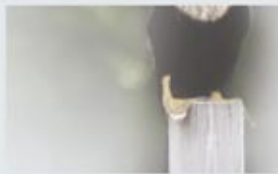


Osprey



Anhinga



Photography provided by Peg Urban with
the Oklawaha Valley Audubon Society and the
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, www.fws.gov.

Produced in partnership with the Oklawaha Valley
Audubon Society, www.oklawaha-audubon.org.



Lake County, Florida



Bird Watching



Lake County Welcome Center

20763 U.S. Highway 27, Groveland, Florida
(800) 430-LAKE • www.lakecountyfl.com

Welcome to LAKE COUNTY:

Bird watching is the fastest growing outdoor sport in the nation, and Lake County is happy to be a part of it. As the name of this County would indicate, it is a great place to view more than 200 different species of birds. However, the area is known for more than just its 1,000 lakes and rivers.

The County is surrounded by environmentally protected areas including the Green Swamp to the south, the Ocala National Forest to the north and the Wekiva River Basin to the east. From championship water skiing to its nationally televised fishing tournaments, Lake County is synonymous with outdoor adventures.

This bird-watching pamphlet was developed, in cooperation with the Oklawaha Valley Audubon Society, to encourage local and visiting birders to explore Lake County's natural beauty. With 18 identified locations to go birding, including some hidden gems such as the Emerald Marsh Conservation Area, Lake County is the right destination for advanced and beginning birders.

Lake County has much more to offer as its charming hometowns and family festivals are top attractions for all. Want to learn more about Lake County? Visit the Lake County Welcome Center, located at 20763 U.S. Highway 27, Groveland, call (800) 430-LAKE, or log on to www.lakecounty.fl.com.

Length: 37 inches

Diet: Primarily plant matter, some insects, aquatic invertebrates, reptiles or amphibians, small mammals, fish

Breeding habitat:
Wetland-open water

Clutch size: 2

Voice: Loud rattling "kar-r-r-r-o-o-o" often in flight



Sandhill Crane

page 01

TIPS

1. Try to observe and photograph birds without disturbing them. Hide in the vegetation or stand right next to a tree while observing the birds, they may come closer.
2. Stay on existing roads and trails to avoid trampling fragile habitat.
3. The best time to watch for perching birds is the first two hours after sunrise and the last hours before sunset. Ducks, waders and shorebirds can be observed all day. On light rainy days birds normally are active most of the day.
4. Wear light clothes of natural colors — preferably khaki, green etc. Avoid clothing that may snag easily or will rustle.
5. At all times make as little noise as possible and talk with a low voice or whisper in order not to scare the birds away.
6. Walk slowly and make no speedy movements. Remember an experienced bird watcher may walk less than a mile an hour.
7. When with a group of bird watchers, always stay together in one flock so that no one walks ahead or falls behind.
8. Do not stay near nests of birds and never take their young or their eggs.
9. Avoid chasing or flushing birds.
10. Visiting hours of birding locations can vary; always call ahead.



Bird Watching

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Bird watching may be one of the easiest outdoor activities to participate in as there are only two equipment necessities: a pair of binoculars and a field guide.

While the two birding essentials are relatively inexpensive, there are numerous choices in both categories. According to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, good binoculars can make for enjoyable birding experiences while bad binoculars can lead to headaches, eye strain and not seeing birds altogether.

Buying a pair of binoculars is a long-term investment. A decent pair of binoculars can be purchased for less than \$100. The recommended magnification for bird watching is between 7x and 10x and the diameter of the lenses should be at least five times larger than the magnification power.

The binoculars should be easy to use and comfortable. Make sure the weight is not uncomfortable and they focus easily.

Choosing a field guide is a little easier than selecting a pair of binoculars due to the cost involved. Some guides are limited

to a certain region while others are more comprehensive including all 800-plus North American species. Some guides use photographs while others use artist renderings to depict species. Whatever the choice, it is important to research all the options and compare what is best. Most bookstores carry dozens of guides to choose from.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission recommends these six popular comprehensive guides: *A Field Guide to the Birds, Eastern and Central North America (Fourth Edition, 1980, Roger Tory Peterson)*, *Stokes Field Guide to Birds, Eastern Region (First Edition, 1996, Donald and Lillian Stokes)*; *All the Birds of North America (First Edition, 1997, The American Bird Conservancy)*; *Field Guide to the Birds of North America (Fourth Edition, 2002, The National Geographic Society)*; *Focus Guide to the Birds of North America (First Edition, 2000, Kenn Kaufman)*; and *The Sibley Guide to Birds (First Edition, 2000, David Allen Sibley)*.

Outdoor enthusiasts are always encouraged to carry sunscreen to protect skin from sunburn, insect repellent to ward off mosquitoes and plenty of water to avoid dehydration. Sunscreen should be 15 SPF or higher and applied 20 minutes before heading out. Insect repellent should contain DEET. Some experienced Florida bird watchers also recommend wearing hats to keep the sun out of their face. One other tip recommended by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and just about every native Floridian, do not confront or feed wildlife, including alligators.



STARTING A 'LIFE LIST'

Can be Rewarding

Bird watching is not an activity void of a challenge. Once the beginning bird watchers learn the tricks associated with the hobby, many turn to compiling the "life list" as their next goal.

The list is simply a document of all the species a bird watcher has seen. For some bird watchers the activity of keeping field notes and snapping photographs can be more fun than the activity itself.

"I just enjoy photographing nature in general, but birds are a big part of it," said Peg Urban of the Oklawaha Valley Audubon Society. "When I first got started back in 1996, I really didn't have a clue what I was doing as far as recognizing the different species. I knew the common ones — the cardinals, blue jays and things like that, but after spending time with the more experienced birders I was amazed at the variety we have in Lake County. What kind of got me hooked on bird watching or birding was starting to keep a record or life list of the different species."

A life list can be as detailed as a journal entry of distinguishable features of the bird and vocalizations made by the species to a simple one sentence explanation of the basic what, where and when. However a birder goes about the life list, it is important to document the basics when compiling the list.

