk the trail south to overlook a freshwater pond with waders and ducks in winter. Curve around the south end of the property to the bay at the end of 34th St.

DIRECTIONS: From I-4 in Tampa, exit at 22nd St. in Ybor City and follow it south 0.5 mi. to Adamo Dr. (SR 60). Turn left (E) and go 0.3 mi. to 34th St. Turn right (S). Park entrance will be ahead, on the left (E) side of the road.

Open dawn to dusk. (813) 274-8615
www.tampagov.net/dept_Parks/

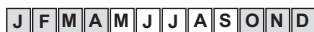


99 Riverhills Park 

The small city park is a nice urban patch of green, with a boardwalk shadowing the Hillsborough River and ending in a narrow forested trail good for songbirds like ruby-crowned kinglets and palm warblers. Wading birds like great blue herons roost on islands visible in the river. Limpkins have been seen along the shore.

DIRECTIONS: From I-75 in Tampa, take SR 582 west to 56th St. Turn left (S) and go 2 mi. to Riverhills Dr. Turn left (E) and follow road to the park, located on the river next to an elementary school.

Open 5 AM to 10 PM. (813) 989-7180
www.templeterrace.com



100 Wilderness Park Trout Creek Site 

This park in the Hillsborough River corridor offers an opportunity to put in/take out a canoe, check the boardwalk and hammock for migrants and scan the river for waterbirds. Worth a quick peek.

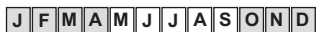


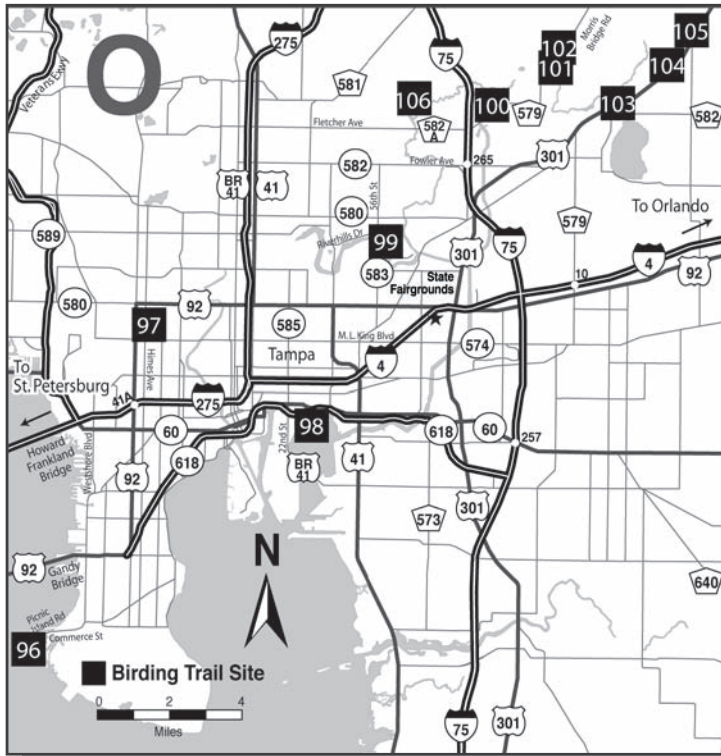
96 Picnic Island Park 

Start at the fishing pier, scoping in winter for common loons and ducks like redheads and scaup. Walk or drive the road, looking for waders in the tidal creek and warblers in the mangroves in migration. Shoreline can be good for occasional shorebirds like dunlin, ruddy turnstones, terns and gulls.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of Westshore Blvd. and Gandy Blvd. south of I-275, drive south on Westshore appx. 1.7 mi. to Commerce St. Turn right (SW) on Commerce, and follow it 1.2 mi. to Picnic Island Rd. Turn left (S) into the park.

Open 7:30 AM to dark. (813) 931-2121
www.tampagov.net/dept_Parks/





DIRECTIONS: From I-75 north of Tampa, exit at Fletcher Ave. (CR 582A) and drive east appx. 1.5 mi. on Morris Bridge Rd. Entrance is on the left (N).

