



Paddle Florida 2.0



As we enter our 12th season, we are excited at the prospect of increasing our participation and fulfilling our mission of raising awareness about water conservation, wildlife preservation, restoration of springs and protection of waterways in Florida.

So what are we doing differently? Call it Paddle Florida 2.0. First, we have established a new, reduced pricing schedule. Next, we are doubling our efforts to promote our mission through social media and other electronic means statewide, nationally and internationally.

As you read this, Paddle Florida staff is in Europe for a working vacation, promoting our 2019/2020 season (maybe we'll be able to attract participants from a 4th or 5th country).

We are also asking for the paddling community's help in distributing information about our upcoming season. So if you would like to assist in this effort, let us know. If you believe in our mission as much as we do, feel free to donate (you can do so from the bottom of the right hand column).

Celebrating Blueways and Trails in Everglades City

By Eric Draper, Director, Florida State parks

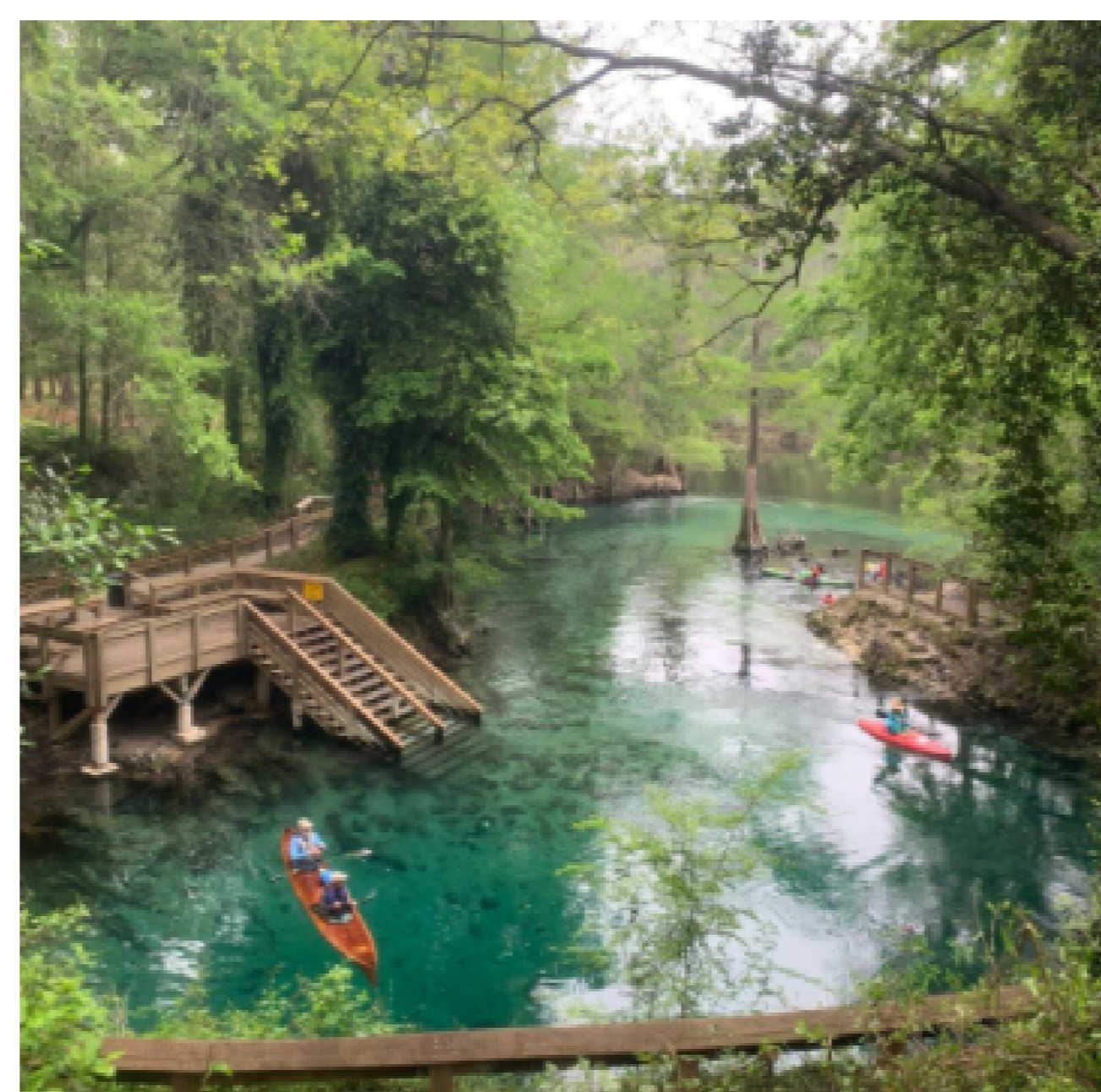


Photo: Paddlers at Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park near Everglades City can see wildlife like great blue herons and alligators as well as many species of rare plants.

During a recent visit to Everglades City, I saw some intrepid paddlers registering for a backcountry trip into Everglades National Park. An Everglades paddling expedition is on my bucket list and I was a little envious of the paddlers, whose car was loaded with gear for a multi-day adventure.

I was in Everglades City to celebrate its designation as a Florida Trail Town. The Florida Park Service created the Trail Town program in 2017 to recognize communities that embrace regional trails and provide amenities for trail users.

Florida State Parks Announced as Finalist for the 2019 National Gold Medal Awards in Parks and Recreation



The Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Florida Park Service was named a finalist for the 2019 National Gold Medal Awards for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management by the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration (AAPRA), in partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).

The Florida Park Service is a finalist in the State Parks category. Florida State Parks is the only three-time gold medal winning state park system. With over 800,000 acres, including 100 miles of beaches, Florida State Parks has a proud legacy of leading conservation and recreation in Florida.

1 million species under threat of extinction because of humans, biodiversity report finds

By Denise Chow, NBC News



A sweeping report assessing the state of the natural world found that humans are having an "unprecedented" and devastating effect on global biodiversity, with about 1 million animal and plant species now threatened with extinction.

A summary of the report's findings was released Monday by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, which was established in 2012 by the United Nations Environment Programme and includes representatives from 132 countries.

Robert Watson, the panel's chair and a professor of environmental sciences at the University of East Anglia in the U.K., said evidence collected over the past five decades from roughly 15,000 scientific and government studies paints "an ominous picture."