By including the time, date and location of each new species, the life list can become not only a chronicle of all the species a bird watcher has seen, but an account of the bird watcher's travels. More importantly, comparing life lists with other birders can mark how far or how much more time a bird watcher needs to put in to reach the same level of the next friendly competitor.

"It's kind of exciting to see new ones or unusual ones that you would normally not see," Urban said. "Bird counts for instance are like a challenge between different groups to see who can count or see the most species. It is almost like a hunt in a way for birders."

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission challenges birders and encourages them to share their life lists. The "Wings Over Florida" Program awards full-color certificates at five achievement levels to bird watchers who report their life lists of Florida birds to the Commission.

For more information or to apply, call (850) 488-8755, e-mail wof@myfwc.com or log on to www.wildflorida.org/wof.

Northern Cardinal

Length: 7.75 inches

Diet: Seeds and fruit primarily, some insects

Breeding habitat:
Successional-scrub

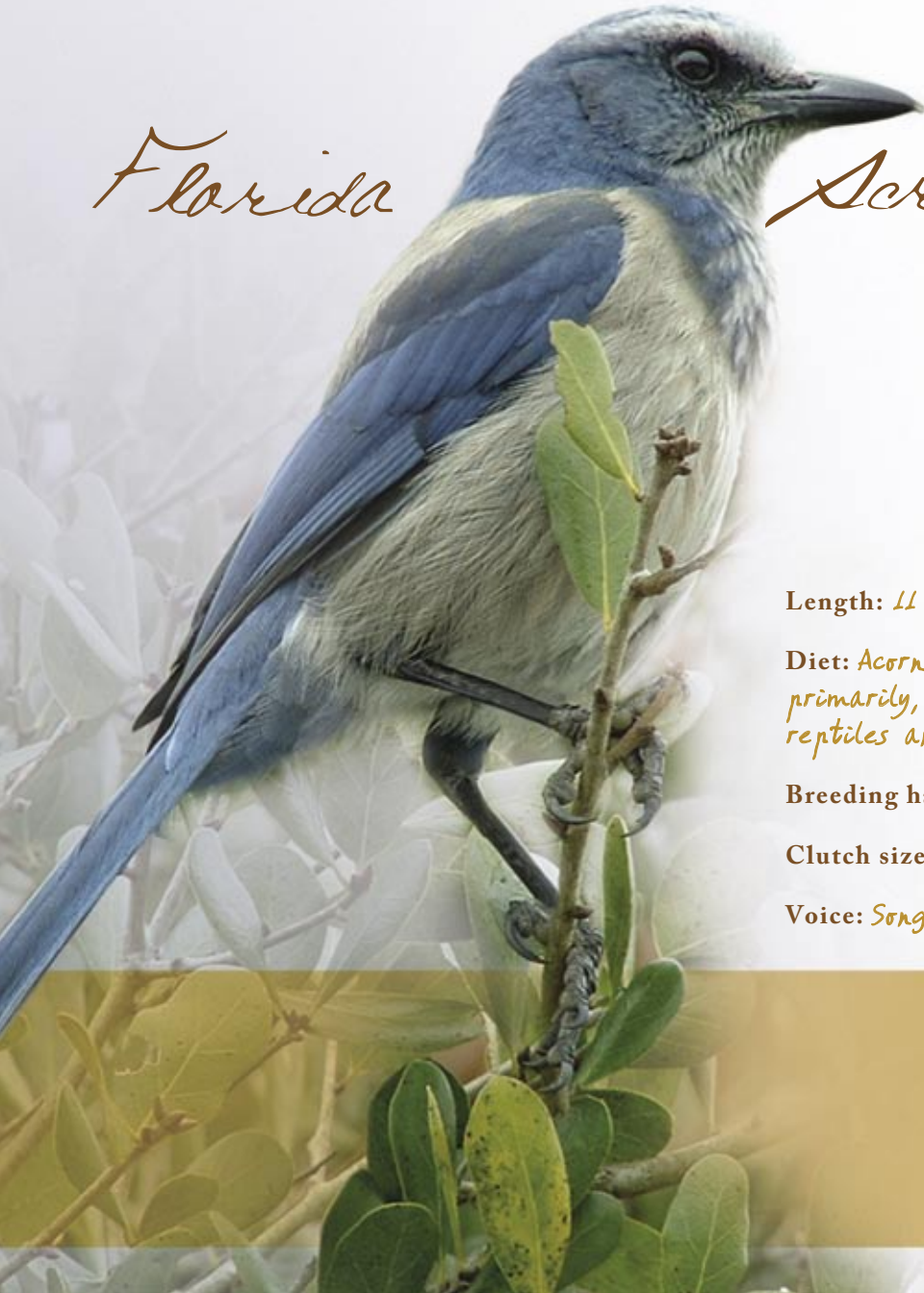
Clutch size: 2-5

Voice: Song of clear whistles; variations of on "wait, wait, wait, cheer, cheer, cheer"



Florida

Scrub-jay



Length: 11 inches

Diet: Acorns, seeds and berries primarily, some insects, amphibians, reptiles and small mammals.

Breeding habitat: Successional-scrub

Clutch size: 3-4

Voice: Song: trills and high warbles

Florida Scrub-jay

Need a reason to visit Lake County?
For touring bird watchers one lone species
is often the number one reason to visit the
Central Florida county of a 1,000 lakes.

The Florida Scrub-jay is a prize sighting for
visiting bird watchers. The species is found
only in Florida and is limited to a number
of small areas in the state that have dry,
sandy soil with oak scrub trees.

The Florida Scrub-jay is a state-listed
threatened species because oak scrub
lands are prime areas for development.
Large colonies of the jays are known in
only four areas of the state — with the
largest possibly in the Ocala National
Forest, located in northeast Lake County.

*"I think Lake County is one of the best
places in Central Florida for bird watching,
although people in Volusia County may
argue with that," said Mary Remer of the
Oklawaha Valley Audubon Society. "We
have a good population of scrub-jays in
Lake County and that is something a lot
of people want to see."*

THRIVES IN LAKE

The Florida Scrub-jay is sought out by many
bird watchers for other reasons than its
declining numbers. The most unusual trait
of the species is the young of the previous
year help raise next year's brood. And
according to Remer, it's a "beautiful bird."

