

Florida State Parks

Monthly Newsletter, June 2008

Special Events June 2008

[Mattie Kelley](#)
[Choctawhatchee](#)
[Estuary Festival](#)
[at Fred Gannon](#)
[Rocky Bayou](#)
[State Park](#)

Sunday, June 1,
11:00 a.m. to 4:00
p.m.

[Turtle Talk: A](#)
[Sea Turtle's](#)
[Journey at](#)
[Gamble Rogers](#)
[Memorial State](#)
[Recreation Area](#)
[at Flagler Beach](#)

Friday, June 6,
10:00 a.m.

[Beach Bash at](#)
[Anastasia State](#)
[Park](#), Saturday,
June 7, 9:00 a.m.
to 4:00 p.m.

[A DAY WITH](#)
[NATURE at](#)
[Anastasia State](#)
[Park](#), Saturday,
June 28, 9:00 a.m.
to 2:00 p.m.



Caladesi Island Is Best Beach in 2008

Just before Memorial Day weekend, Caladesi Island State Park was recognized as the number one beach in the nation by coastal geologist Dr. Stephen P. Leatherman, also known as "Dr. Beach."

The park is accessible only by boat or ferry from Honeymoon Island State Park. Beach lovers can enjoy swimming, sunbathing and beachcombing, while saltwater anglers can fish from their boats or throw a line out into the surf. Nature enthusiasts can glimpse wildlife while hiking the three-mile nature trail through the island's interior or paddling a three mile kayak trail through the mangroves and bay. Picnic tables and shelters are located near the beach, and the park offers a marina with electric and water hookups for boaters.

Dr. Beach's "America's Best Beaches List" is an annual announcement made by Dr. Leatherman, director of Coastal Research at Florida International University in Miami. Leatherman's yearly survey highlights the top destinations from his tour of 650 major public recreational beaches, evaluating beaches based on 50 different factors, including water color and temperature, sand color and softness, public access and area wildlife and vegetation.

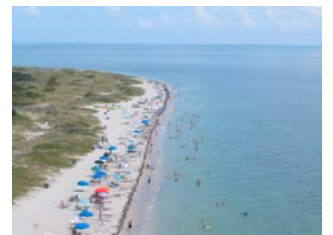


Take a Hike on June 7

Join us and the American Hiking Society in recognizing and celebrating **National Trails Day** on Saturday, June 7. [Savannas Preserve State Park](#) in Port St. Lucie will offer three guided walks along the trails in the park. [Hillsborough River State Park](#) just north of Tampa will host a noncompetitive walk with the Suncoast Sandpipers Volkssport Club. Remember to pack lots of water for hiking in Florida's summer heat. Visit www.americanhiking.org for a complete list of events in Florida.

National Get Outdoors Day: June 14

June is **National Get Outdoors Month** and Saturday, June 14 is National Get Outdoors Day. There is no better time to enjoy Florida's great outdoors. Go for a bike ride, paddle a canoe, fish, watch birds or read a book under a shade tree. Go to the beach, take a swim at a spring, or cool off lakeside. Just go outside and enjoy Florida's sunshine and warm breeze. Celebrate with a basic salt water angling lesson at Fort George Island Cultural State park, a kid's fishing clinic at Fort Clinch State Park or an evening cruise and dinner at Wakulla Springs State Park.



Let's Go  Outside



Upcoming Events in Florida State Parks

Events by Region of Florida

- ❖ [Northwest Florida](#)
- ❖ [Northeast Florida](#)
- ❖ [Central Florida](#)
- ❖ [Southwest Florida](#)
- ❖ [South Florida](#)

Northwest Florida

[MATTIE KELLEY CHOCTAWHATCHEE ESTUARY FESTIVAL](#)

[Fred Gannon Rocky Bayou State Park](#)

Date: Sunday, June 1, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Description: The Department of Environmental Protection's Fred Gannon Rocky Bayou State Park, the Friends of Emerald Coast State Parks, Inc. and the Mattie Kelley Environmental Institute will host the 1st Annual Choctawhatchee Estuary Symposium. The goal for this event is to facilitate community interest and involvement in our local watershed's environment. The event will consist of family-gear activities, such as fish printing on T-shirts and crab races. Informative displays and lectures, such as a historic look at the Choctawhatchee River and Bay and a habitat restoration project of the Okaloosa Darter, a locally threatened fish, will be available. Other displays will focus on local snakes, Red Tide, Sturgeon population and drinking water nitrate testing. Rocky Bayou presents an ideal setting to also include several guided botany and bird watching nature walks along the hiking trails. Additionally, guided kayak tours and lead seining exercises for kids to examine local fish will be offered at the shore.

