

The Great Florida Birding Trail Update

Fall 2001

Coordinator's Note

I recently visited the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail, after which our trail was modeled. Not only did I see great birds, I came away proud of our Trail: it does justice to the innovative idea Texas pioneered.

But while a map and signage are essential to a successful birding trail, the real conservation effects result from birder visibility. If we are recognized as birders, our expenditures can reinforce the value of wildlands; if we aren't, communities assume we're traditional tourists, for whom they pave and drain.

As you're giddy with this migration, take a moment: chat with your waitress about where you went birding. Wear your binoculars when you pay for your gas. Leave a birder calling card at check out. Not only is this a great season to *see* birds, it's a great season to *save* birds. We wouldn't have it any other way...

Happy birding!

Julie Brashears, Birding Trail Coordinator
FL Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission
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The birders are HERE!

The East Florida Trail has been enjoying considerable success since its unveiling last November. In our first nine months, we've distributed nearly 80,000 copies of the commemorative guide, and requests have poured in via the internet and telephone from over 45 states and 6 foreign countries. The birders are HERE! The guide (as well as some other publications) are now available on www.floridabirdingtrail.com. As time passes, information about Trail sites changes too; you will always be able to find the most current version of the Birding Trail guide on the Web site.

East Florida highway signage...

directing birders to Trail sites is being installed this fall. These signs should help Trail users with navigation, and help communities recognize the presence and economic impacts of birders in their areas! The book, *Guide to the East Florida Birding Trail*, should be available in major bookstores in late spring 2002.

Forget your optics?

Wanna "test drive" a new pair?

Through the generosity of **Eagle Optics, Redfield, Weaver and Simmons**, we are able to provide killer optics for loan at the three Gateway sites (Ft. Clinch, Merritt Island and Tenoroc)! The optics are housed at these sites' visitor centers and are available for loan with the deposit of a driver's license or major credit card. The use of the optics is free, and pricing and specifications are available on each pair of optics. We'll warn you though: on a recent field trip where we debuted the loaner optics, few birds were seen... because birders were so busy coveting each others' optics! Check them out when you get a chance, and let us know what you think!

West Florida Site Nominations

The groundtruthing process for the West Florida nominations should begin in October. Julie will visit each nominated site to gauge its appropriateness for the Trail. Sites not only need to have good birdwatching opportunities, but also need to be reasonably accessible and be able to sustain the level of visitation the Trail will bring. Land managers will be contacted in advance to set up a meeting time and location for the site visit.

Panhandle: We're coming!!

Lots of requests have been coming from the Panhandle Section (Jefferson Co. west to Alabama). Site nominations will open for this section in Spring 2002, so you have plenty of time; in the interim, to inventory your area's sites, meet with interested land managers and compile bird lists, so that you're ready when it's time. If you've received this update, that means you're on our mailing list and will receive notification automatically when nominations open in your area.

Sponsorships Available!

Businesses and individuals are being invited to sponsor the Trail. Five levels of sponsorship, ranging from \$5 to \$20,000, help to make site improvements, extended print runs and special educational opportunities available on the Trail. Recognition varies with each level. Interested? Contact Beverly Geist for a packet (geistb@gfc.state.fl.us, 850/488.8755).

BOEING

Special thanks to the Boeing Company for its Bronze Level sponsorship of the Birding Trail! These funds will help support Birding Trail sites and publications for East Florida.

Florida's Fall Birding Festivals

A current listing of festivals, presentations and events can always be found on
www.floridabirdingtrail.com.

Date	Nearest City	Title	Web site	Phone
October 4 - 7, 2001	Clearwater	Florida Birding Festival	www.pcef.org/FBF	(727) 464-4600
October 11-14, 2001	Port St. Joe	Panhandle Birding & Wildflower Festival	www.birdfestival.org	(850) 229-9464
October 12-14, 2001	Marathon	Florida Keys Birding & Wildlife Festival	www.hawkwatch.org/keysfest.htm	(305) 872-0774
November 7-11, 2001	Titusville	Space Coast Birding & Wildlife Festival	www.nbbd.com/fly	(321) 268-5224

This update is made possible, in part, by:

EcoFlorida magazine

Your Guide to Exploring Natural Florida

We're proud to support the Great Florida Birding Trail!

Read about your favorite birds and other wildlife in EcoFlorida. A subscription brings you four issues of natural areas, wildlife, ecotours and unique experiences for \$12. Sign up at ecofloridamag.com or write to

Raptor Migration Hotspots!

Birds aren't the only ones made restless by diminishing hours of daylight! While most people associate fall with back to school and Halloween, we happy few know what it really means: warblers and shorebirds and waterfowl (oh, my!).

There's a migratory phenomenon many of us overlook, however. Raptors bound for Latin America funnel down the peninsula, skipping across the Straits to Cuba before continuing on to points southward.