Remer and other Audubon Society mem-
bers are hoping to add another colony
of Florida Scrub-jays at the Palatka Environmental & Agricultural Reserve, or
as it is commonly referred to as PEAR Park,
in South Lake County.

The 270-acre preserve was leased by Lake
County several years ago from the State of
Florida and has quickly become a popular
regional park for County citizens and visitors
as it features the Dr. S.J. Stephany Memorial
River Trail and a dog park. As part of the
rehabilitation efforts of the former agriculture
land, the Audubon Society is establishing
about 50 acres of oak scrub land for the
Florida Scrub-jay.

*The Florida Scrub-jay is a popular species to view for bird watchers because there are so few
around and they are a magnificent bird with bright blue head, neck, wings and tail. There are
two other scrub-jay species in the West.*

The Jewel of LAKE COUNTY

The crown jewel of bird watching in Lake County is also one of the most prized conservation areas in all of Central Florida.

Although the 7,089-acre preserve known as the Emerald Marsh Conservation Area is almost a secret outside of the Sunshine State, local bird watchers and environmentalists rave about its large and diverse wildlife population. After only a decade of rehabilitation, the St. Johns River Water Management District, along with support from the Lake County Board of County Commissioners and Oklawaha Valley Audubon Society, has accomplished an astounding feat of creating a viable conservation area and an ecotourism attraction.

The uniqueness of Emerald Marsh is partly due to its past. In the 1940s the marsh lands to the east of Lake Griffin were drained and converted to agricultural fields and cattle pastures. With the support of the community,

the District purchased seven different parcels between 1991 and 1993 that make up the conservation area.

Initial restoration of the area began in 1994 when a wetland treatment marsh was established on more than 1,500 acres of former agricultural fields bordering Lake Griffin and Haynes Creek. The marsh treatment, or flow-ways, helps remove solid materials and nutrients from Lake Griffin.

"The original intent was to clean up the lakes – that was the main focus – and to do that one of the things that had to be stopped was the fertilizer loading into the lakes," said John Stenberg, a District environmental scientist. *"We still have the wildlife habitat benefit so it is like a two-pronged approach where we trap nutrients and increase wildlife habitat."*

From the advanced to the novice bird watcher, Emerald Marsh presents unlimited opportunities. Known for its varying habitats and sheer size, what separates the conservation area from other preserves is its 4.3-mile wildlife drive. Built atop the

Emeralda Marsh

dikes in the treatment marsh, the drive provides unbelievable access to the interior of wetland habitats.

"It's a good place for people to go," Stenberg said. "Things like a wildlife trail or wildlife drive give people a chance to see it even if they can't walk that far out. I have talked to people in wheelchairs that are riding around able to go birding. It is a great way to get people in that literally could not make the bike ride or walk that distance."

Length: 28 inches

Diet: Primarily fish, some aquatic invertebrates, reptiles and amphibians

Breeding habitat:
Wetland-open water

Clutch size: 3-5

Voice: Low grunts



Ardea

According to the National Audubon Society, bird feeding can benefit birds and also provide great bird watching from the backyard. The obvious time to feed birds is in winter when natural food supplies are scarce; however, additional species visit feeders during the spring and fall migrations, and also during summer while nesting.

To keep birds coming back to the feeders in any season provide them with the following three essential elements:

- Variety of quality seed.
- Fresh water for drinking and bathing.
- Ample cover, preferably provided by native plants which also provide potential nesting sites and a source of natural food.

For more information about creating a backyard suitable for bird watching, log on to www.audubon.org, e-mail audubonathome@audubon.org or call (215) 355-9588.



Wood Duck

Length: 13.5 inches

Diet: Seeds, fruit, nuts and plant matter primarily, some insects and aquatic invertebrates

Breeding habitat:
Wetland-open water

Clutch size: 8-15

Voice: Male: usually quiet, high whistle when courting; Female: "oo-eek"

Lake County BIRD CHECKLIST

The following checklist is presented in alphabetized categories. Review each category as some have several species such as: blackbirds include meadowlarks, bobolinks and cowbirds; thrashers (*mimics*) include mockingbirds and catbirds; nightjars include nighthawks, chuck-will's widow and whip-poor-will.

Each specific species of bird is identified with a probability of sighting for all four seasons. Ratings are as follows: Common (C), Uncommon (U), Rare (R) and Possible (P).

	SEASONS				Breeds in Central, Fla.	✓
	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall		
ANHINGA (family)						
Anhinga	C	C	C	C	✓	
ANI						
Smooth-billed Ani	R	R	R	R	✓	
Groove-billed Ani	R	R		R		
BLACKBIRD (family)						
Brown-headed Cowbird	U	U	U	U	✓	
Bobolink	R	U	U	R		
Eastern Meadowlark	C	U	U	U	✓	
Red-winged Blackbird	C	C	C	C	✓	
Boat-tailed Grackle	C	C	C	C	✓	
Common Grackle	C	C	C	C	✓	
Brewer's Blackbird	R	R		R		
Rusty Blackbird	R	R		R		
BITTERNS						
Least Bittern	R	U	U	R	✓	
American Bittern	U	R	R	U		
BUNTINGS						
Indigo Bunting	R	U	U	R	✓	
Painted Bunting	R	R	R			
CHICKADEES						
Carolina Chickadee	R	R	R	R	✓	

	SEASONS				Breeds in Central, Fla.	✓
	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall		
COOTS (see Rails)						
CORMORANTS						
Double-crested Cormorant	C	C	C	C	✓	
CRANES						
Sandhill Crane	C	C	C	C	✓	
Whooping Crane	P					
CROWS						
Fish Crow	C	C	C	C	✓	
American Crow	C	C	C	C	✓	
CUCKOOS						
Black-billed Cuckoo		R		R		
Yellow-billed Cuckoo		R	U	R		
DOVES						
Mourning Dove	C	C	C	C	✓	
Common Ground-Dove	U	U	U	U	✓	
White-winged Dove	U	U	U	U	✓	
Rock Pigeon	C	C	C	C	✓	
Eurasian Collared-Dove	C	C	C	C	✓	
DUCKS						
Mottled Duck	U	U	U	U	✓	
Mallard Duck	U	R	R	U		
Gadwall	U			U		

