



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



PANHANDLE FLORIDA BIRDING TRAIL



In partnership with :



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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



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The Great Florida Birding Trail



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CITY LOCATOR

City	Map	City	Map
Apalachicola	I	Laguna Beach	G
Bristol	J	Marianna	F
Carrabelle	I	Mexico Beach	H
Chattahoochee	J	Milton	C
Chipley	F	Panama City	G
Crawfordville	M	Pensacola	B
Crestview	C	Port St. Joe	H
De Funiak Springs	E	Quincy	K
Destin	D	Sopchoppy	M
Ft. Walton Beach	D	St. Marks	M
Grayton Beach	D	Sumatra	I
Gulf Beach	A	Tallahassee	L
Gulf Breeze	B		



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

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?

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!

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 (typically 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

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 traditional 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!

Gateways

Gateway sites provide more extensive Trail-related resources, have loaner optics available on-site, and act as hubs of regional birding information. The Panhandle Section has two gateways: Big Lagoon State Park (site # 1) in Pensacola and St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge (site # 72) near Tallahassee. The West Florida Section has two gateways: Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park (Gainesville) and Ft. De Soto County Park (St. Petersburg). The East Florida Section has three gateways: Ft. Clinch State Park (Fernandina Beach), Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge (Titusville) and Tenoroc Fish Management Area (Lakeland). The South Florida Section has two gateways: Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary (Naples) and Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge (Boynton Beach).



Perdido Cluster

1 Big Lagoon State Park *Gateway**

An ideal gateway for the Birding Trail! This site nicely represents the diversity of Panhandle habitats, all in the boundaries of a single park. The bayfront offers sandy expanses for wintering black-bellied plovers, dunlin and least sandpipers, and winter ducks like lesser scaup, redhead, bufflehead and red-breasted mergansers can be seen from the East Beach tower, diving in the bay. Common loons call on foggy mornings in early spring (an uncommon occurrence in peninsular Florida), and a diversity of gulls and terns feed in area waters. Migrants like yellow-billed cuckoos arriving off the Gulf make landfall in the spring and feed on insects in hammocks in the campground and along the Yaupon and Long Pond Trails. Long Pond Trail skirts some fresh-water wetlands, then stretches into the Cookie Trail leading along the north edge of the lagoon onto a scrubby point, peppered with pines favored by yellow-bellied sapsuckers, flickers and brown-headed nuthatches. Check with staff for information on birding events going on in the Panhandle; binoculars are also available for loan from the visitor center.

DIRECTIONS: Due W of Pensacola, drive S on SR 173 (Blue Angel Pkwy.) and turn right (W) on SR 292 (Sorrento Rd.). After 2.7 mi., turn left (S) on CR 293 (Bauer Rd.); entrance to park is at end of CR 293.

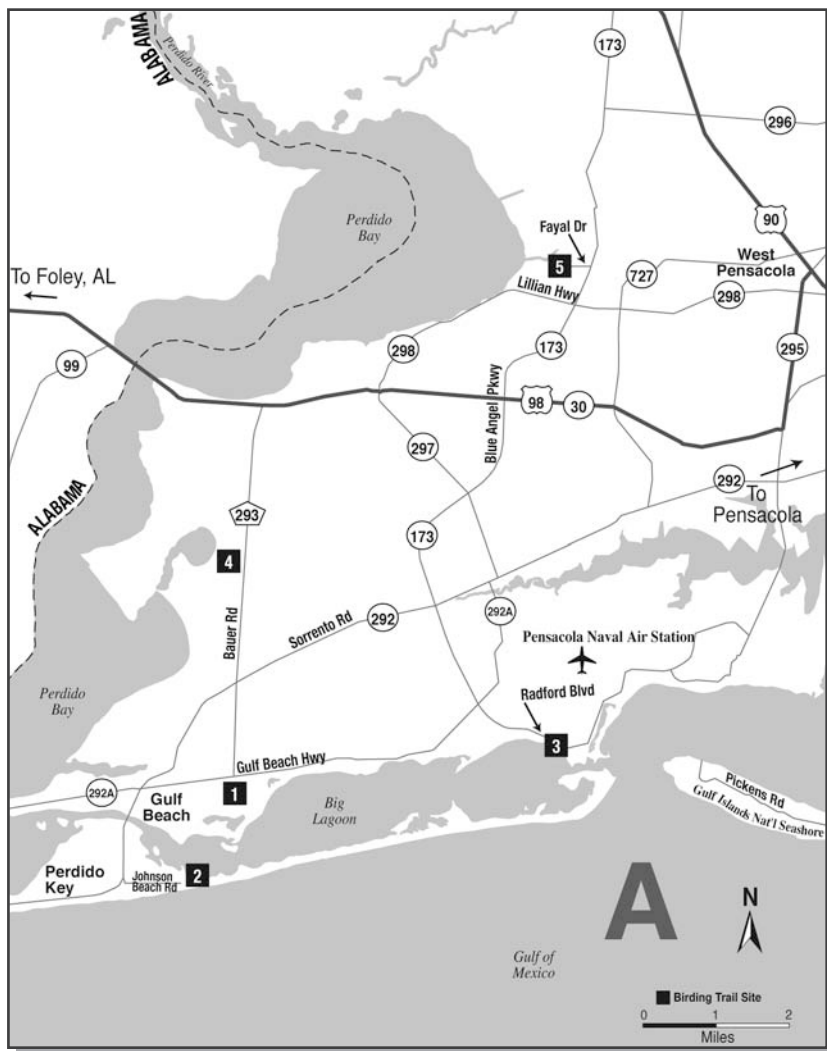
Open daily, 8 a.m. to sunset. (850) 492-1595
www.floridastateparks.org



* see "Gateways" on page 2 for more information.

2 Gulf Islands National Seashore: Perdido Key Area

This property encompasses the eastern tip of Perdido Key at the mouth of Pensacola Bay. Upon entering the park, a nature trail begins at a parking area on your left. Pine warblers and towhees call from the pinewoods while the boardwalk winds through marsh good for clapper rails and spotted sandpipers at muddy edges; views of open water reveal wintering ducks and loons as well. Further down the road, a series of beach accesses on the right (S)



side occasionally allow a look at plunging gannets Oct.-March, and a diversity of gulls, terns and various shorebirds year-round. Small bays on the left (N) side of the road shelter ducks from the winter wind, offering good, close views. A stone's throw across the inlet from Ft. Pickens, keep your eyes peeled for similar migratory events here in spring!

DIRECTIONS: Due W of Pensacola, drive S on SR 173 (Blue Angel Pkwy.) and turn right (W) on SR 292 (Sorrento Rd.). After approx. 6.5 mi., turn left on Johnson Beach Rd.; entrance is ahead past Johnson Beach.

Open 8 a.m. to sunset. (850) 934-2600 www.nps.gov/guis



3 Trout Point Nature Trail

This pleasant nature trail follows a boardwalk 0.5 miles through the interdune area, providing the unique vantage of sandy shoreline on one side and freshwater marsh and open water on the other. Wading birds like night herons and snowy egrets work the marshes while the beachfront attracts shorebirds, terns and gulls. Pines along the waterfront trail are worth checking for feeding songbirds and brown-headed nuthatches. This nature trail is part of Pensacola Naval Air Station and occasional noise from aircraft may be expected. At the entrance security gate, tell the security officer you are visiting Trout Point Nature Trail. Heightened security levels may limit access so call ahead for information.

DIRECTIONS: Due W of Pensacola, drive S on SR 173 (Blue Angel Pkwy.) to W gate of Pensacola Naval Air Station. Continue straight through gate on Radford Blvd. Turn right at trail entrance (0.5 mi. from security gate). Continue on unpaved road 0.25 mi. to trailhead and parking.

Open 6 a.m. to 30 min. before sunset. (850) 452-4611 x3126



4 Tarkiln Bayou State Park

From the parking lot, hike the trail W through flatwoods, listening for the "squeaky toy" call of brown-headed nuthatches and the wavering trills of pine warblers. For a shorter hike, veer left at the fork. The trail will reach a boardwalk through a titi forest (listen for breeding white-eyed vireos), and emerge on the sheltered bayou. Scan the reeds for rails and waders. For a longer hike, veer right at the fork, following the trail along the bayou's far side, past one of the state's last pitcher plant bogs, to the end on Pensacola Bay. Across the street from the parking lot, upland sandhill habitats host bobwhites year-round, and nighthawks on late spring/summer evenings. Bring water year-round and expect mosquitoes in warmer months.

DIRECTIONS: West of Pensacola, drive S on SR 173 (Blue Angel Pkwy.) and turn right (W) on SR 292 (Sorrento Rd.). After 2.7 mi., turn right (N) on CR 293 (Bauer Rd.); entrance is 2.0 mi. on left.

Open 8 a.m. to sunset. (850) 492-1595 www.floridastateparks.org



5 ECUA Bayou Marcus Wetlands

This functioning wastewater treatment facility has nearly 8,000 feet of boardwalk through the titi-lined wetlands created by the plant's treated wastewater discharge. As you enter the boardwalk, the first large pond on the left hosts wintering blue-winged teal, hooded merganser, bufflehead and goldeneye to name a few. Swamp, song and white-throated sparrows exploit the weedy edges and

brown-headed nuthatches and pine warblers call from the adjacent pinewoods. The odd groove-billed ani sighting keeps interest in this site high. Please be considerate: This is a fully functional utilities plant; birder access is at the management's discretion.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of Blue Angel Pkwy. and Lillian Hwy., go N 1 mi. to the ECUA sign at Fayal Dr. Turn left (W) and drive to the entrance gate. Park here, in the grass. Trail to the boardwalk begins on the right (N) just before the entrance gate.

Open 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., daily. (850) 458-1658



6 University of West Florida, Edward Ball Nature Trail

This small site includes a short boardwalk through a nice ravine and swamp, with prothonotary warbler-laden cypress trees above and wading egrets below. Songbirds like northern parulas, summer tanagers and great crested flycatchers frequent the area, and migration in spring and fall can yield some interesting visiting species. Slope is steep and boardwalk shows its age, so don't get so distracted by the birds that you forget to watch your step!

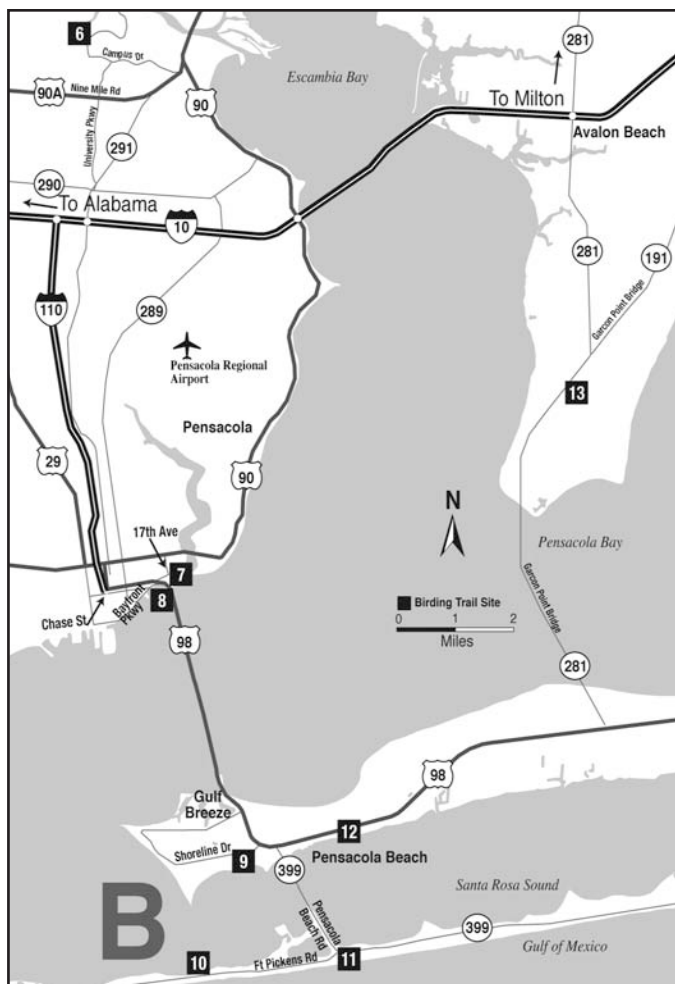
DIRECTIONS: From US 90A (Nine Mile Rd.) N of Pensacola, turn N on University Pkwy. At the end of University Pkwy., turn left onto Campus Dr. Take the 4th left, then another immediate left into Parking Lot G. Park and walk behind Bldg. 13 to trail entrance. Campus maps and MANDATORY PARKING PASSES can be obtained at the Information Center (1st right after turning onto Campus Dr.).

Open daily, dawn to dusk. (850) 474-3000 www.uwf.edu



7 Pensacola Wayside Park and Visitor Information Center

Worth a quick stop to view gulls and terns; the waterfront, fishing bridge and offshore breakwater all host a variety of ages of herring, ring-billed and laughing gulls, Forster's and royal terns and more. Common loons feed very close to shore, and sport nearly complete breeding plumage in February/March before they return north. This site is another vantage to scope the bay for wintering ducks and horned grebes.



DIRECTIONS: From I-10 N of Pensacola, take I-110 S to exit 1B (Chase St.) and head E. Continue E on Chase St. until it ends at US 98 (Bayfront Pkwy.) and take a left. Drive approx. 0.3 mi. and turn left on N. 17th Ave.; entrance is approx. 300 ft. on right.