Fees: Park entrance fee waived for event participants.

Contact: (850) 650-5928.

Directions: **From the west:** Take Interstate 10 east to Highway 85 south until you reach Highway 20. Go east on Highway 20. Park will be approximately five miles on the left. **From the east:** Take Interstate 10 west to Highway 331 south until you reach Highway 20. Go west on Highway 20 approximately 25 miles until you see signs for park on right.

[EARLY BOAT TOUR](#)

[Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park](#)

Date: Saturday, June 7, 8:00 a.m.

Description: Enjoy early morning sights and sounds as you cruise the scenic Wakulla River. Stop by afterwards for breakfast at the historic Wakulla Springs Lodge.

Fees: \$8 Adults, \$6 Children. Reservations suggested.

Contact: (850) 926-0700.

Directions: **From east on I-10** to Exit # 196. Take State Road 263 (Capitol Circle) south 12 miles. Turn right (south) onto U.S. 319/State Road 61 (Crawfordville Hwy) for two miles. Bear left onto State Road 61 (Wakulla Springs Rd) for six miles. Turn left onto State Road 267 at flashing stop light. Turn Right into Park entrance. **From West I-10** use Exit # 203. Take State Road 61 (Thomasville Rd) south. Continue on State Road 61 through Tallahassee for 10 miles. Take U.S. 319/State Road 61 (Crawfordville Hwy) south

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for two miles. Bear left onto State Road 61 (Wakulla Springs Rd) for six miles. Turn left onto State Road 267 at flashing stop light. Turn right into Park entrance.

[EVENING CRUISE & DINNER](#)

[Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park](#)

Date: Saturday, June 14, 6:00 p.m.

Description: End a lazy Saturday with a relaxing cruise on the scenic Wakulla River followed by a delicious dinner in the historic Wakulla Springs Lodge.

Fees: \$29.00 per person. Reservations required.

Contact: (850) 926-0700.

Directions: **From east on I-10** to Exit # 196. Take State Road 263 (Capitol Circle) south 12 miles. Turn right (south) onto U.S. 319/State Road 61 (Crawfordville Hwy) for two miles. Bear left onto State Road 61 (Wakulla Springs Rd) for six miles. Turn left onto State Road 267 at flashing stop light. Turn Right into Park entrance. **From West I-10** use Exit # 203. Take State Road 61 (Thomasville Rd) south. Continue on State Road 61 through Tallahassee for 10 miles. Take U.S. 319/State Road 61 (Crawfordville Hwy) south for two miles. Bear left onto State Road 61 (Wakulla Springs Rd) for six miles. Turn left onto State Road 267 at flashing stop light. Turn right into Park entrance.

Northeast Florida

[FLORIDA SEA TURTLES](#)

[Fort George Island Cultural State Park](#)

Date: Sunday, June 1, 1:00 p.m.

Description: Join a park ranger and learn about the lifecycle of the sea turtle and the importance of these creatures. This program will take place at the Ribault Club on Fort George Island Cultural State Park. Reservations are not necessary.

Fees: This program is free.

Contact: (904) 251-2320.

Directions: Fort George Island Cultural State Park lies approximately 16 miles east of downtown Jacksonville on S.R. A1A, or three miles south of Little Talbot Island State Park.

[FIRST SATURDAY COFFEEHOUSE](#)

[Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park](#)

Date: Saturday, June 7, 7:00 p.m.

Description: Songs, stories, music or poetry may be performed at this open stage night held in the park auditorium. Coffee and desserts will be available for sale.

Fees: This event is free.

Contact: (386) 397-4331.