	SEASONS				Breeds in Central, Fla.	✓
	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall		
DUCKS (continued)						
Northern Pintall	R			R		
Green-winged Teal	U					
Blue-winged Teal	C	C	U	C	✓	
American Widgeon	R			R		
Northern Shoveler	R	R		R		
Wood Duck	C	C	C	C	✓	
Canvasback	R			R		
Redhead	U	R		R		
Ring-necked Duck	C	U		U		
Greater Scaup	U	R		U		
Lesser Scaup	U	R		U		
Bufflehead	R	R				
Ruddy Duck	R			U		
Fulvous Whistling-Duck	U	U	R	R	✓	
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck	U	U	U	U	✓	
Hooded Merganser	R	R	U	U		
EGRETS (see Herons)						
FINCHES						
American Goldfinch	U	U		U		
FLYCATCHERS						
Eastern Kingbird		U	U	U	✓	
Great Crested Flycatcher		U	U	U	✓	
Eastern Phoebe	C	C		C		
Eastern Wood Pewee		U	U	U	✓	
GALLINULES (see Rails)						
GNATCATCHERS						
Blue-gray gnatcatcher	C	C	U	C	✓	
GREBES						
Pied-billed Grebe	C	C	U	C	✓	
Horned Grebe	R	R				
GROSBEAKS						
Northern Cardinal	C	C	C	C	✓	
Blue Grosbeak			U	R	✓	
Rose-breasted Grosbeak		R		R		
GULLS						
Ring-billed Gull	C	C	U	C		
Bonaparte's Gull	U	U		U		

	SEASONS				Breeds in Central, Fla.	✓
	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall		
GULLS (continued)						
Herring Gull	U	R				
HAWKS & EAGLES						
Sharp-shinned Hawk	R	R		U		
Cooper's Hawk	R	R	R	R	✓	
Red-tailed Hawk	C	U	U	C	✓	
Red-shouldered Hawk	C	C	C	C	✓	
Broad-winged Hawk	R	R				
Short-tailed Hawk	R	R	R	R	✓	
Northerner Harrier	U	U	R	U		
Osprey	C	C	C	C	✓	
Bald Eagle	C	U	U	U	✓	
Peregrine Falcon	R	R		R		
Merlin	R			R		
American Kestrel	C	R		C		
HERONS & EGRETS						
Great Blue Heron	C	C	C	C	✓	
Green Heron	C	C	C	C	✓	
Little Blue Heron	C	C	C	C	✓	
Cattle Egret	C	C	C	C	✓	
Great Egret	C	C	C	C	✓	
Snowy Egret	C	C	C	C	✓	
Tri-colored Heron	C	C	C	C	✓	
Black-crowned Night-Heron	U	U	U	U	✓	
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	R	R	R	R	✓	
HUMMINGBIRDS						
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	R	U	U	U	✓	
IBIS						
Glossy Ibis	C	C	C	C	✓	
White Ibis	C	C	C	C	✓	
JAYS						
Blue Jay	C	C	C	C	✓	
Florida Scrub-jay	U	U	U	U	✓	
JUNCOS						
Dark-eyed Juncos (slate colored)	R	R		R		
KINGFISHERS						
Belted Kingfisher	C	C	U	C	✓	

	SEASONS				Breeds in Central, Fla.	✓
	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall		
KINGLETS						
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	C	U		C		
KITES						
Swallow-tailed Kite		U	U	R	✓	
LIMPKINS						
Limpkin	U	U	U	U	✓	
LOONS						
Common Loon	R					
MOORHENS (see Rails)						
NIGHTJARS						
Chuck-will's-widow		U	C	U	✓	
Common Nighthawk		U	U	U	✓	
Whip-poor-will	R			R		
NUTHATCHES						
Brown-headed Nuthatch	U	U	U	U	✓	
ORIOLES						
Orchard Oriole			R	R	✓	
Baltimore Oriole	R	R		R		
OWLS						
Barn Owl	R	R	R	R	✓	
Eastern Screech-Owl	R	R	R	R	✓	
Great Horned Owl	U	U	U	U	✓	
Barred Owl	U	U	U	U	✓	
Burrowing Owl	P				✓	
PELICANS						
American White Pelican	R	R		R		
PIPITS						
American Pipit	R					
PLOVERS						
Killdeer	C	C	U	C	✓	
QUAILS & TURKEYS						
Northern Bobwhite	C	C	C	C	✓	
Wild Turkey	R	R	R	R	✓	
RAILS, COOTS, GALLINULES & MOORHENS						
Common Moorhen	C	C	C	C	✓	
Purple Gallinule	U	U	U	U	✓	
American Coot	C	C	U	C	✓	

	SEASONS				Breeds in Central, Fla.	✓
	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall		
RAILS, COOTS, GALLINULES & MOORHENS (continued)						
King Rail	R	R	R	R	✓	
Virginia Rail	R	R		R		
Sora	U	U		U		
SANDPIPERS & OTHER SHOREBIRDS						
Greater Yellowlegs	U	U	R	U		
Lesser Yellowlegs	U	U	R	U		
American Woodcock	R			R		
Dunlin	R			R		
Wilson's Snipe	U	U		U		
Short-billed Dowitcher	R	R		R		
Long-billed Dowitcher	R	R		R		
Spotted Sandpiper	R	R		R		
Solitary Sandpiper	R	R		R		
Western Sandpiper	R	U		R		
Least Sandpiper	R	R		R		
Semipalmated Sandpiper		R		R		
Black-necked Stilt		U	U			
Stilt Sandpiper	R		R			
SHRIKE						
Loggerhead Shrike	C	C	C	C	✓	
SPARROWS						
Savannah Sparrow	C	U		U		
Vesper Sparrow	U	U		U		
Chipping Sparrow	C	U		U		
Field Sparrow	R					
White-crowned Sparrow	R			R		
White-throated Sparrow	R					
Grasshopper Sparrow	R			R		
Swamp Sparrow	U	U		U		
Song Sparrow	U	R		R		
Le Conte's Sparrow	R	R				
Bachman's Sparrow	R	R	R	R	✓	
House Sparrow	U	U	U	U	✓	
SPOONBILLS						
Roseate Spoonbill		U	U			
STARLINGS						
European Starling	C	C	C	C	✓	