Open 24 hrs./day. (850) 434-1234 www.visitpensacola.com



8 Project Greenshores

This site is a restoration project undertaken by a suite of advocates and agencies. Located across from the Pensacola Visitor Center along Bayfront Pkwy., Project Greenshores is systematically establishing an emergent marsh and oyster reef along the waterfront. The area has historically been good for birds like osprey, brown pelican and royal tern, but as the saltmarsh grasses take root, the birds are responding! Yellow-crowned night herons, semipalmated plovers, black-necked stilts and more ply the flats and shoreline. Park at Wayside Park near the bridge and walk the waterfront to

the west along the bay shore; the restoration project continues past the Missing Children's Memorial on Hawkshaw Lagoon (across from Veterans Park) to Bartram Park.

DIRECTIONS: From I-10 N of Pensacola, take I-110 S to exit 1B (Chase St.) and head E. Continue E on Chase St. until it ends at US 98 (Bayfront Pkwy.) and turn left; site and parking are approx. 0.3 mi. on right, just before the Pensacola Bay Bridge.

Open daily, dawn to dusk. (850) 436-5655

www.dep.state.fl.us/northwest/ecosys/section/birdreport.htm



9 Shoreline Park South

This small sound-side park in Gulf Breeze lies between Ft. Pickens and the mainland as the bird flies, ensuring it's on the path of migrants coming in off the Gulf in spring. In winter, bird the waterfront for grebes and loons (occasional Pacific and red-throated in years when vagrant birds are prevalent). Wintering ducks like lesser scaup, bufflehead and even occasional goldeneye can be viewed from the pier. Nearer the entrance, bird the loop trails through oak hammock excellent for resident pine warblers, Carolina chickadees and pileated woodpeckers, as well as migrant black-throated blue and worm-eating warblers, Swainson's thrushes, orchard orioles and more. Site is busy on warm weather weekends.

DIRECTIONS: From US 98 in Gulf Breeze, turn W on Shoreline Dr. (just W of Pensacola Beach Rd./toll bridge). Entrance 0.5 mi. on left (S).

Open 24 hrs./day. (850) 934-5140



10 Gulf Islands National Seashore: Ft. Pickens Area

This migratory hotspot is not to be missed in spring, as tired migrants make landfall after long overwater flights. Batteries Langdon and Worth are both good stops for migrants; closely check flowering oaks. Please respect closed areas protecting nesting birds: beachfront here is prime for breeding snowy plovers and least terns spring through fall. Black terns are ubiquitous in summer and fall. By far, the fort and surrounding trails offer this site's most exciting birding. In open areas surrounding the fortifications, watch for sentinel flycatchers on any minor promontory. Gray kingbirds breed here and scissor-tailed flycatchers are occasional in winter. The trails on the fort's bayside can be extraordinary for migrant songbirds like Tennessee, Cape May, and magnolia warblers and more. Morning is not necessarily the best time to see these birds; long-term sighting logs from dedicated local birders indicate these migrants can make landfall in early afternoon; fallouts are exaggerated by early afternoon rain showers that ground migrants as soon as they reach land. Migrating raptors cruise the duneline in October and April. Loaner optics and field guides are available.



DIRECTIONS: From Pensacola, take US 98 E approx. 4.5 mi. to the S side of Gulf Breeze. Take SR 399 (Pensacola Beach Rd., toll bridge) S across Santa Rosa Sound. Turn right (W) at Ft. Pickens Rd.; entrance is approx. 2.5 mi. ahead.

Open 8 a.m. to sunset. (850) 934-2600 www.nps.gov/guis



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

11 Pensacola Beach Gulf Pier

With binoculars alone, this site offers a fare of gulls and terns comparable to other area beach sites. However, with a spotting scope and a little blustery weather, the pier can be a seawatcher's dream, offering a stable site away from the beach to scan out over the sea. More common sightings are wintering common loons and plunging gannets Oct.-March, however in periods of stormy weather in the Gulf of Mexico, tantalizing seabirds like bridled and sooty terns and sooty shearwaters have been spotted from this location. Respect severe weather, but certainly don't let a little rain discourage you! This site is primarily a fishing pier, but welcomes birders too.

DIRECTIONS: From Pensacola, take US 98 E approx. 4.5 mi. to the S side of Gulf Breeze. Take SR 399 (Pensacola Beach Rd., toll bridge) S across Santa Rosa Sound. Pier is at the intersection of 399 (where it turns sharply E) and Ft. Pickens Rd.

Open 24 hours/day. (850) 934-7200



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

12 Gulf Islands National Seashore: Naval Live Oaks Area

This visitor center and park HQ for the national seashore spans the spit of land separating Santa Rosa Sound to the south from Pensacola Bay to the north. From the sound shoreline south of the visitor center parking, scope for goldeneye, scaup and other wintering ducks. As always in migration, check the live oaks for which this area was named; black-and-white warblers pick through resurrection fern on the sides of oaks in winter, and brown creepers are occasionally found scaling the trees.

DIRECTIONS: From Pensacola, take US 98 E approx. 4.5 mi. In Gulf Breeze, stay on US 98 E past intersection with SR 399; visitor center and headquarters are approx. 2.0 mi. ahead on S (right) side of road.

Open 8 a.m. to sunset. (850) 934-2600 www.nps.gov/guis



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

13 Garcon Point

Gorgeous wet prairie occupies much of this preserve, with slightly elevated patches of longleaf pine-wiregrass community breaking the otherwise unobstructed horizon. A habitat of extremes, this landscape burns frequently and absorbs lots of rainfall; trails may occasionally hold water so immersible shoes are recommended. Biting flies can be troublesome Apr.-Nov., but the sheer beauty of this site makes it a must-see. Wet prairie sparrows like Henslow's and LeConte's occasionally winter here and Cooper's hawks cruise the prairie for prey like eastern towhees and loggerhead shrikes. Pine warblers call from the treeline and rare pitcher plants crowd the trail (stay on the trail to protect these Panhandle specialties!). From the S entrance, access the 1.5-mile loop trail through scrubby oaks and past an ephemeral wetland. From the N trailhead, the North Spur Trail runs 1.2 miles one-way to join the loop trail on its N border. Bring water, hat and insect repellent.

DIRECTIONS: From I-10 S of Milton, exit S on SR 281 (Avalon Blvd.). After 4 mi., this road will merge with CR 191 (Garcon Point Rd.). Drive approx. 0.7 mi. past the intersection with CR 191; N trailhead on left (E) side of road. South trailhead is approx. 1 mi. farther, also on left (E).

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 484-5125



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

Map
Blackwater Cluster

14 Blackwater River State Forest: Hutton Unit

This site adjacent to Blackwater River State Park is worth a quick stop to listen for Bachman's sparrows—if they're singing, you'll likely hear them from the parking lot! The available habitat is turkey oak-pine uplands common throughout the Panhandle, and not as productive for birding as other habitats may be. Still, in springtime, a quick peek can never hurt. The main gate will be closed in hunting seasons (hunters check in through a different gate). Take care driving on area clay roads—they can be slippery when wet.

DIRECTIONS: From Milton, take US 90 E approx. 9 mi. to Harold. Turn left (N) on Deaton Bridge Rd. and drive 1.5 mi.; entrance on the left (W) side of the road.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 957-6140 www.fl-dof.com



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

15 Blackwater River State Park

This is a popular swimming, canoeing and picnicking area in warm weather, but offers nice access to floodplain hiking trails good for yellow-billed cuckoos and hairy woodpeckers in late spring and summer. Broad-winged, red-tailed and red-shouldered hawks are common and wood thrushes and prothonotary warblers breed here. Brown-headed nuthatches squeak from pines in the uplands, but the best birding trails are lower: the brief campground trail and the 0.9-mile Chain of Lakes Trail. Trails can be wet at times of high water, so wear shoes you don't mind getting muddy! Loaner optics and field guides are available.

DIRECTIONS: From Milton, take US 90 E approx. 9 mi. to Harold. Turn left (N) on Deaton Bridge Rd. and drive approx. 3.0 mi.; entrance on the right (E) side of the road.

Open 8 a.m. to dusk. (850) 983-5363 www.floridastateparks.org



16 Blackwater Fisheries Center

This fish hatchery is an oasis of wading and shore birds nestled in the Blackwater River State Forest's uplands. Walk the dikes between the aquaculture ponds, looking for winter waterfowl such as ring-necked ducks, blue-winged teal and snipe at the muddy edges. Wintering shorebirds include both yellowlegs, spotted, solitary and pectoral sandpipers, and semipalmated plovers. Forster's terns, purple martins, and northern rough-winged swallows skim over the ponds. Bobwhite and turkey are common in the adjacent forest and wooded fields. Ask at the office if you'd like a facility tour, and also if hunting or prescribed fire would

prohibit your birding in the woods of the Carr Unit to the NE. Bachman's sparrows sing here in spring and Henslow's sparrows occasionally overwinter.

DIRECTIONS: From Milton, take US 90 E approx. 17 mi. Turn left (N) on Cooper Ln. outside of Holt. At end of street, turn left on Johns Rd. (becomes Bryant Bridge Rd.). Entrance on right after approx. 3.0 mi.

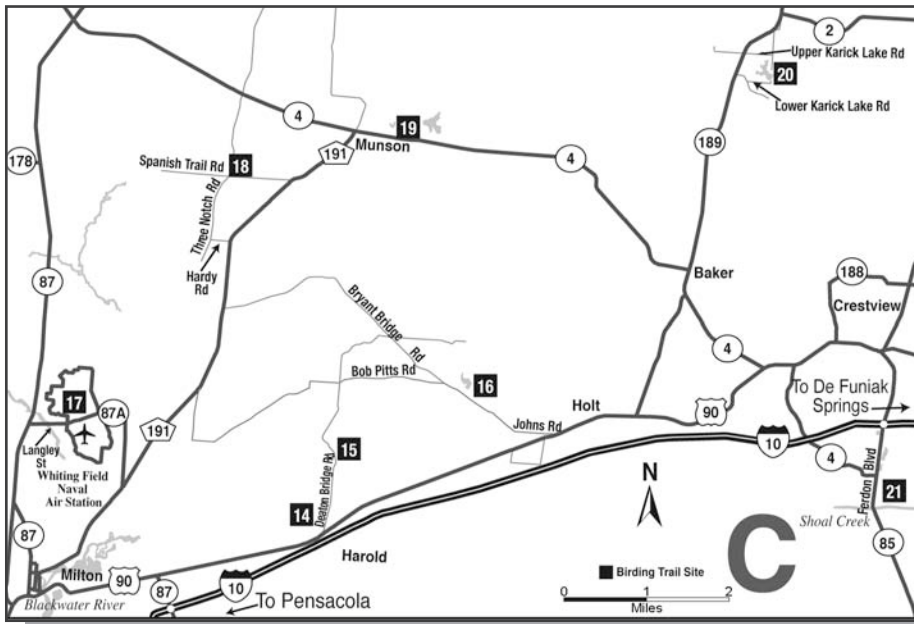
Open weekdays 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m, weekends by appointment. (850) 265-3676



17 Clear Creek Nature Trail, Naval Air Station Whiting Field

This interesting 1.5-mile round-trip trail descends through mixed pine-oak uplands to a creek and associated wetland. Listen for red-breasted nuthatches in fall in the uplands and hermit thrushes overwintering. At the water, common yellowthroats scold from brushy tangles and wading birds like little blue herons and least bitterns are possible among the pitcher plants visible from the boardwalk. This is part of a functioning military Naval Air Station and occasional noise from aircraft may be expected. Access may be limited during times of elevated homeland security levels, so call in advance.

DIRECTIONS: From Milton, head N on SR 87 following signs to NAS Whiting Field. Turn right (E) on CR 87A (Langley St.) and explain at the security gate that you would like to visit Clear Creek Nature Trail. Once through the gate, follow NAS Whiting Field Dr. to trailhead parking.



Open dawn to dusk. (850) 623-7181 x18



18 Blackwater River State Forest: Three Notch Rd.

(Hardy Rd. to Coldwater Horse Trails Rd.)

This site offers easy, safe roadside pulloffs with red-cockaded woodpecker cavity trees, ringed with white paint, visible from the road. RCWs are most easily seen in breeding season in the mornings, when they emerge from their nest cavities to ferry food back to their waiting young. Frequent prescribed fire keeps this habitat healthy, so abide signs closing the area for this necessary management event. Use caution on area clay roads, which can be slippery when wet.

DIRECTIONS: From Milton, take CR 191 N approx. 14 mi. to Hardy Rd. Turn left (W) on Hardy Rd., drive 0.7 miles and turn right (N) onto Three Notch Rd.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 957-6140 www.fl-dof.com



19 Blackwater River State Forest: Bear Lake Loop Trail

From the camping area, hike the 4-mile trail that rings the lake, watching for migrants like ovenbirds and swallow-tailed kites in springtime. Red-shouldered hawks echo across the lake and pied-billed grebes dive, hunting for fish. There is no hunting on the trail or in the vicinity of the lake. Nearby uplands can be good for chuck-will's-widows and turkey. Take water and expect biting insects in warm weather. The lake is popular with anglers in spring and fall.