Open dawn to dusk. (813) 987-6200



101 Wilderness Park Morris Bridge Site

Another Hillsborough River park, this site has excellent access for songbird viewing. It is also another site to put in/take out a canoe along the river run. Bird the brief boardwalk and walk the river trail beyond the bridge, watching for swallow-tailed kites tilting overhead in summer and kingfishers announcing your approach in winter.

DIRECTIONS: From I-75 north of Tampa, exit at Fletcher Ave. (CR 582A) and drive east appx. 5 mi. on Morris Bridge Rd./ CR 579. Park is on the left (N), at the river crossing.

Open dawn to dusk. (813) 987-6209



102 Wilderness Park Flatwoods Site

A 7-mile paved trail winds through the flatwoods of this site, past cypress domes and seasonal wetlands good for wood storks, sandhill cranes and wood ducks. Flatwoods feature bluebirds,

turkey, bobwhite and calling Bachman's sparrows. A bike can make it easier to cover this property.

DIRECTIONS: From I-75 on the north side of Tampa, exit at Fletcher Ave. and drive east on Morris Bridge Road 5 mi. Entrance will be on the left (NW) side, across the river.

Open dawn to dusk. (813) 987-6211



103 Wilderness Park John B. Sargeants Memorial Site

Three small trails explore this river site. Lovely swamp with some adjacent uplands can be good for songbird staples like parulas and hermit thrushes. This site also hosts a river access for canoe launching.

DIRECTIONS: From I-75 north of Tampa, exit at Fowler Ave. (CR 582) and take Fowler east to US 301. Go north on US 301 for appx. 3.5 mi. Entrance will be on the left (N) side.

Open dawn to dusk. (813) 987-6208

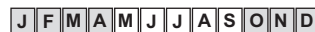


104 Wilderness Park Dead River Site

Entrance road, trails and river are all lovely birding, esp. in migration for warblers, thrushes and flycatchers. Please stay on trails in this rustic area. Birding by ear skills can be helpful for identifying songbirds in the canopy. Mon.-Thurs., park at beginning of entrance road and hike/bike 2 miles into site. Fri.- Sun. you can drive in.

DIRECTIONS: From the Fowler exit of I-75 on the north side of Tampa, take US 301 north appx. 8 mi. A small parking area will be on the left (NW) side of the road 1 mi. before the entrance for Hillsborough River State Park.

Open 9 AM to 5:30 PM. (813) 987-6210



105 Hillsborough River State Park

A gem of the Tampa area, this site offers flatwoods and cypress swamps, freshwater ponds and Florida river "rapids." Hike the extensive trail system or canoe downstream. Likely waterbirds include least and American bitterns, wood storks, white ibis and wood ducks; hammocks along the river can be excellent for migrants like cerulean warblers.



DIRECTIONS: From I-75 on the north side of Tampa, exit at Fowler Ave., and go east 1 mi. and then north 9 mi. on US 301 to the state park entrance on the left (NW) side of the road.

Open 8 AM to sunset. (813) 987-6771
www.floridastateparks.org/hillsboroughriver/



J F M A M J J A S O N D

106 Upper Hillsborough River

A stone's throw from urban Tampa, you'd never guess such primordial solitude could be so close by. This cool, clear river is lined with ancient cypress and emergent vegetation sheltering statuesque American bitterns and skittish wood ducks. Prothonotary warblers pick over Spanish moss, and chimney swifts drink on the wing at dusk. An easy paddle with great birding; area canoe liveries offer guided tours also.

DIRECTIONS: The Hillsborough River from the State Park to Lettuce Lake offers good birding by canoe. Several put in/take out points occur along the way.

(813) 986-2067
www.canoeescape.com



J F M A M J J A S O N D



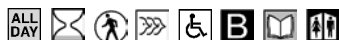
107 Tampa Electric Company's Manatee Viewing Center

The platform at this site was originally constructed to allow viewing of manatees wintering in Tampa Electric's warm water effluent. A 900-foot boardwalk through mangroves creates an excellent vantage of mudflats popular with shorebirds like both yellowlegs and waders of all sorts. Tours are self-guided; groups over 30 are encouraged to make reservations (813) 630-7146. A great site for beginners.