	SEASONS				Breeds in Central, Fla.	✓
	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall		
STORKS						
Wood Stork	R	R	R	R	✓	
SWALLOWS						
Tree Swallow	C	C	R	C		
Bank Swallow		U		U		
North Rough-winged Swallow		U	U	C	✓	
Barn Swallow		U	U	C	✓	
Purple Martin	R	U	C		✓	
SWIFTS						
Chimney Swifts		R	U	U	✓	
TANAGERS						
Summer Tanager		U	U	U	✓	
TERNs						
Forster's Tern	C	U		C		
Royal Tern	R	R	R	R	✓	
Caspian Tern	R	R				
THRASHERS & MIMICS						
Northern Mockingbird	C	C	C	C	✓	
Gray Catbird	C	U	R	C		
Brown Thrasher	U	U	U	U	✓	
THRUSHES						
American Robin	C	U		U		
Eastern Bluebird	U	U	R	U	✓	
Wood Thrush		R		R		
Hermit Thrush	U			U		
Veery		R		R		
TITMICE						
Tufted Titmouse	C	C	C	C	✓	
TOWHEES						
Eastern Towhee (Rufous-sided)	C	C	C	C	✓	
TURKEYS (see Quails)						
VIREOS						
White-eyed Vireo	C	C	C	C	✓	
Blue-headed Vireo	U	U		U		
Red-eyed Vireo		U	C	C	✓	
Yellow-throated Vireo		R	R		✓	
VULTURES						
Turkey Vulture	C	C	C	C	✓	
Black Vulture	C	C	C	C	✓	

	SEASONS				Breeds in Central, Fla.	✓
	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall		
WARBLERS						
Palm Warbler	C	C	U	C		
Pine Warbler	U	U	U	U	✓	
Prairie Warbler	U	U	R	U	✓	
Black-and-white Warbler	U	C		U		
Orange-crowned Warbler	U	R		U		
Cape May Warbler		R		R		
Northern Parula	R	C	C	R	✓	
Yellow Warbler		R		R		
Magnolia Warbler		R		R		
Yellow-rumped Warbler	C	U		C		
Yellow-throated Warbler	R	R	R	R	✓	
Common Yellowthroat	C	C	R	C	✓	
American Redstart		U	R	U		
Black-throated Blue Warbler		R		R		
Black-throated Green Warbler	R	R		R		
Blackpoll Warbler		R		R		
Blackburnian Warbler	R	R		R		
Prothonotary Warbler		U	U		✓	
Ovenbird	U	U		U		
WATERTHRUSH						
Northern Waterthrush		R	U	R		
Louisiana Waterthrush		R		R		
WAXWINGS						
Cedar Waxwing	C	U		U		
WOODPECKERS						
Northern Flicker	C	C	C	C	✓	
Pileated Woodpecker	C	C	C	C	✓	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	C	C	C	C	✓	
Red-headed Woodpecker	R	R	U	R	✓	
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	U	R		U		
Downy Woodpecker	C	C	C	C	✓	
Hairy Woodpecker	R	R	R	R	✓	
WRENS						
House Wren	C	U		U		
Carolina Wren	C	C	C	C	✓	
Marsh Wren	U	U		U		
Sedge Wren	U	R		U		

LAKE COUNTY IS

Perfect for

BIRD WATCHERS

Unlike the birds, it is hard to say how many bird watchers visit or call Lake County home. With more than 18 identified locations for the activity, bird watching is a popular hobby that is enjoyed by many Lake County outdoor enthusiasts.

"I think there are a lot of bird watchers in Lake County," said Mary Remer of the Oklawaha Valley Audubon Society. "The society is sent all the names of people that subscribe to National Audubon Magazine, and right now there are more than 500 in this area.

"Bird watching is a growing outdoor activity. Florida is wonderful for it, and there are tons of people that come down here to go bird watching. It's hard to say how many bird watchers are in Lake County at any given time, but it is a great place for bird watching."

While many visiting bird watchers find Lake County to be a great place for birding, many residents have known this for years by simply looking out their back porches. While bird watching is increasing in popularity so is the casual watcher who sits in the backyard.

"I have a little different slant than the typical birders – I do it in my yard," said Greg Gensheimer, a Clermont resident. "I live in an older subdivision with rectangular five-acre lots. Particularly some of the older communities where the trees and habitats are established, there are more birds flying around our houses than most people realize."

In the past couple of years, Gensheimer has counted more than 60 different species from his backyard, but of course not all at one time.

"It depends on the time of year. Over the last couple of weeks in November the warblers come in and the Chipping Sparrows are at the feeder," he said. "I heard robins this week and have seen White-winged Doves and Mourning Doves.

"Birds can be found anywhere in Lake County – even little places that might not be anything more than an extended berm off the side of the road. You can see some of the most amazing things here."

THE GREAT

Florida Birding TRAIL

The Great Florida Birding Trail is a bird watcher's dream. The segmented trail of prominent and hidden bird-watching locations is marked with highway signs that ease the ability to locate these environmental wonders for bird watchers.

For the purposes of The Great Florida Birding Trail, the state is divided into four sections. The East Florida Section of the trail opened in November 2000, the West Florida Section followed in November 2002 and the Panhandle Florida Section opened in May 2004. The opening of the South Florida Section in 2006 will complete this 2,000-mile statewide trail.

Of the 135 sites spread throughout the East Florida Section of the trail from Jacksonville

to Cocoa Beach, eight are located in Lake County, though the Oklawaha Valley Audubon Society is working to get this expanded to include the Palatamaha Environmental & Agricultural Reserve in South Lake County.