DIRECTIONS: From Milton, take CR 191 N to SR 4 in Munson. Turn right (E) on SR 4; entrance on left (N) after approx. 2 mi.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 957-6140 www.fl-dof.com



20 Blackwater River State Forest: Karick Lake

Check these recreation areas for Bachman's sparrows calling in the sandhills, ducks and wading birds like green herons visible from the north access pier, and songbirds like yellow-throated warblers and red-eyed vireos in the hardwoods around the lake. A 3.5-mile loop trail circles around the lake, traveling along sandhills, gallberry mid-slopes and hardwood bottoms. Pay attention to ecotones, particularly those edges with hardwoods. These can be good for migrants that prefer this habitat over drier sandhills.

DIRECTIONS: From Milton, take CR 191 N to SR 4 in Munson and turn right (E). Follow SR 4 to its intersection with SR 189 in Baker and turn left (N). South access (Karick Lake Lower Rd.) is 8 mi. on right. North access is 0.8 mi. farther N.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 957-6140 www.fl-dof.com



21 Bill Duggan Jr. Shoal Creek Park

Worth a quick check for wading birds at the river and songbirds in the adjacent floodplain forest. In this part of the Panhandle, floodplain corridors along rivers like this create migrant highways through arid turkey oak and sand pine uplands. Check the treeline

and understory especially in spring migration for songbirds like prairie warblers and well camouflaged veeries.

DIRECTIONS: From I-10 S of Crestview, exit S onto SR 85 (Ferdon Blvd.); entrance on left (E) after 1.5 mi.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 689-5770



22 Turkey Creek Park

This site offers a lovely 0.75-mile boardwalk along tannic Turkey Creek through a river forest of titi, maple, cypress and bay. Watch for green herons stalking minnows on low hanging branches over the water and anhingas swimming in the creek. Mississippi kites are common in summer and songbirds like white-eyed vireos breed here. In warm weather, visit on weekdays and early in the morning: this is a popular swimming access, and the revelry of swimmers riding inner tubes downstream can be disruptive to birding (albeit tempting to partake in!). The boardwalk is ADA accessible, but the city also provides rides on electric carts for the mobility impaired between 7:30 and 11:00 a.m. on the first Wednesday of each month.

DIRECTIONS: From intersection of SR 20 and SR 85 in Valparaiso, drive E on SR 20 to entrance on the left.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 729-4062

<http://www.niceville.org/turkey.html>



23 Rocky Bayou State Park

This waterfront park is on Rocky Bayou in Choctawhatchee Bay. Of its three trails, Red Cedar and Rocky Bayou are more interesting for birds than Sand Pine Trail. Walk the trails for migrants like cedar waxwings and indigo buntings, as well as checking the trees in the campground area. The waterfront can offer vantages of diving ducks in winter, ospreys overhead and spotted sandpipers on rocky edges in winter. The local Audubon chapter offers bird walks early on Friday mornings—call in advance for details. Loaner optics and field guides are available.

DIRECTIONS: From intersection of SR 285 and SR 20 in Niceville, drive approx. 4.0 mi. E on SR 20 (John Sims Pkwy.). Entrance to park is on left after crossing Rocky Bayou Bridge.

Open 8 a.m. to dusk. (850) 833-9144 www.floridastateparks.org



24 Henderson Beach State Park

This small state park offers nice beachfront for specialties like snowy plovers, least terns, American oystercatchers and more. Take care not to disturb beach-nesting birds, which are often cryptic and blend easily with the sand they nest upon. A nature trail by the beach access points winds through a small coastal hammock in a stretch of coastline where little of this important habitat remains. Watch for migrant songbirds here in spring and raptors making landfall or following the duneline in April and October. Campground has some nice trees worth checking as access allows; ask permission at entrance gate and be considerate of campers. This site gets busy in warm weather. Loaner optics and field guides are available.

DIRECTIONS: From intersection of SR 293 (Danny Wuerffel Way; toll bridge) and US 98/SR 30 (Emerald Coast Pkwy.) E of Destin, drive 1.5 mi. W on US 98 to park entrance on left (S) side of highway.

Open 8 a.m. to dusk. (850) 837-7550 www.floridastateparks.org

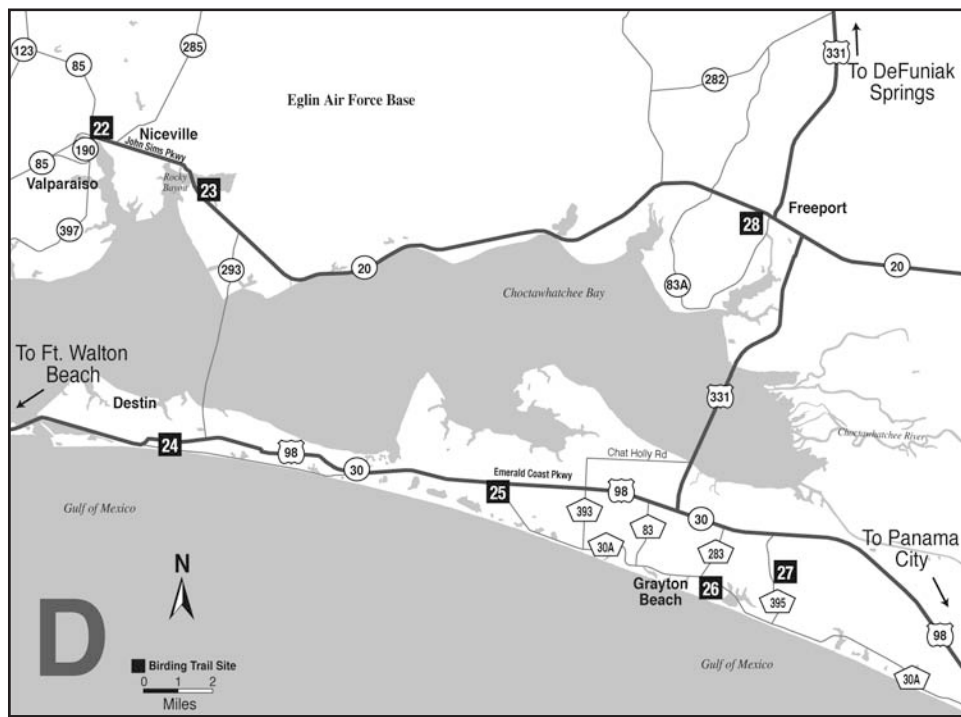


25 Topsail Hill Preserve State Park

This beachfront state park offers inland trails through coastal scrub and past freshwater lakes. Morris Lake Trail is slightly more productive than Campbell Lake Trail, although either will yield eastern bluebirds, eastern kingbirds, red-headed woodpeckers, and brown-headed nuthatches, to name a few. Check the beachfront for gulls and terns like sandwich, least and royal. Snowy plovers nest here, and shorebirds ply the shoals near the outfall for Morris Lake at the Gulf. Scope the surf for common loons and horned grebes in winter and watch for gannets Oct.-Mar. The beach is heavily visited in warm weather, so plan accordingly.

DIRECTIONS: From intersection of SR 293 (Danny Wuerffel Way; toll bridge) and US 98/SR 30 (Emerald Coast Pkwy.) E of Destin, drive approx. 8.5 mi. E on US 98 and turn right on CR 30A; entrance approx. 0.2 mi. on right.

Open 8 a.m. to dusk. (850) 267-0299 www.floridastateparks.org



26 Grayton Beach State Park

This site is very popular with beachgoers in warm weather, but in cooler months can be worth checking. Trails through the pine flatwoods and around a small freshwater pond can be good for wading birds, brown-headed nuthatches, pied-billed grebes and more. The beachfront offers plovers, terns and gulls (Bonaparte's in winter) and plunging gannets out to sea Oct.-Mar. As with all coastal sites, watch for raptors cruising the beachfront and migrants arriving off the Gulf in spring. Loaner optics and field guides are available.

DIRECTIONS: From intersection of US 98 and US 331 E of Destin, drive E approx. 1.5 mi. and turn right (S) on CR 283. Follow CR 283 approx. 2.0 mi. to CR 30A and turn left (E); entrance is on right (S) after 0.5 mi.

Open 8 a.m. to dusk. (850) 231-4210
www.floridastateparks.org



27 Point Washington State Forest

This site offers 3-, 5- and 10-mile hiking loops through longleaf pine flatwoods, coastal scrub and sandhills. Bachman's sparrows are very likely to be heard singing in spring in areas of wiregrass and palmetto in the southern half of the 3-mile loop.

The eastern boundary of this loop crosses the west arm of Peach Creek, where you can listen for songbirds and watch for red-shouldered hawks. Cooper's hawks occasion the flatwoods and eastern towhees and common yellowthroats are abundant. Hunting on this area shouldn't be a conflict; call for dates in advance.

DIRECTIONS: From intersection of US 98 and US 331 E of Destin, drive E approx. 3.0 mi. and turn right (S) on CR 395; trailhead parking is approx. 1.5 mi. on left (E) side of road.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 231-5800 www.fl-dof.com



28 H. A. Laird Park

This small wayside park has a brief boardwalk along a creek lined with hardwoods. The area is worth checking in migration only, for songbirds like waterthrushes and worm-eating and hooded warblers. Weekend afternoons can be busy with picnickers and playground visitors, but weekdays are left for you and the birds.

DIRECTIONS: From intersection of US 331 (north leg) and SR 20 in Freeport, entrance is 0.5 mi. W on S side of SR 20 (past Tucker Town Rd.).

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 835-2822 www.freeportflorida.com

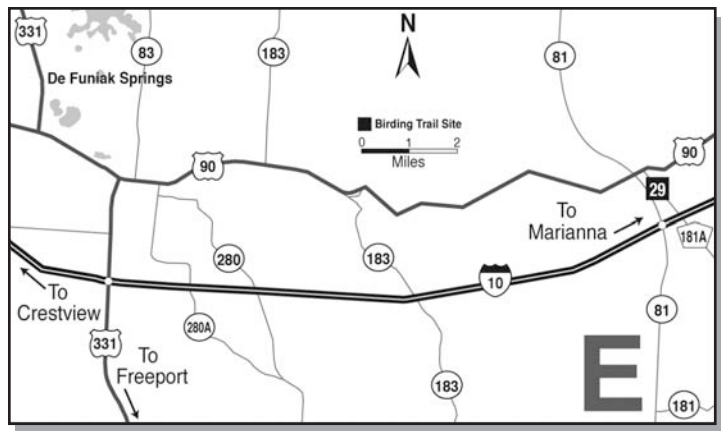


29 Ponce de Leon Springs State Park

Worth checking in migration, this site's real strength is wintering birds, especially those at the southernmost limit of their range. Birds like brown creeper and golden-crowned kinglet are possible at this site; your chances improve with your ability to identify bird-calls by sound. Hike both short trails—Spring Run and Sandy Creek—stopping to listen carefully in the shady hardwood forest. This park can be busy with swimmers in warm weather, so weekday and early morning birding may prove the most rewarding.

DIRECTIONS: From I-10 E of De Funiak Springs, exit N onto SR 81. Turn right (E) onto US 90; after approx. 0.3 mi., then right again onto CR 181A; entrance is 0.5 mi. on right.

Open 8 a.m. to dusk. (850) 836-4281 www.floridastateparks.org



30 Falling Waters State Park

This small state park makes for a nice hour-long hike, exploring the sinkholes, waterfalls, lake and surrounding uplands via the Wiregrass and Sinkhole trails. Watch for red-headed woodpeckers in the uplands and songbirds like gray-cheeked thrushes in the leafy understory of dogwood and azalea, beneath the magnolia and white oaks. As always when in this part of northwest Florida, northern species like dark-eyed juncos are possible in winter. Check for ducks and waders at the lake edge.

DIRECTIONS: From I-10 E of De Funiak Springs, exit S onto SR 77. After approx. 1.0 mi. turn left (E) onto CR 77A (State Park Rd.); entrance is 1.0 mi. ahead (road dead ends into park).

Open 8 a.m. to dusk. (850) 638-6130 www.floridastateparks.org



31 Florida Caverns State Park

This large state park has some of the best-preserved uplands in NW Florida as well as mixed-hardwood swamps lining the drainage basin for the Chipola River. Known for northern species like red-breasted nuthatches (in pine forest) and winter wrens, this site is ideal for birding with miles of remote trails. Access both the Fish Hatchery Loop Trails and the Pine Island Loop Trails from the Blue Hole Swimming Area. Keep in mind that the Management Trail (part of the Pine Island system) runs north into Upper Chipola Wildlife Management Area where hunting seasons will be in effect. Cave tours are available at regular intervals and fill quickly. An on-site canoe concession allows you to access the upper reaches of the Chipola River Water Management Area.

Open 8 a.m. to dusk. (850) 482-1228 www.floridastateparks.org



For the more intrepid explorer, this rustic river is kept clear enough of obstructions to make a nice day of paddling and birding. Launch from Florida Caverns State Park and paddle upriver toward Christoff Ferry Landing on Chipola River Water Management Area, where the river forks at the confluence with Waddells Mill Creek. When you're done paddling, float back watching for brilliant prothonotary warblers and limpkins lurking along the shore. Take water and a map, and allow enough time to return before the park closes at dusk. Christoff Ferry Landing is another launch site, but because of its secluded location, the state park is a better choice.

DIRECTIONS: Boat launch site is within Florida Caverns State Park: from US 90 in Marianna, head N on SR 166 (Jefferson St., becomes Caverns Rd.); entrance is approx. 2.5 mi. on left. Paddle upriver toward Christoff Ferry Landing.