DIRECTIONS: From I-75 south of Tampa, take CR 672 (Big Bend Rd.) west 2.5 mi. When the road curves to the south, becoming Dickman Rd., the site entrance will be on the right (W) side of the road.

Open 10 AM to 5 PM, Nov. 1 to April 15. Closed major holidays; seasonal dates subject to change.

(813) 228-4289 www.manatee-teco.com



J F M A M J J A S O N D

108 Balm-Boyette Scrub Nature Preserve

Hike several miles through scrub and grassland watching for Henslow's sparrows in winter and listening for Bachman's sparrows

calling from the flatwoods in spring. Watch for nesting kestrels in cavities. Phosphate pit lakes offer good birding for waders as well as migrants like ovenbirds in vegetation on the banks. Take water and sunscreen; best in cool weather.

DIRECTIONS: From I-75 south of Tampa, take CR 672 (Big Bend Rd.) 1.4 mi. east to US 301. Turn right (S) and go 1.5 mi. to CR 672 (Balm Rd.). Go east 5.3 mi. to Balm Boyette Rd. Turn left (N), park will be on the right (E) side of the road, 1.1 mi. ahead.

Open dawn to dusk. (813) 672-7876



J F M A M J J A S O N D

109 E. G. Simmons Park

This coastal site has mangrove-sheltered mudflats as well as beachfront, showcasing some of Tampa Bay's best waterbirds. Reddish egrets dance in the shallows while roseate spoonbills feed nearby. Wintering shorebirds like avocets are common; terns and skimmers loaf on the beach. An excellent, easily accessed site.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of SR 674 and US 41 in Ruskin, drive north on US 41 1.5 mi. to 19th Ave. Turn left (W) and follow the road to the park at the end.

Open 8 AM to 7 PM in spring/fall; 8 AM to 6 PM Winter; 6 AM to 8 PM Summer.

(813) 671-7655



J F M A M J J A S O N D

110 Cockroach Bay Aquatic Preserve

Recent habitat restoration makes for a great full day of birding. Access the Horseshoe and Snook canoe trails from boat ramp at end of Cockroach Bay Rd. Roseate spoonbills, egrets, avocets, and ibis frequent the flats in winter/spring; mangrove cuckoos breed here (summer; check along road, on foot). Wintering ducks (15 sp.) include pintail, redhead, and canvasback. Black-necked stilts and least terns nest on new shell islands; check pine flatwoods for scissor-tailed flycatchers (winter). Stop at office for maps. Bring boots, sunscreen, water, and repellent.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of SR 674 (College Ave.) and US 41 in Ruskin, drive south on US 41 4 mi. and turn (W) on Cockroach Bay Rd. Travel 3 mi. to boat ramp or after 2 mi. turn right (N) on Gulf City Rd. to office 0.5 mi. on left (3705 GCR).