The trail is a program of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. The Great Florida Birding Trail aims to combine more prominent birding sites with smaller local sites in groups that will spread out casual birdwatchers and their ecotourism dollars into the surrounding communities.

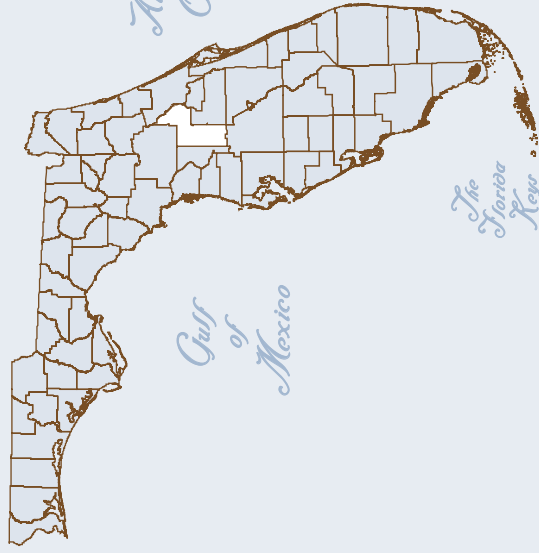
The listed trail sites in Lake County are as follows:

- Site 36 — Alexander Springs in the Ocala National Forest
- Site 38 — Emerald Island Road access to Emerald Marsh Conservation Area
- Site 39 — Treasure Island Road access to Emerald Marsh Conservation Area
- Site 40 — Hidden Waters Preserve
- Site 49 — Rock Springs Run State Preserve
- Site 50 — Seminole State Forest
- Site 51 — Lower Wekiva River State Preserve
(access from both Lake and Seminole counties)
- Site 72 — Lake Louisa State Park

For more information about The Great Florida Birding Trail,
call the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission at (850) 488-8755,
or log on to www.floridabirdingtrail.com.

Lake County, Florida

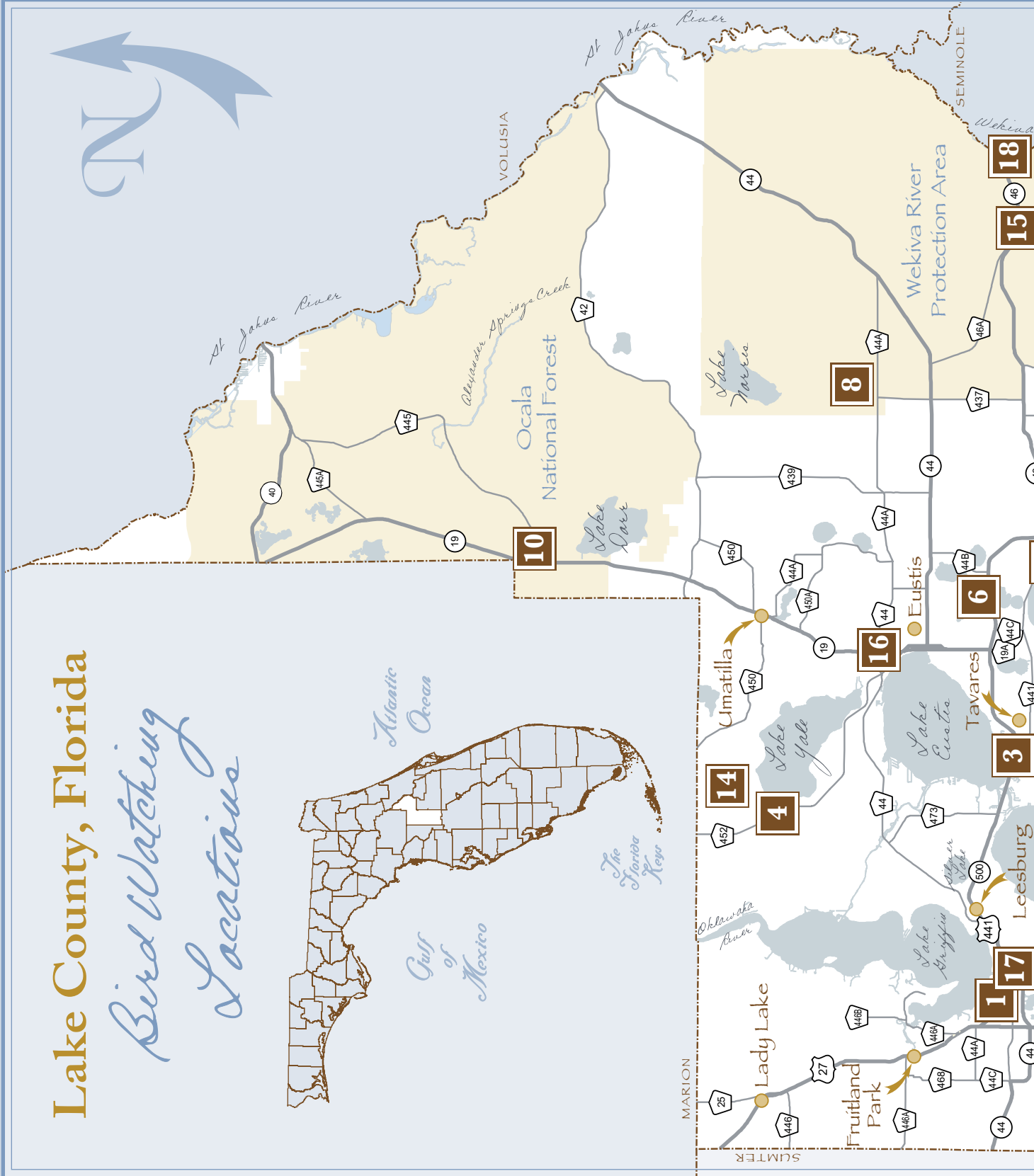
Bird Watching Locations



Atlantic Ocean

Gulf of Mexico

The Florida Keys





- 1 Bourlay Historic Nature Park
- 2 Crooked River Preserve
- 3 Dora Canal
- 4 Emerald Marsh Conservation Area
- 5 Flat Island Preserve
- 6 Hidden Waters Preserve
- 7 Lake Apopka Clay Island
- 8 Lake Norris Conservation Area
- 9 Lake Louisa State Park
- 10 Ocala National Forest (Alexander Springs)
- 11 Palm Island Boardwalk
- 12 Palatka Environmental and Agricultural Reserve
- 13 Sarah Maude Mason Nature Preserve
- 14 Sawgrass Island Preserve
- 15 Seminole State Forest
- 16 Trout Lake Nature Center
- 17 Venetian Gardens
- 18 Wekiva Springs State Park (Lower Wekiva River State Preserve and Rock Springs Run State Preserve)