Florida Flora & Fauna Spotlight

FWC Bulletin: Sturgeon returning to the Suwannee River

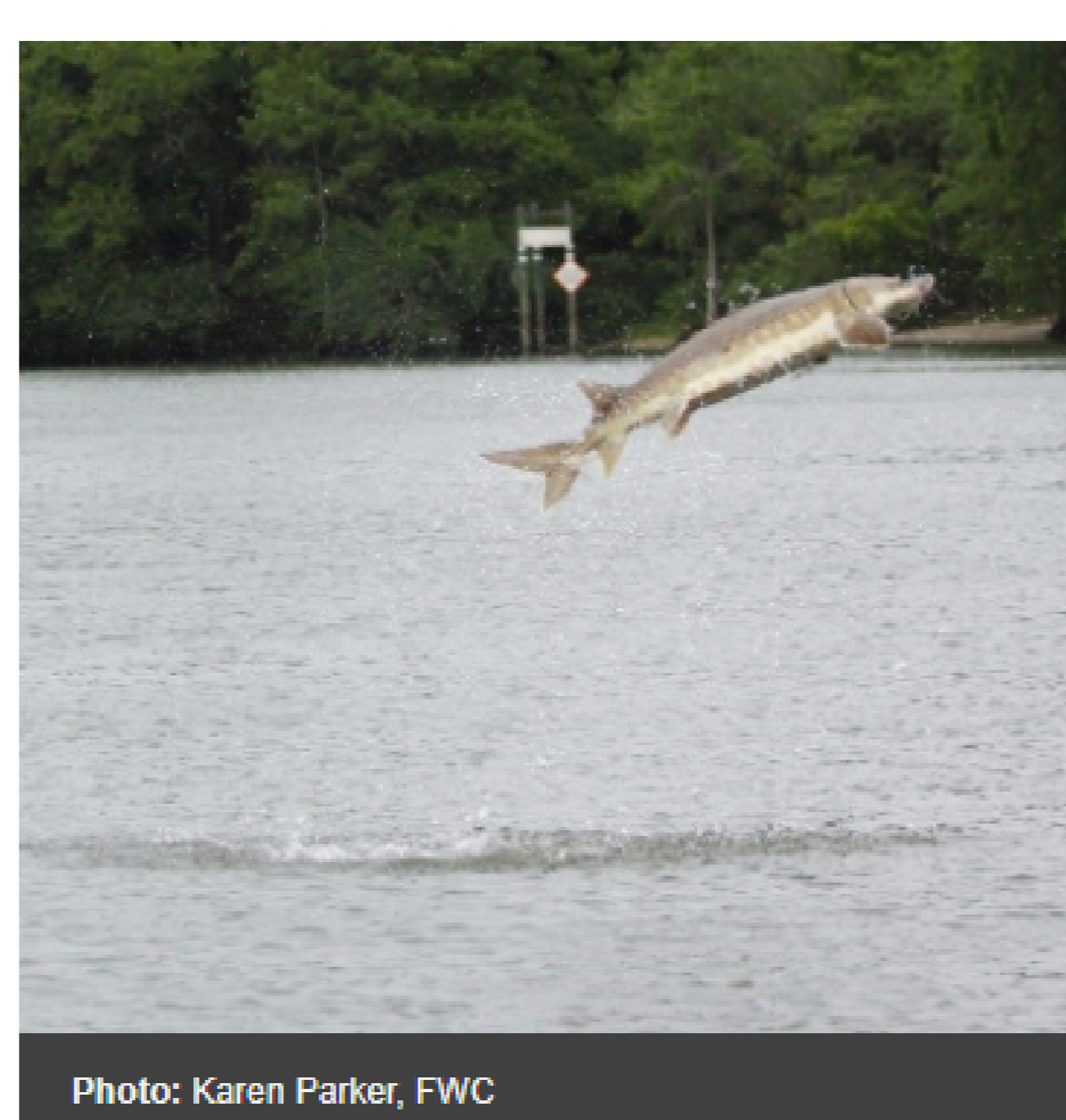


Photo: Karen Parker, FWC

Gulf sturgeon have begun their annual migration back into the Suwannee River, and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) officials want boaters to be aware that these jumping fish can injure people.

During 2018, only one sturgeon encounter with a boat was reported. There were no injuries to the boaters involved. Although no injuries were reported last year, FWC officials don't want the boating community to become complacent about the dangers posed by jumping Gulf sturgeon.

"We don't want even one person to be injured in an encounter with the fish," said Maj. Andy Krause, FWC regional commander. "We want people to be aware the sturgeon are back in the Suwannee and that the risk of injury to boaters does exist."



Inspiring. Meaningful. Adventure.

2019-20 Season

Suwannee River Wilderness Trail

October 18-23, 2019 Celebrate Florida's version of autumn on its most famous river. The trip spans 65 miles of the scenic Suwannee and a portion of the (northern) Withlacoochee, from Madison Blue Spring to Branford. This section features dozens of clear blue springs perfect for swimming and snorkeling.

Flagler Coastal Wildlife Festival

November 1-3, 2019 Paddle with dolphins, meet rescued sea turtles, and float by historic forts as you immerse yourself in the rich cultural history and natural beauty of Florida's northeast coast.

Wekiva/St. John's River Ramble

December 5-8, 2019 Join us for a paddle down the iconic Rock Springs Run, back to Wekiva Springs State Park, and on to Wilson's Landing in Seminole County as we camp in rustic cabins for the first two nights and at Wilson's Landing on the way to the finish at Blue Spring State Park in Volusia County.