For a good look, check out the following:

Swallow-tailed Kites:

Check open fields near water statewide, especially in Glades and Hendry counties; also **Lake Woodruff National Wildlife Refuge** (Volusia Co.). These long-distance dynamos start early, clearing out of Florida by early September. In the months preceding, they form groups called "kettles," in numbers of a few birds to more than 100, and share communal roosts as they move south together. To learn more, visit **Audubon Center for Birds of Prey's** Web site: www.adoptabird.org/kitesite/

Peregrine Falcons:

These bird-eaters cruise southward along the Atlantic dune line, picking off peeps as their appetite demands. Atlantic beach spots where you can get a good view up the dune line include **Huguenot Memorial Park** (near Jacksonville), **Guana River State Park and Wildlife Management Area** (near St. Augustine) and **Canaveral National Seashore** (on the Space Coast). **Guana River State Park** in particular has a dune line overlook prime for peregrine spotting, particularly during the first half of October.

Raptor Overload:

HawkWatch International has hosted a remarkable raptor survey and banding station in the **Middle Keys** for several years, taking advantage of the funneling effect the Keys have on the groups of migrating raptors bound for Cuba and beyond. It is estimated that more than 26,000 raptors move through the Keys from mid-September

through mid-November... and the public can join this effort! Assist with counts and view the capture and banding of these birds from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sept. 15- Nov. 13 at Curry Hammock State Park (at mile marker 56 just north of Marathon). Large groups need to make advance reservations by emailing <keysmigration@hotmail.com>. The project is also featured at the **Keys Birding and Wildlife Festival** in October. For details: www.hawkwatch.org/keysmigration

Don't be a bashful birder!

So often as birders, our polite and unassuming natures can render us invisible as visitors. Unidentifiable as ecotourists, we are frequently presumed to be traditional tourists, for whose dollars communities continue to pave and drain. Here are tips on being more visible in the communities where you bird. Don't be a bashful birder: let your hobby call attention to the value of birds!

Say NO to birding incognito!

Help communities recognize you as a birder!

- Wear birding shirts, pins and hats.
- Leave birder calling cards anywhere you spend money (a template is available on www.floridabirdingtrail.com).
- Birding car window decals or bumper stickers demonstrate your affiliation wherever you go.

Conversational Topics for Unabashed Birders

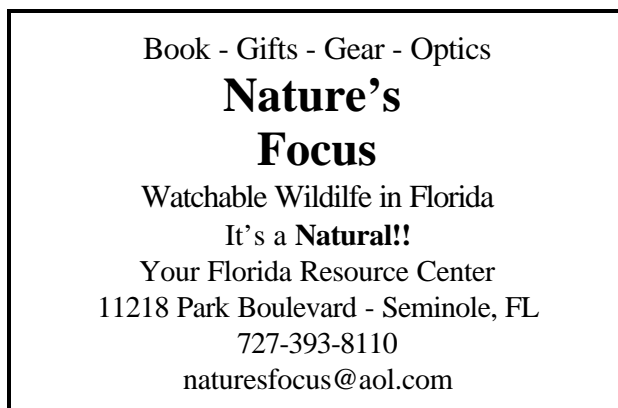
- **ASK** about specific species and local birding sites. Even if they don't have an answer, it will get them thinking about birds and birding in their area... and economy.
- **PRAISE** businesses for their use of native, bird-friendly plants in landscaping.
- **COMPLIMENT** individuals on the amount and quality of community wildlands and birding facilities. Help communities build a sense of pride in and ownership of their area's natural resources.
- **OFFER** to let passersby look through your optics at whatever bird you're viewing. Share with them what you know about the bird. Enthusiasm is contagious!

Looking to buy a new pair of optics soon?

Should you choose to purchase them online from **Eagle Optics**, be sure to access their Web site from the link on the sponsor's page of www.floridabirdingtrail.com ! Eagle has agreed to donate a percentage of all sales made via the Birding Trail's Web site to the Great Florida Birding Trail program. These funds will be combined with sponsorships and advertising revenue to finance site improvements, publication printing and conservation education in Florida's communities.

Thanks to Eagle for their support of the Birding Trail and conservation in Florida!

This update made possible, in part, by:



EFBT Guide Corrections for 1st, 2nd and 3rd Printings:

By December 2001, we will have distributed three editions of the East Florida Section commemorative guide, totaling more than 105,000 copies. With such a large and diverse group of sites, things are constantly changing, so each edition of the guide has revisions. To make sure you have the most current information on Birding Trail sites, we've compiled a list of these corrections for you to clip and add to your copy of the commemorative guide.

How to use the corrections sheet:

To determine which edition you own, look on the back of your commemorative guide (when completely folded). In the bottom left corner, look for the "edition number." There are three options. If this space is marked:

- C** **No date:** You own one of the original 5000 guides printed. All of the corrections on this addendum apply to your copy of the guide.
- C** **Rev. 1/01:** Your guide came from the second print run. Only the corrections within the dotted line apply to your copy.
- C** **Rev. 6/01:** Your guide is from the third print run. Only the corrections within the solid line apply to your copy of the guide.