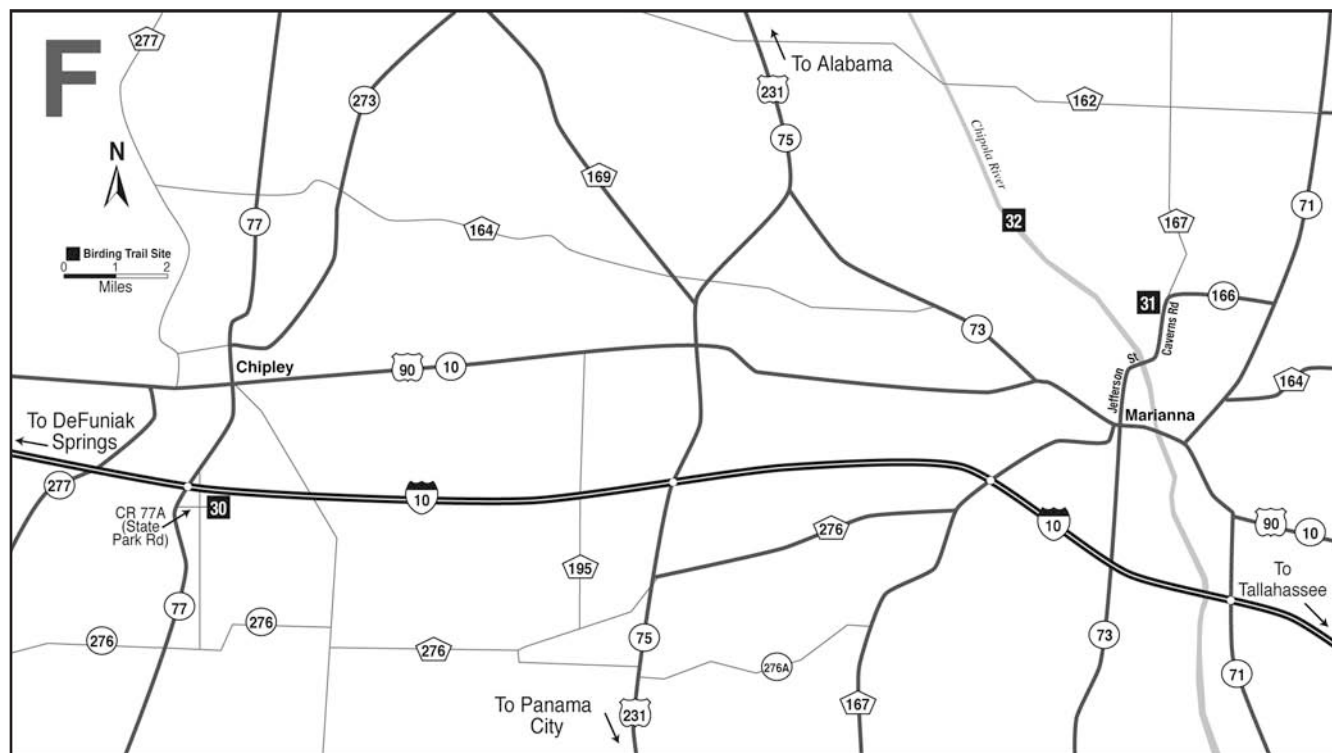
Open dawn to dusk. (850) 482-9522



A popular local swimming hole, Pitt Spring can be busy on warm afternoons, but in early mornings or on colder days, it offers a nice access to slope/floodplain forest popular with songbirds like wood thrushes and Kentucky warblers. The entrance gate to the small parking area is open daily Apr. through Sept., and on weekends and holidays Oct.-Mar. However, interested users are welcome to park outside the gate and enter on foot, to enjoy the trails in the immediate area of the spring. Opposite the spring is a launch point to canoe Econfinia Creek. Nearby canoe concessionaires can offer advice on routes and creek conditions; like many Panhandle creeks, the Econfinia can be fast flowing and challenging with occasional obstructions that may require portages.

DIRECTIONS: From US 231 in Fountain (NE of Panama City), drive 2.0 mi. S and turn right (W) on SR 20; entrance approx. 8.2 mi ahead, on right (N).

Open 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., daily Apr.-Sept.; weekends and holidays only Oct.-Mar. (850) 539-5999



36 St. Andrews State Park

Scan the Gulf from the end of the fishing pier on the peninsula's S (Gulf) side for brown pelicans, least terns and gulls in warmer months, and gannets plunging near to shore in winter. At the peninsula's E end, beaches N of the jetty fishing area are productive for shorebirds like snowy plovers and willets; black skimmers occasionally loaf here. Gator Lake hosts a heron rookery in spring (great blue herons, great and snowy egrets). Check the Buttonbush Marsh Overlook adjacent to the boat parking for least bitterns and wood ducks. Pine flatwoods throughout are home to brown thrashers, loggerhead shrikes and eastern towhees.

DIRECTIONS: Take US 98 in Panama City W across Hathaway Bridge to CR 3031 and turn left (S). Follow CR 3031 to its end at the intersection with CR 39 and 392. Bear left (straight) onto CR 39 (State Park Ln.); entrance to the site is ahead.

Open 8 a.m. to sunset. (850) 233-5140 www.floridastateparks.org

**37 St. Andrews Bird Trail**

This small marina is worth a quick stop if you're in the area and is particularly rewarding for beginners. The waterfront boardwalk (west-facing) has a series of educational signs on the area's more common birds like double-crested cormorants, brown pelicans, herons and egrets. The boardwalk ends in a small park to the south, where oaks can be attractive for warblers in April and October. A dune walkover here provides access to the beachfront, for chance encounters with shorebirds like yellowlegs and dunlin, as well as terns, diving ducks and loons on the bay in winter.

DIRECTIONS: From US 98 in Panama City, head S on Beck Ave. to its intersection with 10th St. Park at Oaks By The Bay Park (directly across 10th St. from this intersection) or turn right (W) on 10th St. and park at St. Andrews Marina.

Open daily, dawn to dusk. (850) 872-7208
www.historicstandrews.com

**38 Lynn Haven Sports Complex and Nature Trail**

This complex of ball fields yields more birds than you might think, due in large part to the adjacent lake and nature trail. On the lake on the E side of the complex, check for wintering ducks like ring-necked and lesser scaup, then follow the trail E of the lake, along the boardwalk through a small bayhead. Some large trees in this mature wetland hammock make for interesting flocks of migrants in October and April. Brushy areas N of the lake, and on the W and S

perimeters of the complex may be good for wintering sparrows. Loaner optics and field guides are available.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of CR 390 and US 231/SR75 in Lynn Haven, drive W on CR 390 approx. 2 mi. to Hilltop Ln. Turn left (S); at the end of the road, park by the lake on the E side of the complex.

Open 24 hours/day. (850) 271-5547

**39 Parker Environmental Exploratorium Park**

This delightful little town park offers a waterfront pier with views of osprey, yellow-crowned night herons, purple martins and least terns among others. Walk the park's brief trail for more common woodland species such as Carolina wrens, white-throated sparrows, chimney swifts and great crested flycatchers. A butterfly garden on site is worth checking for occasional ruby-throated hummingbirds, as well as butterflies like buckeyes and Gulf fritillaries.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of US 98 and SR 22 E of Panama City, drive S on US 98 1.25 mi. to Lake Drive and turn right (W). Parking lot at Martin Lake will be 1.5 mi. ahead.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 871-4104

**40 St. Joseph Bay State Buffer Preserve: Deal Tract**

This parcel on the bay side of St. Joseph Peninsula offers a casual hike through sand pine scrub to a fork in the trail. To the right, follow the trail to a fenced tower and dock overlooking St. Joseph Bay, where you can scope for ducks on the bay, shorebirds along the edges and raptor migration in October. To the left at the fork, the trail leads to a hardwood hammock with potential for spring songbird migrants like hooded warblers. Remember, migrants in this part of the state can make landfall after 11a.m., so don't abandon a site too early! Biting insects can be fierce and the trails offer little shade: bring insect repellent and drinking water.

DIRECTIONS: From Port St. Joe, take US 98 E approx. 2 mi. Turn right (S) on CR 30A, drive 6.5 mi. and turn right on CR 30E; entrance and parking are 4.0 mi. on right.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 229-1787



41 St. Joseph Peninsula State Park

Because of its peninsular shape and position sheltering a large stretch of coastline from the Gulf, this property is a remarkable migratory hotspot for raptors, songbirds and even butterflies and dragonflies in fall! Hike the spring beaches for snowy and piping plovers (with caution not to disturb them); watch for gannets plunging offshore in fall and winter and loons, cormorants and ducks wintering in the surf and bay; and check the interior of the peninsula for songbird migrants like black-throated blue and chestnut-sided warblers making landfall in April. Raptors like broad-winged hawks and swallow-tailed kites start arriving off the Gulf in late Feb. and March. A canoe concession is available onsite. Permits are available for after-hours access; camping is allowed by reservation. Loaner optics and field guides are available.

DIRECTIONS: From Port St. Joe, take US 98 E approx. 2 mi. Turn right (S) on CR 30A, drive 6.5 mi. and turn right on CR 30E; entrance is 8.5 mi. ahead.

Open 8 a.m. to sunset. (850) 227-1327
www.floridastateparks.org

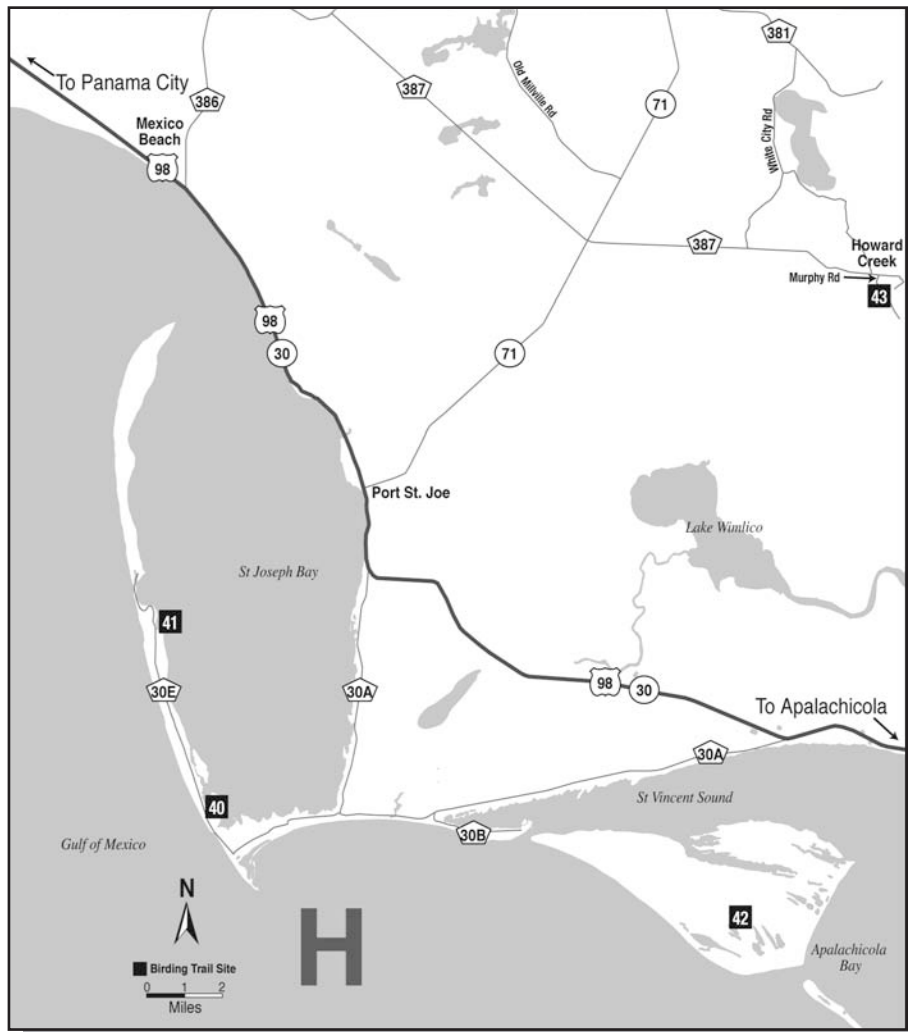


42 St. Vincent National Wildlife Refuge

This extremely rustic refuge is under-birded in large part because it takes some effort to access it. Cross Indian Pass either by the private ferry or with your own boat. This barrier island is very large: prepare to hike the extensive sand roads or bring a bike. Be sure to pick up a map at the refuge office in Apalachicola, at the Indian Pass boat ramp, or download one online, and don't forget water and bug spray! Never fear though, your hard work will be repaid: seaside sparrows populate the saltmarsh on the east side of the island. Interior wetlands host least bitterns and ducks, fodder for peregrine falcons and other raptors in migration. Oystercatchers and a variety of plovers nest on the beach (please respect areas closed for their protection) and the island's hammocks are a haven for returning songbird migrants in March and April. Three- to four-day hunts in fall and winter close the island to other uses. Call in advance to check dates.