Florida Keys Challenge

January 15-22, 2020 Paddle the azure coastal waters of the Middle Florida Keys, including the length of the famed 7-Mile Bridge, explore mangrove tunnels, and watch sea turtle surface beside your kayak, and enjoy a snorkeling trip out to Looe Key.

Wild, Wonderful Withlacoochee

February 13-16, 2020 Beginning at Lake Panasoffkee, paddlers will thread their way through hardwood swamps and tannic streams on a 60-mile journey to the Gulf of Mexico. The adventure includes a side trip to the colorful Rainbow River and its world class first magnitude spring.

Choctawhatchee Challenge

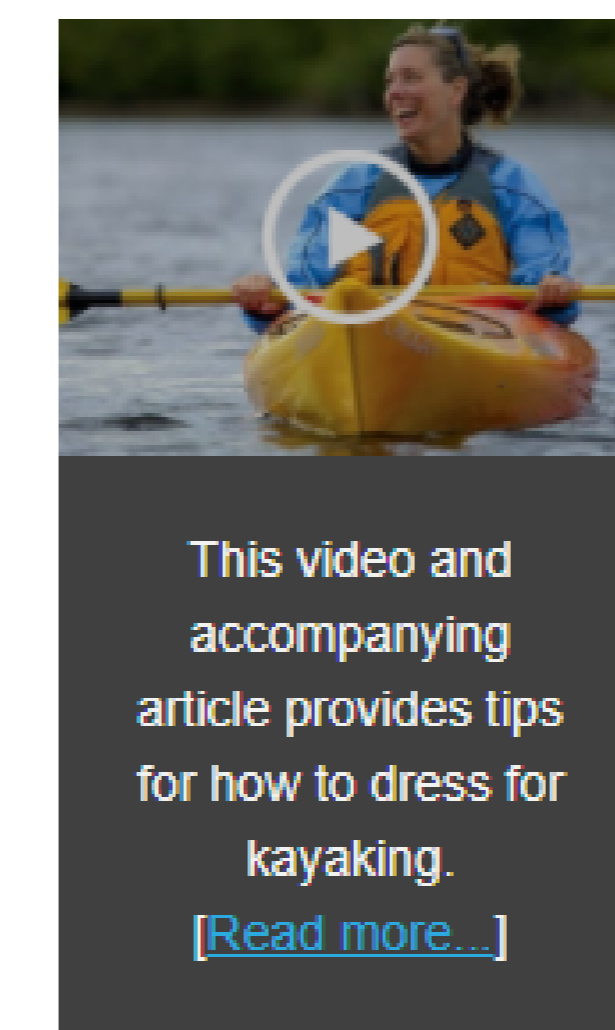
March 13-19, 2020 Get away from it all into the heart of the Panhandle as we paddle 56 miles of the mighty Choctawhatchee. This is a journey into Wild Florida where wildlife far outnumber humans, and paddlers can stumble upon spectacular springs.

Suwannee River Paddling Festival

April 3-5, 2020 With camping atop the bluff overlooking two beautiful rivers, our season-capping festival takes place at Suwannee River State Park near Live Oak. The weekend will offer supported 8-12 mile paddling options on both the Suwannee and Withlacoochee Rivers, a concert featuring Paddle Florida's favorite musicians, and educational presentations from regional waterway experts.

Note: Many of these trips have historically sold out before the registration deadline, so to ensure you have a spot, please register early.

How To: Dress for Kayaking



Like us on Facebook



Reconnect with paddling friends and make new ones on Paddle Florida's Facebook page. Our daily feeds provide updates on the news impacting Florida's waterways and wildlife as well as our upcoming trips.

Support Paddle Florida with AmazonSmile



As a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, Paddle Florida is dedicated to promoting water conservation, wildlife preservation, springs restoration, and waterways protection across Florida. You can help us meet our water conservation missions by (1) joining us on one or more paddling adventures scheduled annually on Florida's wild and scenic rivers and coastlines, or (2) donating to Paddle Florida via our secure PayPal connection or through AmazonSmile.

If you're an Amazon shopper, you can sign up for AmazonSmile at this link, and confirm your desire to support us. Amazon will then donate 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to Paddle Florida.



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