Clip the corrections addendum and keep it in your copy of the Commemorative Guide.

These corrections will also be available on www.floridabirdingtrail.com. The Web site PDF version of the guide will always reflect all changes made to date. Additional corrections sheets will be issued either annually or every 100,000 guides distributed.

*East Florida Birding Trail
Commemorative Guide*

Corrections Addendum

September 2001

*All corrections on both sides of this addendum apply to guides from the **first print run.***

<u>Site #</u>	<u>Corrected Information</u>	<u>Site #</u>	<u>Corrected Information</u>
3	Amelia Island State Park Name change	55	Mead Gardens Directions: From I-4 north of downtown Orlando, take SR 426/Fairbanks Av east towards Winter Park to Denning Dr. Turn right (S) on Denning Dr. and proceed 0.5 miles to Garden Dr. Turn left (E). Mead Gardens is at end of road. (407) 599-3334 www.ci.winter-park.fl.us
6	E. Dale Joyner Nature Preserve Reservations necessary.	62	Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge www.nbbd.com/godo/minwr
9	Ft. George Cultural State Park Name change	63	Canaveral National Seashore www.nbbd.com/godo/cns Entrance fee
14	Jennings State Forest www.fl-dof.com	66/67	Buck Lake Conservation Area http://sjr.state.fl.us
20	Ft. Mantanzas National Monument No reservations necessary	68	Seminole Ranch Conservation Area http://sjr.state.fl.us
23	Washington Oaks Gardens State Park Name change	69	Parrish Park www.brevardparks.com
24	Ravine Gardens State Park (386) 329-3721	71	Hatbill Park www.brevardparks.com
26	Welaka State Forest www.fl-dof.com	73	Tibet-Butler Preserve http://parks.onetgov.net
31	Ocklawaha Prairie Restoration Area http://sjr.state.fl.us	76	Moss Park http://parks.onetgov.net
33	Bulow Creek State Park (386) 676-4050	83	J.G. Bourbeau Park www.brevardparks.com
34	North Peninsula State Park Name change	84	Kelly Park www.brevardparks.com
37	Sunnyhill Restoration Area http://sjr.state.fl.us	85	Port's End Park www.portcanaveral.org
38/39	Emeralda Marsh Conservation Area http://sjr.state.fl.us	86	Jetty Maritime Park www.portcanaveral.org
40	Hidden Waters Preserve (352) 383-3777	90	Saddle Creek Park www.polk-county.net/ Community_Services/parks/index.htm
41	Lake George State Forest www.fl-dof.com	94	Eagle Ridge Mall No Web site address
50	Seminole State Forest www.fl-dof.com		
51	Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park Name change		

Site # Corrected Information

- 95 Lake Kissimmee State Park**
Directions: Boy Scout *Camp* Road
- 98 Ridge Audubon Nature Center**
Open 9:30a.m. to 2:30p.m. Nature Trail open dawn to dusk. Email: Raudubon@cs.com
- 102/103 Joe Overstreet Landing & Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area**
Directions: Vermont Ave.= Canoe Creek Rd.
- 109 Erna Nixon Park** www.brevardparks.com
- 113 Honest John's Fish Camp**
No longer offers guided boat tours; kayaks, motorboats and canoes available for rent. No reservations necessary.
Open 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (321)727-2923
- 114 T.M. Goodwin Waterfowl Management Area**
<http://wld.fwc.state.fl.us/duck>
- 115/116 St. Sebastian River State Buffer Preserve**
www.dep.state.fl.us
- 117 Sebastian Inlet State Park**
Name change
- 119 Blue Cypress Conservation Area**
<http://sjr.state.fl.us>
- 120 Indian River Wetlands Treatment Facility**
No hunting allowed at site.
- Map #21** U.S. Hwy 17 should be U.S. Hwy 27.
- 128 Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park**
Name change
- 133 Ft. Pierce Inlet State Park** (name change)
- 136 Savannas Preserve State Park**
Name change

Donations address: GFBT, P.O. Box 6181,
Tallahassee, FL 32314-6181

Guide Book: will be available Summer 2002.

Only corrections surrounded by the dotted line apply to the second print run, "Rev. 1/01."

Area codes for the following site numbers changed from (904) to (386):

24 25 26 32 33 34 38 39
41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48
63 64 66 67

96 Bok Tower Gardens
(863) 676-1408

Only corrections surrounded by the solid line apply to the third print run, "Rev. 6/01."

132 Florida Ranch Tours
NO LONGER OPEN

The Web address for all State Parks has changed to:

<http://www8.myflorida.com/communities/learn/stateparks/index.html>

This change applies to the following site numbers:

1 3 4 5 9 15 17 19
21 23 24 30 33 34 35 42
44 45 49 51 52 61 72 95
117 122 125 128 133 136