Directions: Located on U.S. 41 in White Springs. **From I-75 to State Road 136** (Exit # 439), travel east on State Road 136 for three miles. Turn left on U.S. 41. Park entrance is on the left. **From I-10 to U.S. 41 North** (Exit # 301), travel nine miles to White Springs. Park entrance is on the left.

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PARK DESIGN FOR WATER CONSERVATION

Silver River State Park

Date: Saturday, June 7, 10:00 am

Description: James Couillard, Park Designer for Marion County Parks & Recreation, will discuss how Marion County Parks are being designed to enhance water conservation efforts. He will explain how this can also be incorporated into a private home and landscaping.

Fees: \$4.00 per car park entry fee

Contact: (352) 236-7148 or deborah.wilson@dep.state.fl.us.

Directions: Silver River State Park is located east of Ocala, one mile south of State Road 40 on State Road 35. From Interstate 75, take Exit # 352 onto State Road 40 east, about nine miles to State Road 35. From Interstate 95 take Exit # 268 to Route 40 west, about 60 miles to State Road 35.

FLORIDA'S EXOTIC ANIMALS

Fort George Island Cultural State Park

Date: Saturday, June 7, 11:00 a.m.

Description: Join a park ranger to learn about Florida's exotic and invasive animal species and why they pose a continuous threat to conservation. This program will take place at the Ribault Club on Fort George Island Cultural State Park. Reservations are not necessary.

Fees: This program is free.

Contact: (904) 251-2320.

Directions: Fort George Island Cultural State Park lies approximately 16 miles east of downtown Jacksonville on S.R. A1A, or three miles south of Little Talbot Island State Park.

ANNUAL FREE KIDS' FISHING CLINIC

Fort Clinch State Park

Date: Saturday, June 14, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Description: Children will learn how to be responsible anglers, tie knots, cast and more. First 500 children receive a free rod and reel. Bait is provided. Guardians must attend.

Fees: Free for kids and accompanying adults.

Contact: (904) 277-7274.

Directions: Take I-95 to the Fernandina Beach/Callahan exit (Milepost Exit # 373 - Old Exit # 129), and stay to the right. You will then be traveling east on A1A. (This road becomes 8th Street within the town limits of Fernandina.) Stay on this road, (A1A), for 16 miles until you come to the intersection of 8th Street and Atlantic Avenue. Turn right on Atlantic Avenue and go about two miles, Fort Clinch State Park will be on the left.

BASIC SALT WATER ANGLING

Fort George Island Cultural State Park

Date: Saturday, June 14, 10:00 a.m.

Description: Join a park ranger and learn important skills such as rigging a line, tying fishing knots, and various other techniques involved in angling fish. The program will take place at the pavilion behind the

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Ribault Club on Fort George Island. Reservations are not necessary.

Fees: This program is free.

Contact: (904) 251-2320.

Directions: Fort George Island Cultural State Park lies approximately 16 miles east of downtown Jacksonville on S.R. A1A, or three miles south of Little Talbot Island State Park.

NATIVE YARDS

Little Talbot Island State Park

Date: Sunday, June 15, 1:00 p.m.

Description: Join a park ranger and learn how you can help Florida's environment stay natural and healthy by planting native species, eradicating exotic species, and creating an earth-friendly mini-environment on your property. The program will take place at pavilion five on Little Talbot Island. Reservations are not necessary.

Fees: This program is free with regular park admission.

Contact: (904) 251-2320.

Directions: Take I-95 to Heckscher Drive (Milepost Exit # 358A) and then travel east for 17 miles.

WILDLIFE WEEK IN THE PARK

Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park

Date: Monday, June 16, to Saturday, June 21, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Monday through Friday with graduation on Saturday.

Description: Summer Fun Camp program for children who will be going into 3rd and 4th grades in the fall. Children will learn about various Florida wildlife and their habitats through activities and crafts. Limited space is available, so advance registration is required.

Fees: \$35.00 per child.

Contact: (352) 628-5343.

Directions: Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park is located in Homosassa Springs, 75 miles north of Tampa on U.S. 19 and 90 miles northwest of Orlando.

JACKSONVILLE TRIATHLON SERIES, SPRINT #1

Little Talbot Island State Park

Date: Saturday, June 21, 7:30 a.m.