Open dawn to dusk. (813) 671-7754

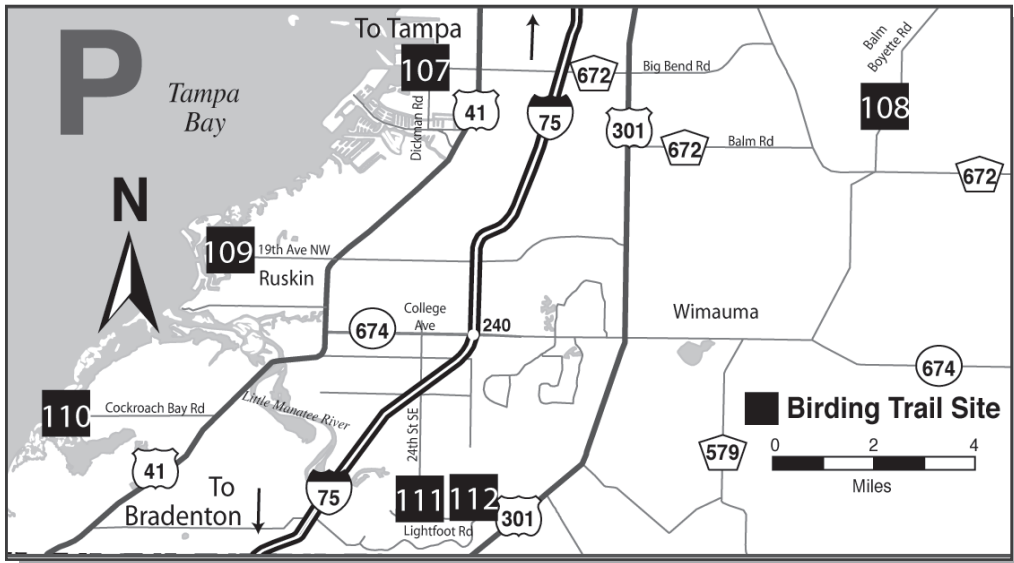


J F M A M J J A S O N D

111 Camp Bayou Outdoor Learning Center

This flatwoods and sandhill site fronts on the Little Manatee River, and offers educational programs if scheduled in advance. Its bird garden and blind are a good place to practice common woodland





birds, and introduce newcomers to birding. More unusual species like wintering lesser scaup on the river may surprise the patient visitor.

DIRECTIONS: From I-75 south of Tampa, take SR 674/College Ave. E west 1 mi. towards Ruskin, and turn left (S) on 24th St. SE. Park is 3 mi. ahead at the end of the road.

Open 8 AM to 6 PM; Visitor Center Thurs. to Sat., 9 AM to 3 PM.
(813) 641-8545 www.campbayou.org



112 Little Manatee River State Park

The best birding is actually on hiking trails external to the main public use area of park. Total loop is 6.5 miles along the Little Manatee River and through sandhill and hammock; short loop offers a nice 3-mile hike. Stay left at the first fork to explore along the river. Bring water and bug spray; plan on a pleasant hike with interesting birding.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of SR 674 and US 301 in Wimauma, drive south on US 301 for 4.5 mi. to Lightfoot Rd. Turn right (W) and follow the road to the park (on right).

Open 8 AM to sunset. (813) 671-5005
www.floridastateparks.org/littlemanateeriver/



J F M A M J J A S O N D

Map Snowy Plover Cluster

113 Emerson Point Preserve

Drive the entrance road past freshwater wetlands, watching for ducks like mottled and redheads, foraging wood storks and roseate spoonbills. Enshrouded by tropical hardwood hammock, the 1200-year-old Portavant Temple Mound near the entrance has songbirds, woodpeckers, and hawks. A tower gives a good vantage of the Manatee River, Terra Ciega and Tampa Bays. Five+ miles of trail and boardwalk wind through uplands, hammock, coastal berm, and mangrove estuary, each with respective birding opportunities.

DIRECTIONS: From I-75 in Ellenton, drive west on US 301 for 6 mi. (US 301 becomes 10th St. W in Palmetto). Take 10th St. W to Snead Island. Turn right (N) on Tarpon Rd. Turn left (W) on 17th St. W and follow until reaching Preserve entrance.