County Roads

State Roads

Florida's Turnpike

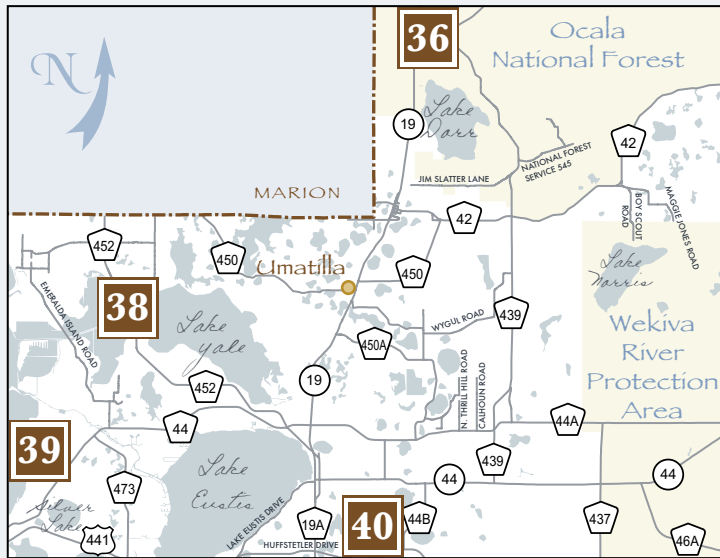
U.S. Highways

Cities/Towns

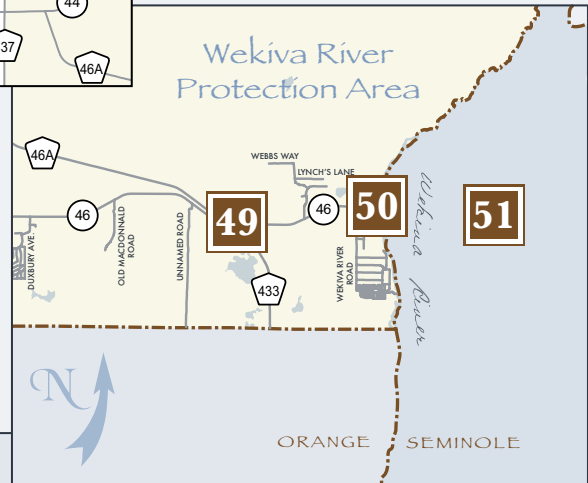
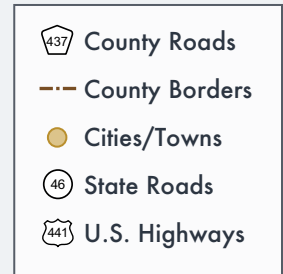


THE GREAT FLORIDA BIRDING TRAIL

Site Locations Reference Map



Sites map A



Sites map B



Sites map C

LAKE COUNTY

Birding SPOTS

1 Bourlay Historic Nature Park

LOCATION: 700 N. Canal St., Leesburg

DIRECTIONS: From U.S. Highway 441 in Leesburg, turn north on to Canal Street and follow into park.

HOURS: Sunrise to sunset, seven days a week

CONTACT: Lake County Water Authority, (352) 343-3777, www.lcwa.org

2 Crooked River Preserve

LOCATION: 11121 Lake Louisa Road, Clermont

DIRECTIONS: From U.S. Highway 27, turn west on Lake Louisa Road. Travel about 3 miles, park entrance is on south side of road.

HOURS: Sunrise to sunset, seven days a week

CONTACT: Lake County Water Authority, (352) 343-3777, www.lcwa.org

3 Dora Canal

LOCATION: Most cruises leave from shores along U.S. Highway 441 in Tavares

CONTACT: Lake County Department of Economic Development and Tourism (800) 430-LAKE, www.lakecountyfl.com

4 Emeralda Marsh Conservation Area

LOCATION: Between state roads 42 and 44, on the east side of Lake Griffin and west of County Road 452.

DIRECTIONS: From U.S. Highway 441, turn east on to County Road 44. Turn left on to Emeralda Avenue. When road comes to a "T", turn left and follow Emeralda Island Road.

HOURS: 24 hours, seven days a week; wildlife drive is open mid-February to May on Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Drive is open to walkers and bicyclists all year.

CONTACT: St. Johns River Water Management District, (386) 329-4404, www.sjrwmd.org

5 Flat Island Preserve

LOCATION: 2301 Owens Road, Leesburg

DIRECTIONS: From U.S. Highway 27 south of Leesburg, turn right onto County Road 25A and then right again on Owens Road.

HOURS: Sunrise to sunset, seven days a week

CONTACT: Lake County Water Authority, (352) 343-3777, www.lcwa.org

6 Hidden Waters Preserve

LOCATION: Country Club Road, Eustis

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of U.S. Highway 441 and State Road 19, travel east on U.S. Highway 441 and turn left on East Crooked Lake Drive.

HOURS: Sunrise to sunset, seven days a week

CONTACT: Lake County Water Authority, (352) 343-3777, www.lcwa.org

7 Lake Apopka Clay Island

LOCATION: Between County Road 48 and State Road 455, west of Lake Apopka.

DIRECTIONS: From County Road 48 in the Town of Astatula, travel east to Ranch Road. Take Ranch Road south and then turn west on Peoples Road. Turn south on Carolyn Road to the parking area.