DIRECTIONS: From Apalachicola, take US 98 W 5.0 mi. and turn left on CR30A at fork. Drive 9.6 mi. and turn left on CR 30B in Indian Pass; ferry to site is 3.0 mi. ahead.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 653-8808
http://www.fws.gov/saintvincent/



43 Apalachicola River WEA: Old Agricultural Fields

This part of the Wildlife Environmental Area lies on the river's W side, and includes old agricultural fields mown and planted for hunting deer, turkey and quail. The same management techniques that benefit these species also make the area prime for sparrows, including the usual swamp, song and savannah, plus the less common white-throated, white-crowned, field, vesper and grasshopper among others. The best plan of attack: get a map at the office on the way in and drive Tram, Boggy Branch, Bean Field, Palmetto and Indian roads. Feel free to park on the roadside and walk the fields for sparrows. Ephemeral wetlands throughout the area are worth checking for wintering waterfowl also. Deer season runs late-Nov.-Feb.—call for details or check the Web site for info on this and other hunting seasons.

DIRECTIONS: From US 98 in Port St. Joe, take SR 71 N approx. 8.5 mi. and turn right (E) on CR 387. Drive 8.0 mi. and turn right (S) on Murphy Rd. in Howard Creek; FWC office (approx. 0.6 mi. on left) can provide maps of area roads.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 827-2934
http://myfwc.com/recreation/apalachicola_river/



Map Pitcher Plant & Peregrine Cluster

44 St. George Island State Park

This is regularly rated one of Florida's most beautiful beaches, but what all the beachgoers don't realize is that it's spectacular bird-watching too! Bonaparte's gulls are reliable in winter-spring, snowy plovers and American oystercatchers nest here and gull-billed terns cruise the beach in summer. Gannets plunge offshore Oct.-Apr., and spring migrants like swallow-tailed kites, common nighthawks and herons can be seen arriving off the ocean in March and April. The sandhill trail from the camping area and the oaks surrounding the youth camp are both excellent spots for migrant songbirds like blue grosbeaks and scarlet tanagers in April. There's something to see year-round, but birding is best and beach visitor numbers are lowest Oct.-Apr.

DIRECTIONS: From US 98 in Eastpoint, take Island Drive (CR 300) S approx. 5 mi. across bridge to St. George Island. Turn left (E) on Gulf Beach Dr.; entrance to park is approx. 4.0 mi. ahead.

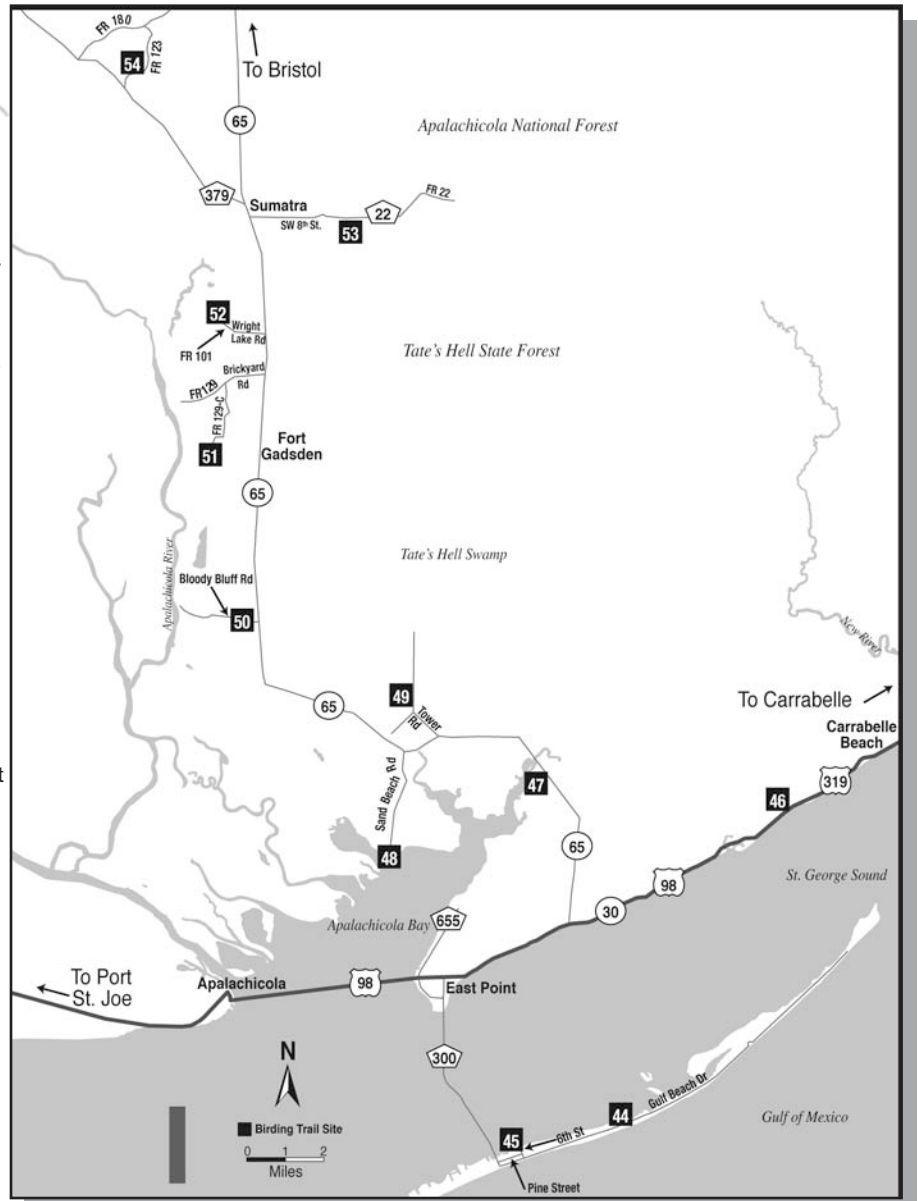
Open 8 a.m. to sunset. (850) 927-2111
www.floridastateparks.org



45 Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve: Unit 4

This small preserve on the sound side of St. George Island is a nice companion to the larger, more well-known migrant fallout site

at St. George Island State Park. Unmarked trails leading off from the parking area at the end of 6th St. wind through a coastal pine forest and give vantages of the sound and shoreline. Watch for shore- and seabirds like royal terns, oystercatchers and laughing gulls as well as migrants moving through: common nighthawks, scarlet tanagers, Baltimore orioles and swallow-tailed kites all pass through coastal areas like these as they arrive off the Gulf each spring. Come prepared with insect repellent and drinking water.



DIRECTIONS: From US 98 in Eastpoint, take Island Drive (CR 300) S approx. 5 mi. across bridge to St. George Island. Turn left (E) on Gulf Beach Dr. and go 1 mi. to 6th St. Turn left. At the end, look for a gravel road and small gazebo at the site entrance.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 670-4783



46 Tate's Hell State Forest: High Bluff Coastal Hiking Trail

From the parking area, a nature trail leads 4 miles through sand pine scrub good for brown-headed nuthatches, red-bellied woodpeckers and eastern towhees year-round. In migration, summer and scarlet tanagers can be found in the pines. Bald eagles nest NE of the parking area so watch for flyovers! A nice spot for a quick hike, worth checking in migration.

DIRECTIONS: From Carrabelle, drive W on US 98 approx. 3.0 mi. past Carrabelle Beach; entrance and parking area are on right (N).

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 697-3734 www.fl-dof.com



47 Apalachicola River WEA: Cash Bayou

If you're traveling between Sumatra and Eastpoint, it's worth taking a moment to pull off at the edge of Cash Bayou to take in the scenery, scan for waterbirds like bald eagles and American bitterns, and check the brief trails for songbirds. Better yet, launch your canoe or kayak from this landing and bird the bayou by boat. Hunting is allowed in the area; more info available on the Web.

DIRECTIONS: From US 98 E of Eastpoint, drive N on SR 65 for 4.6 mi. Parking is on left (SW) side of SR 65 just before bridge.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 827-2934

http://myfwc.com/recreation/apalachicola_river/



48 Apalachicola River WEA: Sand Beach Tower and Area Roads

Sand Beach Rd. ends at a canoe/kayak launch, pier and viewing tower, in a nice hammock where yellow-throated warblers and white-breasted nuthatches are possible. Scan the reeds for waders like little blue herons and from the tower, scope East Bay for loons, grebes and wintering ducks. Osprey and bald eagles nest in the area, and both Mississippi and swallow-tailed kites are likely in summer here in the Apalachicola River basin. Area roads can be interesting birding for intrepid explorers, particularly Tank Island

Rd. and Butcher Pen Landing. Shallow streams across the road (= low water crossings) have firm limestone bottoms, and are not an obstacle to 2WD vehicles, except during very high water. These are a hydrologically sensitive alternative to culverts.

DIRECTIONS: From US 98 E of Eastpoint, drive N on SR 65 for 8.6 mi. Turn left (S) on Sand Beach Rd. to enter site. Informational kiosk containing maps of area roads is on right. Tower is 2.7 mi. down Sand Beach Rd.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 827-2934

http://myfwc.com/recreation/apalachicola_river/



49 Tate's Hell State Forest: Deep Creek Birding Trail

This rustic site gives you quick, easy access to a wet prairie in the Apalachicola River basin. Insect-eating pitcher plants line the ditches around this prairie measuring 0.75 mile by 0.5 mile. Watching for other recreational users, bird the road from your car and drive the road that divides the prairie in two, watching in winter for typical wintering wetland sparrows like skulky LeConte's, grasshopper and Henslow's, as well as more common swamp and song sparrows. Swallow-tailed kites use the cypress domes in late spring; wading birds like snowy egrets and little blue herons are most concentrated March-June. By summer, the sun is punishing and bugs are fierce, hence the state forest's name! Hunting here is heaviest at the end of Nov. and from mid-Dec. through early-Jan. Call for details.

DIRECTIONS: From US 98 E of Eastpoint, drive N on SR 65 for 7.3 mi and turn right (N) on Tower Rd. After 1.0 mi., bear right at the fork; site is along the left side of Tower Rd.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 697-3734 www.fl-dof.com



50 Apalachicola River WEA: Bloody Bluff Tract

Along the drive down Bloody Bluff Rd., watch the edges for sparrows including chipping, swamp and song, as well as listening in spring for Bachman's sparrows. The loop trail at the boat ramp at the end of the road can be good for songbirds like yellow-throated warblers and blue-headed vireos, and swallow-tailed and Mississippi kites frequent the river run. Most roads in this area can be interesting for birding (Creek Rd. and Old County Rd. have been productive for sparrows in the past) and several species of rare plants occur on the area. This site is very rustic and there are some low water crossings on the dirt roads, but these washes are hard bottomed (and accordingly passable in 2WD except in times of very high water). Various hunting seasons run between October and April, so check the Web site for seasons and wear blaze orange when recommended.

DIRECTIONS: From US 98 E of Eastpoint, drive N on SR 65 for 14.2 mi. Turn left (W) on Bloody Bluff Rd. to enter site.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 827-2934
http://myfwc.com/recreation/apalachicola_river/



51 Fort Gadsden Historical Site

This site of a British Fort dating back to the War of 1812 is slowly returning to the nature it was eked out of centuries ago. Fortifications and historical signage are surrounded by the Apalachicola National Forest's flatwoods on one side, good for common yellowthroats and the occasional Bachman's sparrow; on the other side, the shoreline at the broad, brown Apalachicola River is lined with hardwoods and cypress, home to singing parulas and prothonotary warblers. Hike the flatwoods trail from the parking area, and walk the waterfront in migration. Breeding raptors like red-shouldered hawks and Mississippi kites are raucous in spring/summer. Longleaf pines used by red-cockaded woodpeckers as cavity trees are ringed with white paint.

DIRECTIONS: Approx. 4.5 mi. S of Sumatra on SR 65, turn right (W) on FR 129 (Brickyard Rd.). Follow FR 129 2.3 mi. to site.

Open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (850) 643-2282
www.fs.fed.us/r8/florida/recreation/



52 Wright Lake

Two trails here, a 0.25-mile trail and 4.5-mile one, traverse stretches of longleaf pine-wiregrass community. Plants and animals in this community type have come to depend on frequent fire that keeps the understory low and open, stimulating pine seeds to germinate and wiregrass to flower. Since natural fire is feared by people, it's been suppressed in much of Florida, allowing many remaining examples of this community to become overgrown and unsuitable for the animals that are uncompromisingly dependent on it. Here in the national forest, prescribed fire is used to keep pinewoods healthy, making one of the best places to see red-cockaded woodpeckers and Bachman's sparrows. Spring mornings are best for spotting both, when sparrow males are singing "here, kitty-kitty-kitty-kitty" on their territories, and RCWs are busy coming and going from their nest cavities, carrying food to their young.

DIRECTIONS: Approx. 2.5 mi. S of Sumatra on SR 65, turn right (W) on FR 101 (Wright Lake Rd.). Follow FR 101 2.0 mi. to site.

Open 24 hrs./day. (850) 643-2282
www.fs.fed.us/r8/florida/recreation/



53 Apalachicola Ranger District County Road 22 Pond

While there are red-cockaded woodpecker cavity trees ringed with white paint visible throughout the national forest, this site offers the opportunity to park and hike to view the birds on foot without danger from passing traffic. From the small parking area, hike S to the small lake where ducks like lesser scaup may occasionally be found in winter. The W side of the lake is a good foraging and nesting area for the woodpeckers. Around the cavity entrances, you'll notice sap running from holes drilled by the woodpeckers; this is thought to deter snakes from raiding the nests. Please take care not to approach the cavity trees too closely; these birds are protected by law and harassment is not tolerated. Patient observers will easily see RCWs on spring mornings as they emerge and then begin bringing food to chicks in the cavity. Please stay on the trails to avoid trampling some of the sensitive and rare plants that occur in this area.