Open 8 AM to sunset. (941) 721-6885

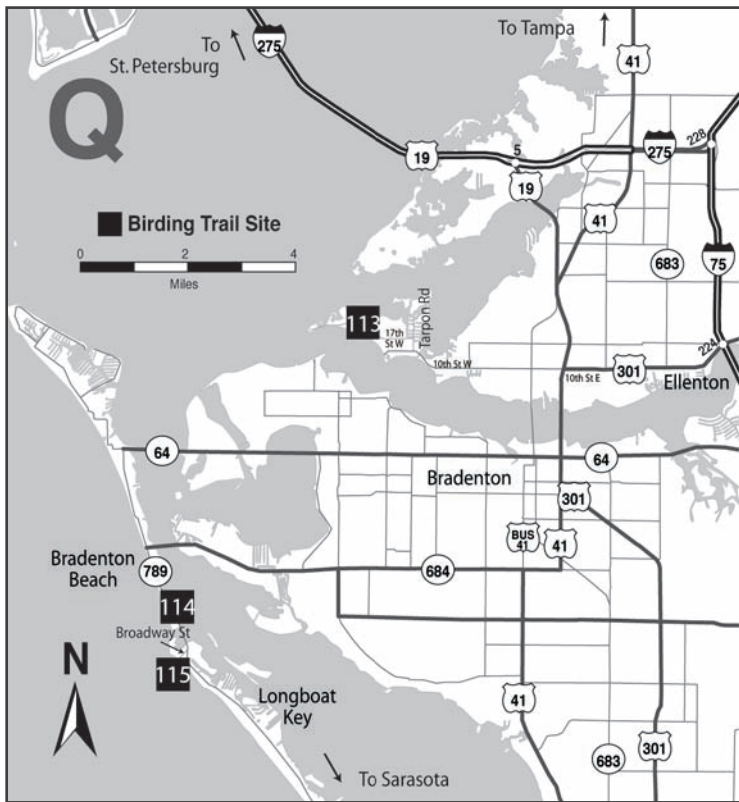


J F M A M J J A S O N D

114 Coquina Baywalk at Leffis Key

The site's boardwalk traverses a nice combination of mangroves, mudflats and coastal ridge. Cross the bridge; the mound on your left can have common ground-doves and palm warblers. Proceed to the mangrove forest for migrants in spring and fall. Yellow-crowned night-herons roost in the shadows and reddish egrets dance on adjacent flats.





DIRECTIONS: From SR 684 in Bradenton Beach, drive south on SR 789 1.4 mi. Site is on the left (E) side, just north of the bridge to Longboat Key.

Open dawn to dusk.



115 Greer Island

This site encompasses the north tip of Longboat Key. Large numbers of skimmers, terns, willets, black-bellied plovers and oystercatchers winter on the beach here. Occasional snowy plovers comb the wrackline and frigatebirds soar overhead. Walk north to the pass; check the sound side for waders like roseate spoonbills and reddish egrets.

DIRECTIONS: From Bradenton Beach, drive south on SR 789 and cross the bridge to Longboat Key. Turn right (W) on Broadway (2nd right south of the bridge) and proceed to parking lot at the end.

Open 24 hours a day.

