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SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

WATER

Matters Fall 2008



Nesting Ospreys

GET TO KNOW US!

Stay informed with this timely update from the South Florida Water Management District, protector of the region's water resources.



Birds

Discover Winged Wonders ON Your Public Lands .



This land is your land so come out and play!



SFWM District Public Access/Recreation Areas

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|
| 1 | Tibet-Butler Preserve | 21 | North Fork St. Lucie River |
| 2 | Shingle Creek | 22 | Allapattah Flats |
| 3 | Upper Reedy Creek | 23 | Atlantic Ridge Preserve State Park & Halpatokee Regional Park |
| 4 | Lake Marion Creek | 24 | DuRoi Management Area |
| 5 | Lake Russell | 25 | Hungryland & Loxahatchee Slough |
| 6 | Lower Reedy Creek | 26 | Cypress Creek, Loxahatchee River & Riverbend County Park |
| 7 | Gardner-Cobb Marsh & Drasco | 27 | Stormwater Treatment Area 1W |
| 8 | Lake Kissimmee | 28 | Stormwater Treatment Area 1E |
| 9 | Catfish Creek | 29 | Stormwater Treatment Area 2 |
| 10 | SUMICA | 30 | Stormwater Treatment Area 3/4 (Harold A. Campbell PUJA) |
| 11 | KICCO & Blanket Bay Slough | 31 | Stormwater Treatment Area 5 |
| 12 | Oak Creek, No Name & Starvation Sloughs | 32 | Stormwater Treatment Area 6 |
| 13 | Boney Marsh, Bluff Hammock & Hickory Hammock | 33 | Six-Mile Cypress Slough Preserve |
| 14 | Turkey Hammock, Cornwell Marsh & Micco Landing | 34 | Owaloocoochee Slough State Forest |
| 15 | Seaboard, Yales & Telox Marshes | 35 | Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed |
| 16 | S-6SE Impoundment Area & Paradise Run | 36 | Water Conservation Areas |
| 17 | Taylor Creek Stormwater Treatment Area | 37 | Southern Glades/Frog Pond |
| 18 | Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park | | |
| 19 | Queen's Island & Blind Creek | | |
| 20 | Ten Mile Creek | | |



10 Great Reasons TO Flock TO Public Lands

1. Red-Bellied Woodpecker

Red-bellied woodpeckers can be found in Florida's open woods. Its name is misleading, as the most prominent red plumage is on the head. They nest in the cavities of dead trees, old stumps or live trees that have softer wood.

2. Great Egret

Making its home in Florida's salt and freshwater marshes and sandbars, the great egret is a large bird standing over 3 feet with a wingspan of more than 4 feet. It was nearly driven to extinction by 1900 due to demand for its plumes for hats, but early conservation efforts saved the great egret.

3. Red Shouldered Hawk

Making its home year-round in Florida's wooded wetlands and swamps, the red shouldered hawk is a medium-size hawk averaging 20 inches. It preys on small mammals, birds, reptiles and crayfish. The red "shoulder" is visible when the bird is perched.

4. Green Heron

The green heron is a small wading bird found in Florida's ponds, streams, marshes and mangroves. One of the few tool-using birds, it leans over water from logs or rocks and drops bait such as insects, worms or twigs to attract and grab small fish.

5. White Ibis

The white ibis is medium-sized with long legs and a long neck. It nests in large colonies throughout Florida's tidal mudflats, marshes and swamps. This wading bird feeds on fish, frogs and insects by probing with its long, down-curved beak.



Did you know that South Florida is home to more than 200 species of birds? The South Florida Water Management District invites you to discover these winged wonders on your public lands. Bird populations and nesting success are important indicators of a healthy environment. With more than 1 million acres of public land within the District's boundaries, we've taken great strides to expand public access and recreation programs on these lands while protecting the natural resources and project objectives. This year alone, we've opened more than 29,000 acres of public use areas at Everglades Stormwater Treatment Area (STA) 1 West, STA 1 East and STA 3/4 - Harold A. Campbell Public Use Area. (See map above.)

In addition to birding, you can bicycle, hike, fish, camp, canoe, horseback ride, hunt, study nature or just relax on many of the District's 37 public use areas. From the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes in the northern Everglades to Florida Bay in the southern reaches of the Everglades, the District's major ecosystem restoration projects are preserving land.

See the back page to find out how you can get more information about all District recreational areas and how these lands are being used for ecosystem restoration.



6. American Bald Eagle

One of our most recognizable national symbols, the American bald eagle makes its home in Florida near coasts, rivers, large lakes and other large bodies of open water with an abundance of fish. The eagle swoops down over the water and snatches the fish out of the water with its massive talons.

7. Snail Kite

The endangered snail kite searches for its prey – apple snails – by flying low over Florida's shallow freshwater marshes. When it spots a snail, it swoops down and grasps the snail with its talons. It uses its hooked bill to pull the snail from its shell.