DIRECTIONS: From SR 20 just W of Bristol, take SR 12 S approx. 19 mi. to SR 65 in Wilma. Go S on SR 65 9.7 mi. to Sumatra and turn left (E) on SW 8th St./CR 22. Go 1.4 miles down this wide unpaved road (also known as FR 22). Narrow woods road to site is on right (S) side. Park on SW 8th St./CR 22/FR 22 and walk the woods road to the pond.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 643-2282
www.fs.fed.us/r8/florida/recreation/



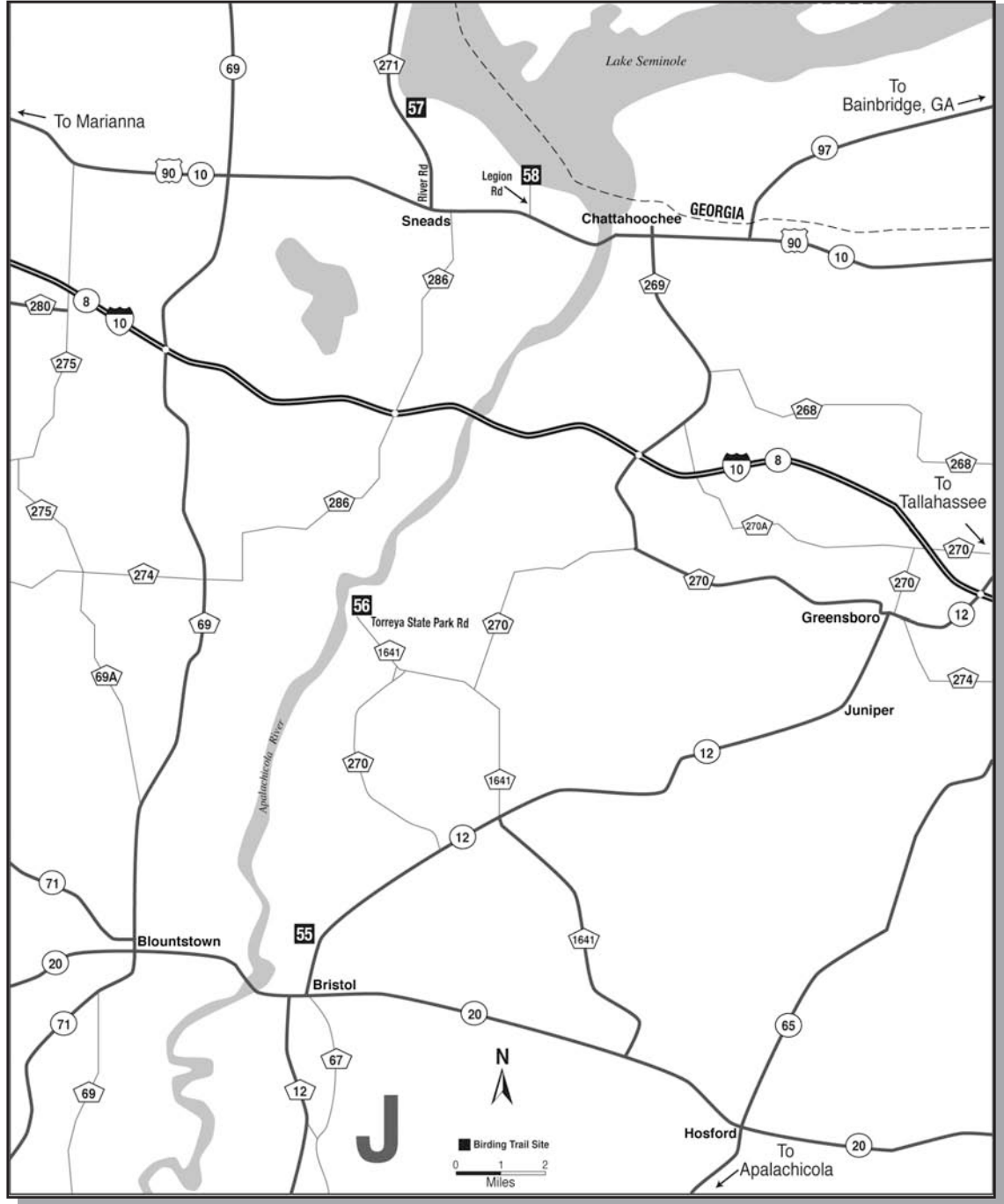
54 Post Office Bay, Forest Road 123 Northeast

This scenic drive passes through wet savannas and longleaf pine forest in some of the best condition you'll find anywhere in the southeast. Watch for carnivorous plants like four species of pitcher plants growing in roadside wetlands, and stop at roadside pullofts to explore, looking for breeding red-cockaded woodpeckers, Bachman's sparrows and Swainson's warblers. Winter can be good for rarer sparrows like Henslow's and LeConte's in the soggy flatwoods and savannas. Take care not to trample delicate plant life by walking off trails, and be aware that hunting pressure can be very heavy here in deer season. Call for dates and wear blaze orange in season; roadways and their immediate area should be safe during daylight hours.

DIRECTIONS: Half a mile N of Sumatra on SR 65, turn left (W) onto CR 379. The best access point for FR 123 is approx. 6.0 mi. ahead on the right (E) side of the road. This road can be driven as a loop with stops to view RCW clusters and savannas: drive FR 123 until it ends at FR 180. Turn left (W) and FR 180 will return you to CR 379, 1.5 mi. further north.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 643-2282
www.fs.fed.us/r8/florida/recreation/







Bluffs Cluster

55 Apalachicola Bluffs and Ravines Preserve: Garden of Eden Trail

At 135 feet above the Apalachicola river, Alum Bluff is the largest geological exposure in Florida. In fact, the topography of this site feels nothing like what most people expect from Florida. Hike the steep 3.75-mile trail through longleaf pine sandhills, upland mixed hardwoods, along the tops of steephead ravines, down into slope forests, across shallow streams, and out to the bluff. Listen for wood thrushes and hooded warblers, barred owls and broad-winged hawks along the way. Not for the faint of heart, this hike will make you earn the spectacular views of the Apalachicola River... but they're well worth the effort. Watch your footing and definitely bring water. While there's no hunting on this property, the Nature Conservancy encourages visitors to wear bright colors in season, for safety.

DIRECTIONS: From SR 20 in Bristol, take SR 12 N approx. 1.5 mi.; entrance on left (W) side of road at "Apalachicola Bluff-Garden of Eden" sign.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 643-2756 www.nature.org



56 Torreya State Park

This park is named after the Torreya tree, the world's rarest evergreen, which only grows on bluffs on the eastern side of the Apalachicola River. Still in decline, this tree is the subject of much study, and can be seen here, alongside wonderful vantages of the Apalachicola River and interesting birds. The most productive birding trails are the areas of the trail around Stone Bridge, down by the river NW of the historic home, and on the trails to Rock Bluff Primitive Campground. As in much of extreme N FL, watch for northern birds like winter wren, Louisiana waterthrush, golden-crowned kinglets and brown creepers. Brown-headed nuthatch and Bachman's sparrows are possible in the sandhills, and the high canopies along the river can be good for yellow-throated vireos in spring. Birding by ear skills are very useful here.

DIRECTIONS: From I-10 W of Quincy, exit W on SR 12 toward Greensboro. Stay on SR 12 through Greensboro and continue (approx. 14 mi. total from I-10) until intersection with CR 1641. Turn right (N) on CR 1641 and continue left at fork with CR 270. Bear right at next fork (CR 1641 becomes Torreya State Park Rd.) and follow signs to park entrance.

Open 8 a.m. to dusk. (850) 643-2674 www.floridastateparks.org



57 Three Rivers State Park

Pine and hardwood uplands with big, old trees characterize this park on the south shore of Lake Seminole. This lake is actually a reservoir created at the confluence of the Flint and Chattahoochee rivers, where they form the Apalachicola—the opposite shoreline lies in Georgia. Bird the Lakeside Trail which begins near the campground, as well as the Half Dry Creek Trail by the picnic area. Habitat and location are good for Kentucky warblers and Louisiana waterthrushes in spring/summer. Otherwise, wintering birds characteristic of the area, such as red-breasted nuthatch and golden-crowned kinglet are rare but possible in cooler months. In winter, also scope the lake from two new birding blinds—you never know what wintering waterfowl you may find! A yellow-billed loon wintered on a reservoir south of Atlanta in 2003-04. Who knows what else is out there, simply waiting for birders to find it? Loaner optics and field guides are available.

DIRECTIONS: From US 90 in Sneads, drive 2.3 mi. N on CR 271 (River Rd.) to park entrance.

Open 8 a.m. to dusk. (850) 482-9006 www.floridastateparks.org



58 Sneads Park

This small waterfront park on Lake Seminole is worth a stop if you're in the area, to scan the open water for wintering ducks like redheads, lesser scaup, ring-necked ducks and more. Up for exploring? The park includes a boat ramp for access to the lake.

DIRECTIONS: From US 90 in Sneads, drive 1.5 mi. N on Legion Rd. to park entrance.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 593-6636



Talquin Cluster

59 Joe Budd WMA at Lake Talquin State Forest

An extensive system of side roads closed to vehicles are open to exploration via foot traffic, and will yield wintering mixed flocks of warblers, turkeys in the open fields and bobwhite in the pinewoods. The area is closed to other uses on hunt days, so call for access details. After turning on Office Rd., a large open pasture and dove field on both sides of the road are good birding for wintering sparrows, mourning doves, meadowlarks and kestrels and also serve some years as a display ground for courting woodcocks at dawn

and dusk. At the end of Office Rd., a dike trail runs 0.7 miles one-way past sloughs good for black-crowned night herons and wood ducks. Of interest off Cattle Gap Rd.: wood storks at the environmental center on Budd Pond; the trail at the end of Plantation Rd. offers a vantage of Lake Talquin similar to High Bluff's.

DIRECTIONS: From I-10 W of Tallahassee, take exit #192 onto US 90 W toward Midway. After approx. 2.1 mi. turn left on CR 268; Office Rd. (headquarters) is on left after approx. 6.0 mi. Other WMA area roads can be accessed via Peters Rd. (See directions for Site #60—veer right onto Cattle Gap Rd. to access Joe Budd).

Open dawn to dusk; closed on hunt days. (850) 627-1773
www.myfwc.com/recreation/joe_budd/



60 Lake Talquin State Forest: High Bluff Recreation Area

Scan the lake from the fishing pier, looking for waders along the shoreline and in offshore trees, as well as wintering ducks on the open water, like green-winged teal and lesser scaup. Better yet, explore the lake from the water. Songbirds like black-throated blue warblers and northern and Louisiana waterthrushes use the hardwoods lining the lake's edge in migration.

DIRECTIONS: From I-10 W of Tallahassee, exit onto US 90 W toward Midway. After approx. 2.1 mi. turn left on CR 268, drive 2.4 mi. to Peters Rd. and turn left again. Drive approx. 1.0 mi. and take the road's left fork onto High Bluff Landing Rd., which dead-ends at the site after approx. 3.0 mi.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 488-1871 www.fl-dof.com



61 Bear Creek Educational Forest

The entrance trail to this site is a paved interpretive trail, which then connects to the 2.5-mile Ravine Trail and the 3.0-mile Bear Creek Trail. The former hugs the creek ravine, and its hardwood forest is good for migrants like wood thrushes and veeries. The pine flatwoods of the longer Bear Creek Trail are good for bobwhite and turkey. Take water and insect repellent, and pick up a map at the entrance kiosk. This site offers something for people of all birding skill and mobility levels.

DIRECTIONS: From I-10 S of Quincy, exit S on SR 267 (Pat Thomas Pkwy.). Drive S approx. 4.0 mi. and cross CR 65B; entrance is 0.5 mi. on left.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 627-9064 www.fl-dof.com

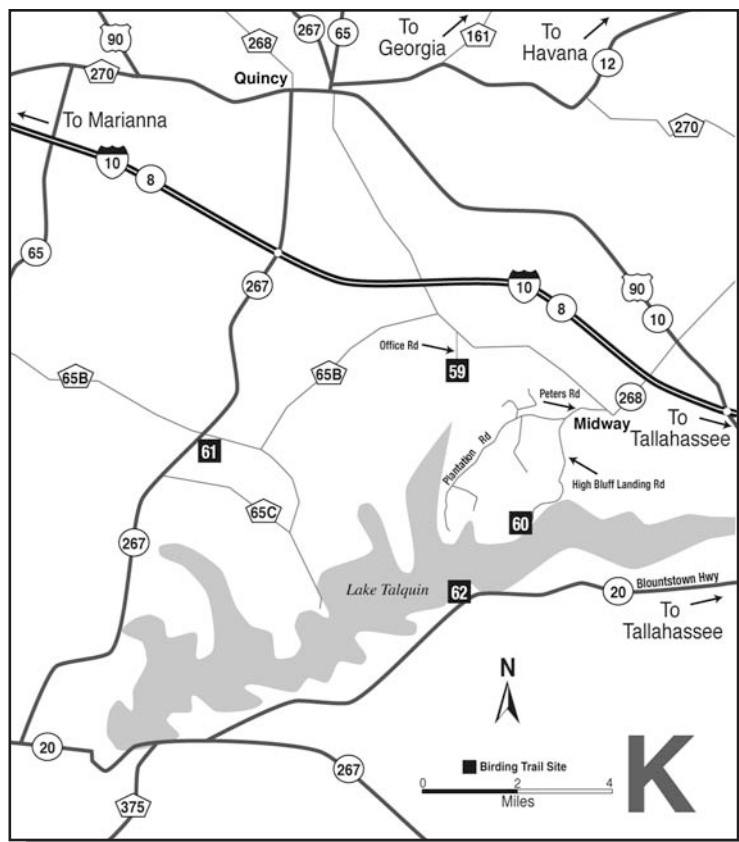


62 Lake Talquin State Forest: Fort Braden Trails

This site offers extensive hiking trails that are blazed in orange (compared to horse trails in pink or yellow). Pick up a map at the entrance and bring water. One of the best trail choices is the Center Loop: hike N from the parking area and stay right at every split in the orange-blazed trail to make a 2-mile loop back to the parking area. Trail will take you through open areas and xeric oak uplands good for turkey and white-eyed vireos, then reach bluffs overlooking Lake Talquin. It follows the lake edge for nearly a mile before circling back through the uplands. Watch overhead for raptors and scan the lake for wintering ducks and wading birds.