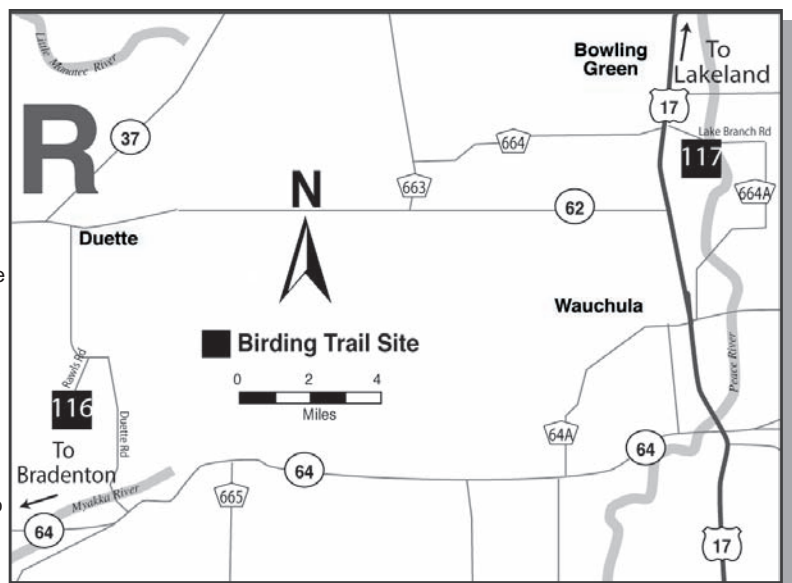


116 Duette Preserve

At the check station, look at the property map and get main entrance combination. Enter via main gate (Trail 1) and bird this grassy upland to Trail 6 where you turn right (W) into an oak hammock. Park and bird the hammock, adjacent slough, flatwoods and seasonal ponds. This vast area is fun to explore; sugar sand makes 4WD helpful, so be cautious. Area is closed 12 weekends for hunting; call ahead for details/combination.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of I-75 and SR 64, drive east on SR 64 27 mi. to Duette Rd. (about 1 mi. before the Hardee Co. line). Turn left (N) on Duette Rd. and drive appx. 6.3 mi. to Rawls Rd. Turn left (S) and proceed to the check station at the end of the road.

Check station open 10 AM to 6 PM Fri.; 8 AM to 4 PM, Sat. - Sun. (941) 776-2295



117 Paynes Creek Historic State Park

A nature trail skirts the ecotone between the river, xeric hammock and bottomland forest, concentrating migratory songbirds as well as wintering feeding guilds with black-and-white warblers, titmice and more. Take the canopy-level bridge across the creek or veer north to the "catwalk" through bottomland forest. After hours permits allow for owl prowling after dark; a canoe launch is also available.

DIRECTIONS: From US Hwy 17 in Bowling Green, drive east on Main St. 0.5 mi. Turn right (S) on CR 664A (Lake Branch Rd.) Park entrance is on right (S) side of road.

Open 8 AM to sunset. (863) 375-4717
www.floridastateparks.org/paynescreek/

**ABOUT THIS GUIDE**

This trail guide, along with guides for the East, Panhandle, and South trail sections can be downloaded from the Great Florida Birding Trail website. Additional copies of all four trail guides may be ordered from the website or by using the form on this page. As information for a particular site may change after trail guides are printed, please check the website before heading out on your trip for the most up-to-date information. Please report any errors to GFBT@myfwc.com. Thanks!

Help Us Maintain the Trail!

The Great Florida Birding Trail's mission is to conserve and enhance Florida's bird habitat by promoting birdwatching activities, conservation education and economic opportunity. Help the FWC maintain the trail by "adopting" sites in your area. For example, if you see a Birding Trail road sign that needs repair, please let us know. Your support and your opinions are important to us. Have a site update or a comment about the trail? Contact the Birding Trail Coordinator at GFBT@myfwc.com. Thanks!

Birding Resources

There are many more resources for birding in Florida! Before your trip, check the Internet for area rare bird alert hotlines and statewide birding listserves to get an idea of what's being seen. If you're staying in an area for a longer visit, check local book and nature stores for area guides to birding published by local Audubon chapters or birders. The Florida Birding Trail guides are just a taste of the information available to plan your ultimate Florida birding vacation!

Birder I.D.

Name _____

Street _____

City _____

State _____ County _____

Country _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

Home phone _____

Work Phone _____

Request for Information

____ Add my name to your mailing list

____ Send mailings electronically

____ Send a site nomination form – also available online *

____ Send a Birding Trail sponsorship packet

____ Send a Birding Trail brochure

____ Send a Birding Trail guide - also available online *

____ East ____ Panhandle ____ South

____ Send "Birdwatching Basics" – also available online *

Other: _____

* www.floridabirdingtrail.com
MyFWC.com

The Great Florida Birding Trail is
a program of the
Florida Fish and Wildlife
Conservation Commission.



Cut along dotted line


MAIL-IN RESPONSE SLIP


Rate the Trail!

Mail-In Response Form

 Your country, state and county of origin _____


 Where did you hear about the Birding Trail? _____

 What is your goal in using the Birding Trail? (eg: finding a specific species of bird, seeing a diversity of birds or simply enjoying the outdoors).