8. Crested Caracara

A member of the falcon family, the crested caracara's preferred habitat is open, lowland countryside like pastures, savannas, river edges and ranches mainly north and west of Lake Okeechobee. Although other members of the falcon family do not construct nests, the threatened Crested Caracara builds a stick nest.

9. Wood Stork

The only North American stork, the endangered wood stork makes its home in Florida's tidal flats, marshes and flooded pastures. The wading bird moves slowly in shallow waters, groping for fish, frogs, snakes and baby alligators. It nests in colonies.

10. Purple Gallinule

The colorful purple gallinule stands about a foot tall and lives in Florida's freshwater marshes with water lilies and pickerelweeds. The hen-like water bird is frequently seen swimming. It eats a variety of plant and animal matter, including seeds, leaves, fruits, insects, frogs, snails, spiders, earthworms and fish.

Restoration Meets Recreation

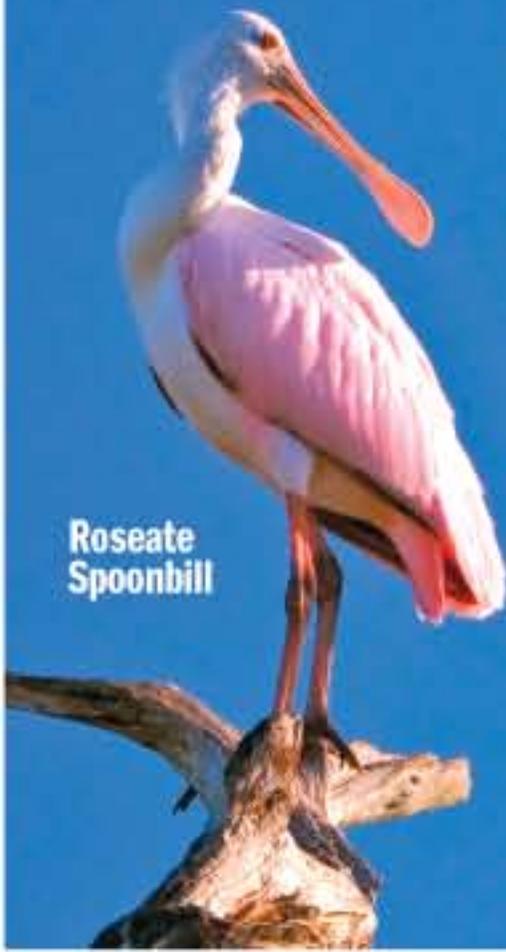
A new haven for outdoor enthusiasts opened in July amid an expanse of wetlands constructed by the South Florida Water Management District to clean water for the Everglades. Located in central Palm Beach County, Stormwater Treatment Area (STA) 1 West features a 200-foot viewing platform and gazebos overlooking the watery expanse. The 3-mile trail along a section of the levee surrounding the 6,670-acre treatment wetland offers hikers, bicyclists, photographers and bird watchers vast views of nature and wildlife. Fishing is allowed in the outer canal but not in the treatment area.

This is the third treatment wetland managed by the District to open for recreation this year. The nearby 6,562-acre STA 1 East opened in May for similar outdoor activities. Future plans call for a 10-mile levee walking trail connecting STA 1 East and STA 1 West. In February, the 17,000-acre STA 3/4 - Harold A. Campbell Public Use Area in western Palm Beach County opened. The facility features covered information kiosks, restrooms and a dual-lane boat ramp providing access to more than 23 miles of perimeter canals. A pedestrian bridge provides access for nature-seeking hikers and bicycle riders.

While recreation has become a staple on these public lands, the key purpose of STAs is to improve the quality of water flowing into the Everglades. The STAs are immense constructed wetlands, where aquatic plants soak up phosphorus, a nutrient that helps vegetation grow but can harm the Everglades ecosystem.

Along with better farming practices, South Florida's 52,000 acres of STAs have prevented more than 2,600 metric tons of phosphorus from entering the Everglades, reducing phosphorus loads by 70 percent since 1994. The STAs have also attracted many native animal and bird species.

Roseate Spoonbill



Come and out play

As the South Florida Water Management District continues to forge ahead with greater Everglades restoration and other water resource projects, we continue to maintain and expand recreational opportunities to put the public in public lands. For more information on each of the District's 37 public use areas including project goals, detailed directions, maps of designated management areas, authorized public uses, special use licenses and the general rules and regulations, visit www.sfwmd.gov and click on the "Recreation" bar to order or download your 114-page Recreational Guide.



South Florida Water Management District
3301 Gun Club Road • West Palm Beach, Florida 33406
561-686-8800 • FL WATS 1-800-432-2045 • www.sfwmd.gov
MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. Box 24680 • West Palm Beach, FL 33416-0680

sfwmd.gov