Description: This is the first of a three race series by DRC Sports on Little Talbot Island. The triathlon involves a quarter-mile ocean swim, 10-mile bike ride, and a 2-mile run. Registration and fees are required through DRC Sports. Free park pass available to participants through DRC Sports. For more information or to register please contact DRC Sports online at [DRC Sports](#) or by phone at 352-637-2475.

Fees: Registration and fees are required through DRC Sports.

Contact: DRC Sports, (352) 637-2475.

Directions: Take I-95 to Heckscher Drive (Milepost Exit # 358A) and then travel east for 17 miles.

WATERCOLOR WORKSHOP

Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park

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Date: Saturday, June 21, 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Description: Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park will host a watercolor workshop. Taught by Wally Reichert, the workshop is designed for beginning through intermediate levels and will cover all aspects of watercolor painting, including supplies, techniques, color theory and the painting of trees, skies, landscapes and buildings. Each participant will complete one painting matted and ready to frame.

Space is limited to six people. Students are encouraged to bring a bagged lunch and a favorite landscape photo.

Fees: Cost for the four-hour class is \$35.00, which includes supplies and park admission.

Contact: (386) 397-1920.

Directions: Located on U.S. 41 in White Springs. **From I-75 to State Road 136** (Exit # 439), travel east on State Road 136 for three miles. Turn left on U.S. 41. Park entrance is on the left. **From I-10 to U.S. 41 North** (Exit # 301), travel nine miles to White Springs. Park entrance is on the left.

FLORIDA'S EXOTIC PLANTS

Little Talbot Island State Park

Date: Sunday, June 22, 1:00 p.m.

Description: Join a park ranger to learn about Florida's exotic and invasive plant species and why they pose a continuous threat to conservation. The program will take place at pavilion one on Little Talbot Island. Reservations are not necessary.

Fees: This program is free with regular park admission.

Contact: (904) 251-2320.

Directions: Take I-95 to Heckscher Drive (Milepost Exit # 358A) and then travel east for 17 miles.

FLORIDA'S EXOTIC INSECTS

Little Talbot Island State Park

Date: Sunday, June 28, 11:00 a.m.

Description: Join a park ranger to learn about Florida's exotic and invasive insect species and why they pose a continuous threat to conservation. The program will take place at pavilion Ten on Little Talbot Island. Reservations are not necessary.

Fees: This program is free with regular park admission.

Contact: (904) 251-2320.

Directions: Take I-95 to Heckscher Drive (Milepost Exit # 358A) and then travel east for 17 miles.

Central Florida

TURTLE TALK: A SEA TURTLE'S JOURNEY

Gamble Rogers Memorial State Recreation Area at Flagler Beach

Date: Friday, June 6, 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Description: Join a Park Ranger to learn about the life journey of a sea turtle. Sea turtle nesting season began May 1st. Participants will learn how they can enjoy the beach while helping to protect these

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ancient creatures. Participants will discover the park's role in ensuring the future of sea turtles. Participants will learn about the different species that frequent Florida beaches, the life cycle of a loggerhead sea turtle and the perils sea turtles face throughout their journey through life.

Fees: Regular park admission fees apply.

Contact: (386) 517-2086.

Directions: From I-95: Whether traveling north or south on I-95, take Exit # 284 (State Road 100). Turn east onto State Road 100 and travel approximately three miles to A1A (and the ocean). At the light turn right (south) and travel approximately another three miles. The Ranger Station will be located on the drive to your right and our day use beach facilities will be on the left.

From Daytona: Take A1A north to approximately one mile north of the Flagler/Volusia County line (approximately 18 miles). The Ranger Station will be located on the drive to your left and our day use beach facilities will be to your right.

From Ormond Beach: Take West Granada (40) east, across the Halifax River, to A1A. Turn left (north) on A1A and travel approximately 11 miles (one mile north of the Flagler/Volusia County line). The Ranger Station will be located on the drive to your left and our day use beach facilities will be to your right.

From Palm Coast: Take Palm Coast Parkway east across the Intracoastal Waterway (toll bridge) to A1A. Turn left (south) on A1A and travel approximately 11 miles. The park is located on A1A. The Ranger Station will be on the drive to your right and our day use beach facilities will be to your left.