 How long have you had this guide? _____


 How many sites have you visited? _____

 Which site was best? Why? _____

 Which site was worst? Why? _____

 How many days have you spent birding in the last month? _____

 How long was your last birding trip on the Great Florida Birding Trail? _____

 How much money did you spend on lodging, food and gas on the above birding trip? \$ _____

 Will you recommend the Birding Trail to friends? _____

Please detach and mail us your valued response to the GFBT address on page 31. **Thank you!**

Birding Ethics

Don't you hate it when the doorbell or telephone rings just as you settle down to dinner or a nap? While mere nuisances to us, disruptions in feeding and nesting routines can spell disaster for birds, especially the cumulative effect of frequent disruptions, a common occurrence at busy sites. When a nesting bird is forced to fly, it may leave eggs or young exposed to temperature extremes or predators. A migratory bird may be exhausted and hungry from a long flight—it needs to rest and eat. With care and common sense, birders can help protect the birds they love to watch.

Consider these points:

- Stay back from concentrations of nesting or loafing waterbirds—a spotting scope may be a better choice than binoculars.
- Walk around groups of birds on the beach rather than forcing them to fly.
- Sit or crouch so that you appear smaller.
- Keep movements slow and steady rather than fast or sporadic.
- If viewing from your car, stay inside as long as possible. It acts as a viewing “blind” and the birds are less likely to fly if they don't recognize you as human.
- Stay on roads, trails and paths to minimize habitat disturbance.
- Do you occasionally use recordings to attract birds? If so, remember not to overuse them, or to try to attract rare or protected species.

Trail Tips

When birding:

- Take sunscreen, water and bug spray.
- Make reservations in advance for “by-appointment only” sites.
- Check seasonality of site; are you visiting at the right time of year?

Cut along dotted line



For more information...

Or to be added to the mailing list for the Great Florida Birding Trail, fill in the response form (including your name and address on reverse side) and mail to:

Great Florida Birding Trail (or GFBT)
620 South Meridian Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1600

OR visit the Birding Trail's Web site at:

www.floridabirdingtrail.com

"Trail Updates" include news on the Birding Trail's progress and trail-related birding events across the state. Information also is available regarding trail sponsorship, site nominations for Birding Trail sections, tips for better birding and the economic impact of this flourishing pastime.

Take part in the ongoing development of this great resource for birders of all levels, while enjoying and ensuring continued concern for the conservation of Florida's fabulous avian treasures!

Birders! Flex your economic muscles!

Florida communities have long made land use choices to attract traditional tourists and their dollars. Birding is big business in Florida too... but communities will only recognize that if we're visible! Your visibility and economic impact can encourage wildlife conservation. Some ways you can make yourself more visible:

- 1) Wear bird t-shirts.
- 2) Take your binoculars into the restaurant with you.
- 3) Ask local residents in restaurants, hotels, gas stations, etc. about where good birding locations might be in their area.
- 4) Leave birder calling cards whenever you spend money, helping vendors make the connection between healthy wildlands and healthy economies (cards may be downloaded from www.floridabirdingtrail.com).
- 5) Put a birding bumper sticker or window decal on your car or business. It speaks for itself, so you don't have to!

Conserve birds by watching birds! It's more than a hobby... it's a legacy.

For the Birds!

The Great Florida Birding Trail helps everyone enjoy and conserve Florida's wildlife and wildlife habitat. A donation to the Wildlife Foundation of Florida helps us expand and enhance the Birding Trail experience. With your support, we can continue to protect Florida's natural resources for future generations to enjoy.

If you would like to make a donation, please mail your check to:

Wildlife Foundation of Florida
P.O. Box 6181
Tallahassee, FL 32314-6181

Note: Please write GFBT in the memo section of your check!