HOURS: 24 hours, seven days a week

CONTACT: St. Johns River Water Management District, (386) 329-4404, www.sjrwmd.org

8 Lake Norris Conservation Area

LOCATION: Lake Norris Road, north of County Road 44A

DIRECTIONS: From State Road 19, turn east on State Road 42, then south on State Road 439. Turn east on State Road 44A and drive 4.5 miles to Lake Norris Road. Turn north and drive 2.5 miles to the entrance on the west side of the road.

HOURS: Sunrise to sunset, seven days a week

CONTACT: Lake County Water Authority, (352) 343-3777, www.lcwa.org

9 Lake Louisa State Park

LOCATION: 7305 U.S. Highway 27, Clermont

DIRECTIONS: Located on U.S. Highway 27, 7 miles south of Highway 50

FEE: \$4 per vehicle

HOURS: 8 a.m. to sunset, seven days a week

CONTACT: Florida Park Service, (352) 394-0386, www.floridastateparks.org/lakelouisa/

Snowy Egret



10 Ocala National Forest

(Alexander Springs)

LOCATION: 49525 County Road 445.

DIRECTIONS: From State Road 19 north of Eustis, take County Road 445 northeast 5 miles. Entrance will be on left hand side.

HOURS: 8 a.m. to sunset, seven days a week

FEE: \$4 per person per day

CONTACT: USDA Forest Service, (352) 669-3522, www.fs.fed.us/r8/florida

11 Palm Island Boardwalk

LOCATION: Located at the end of Liberty Avenue and south of Tremain Street on Lake Dora.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of U.S. Highway 441 and Donnelly Street in Mount Dora, travel south on Donnelly Street. Turn left on Charles Avenue and then right on Tremain Street.

HOURS: Sunrise to sunset, seven days a week

CONTACT: City of Mount Dora, (352) 343-3777, ci.mount-dora.fl.us

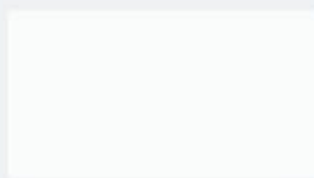
12 Palatka Environmental and Agricultural Reserve

LOCATION: Entrance at the end of University Avenue

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of U.S. Highway 27 and County Road 48, travel south 2 miles on U.S. Highway 27 and turn right on University Avenue.

HOURS: Sunrise to sunset, seven days a week

CONTACT: Lake County, (352) 343-6347, www.lakegovernment.com



13 Sarah Maude Mason Nature Preserve

LOCATION: Off Lakeshore Drive and Buckhill Road, Howey-in-the-Hills

DIRECTIONS: From south of Tavares on State Road 19, turn left at the traffic light intersection with County Road 48. Take a left on East Lakeview Avenue and then right on South Lakeshore Boulevard. Turn left on North Buckhill Road into preserve.

HOURS: Sunrise to sunset, seven days a week

CONTACT: Town of Howey-in-the-Hills, (352) 324-2290, www.howeyinthehills.org

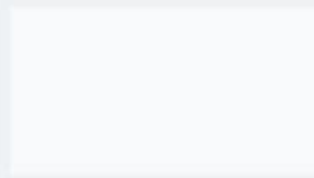
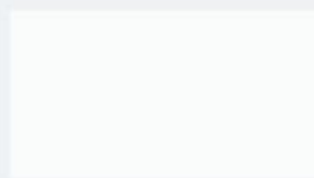
14 Sawgrass Island Preserve

LOCATION: 12050 Sawgrass Island Road, Umatilla

DIRECTIONS: Travel north from Eustis on County Road 452, turn right on Em-En-El Grove Road and then left on Thomas Boat Landing Road.

HOURS: Sunrise to sunset, seven days a week

CONTACT: Lake County Water Authority, (352) 343-3777, www.lcwa.org



15 Seminole State Forest

LOCATION: Between State Roads 46 and 44 near the border of Lake and Seminole counties.

DIRECTIONS: There are two entrances. The first entrance is located off of State Road 46 approximately 14 miles west of the City of Sanford. Parking areas, entrance gates and trailheads are located at the second entrance which is located west of the Wekiva River on State Road 44 in Cassia, approximately 12 miles east of the City of Eustis.

FEE: \$1 per person

HOURS: Sunrise to sunset, seven days a week

CONTACT: Florida Division of Forestry, (352) 360-6675, www.fl-dof.com/state_forests/Seminole.htm

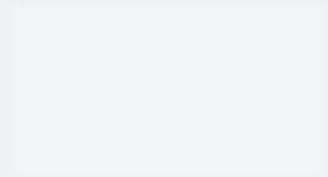
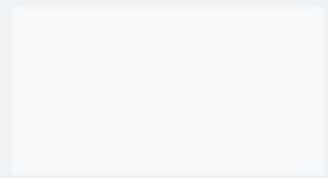
16 Trout Lake Nature Center

LOCATION: 520 E. County Road 44, Eustis

DIRECTIONS: Entrance is one-half mile east on County Road 44 from intersection of State Road 19.

HOURS: Oct. 1 through April 30, Friday-Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday 1 to 4 p.m.

CONTACT: Trout Lake Nature Center Inc., (352) 669-2398, www.troutlakenature.org



17 Venetian Gardens

LOCATION: 109 E. Dixie Ave., Leesburg

DIRECTIONS: Entrance is off East Dixie Avenue from U.S. Highway 441.

HOURS: Sunrise to 10 p.m., seven days a week

CONTACT: City of Leesburg, (352) 728-9885, www.ci.leesburg.fl.us

18 Wekiva Springs State Park

(Lower Wekiva River State Preserve and Rock Springs Run State Preserve)

LOCATION: Both state parks are located on State Road 46 near the border of Lake and Seminole counties.

DIRECTIONS: Entrance to Rock Springs Run is located on the south of State Road 46. Lower Wekiva River entrance is across the Wekiva River on State Road 46 in Seminole County, though a second entrance is off County Road 44 in Lake County.

HOURS: 8 a.m. to sunset, seven days a week

FEE: \$5 per vehicle

CONTACT: Florida Park Service, (407) 884-4311, www.floridastateparks.org/wekiwasprings