DIRECTIONS: From intersection of SR 263 (Capital Circle) and SR 20 (Blountstown Hwy.) in Tallahassee, take SR 20 W 8.5 mi.; trail-head parking area on right.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 488-1871 www.fl-dof.com



Map White-breasted Nuthatch Cluster

63 J. Lee Vause Park

This small park has a well-developed center, but down by the lake its sunny, woody edges are a haven for birds like orange-crowned warblers and the occasional yellow-breasted chat. A boardwalk and pier provide a view of Lake Jackson, where you can look for a diversity of wading birds like wood storks as well as wintering ducks and coots. Don't forget flyovers by osprey and bald eagles, as well as breeding red-shouldered, red-tailed and broad-winged hawks in spring and summer!

DIRECTIONS: From I-10 in Tallahassee, exit N on US 27 (N. Monroe St.). Drive approx. 4.5 mi. and turn right (N) on CR 0361 (Old Bainbridge Rd.); park is 0.5 mi. on right.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 606-1470



64 Faulk Drive Landing

Another access to Lake Jackson, this one is a little more rustic, and your tires (not to mention your feet!) may get muddy at times of higher water. It's best to park back from the landing and walk in, watching fenceposts and small oaks for flycatchers and warblers. The grassy area to the south of the landing can be good for sparrows in winter. Worth a stop if you're in the area.

DIRECTIONS: From I-10 in Tallahassee, exit N on US 27 (N. Monroe St.). Drive 2.7 mi. and turn right (E) on Faulk Dr.; site at end.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 606-1470



65 Crowder Landing

This small boat landing warrants a quick stop if you're in the area, because it provides another vantage of Lake Jackson. Wintering ducks and coots are plentiful on the lake in winter, as are wading birds like snowy egrets and little blue herons. Sandhill cranes appear on occasion and in 2002 a Hudsonian godwit was discovered here! Lake Jackson is known for its tendency to disappear down a sink-hole in its middle at times of low water; to

birders, it's known for less common flycatchers (vermillion, for example), and songbirds in migration. When it's hot, it's hot. When it's not...

DIRECTIONS: From I-10 in Tallahassee, exit N on US 27 (N. Monroe St.). Drive 1.7 mi. and turn right (E) on Crowder Rd. Crowder Rd. bends first N then E; site is at the end.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 606-1470

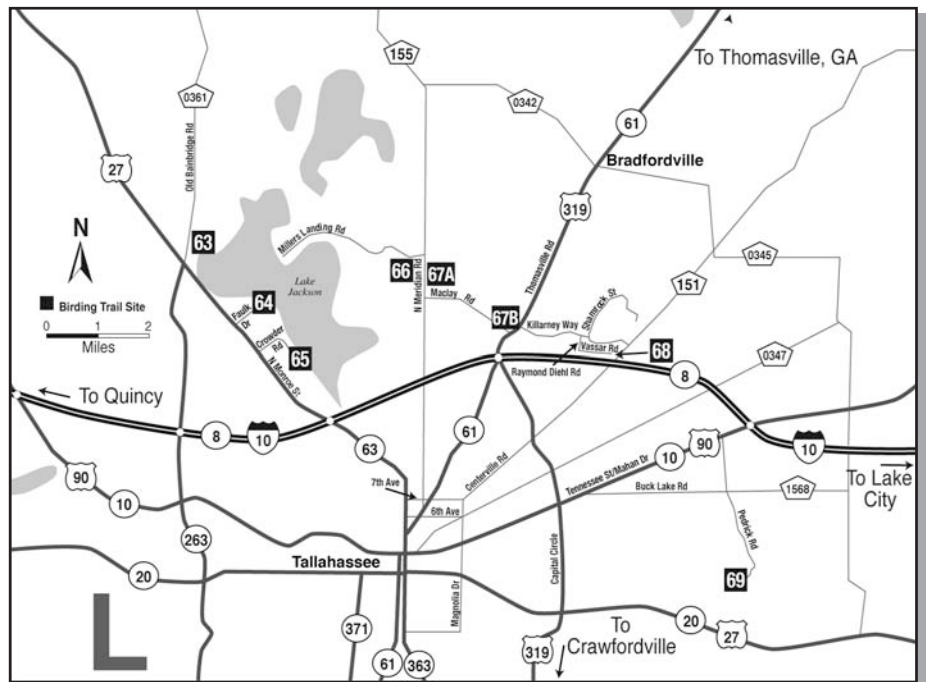


66 Elinor Klapp-Phipps Park

This park on Lake Jackson has areas of longleaf pine restoration, but its real asset is the beautiful deciduous slope forest following the trickle of small streams down to the big lake. Eastern bluebirds, indigo buntings and turkeys use open grassy areas along the powerline entrance and horse trailer entrance. As the trails dive into the hammock, start watching and listening for migrants like wood and gray-cheeked thrushes and Blackburnian warblers. The Lake Jackson area is known for unusual sightings, like occasional wintering western tanagers, so bird with an open mind! Trails at this site are extensive and winding. Pay attention to your chosen route.

DIRECTIONS: From I-10 in Tallahassee, exit N on US 319 (Thomasville Rd.). Drive approx. 1.0 mi. and turn left (W) on Maclay Rd. Follow Maclay to its end and turn right (N) on N. Meridian Rd. Drive 1.0 mi. and turn left (W) on Millers Landing Rd.; park entrance is 100 yds. ahead.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 891-3866



67 A.B. Maclay Gardens State Park

More widely known for its manicured gardens, this park also offers native habitat that is better for birdwatching. Try the brief trails along the lake at the Lake Hall Recreation Area for wintering orange-crowned warblers and blue-headed vireos. Check the lakes for wintering ducks and then for drinking purple martins beginning in February. For a longer hike, visit the more extensive Lake Overstreet trails off Meridian Road. These are more rustic so be sure to pick up a map and bring water. Birds like red-headed woodpeckers, brown-headed and white-breasted nuthatches, great horned owls and chuck-wills-widows can all be found here.

DIRECTIONS: (A) Lake Overstreet Trailhead: From the intersection of Meridian and Maclay roads, drive N on Meridian 0.9 mi. and enter parking lot for Forest Meadows Park & Athletic Center; trailhead is directly across street on E side of Meridian. (B) Main entrance: From I-10 in Tallahassee, exit N on US 319 (Thomasville Rd.); park approx. 1.0 mi. on left (just past Maclay Rd.).

Open 8 a.m. to dusk. (850) 487-4556 www.floridastateparks.org

**68 A. J. Henry Park**

This small city park has some nice topography, forested with hardwoods and draining down to a lake. Accordingly, it experiences nice fallouts of migrants like veery, ovenbird and magnolia warbler among others. Mississippi kites and broad-winged hawks can be seen here in late spring and summer, and blue-winged teal, ring-necked ducks and the occasional redhead or goldeneye can be found on the lake in winter. The area around the lake and lower (N) parking area are the most productive birding; extensive trails at the upper (S) parking area are appealing, but the thicker understory can make it hard to spot birds, frustrating those who don't know bird calls.

DIRECTIONS: From I-10 in Tallahassee, exit N on US 319 (Thomasville Rd.). Drive approx. 1.0 mi. and turn right (E) on Killarney Way. There are two approaches to the site off of this road. For the S entrance, turn right off Killarney Way onto Raymond Diehl Rd., then left on Vasser Rd. Take Vasser to its end and turn right on Whitney Dr. Park is 100 ft. on the left. For the N entrance, follow Killarney Way to end and turn right on Shamrock St. After approx. 0.5 mi., turn right on Gardenvue Way and right again after 100 yds. into park.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 891-3866 www.talgov.com

**69 J. R. Alford Greenway**

This greenway is a collection of old pastures now used for passive recreation. From the parking area follow the trail due E across the first pasture and veer either way at the fork to continue through a series of open fields. Watch overhead for red-tailed hawks; mixed

flocks of wintering palm warblers and white-throated sparrows flit in the weedy edges; wintering grasshopper sparrows skulk in the grass (when it's left high) as do eastern meadowlarks. Kestrels, eastern phoebes and loggerhead shrikes stand lookout on snags and wood storks and double-crested cormorants can be seen flying overhead to Lake Lafayette at sunset. From the parking lot, another trail leads to the S and winds E through hardwoods good for red-shouldered and Cooper's hawks.

DIRECTIONS: From intersection of US 319 (Capital Circle) and US 90 (Tennessee St./Mahan Dr.) in Tallahassee, drive 0.7 mi. E on US 90 and turn right on Buck Lake Rd. After 2.2 mi., turn right onto Pedrick Rd.; entrance and parking 1.5 mi. at end of road.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 606-1470

**70 Leon Sinks Geological Area**

This recreation area in the E portion of the Apalachicola National Forest is different from the lower, longleaf savannah habitats of the tracts closer to the river. Here, higher sandhills of pine and turkey oak are broken by erosion in the underlying limestone, causing deep, dramatic crystal blue sinkholes rimmed with hardwoods. Upon entering the hiking trail, turn left at the T for the shorter trail (1.7 miles) and return on the short-cut (0.5 mile) through a tupelo swamp. Listen for barred owls, parulas and prothonotary warblers near the wetlands, and watch for blue-headed vireos and Carolina chickadees in the pinewoods. By turning right at the T, you'll choose the longer 2.5-mile loop past a series of large sinkholes. Watch for turkeys, hermit thrushes and white-eyed vireos in the sandhills, as well as songbirds like yellow-billed cuckoos in hardwoods sloping into the sinks. Bring water and sunscreen.

DIRECTIONS: From Tallahassee, drive approx. 8.0 mi. S from Capital Circle on US 319; park is on right.

Open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (850) 926-3561

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/florida/recreation/>

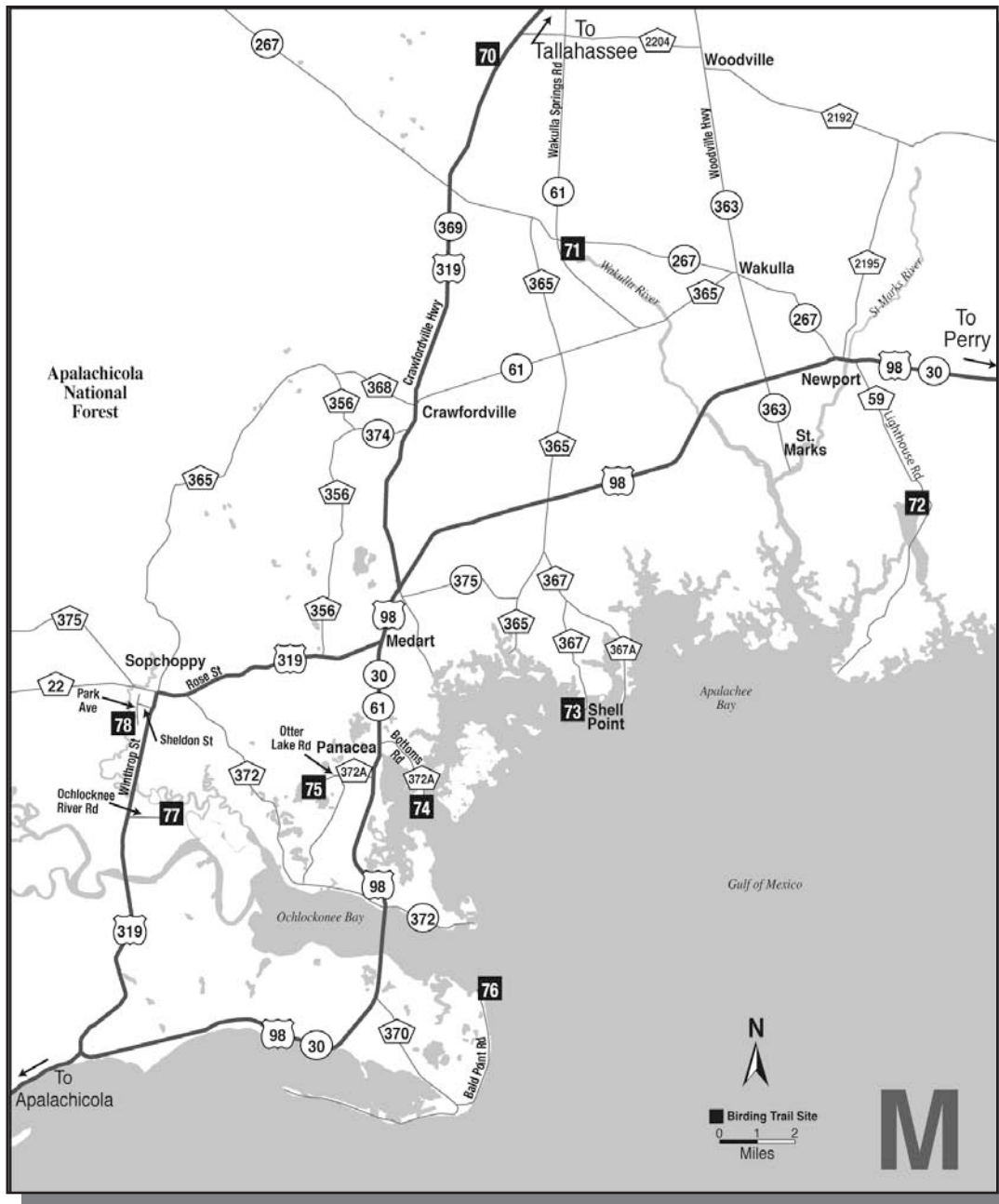
**71 Wakulla Springs State Park**

Hiking trails throughout this park provide access to floodplain forest good for summer tanagers and ovenbirds in migration and great crested flycatchers and northern parulas in summer. The primary attraction, however, is the access to Wakulla's 1st magnitude spring. From the pier, look for anhingas, common moorhens,

pied-billed grebes and wintering American wigeons, as well as roosting black vultures in the cypress. Better yet, take one of the park's river cruises to get excellent views of the aforementioned plus least bitterns, barred owls and white ibis. In years past, this park was known for limpkins but today they aren't as likely. The park hosts an extensive wildlife and birding festival each April.