WEST SECTION

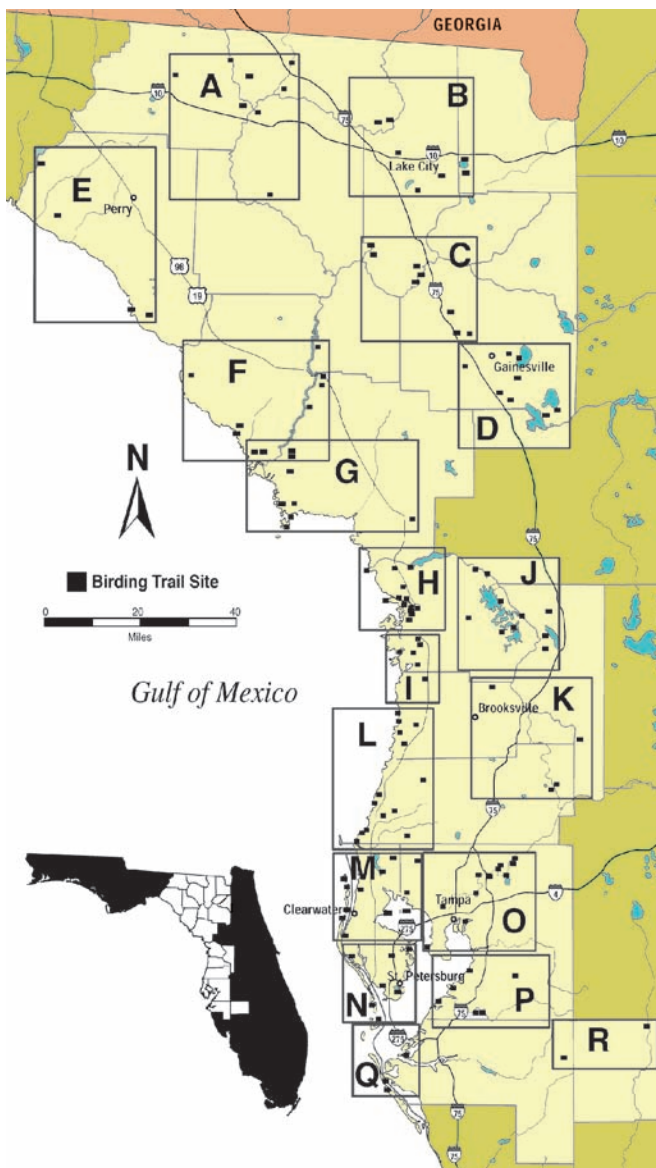
HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

We hope this guide will help you quickly and easily identify West Section birding sites of interest to you. Sites have met criteria ensuring they are good for birdwatching, but also aren't too sensitive to withstand birder use.

Maps show "clusters" of up to 15 sites within an hour's drive of one another. The map at right shows the locations of these clusters; the letter in each box corresponds to the map for that cluster. Descriptions and directions for sites accompany each cluster map. You may want to use the maps in this guide along with a larger map book, such as a DeLorme *Florida Atlas & Gazetteer*.

MAP KEY (see page 2 for City Locator)

- A** River Bluffs Cluster
- B** Flatwoods and Falls Cluster
- C** Warbler Woods Cluster
- D** Arredondo Cluster
- E** Aucilla Cluster
- F** Lower Suwannee Cluster
- G** Cedar Key Cluster
- H** Crystal River Cluster
- I** Eagle and Osprey Cluster
- J** Red-cockaded Woodpecker Cluster
- K** Green Swamp Cluster
- L** Gulf Migrants Cluster
- M** Oystercatcher Cluster
- N** Reddish Egret Cluster
- O** River to Bay Cluster
- P** Bobwhite and Nighthawk Cluster
- Q** Snowy Plover Cluster
- R** Big Sky Cluster



LEGEND

- Not a primary Trail site, but "Worth A Visit" if you're already in an area
- Some viewing is barrier-free
- Sites good for beginners
- Sites best for those with ability to ID bird calls

- Entrance fee required
- Tours, educational signage and/or nature center on site
- Seasonal hunting on site
- Access by appointment only
- This site is primarily accessed, and birded, by car
- This site is accessed by boat

- This site is only accessed by foot, and sometimes by bicycle
- This site is good for seeing a variety of species
- This site is good for a single sought-after species
- Restroom available

J F M A M J J A S O N D

Best months for each will be shaded

AM PM AM PM ALL DAY

Best time of day for birding: morning, evening, both morning and evening, and all day



Recommended length of visit: quick stop, a few hours, all day