Avoid the toll: Take Palm Coast parkway east to Colbert Lane. Turn right (south) on Colbert Lane and travel approximately seven miles to State Road 100. Turn left (east) on State Road 100 and travel approximately 1.5 miles to A1A. Turn right on A1A and travel about three miles. The Ranger Station will be located on the drive to your right and our day use beach facilities will be to your left.

From St. Augustine: Take A1A south for approximately 32 miles to State Road 100. Continue straight through the light and travel approximately another three miles to the park. The Ranger Station will be located on the drive on your right and our day use beach facilities will be located on your left.

BEACH BASH

Anastasia State Park

Date: Saturday, June 7, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Description: Fun filled family day of guided walks, a scavenger hunt and a sandcastle/sculpture contest. Prizes, music and fun for all ages.

Fees: Event is free with regular park admission fees.

Contact: (904) 461-2033.

Directions: From I-95 take Exit # 311. Go east on State Road 207. Turn right on State Road 312. Turn left on A1A. Travel approximately 1.5 miles north to main park entrance. (Turn right after The Surf Station.)

From US-1 turn east onto State Road 312. Turn north (left) on A1A. Travel approximately 1.5 miles north to main park entrance. (Turn right after The Surf Station.)

A DAY WITH NATURE

Anastasia State Park

Date: Saturday, June 28, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Description: Visit Anastasia State Park to enjoy the natural and cultural treasures our state park has to

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offer. This event will feature a combination of programs: bird and eco walks, information booths, seminars, hands-on nature crafts, nature games for kids, native plants and natural foods.

Fees: \$5.00 entrance fee/per car.

Contact: (904) 461-2033.

Directions: **From I-95** take Exit # 311. Go east on State Road 207. Turn right on State Road 312. Turn left on A1A. Travel approx. 1.5 miles north to main park entrance. (Turn right after The Surf Station.) **From U.S. 1** turn east onto State Road 312. Turn north (left) on A1A. Travel approx 1.5 miles north to main park entrance. (Turn right after The Surf Station.)

Southwest Florida

[NATIONAL TRAILS DAY WALK IN THE PARK](#)

[Hillsborough River State Park](#)

Date: Saturday, June 7, 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Description: The Suncoast Sandpipers Volkssport Club and Hillsborough River State Park are hosting noncompetitive walks open to everyone. Participants will be given written directions and follow a marked trail. Water will be provided at checkpoints. The event is sanctioned by the American Volkssport Association. Registration will be in the recreation hall at Parking lot #3. Lunch will be on sale after the walk. Camping, a café and swimming pool are available within the park.

Fees: Volkssport credit is \$1. Walk fee is \$2; children walk for free. There is a \$4 charge per vehicle to enter the park, up to 8 people.

Contact: (813) 987-6771.

Directions: Hillsborough River State Park is located nine miles north of Tampa and six miles south of Zephyrhills on U.S. Highway 301. **From I-75 Southbound** from Ocala take State Road 54, Exit #279 east to Highway 301. Travel south for six miles. The park will be on your right. **From I-75 Northbound** from Tampa, take the Fowler Avenue Exit #265 east to Highway 301. Travel north for nine miles. The park will be on your left. **From I-4 Westbound** take Exit # 10. Go north on County Road 579 to Highway 301. Follow the signs and go north seven miles. The park will be on your left. **From I-4 Eastbound** take Exit # 7 (be careful of the merges) and go north on Highway 301 for 14 miles. The park will be on your left.

South Florida

[NATIONAL TRAILS DAY](#)

[Savannas Preserve State Park](#)

Date: Saturday, June 7, 9:00 a.m.

Description: Celebrate National Trails Day by taking one of three free guided walks exploring some of the Savannas more off-the-beaten path trails:

At 9:00 a.m., we'll explore the one mile loop through diverse habitats at Hawk's Bluff.

Join us at 10:00 a.m. for a walk to the North Fork of the Saint Lucie River, where a new boardwalk was

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recently installed. Call ahead to reserve a spot and receive driving instructions.

Fees: Free with park admission.

Contact: (772) 398-2779.

Directions: The Environmental Education Center is located approximately two miles east of U.S. 1 on Walton Road in Port St. Lucie.

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