DIRECTIONS: From Tallahassee, drive approx. 9.0 mi. S from Capital Circle on SR 61 to SR 267 and turn left; entrance 100 yds. on right.

Open 8 a.m. to dusk. (850) 224-5950 www.floridastateparks.org



72 St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge: Lighthouse Unit

*Gateway**

This site is a must-see. Stop briefly at the visitor center for a map and to check the sightings log. A pond and trail here can be good for white-throated sparrows, pileated woodpeckers, kingfishers, phoebes and more, but other trails are more rewarding. From N to S along the main road: The helicopter pad accessed from the primitive hiking trails is good for wintering sparrows such as Henslow's; East River Pool can be good for waterfowl in winter and shorebirds when water levels are low; Stoney Bayou Pool and the Mounds Pools hold shovelers, coots and the spectrum of wading birds in winter, and the trail around Mounds Pool #3 is particularly good for pintails and snow geese in winter. The Headquarters Pond overlook offers a bald eagle nest, sora and purple gallinule, as well as wintering teal and year-round waders. The Mounds Trail around Tower Pond is very good for migrant songbirds like yellow-billed cuckoos and indigo buntings, as well as brown-headed nuthatches in the pines and ducks and shorebirds in the pond. At the road's terminus at the lighthouse, look for common wintering waterfowl plus redheads, canvasbacks, Nelson's sharp-tailed sparrows and more. Bufflehead, loons and horned grebes winter in the Gulf, and least bitterns, seaside sparrows and clapper rails breed in the marshes. Oystercatchers, pelicans and gulls loaf on pilings and offshore oyster bars. Bring water, food, sunscreen and bug spray.

DIRECTIONS: From intersection of US 98 and SR 363 N of St. Marks, drive E on US 98 approx. 2.5 mi. and turn right (S) on CR 59 (Lighthouse Rd., just E of the St. Marks River bridge). Refuge entrance and visitors center 3.0 mi. on right.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 925-6121 www.fws.gov/saintmarks



* see "Gateways" on page 2 for more information

73 St. Marks NWR: Shell Point

Worth a quick stop for a picnic lunch and a look for shorebirds, this site offers an easy vantage from the parking area of loafing shorebirds in fall-winter-spring such as short-billed dowitchers, dunlin, willets, marbled godwits and more. Keep an eye peeled for the occasional migrating peregrine watching the shorebirds even more closely than you! Summer is busy with swimming/ boating visitors. Shorebirds are more diverse and plentiful in cool weather months.

DIRECTIONS: From intersection of US 98 and SR 363 N of St. Marks, drive W on US 98 approx. 8.0 mi. and turn left (S) on CR 365 (Spring Creek Hwy.). Turn left after 2.0 mi. onto CR 367. Continue approx. 5.0 mi. on 367 (do not take 367A at the fork) and park at the end of the road at the point.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 925-6121 www.fws.gov/saintmarks



74 Bottoms Rd. Pull-off

This road extends out through saltmarsh to a boat launch on the Gulf. Along the way, watch for clapper rails and wading birds in the marsh, and northern harriers cruising the flats in winter. Three-quarters of the way to the end, a pull-off provides pedestrian access to the waterfront where you can scope offshore sandbars for loafing terns, gulls and shorebirds. This saltmarsh is locally known for occasional short-eared owl sightings in winter, so watch for these daytime hunters gliding low over the marsh in form reminiscent of harriers, or perched on low posts amidst the rushes.

DIRECTIONS: From intersection of US 98 and SR 363 N of the town of St. Marks, drive W on US 98 approx. 17.0 mi. and turn left (W) on Bottoms Rd. just before the town of Panacea. Parking areas are along this road.

Open dawn to dusk.



75 St. Marks NWR: Otter Lake

Make a quick trip to the picnic area and boat launch at the end to check the cypress for prothonotary warblers and occasional wading birds, or choose to hike one of the longer trails, the south Piney Ridge Trail loop (5 miles) or the north Otter Lake Trail loop (9 miles). The latter runs through pinewoods interrupted by occasional bayheads and wetlands. Watch for red-headed and red-cockaded woodpeckers, turkey and bobwhite. At dusk, check the boat launch for wood storks, egrets and both vultures coming in to roost; ospreys nest in the area. Swallow-tailed kites can be seen soaring overhead in spring and summer. There is some hunting along the hiking trails so check the trailhead signs before entering and carry water and sunscreen with you.

DIRECTIONS: From intersection of US 98 and SR 363 N of St. Marks, drive W on US 98 approx. 18.0 mi. and turn right (E) on CR 372A (Otter Lake Rd.). Site is at end of CR 372A.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 925-6121 www.fws.gov/saintmarks



76 Bald Point State Park

This new state park already offers great birding. Its geography and location offer a prime vantage of the raptor migration in Oct., as peregrines, harriers and others cruise down the beach. It's also a staging point for monarch butterflies on their fall trans-Gulf migration. Overwintering shorebirds like black-bellied plovers and dunlin use the beach and estuary, and in spring, migratory songbirds like indigo buntings make landfall in the park's hammocks. Year-round, check back marshes for raucous clapper rails and pine flatwoods for brown-headed nuthatches (best accessed via limerock roads on the left side of the road prior to park entrance). At the north end of Bald Point Rd., listen for marsh wrens from the new observation boardwalk overlooking pris-

tine marshes. Guided tours are available for groups; call 2 weeks in advance. Fishing and sunbathing are popular in nice weather.

DIRECTIONS: From Panacea, drive W (head S) on US 98 approx. 7.5 mi. and turn left (S) on CR 370. Drive 3.5 mi. and turn left (E) on Bald Point Rd.; main entrance gate is approx. 2.5 mi. ahead. Open 8 a.m. to sunset. (850) 349-9146 www.floridastateparks.org



77 Ochlockonee River State Park

Upon entering this state park, ask at the gate for the locations of active red-cockaded woodpecker cavities or recent sightings. Drive or walk the "scenic drive" road, watching for these pinewoods specialists, as well as pine warblers, eastern towhees, and common yellowthroats. If you choose to launch a canoe here, ask at the gate about water levels and clearance. Prothonotary warblers and wood storks may be seen along the river, as well as skulking green herons, limpkins and least bitterns in the brushy margins. For early morning access, consider camping overnight, and enjoy chuck-will's-widows and screech owls after dark.

DIRECTIONS: From Sopchoppy, drive 4.0 mi. S on US 319 and turn left (E) on Ochlocknee River Rd.; entrance is approx. 1.0 mi. ahead.

Open 8 a.m. to dusk. (850) 962-2771 www.floridastateparks.org



78 City of Sopchoppy Myron B. Hodge Park

If you're in the area, it's worth stopping by briefly to visit this small city park on the Sopchoppy River. Check the boardwalk and waterfront for night herons and prothonotary warblers, and hike the brief trail to the left side of the property upon entering. In the thicker hardwoods of the hiking trail you'll find migrants like yellow-billed cuckoos in spring, as well as Mississippi and swallow-tailed kites circling overhead in warmer months. This site can be a busy boat launch in warm weather. Consider launching a canoe from this spot to explore the Sopchoppy River more extensively.

DIRECTIONS: In Sopchoppy, take Sheldon St. W from US 319. Go 0.4 mi. and turn left on Park Ave. Entrance to park is 0.5 mi. on right.

Open dawn to dusk. (850) 962-4611



ABOUT THIS GUIDE:

This Trail guide, along with guides for the East, West, 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!

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 Trail sponsorship packet

_____ Send a Birding Trail brochure

_____ Send a Birding Trail Guide-also available online*

_____ East _____ West _____ 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

Rate the Trail! Mail-In Response Form

Your country, state and county of origin _____

Where did you hear about the Trail? _____

What is your goal in using the 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 Trail to friends? _____

Please detach and mail us your valued response to the GFBT address on page 27. **Thank you!**

Cut along dotted line

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.

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!

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 Trail's Web site at:

www.floridabirdingtrail.com

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

Take part in the development of this great new 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!

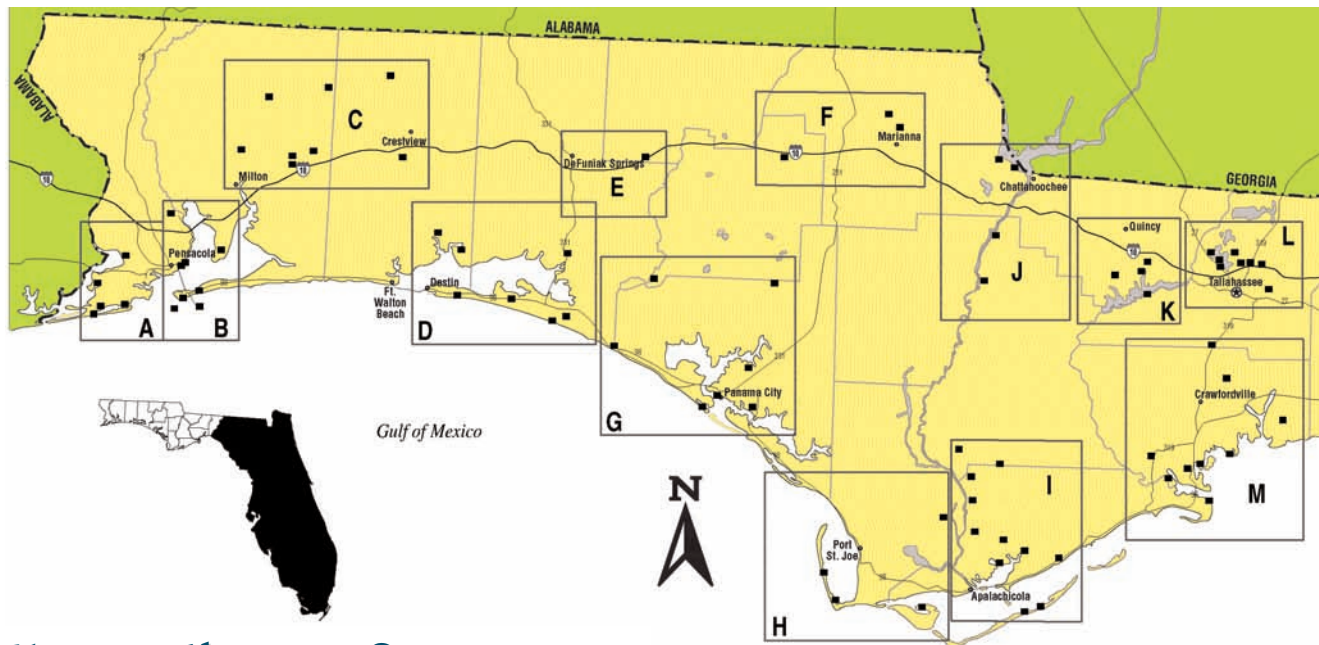
The Great Florida Birding Trail helps everyone enjoy and conserve Florida's wildlife and wildlife habitat. A donation to the Wildlife Foundation of Florida helps us expand and enhance the Trail experience. With your support, we can continue to protect Florida's natural resources for future generations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

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

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

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

PANHANDLE SECTION



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

We hope this guide will help you quickly and easily identify Panhandle 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 1-10 sites within an hour's drive of one another. The map above 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	Perdido Cluster	I	Pitcher Plant & Peregrine Cluster
B	Migrant's Rest Cluster	J	Bluffs Cluster
C	Blackwater Cluster	K	Talquin Cluster
D	Choctawhatchee Cluster	L	White-breasted Nuthatch Cluster
E	Dogwood Cluster	M	Mississippi Kite Cluster
F	Kentucky Warbler Cluster		
G	Indigo Bunting Cluster		
H	Cape 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