



play

parks & preserves

“On the St. Johns River, boaters can enjoy fishing, sightseeing, riverside parks and even restaurants.”

BAKER COUNTY

{Glen St. Mary, Macclenny}

■ John M. Bethea State Forest

259-2157

11656 SR 2, Sanderson

www.fl-dof.com/state_forests/john_bethea.html

This 37,736-acre forest establishes a continuous wildlife corridor between the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge and the Osceola National Forest. Reforestation efforts, following catastrophic wildfires, ensure visitors will continue to enjoy the three miles of river front along the St. Marys River. In addition to reforestation efforts, plans are underway to develop a 13-mile horseback riding trail along established forest roads and fire lines. Recreational activities include camping, hunting, fishing, canoeing and kayaking.

■ Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge

912-496-7836

2700 Suwannee Canal Rd., Folkston, GA

www.fws.gov/okefenokee

Though the East Entrance of the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge is technically in Georgia, this unique Southern wilderness swamp is just a 30-minute drive from Callahan. Wild, mysterious and expansive, Native Americans called the region, Okefenoka, meaning “Land of the Trembling Earth.” The refuge encompasses almost 400,000 acres of cypress forest, marsh, lakes and islands. Visitors can see alligators, sandhill cranes and red-cockaded woodpeckers, in addition to more than 400 animal species. Witness the vast refuge through a guided boat tour, or strike out on foot using the park’s winding boardwalks and trails, which feature observation towers and viewing platforms.

■ Osceola National Forest

386-752-2577

US 90, Olustee

www.fs.usda.gov/osceola

Nearly 200,000 acres of forested woodlands and swamps await exploration in this Baker County treasure. The forest area provides a wide range of recreational activities for residents and visitors including camping, hiking, swimming, fishing, hunting and wildlife viewing. Some recreational activities require a pass or permit.

CLAY COUNTY

{Fleming Island, Green Cove Springs, Keystone Heights, Middleburg, Orange Park, Penney Farms}

■ Camp Chowenwaw Park

529-8058

1517 Ball Rd., Green Cove Springs

www.claycountygov.com/campchow

Visitors to Camp Chowenwaw Park might see alligators, deer, eagles, manatees, otters, tortoises and more. Located south of Fleming Island, the park sits on 150 acres between Black Creek and Peters Creek. In the park, visitors can enjoy camping, canoeing, fishing, hiking, swimming, picnicking, environmental classes, horseshoes and more.

Top: Walter Jones Historical Park – JAX Chamber
Right (Pg. 107): Gator – Art Webster/USFWS

Jennings State Forest

291-5530

1337 Long Horn Rd., Middleburg

www.fl-dof.com/state_forests/jennings.html

Managed by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Jennings State Forest features 25,266 acres of wetlands and uplands. The forest is open during daylight hours for hunting, bicycling, canoeing, horseback riding and wildlife viewing. Two hiking trails and more than 15 different natural biological communities make Jennings State Forest a great place to get back to nature.

DUVAL COUNTY

{Atlantic Beach, Baldwin, Jacksonville,
Jacksonville Beach, Neptune Beach}

Big Talbot Island State Park

251-2320

SR A1A N., Jacksonville

www.floridastateparks.org/bigtalbotisland

Primarily a natural preserve ideal for bird-watching and photography, Big Talbot Island State Park provides an opportunity to explore a natural sea island preserve by boat or on foot. Fishing and kayaking tours are available through Kayak Amelia (888-305-2925). Two hiking trails lead explorers to the shoreline (Blackrock Trail) or through the unaffected marshland (Big Pine Trail). Have a picnic at one of the park's pavilions or stroll down to Boneyard Beach, famous for salt-washed skeletons of live oak and cedar trees that once grew on the shore.

Little Talbot Island State Park

251-2320

12157 Heckscher Dr., Jacksonville

www.floridastateparks.org/littletalbotisland

More than five miles of white, sandy beaches, desert-like dunes and undisturbed salt marshes make Little Talbot Island State Park an ideal spot to view wildlife in its natural habitat. Nature lovers can see river otters, marsh rabbits, bobcats and a variety of native and migratory birds in the park, which is one of the few remaining undeveloped barrier islands in Northeast Florida. The park features a full-facility campground, kayak rentals and guided paddle tours.



Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve

641-7155

12713 Fort Caroline Rd., Jacksonville

www.nps.gov/foca

One of the last unspoiled coastal wetlands on the Atlantic Coast, Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve features salt marshes, coastal dunes and hardwood hammocks. The preserve includes several facilities for visitors to explore in addition to the preserve's lush natural resources. The Fort Caroline National Memorial provides a look at the short-lived French presence in 16th century Florida; the Timucuan Preserve Visitor Center showcases the natural environment in Northeast Florida and how humans have interacted with that environment for thousands of years; and the Kingsley Plantation provides a look at 19th century plantation life.

NASSAU COUNTY

{Amelia Island, Bryceville, Callahan,
Fernandina Beach, Hilliard, Yulee}

Four Creeks State Forest

845-4933

3742 Clint Dr., Hilliard

www.fl-dof.com/state_forests/four_creeks.html

Named after the four water systems that course through its boundaries, Alligator, Thomas, Boggy and Plummer creeks, this Nassau County property includes 13,147 acres. Residents can watch this natural treasure come to fruition, as the Florida Forest Service carries out its five-year plan to establish a first-rate recreational system in the forest. Activities will include hiking, hunting, fishing, canoeing, kayaking, bicycling and horseback riding.

AREA NEIGHBORHOOD MAP COLOR KEY *(Please Visit Page 19)*

BAKER COUNTY	CLAY COUNTY	DUVAL COUNTY	NASSAU COUNTY	ST. JOHNS COUNTY
	Fleming Island	Arlington/Ft. Caroline	Amelia Island/ Fernandina Beach	Julington Creek
	Green Cove Springs	Beaches/Intracoastal	Callahan	Nocatee
	Keystone Heights	Downtown/Riverfront	Hilliard	Ponte Vedra Beach
	Middleburg	Mandarin	Yulee	St. Augustine
	Orange Park	Oceanway		World Golf Village



ST. JOHNS COUNTY

{Hastings, Julington Creek, Ponte Vedra Beach,
St. Augustine, St. Augustine Beach}

Anastasia State Park

461-2033

1340-A SR A1A S., St. Augustine

www.floridastateparks.org/anastasia

Anastasia State Park is a full-facility campground with more than four miles of pristine beach, a tidal salt marsh, and a maritime and upland hammock. Visitors enjoy hiking, beachcombing, swimming, picnicking, fishing, windsurfing, wildlife viewing, boating and more. Also in the park—an archeological site where coquina rock was mined to create the nearby Castillo de San Marcos fortress. The site provides a unique look into the ingenuity that defended Spanish claims in the New World for more than 300 years.

Faver-Dykes State Park

794-0997

1000 Faver-Dykes Rd., St. Augustine

www.floridastateparks.org/faverdykes

Bordering Pellicer Creek, this tranquil park is a popular site for bird-watching. More than 100 species can be seen during spring and fall migrations, including colorful wood warblers, eagles, falcons, wading birds, wood storks and heron. Other activities at the park include fishing, picnicking, nature walks and canoeing. A full-facility campground is also available for overnight stays.

Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve

823-4500

505 Guana River Rd., Ponte Vedra Beach

www.dep.state.fl.us/coastal/sites/gtm

Located halfway between Jacksonville and St. Augustine, the 9,815-acre preserve offers fishing, hunting, bird-watching and hiking. A protected area for a wide variety of fish and wildlife, the preserve features miles of scenic road through marshes, coastal xeric shrub and flatwoods available for hiking, biking and horseback riding.

Top Left: Treehill – JAX Chamber

Bottom Left: Camping at Hanna Park – JAX Chamber

Top Right: Barred Owl – Art Webster/USFWS

Bottom Center: Residents enjoying a stroll – JAX Chamber

Bottom Right: Leaving Mizel Prairie – Art Webster/USFWS