

# EVERGLADES...

## swamp, Seminoles and settlers



Above: Land speculators on railroad handcars that connected Everglades City and Deep Lake, 1917.

The mysterious and uncharted swamplands of South Florida remained untouched by settlers during the 19th century, with the exception of Native Americans and runaway slaves who found refuge there before and during the Seminole Wars of the early 1800s.

The December 3, 1882, *New Orleans Times-Democrat* described the area as “a region mysterious, unknown, beautiful – a terra incognita – of which as little is known as of the centre of the dark continent.”

The first actual work toward drainage and “reclamation” of the southern portion of the Kissimmee-Okeechobee-Everglades watershed did not begin until the early 1900s, under the personal direction of Governor Napoleon Bonaparte Broward.

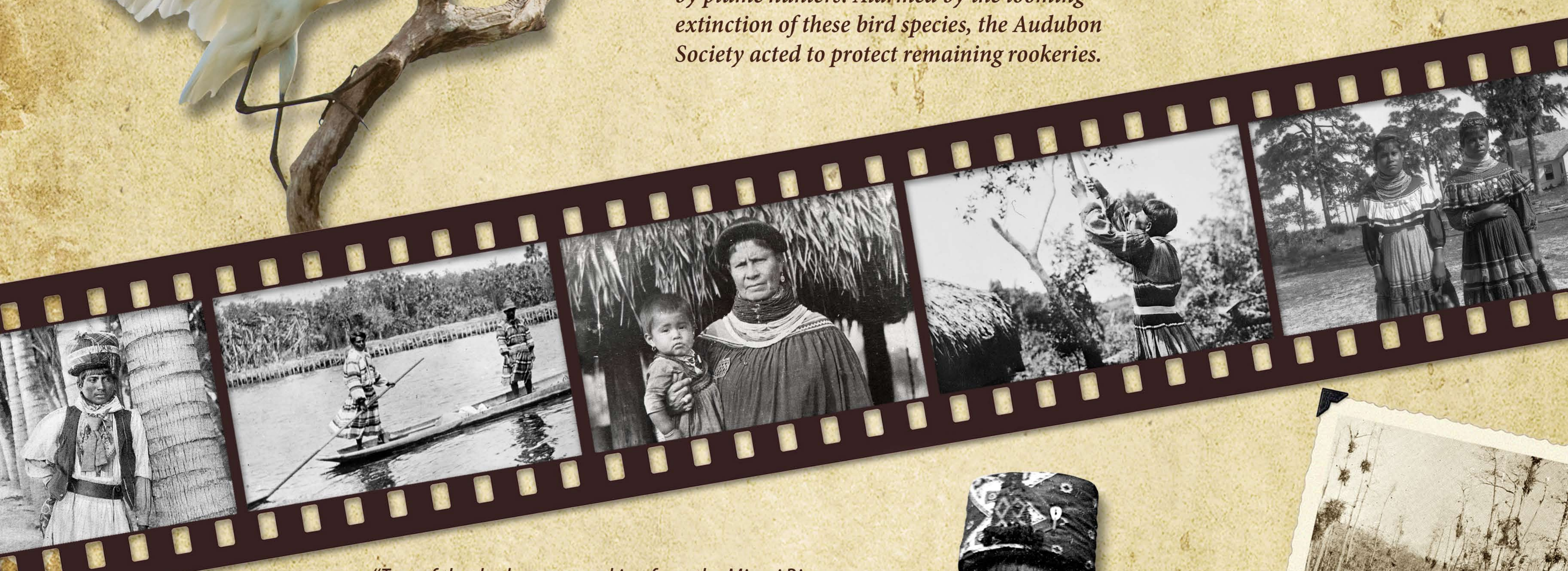
Farmers and speculators flocked to Florida as the state’s Everglades Drainage District dredged approximately 225 miles of canals from 1905 to 1912. By 1920, the 16,000-acre Everglades Agricultural Area was producing tomatoes, beans, peas, peppers and other winter crops for shipment north via steamboat.



At the turn of the century, wading birds in the Everglades were being slaughtered by plume hunters. Alarmed by the looming extinction of these bird species, the Audubon Society acted to protect remaining rookeries.



Top: Gentlemen attempting to drive a luxury auto in the Everglades, 1906.  
Above: A 1912 postcard promoting “reclamation” of the Everglades.



“Two of the dredges are working from the Miami River. The other is on the west side of the lake in the Caloosahatchee River. There are 3,000,000 acres of land free of trees and shrubs, with a covering of grass only, costing nothing to clear it and make it ready for cultivation.”

– 1909 excerpt from *Everglade Magazine*, a real estate catalogue published in the early 1900s



Left: Everglades survey party, 1913.  
Above: Everglades Drainage District dredge No. 2 at work in the Everglades, circa 1915.



Above: Road through a cypress swamp to Dr. W.J. Godden’s Seminole Medical Missionary Post, 1913.



“It is the dream of my life to see this wilderness turned into a prosperous country and where this tangled mass of vine, brush, trees and rocks now are to see homes with modern improvements...”

– Julia Tuttle, a founder of Miami, late 1800s



“The accepted definition of a glade is a narrow strip of grassy land between forests. The big glade is all or ‘ever’ glade. In this way, no doubt, the term Everglade originated.”

– John Gifford, forester, 1911

Charlie Tiger, 1910