



Continuous monthly issues since June 2009!

Trip Spotlight: Flagler Coastal Wildlife Festival

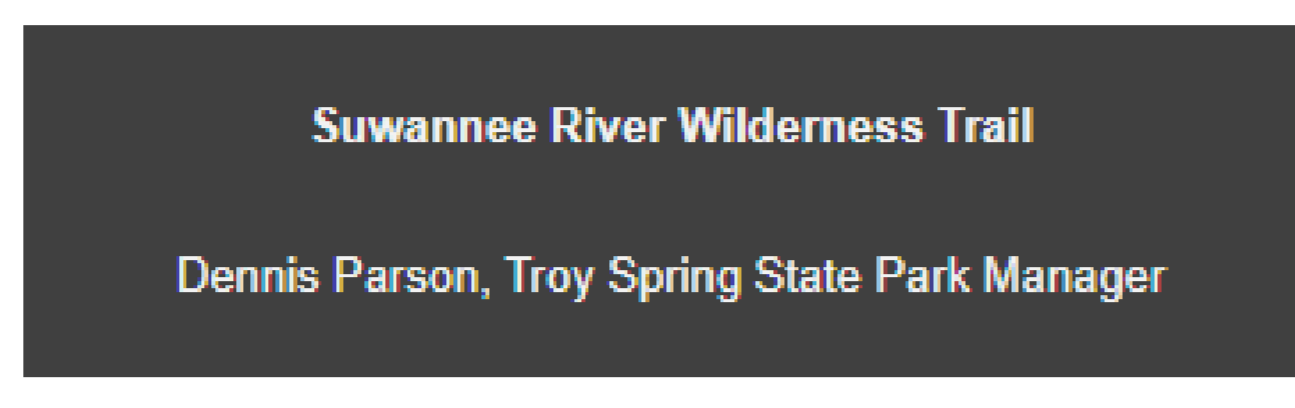


Photo: UF Whitney Lab for Marine Bioscience

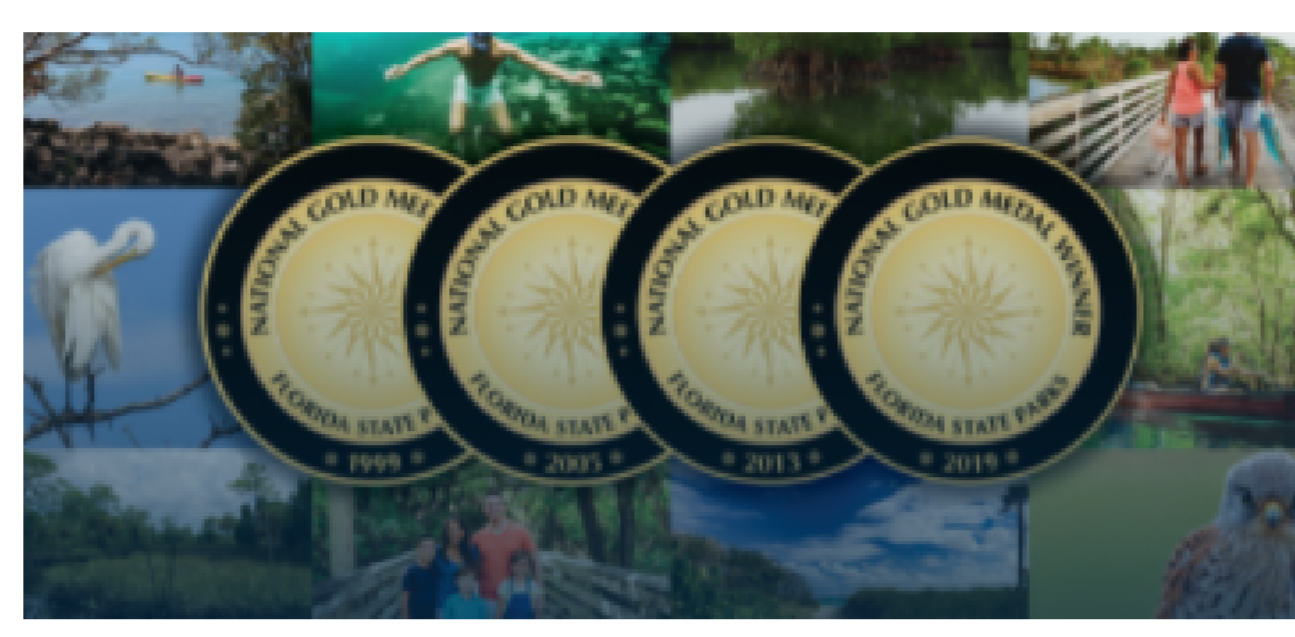
Join us next month for our third Flagler Coastal Wildlife Experience. Explore the intercoastal waterway on the Matanzas River near Flagler Beach on Florida's east coast.

Speaking of deadlines, the deadline for our 12th annual Fall Paddle Florida on the Suwannee River Wilderness Trail is October 4th.

Paddle Florida Program Update



Congratulations Florida State Parks, Four-time National Gold Medal Winner!



On Tuesday, September 24, the National Recreation and Parks Association, in partnership with the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration, announced Florida State Parks as the 2019 Gold Medal award winner.

This achievement makes Florida the first park system in the nation to win a fourth Gold Medal. Florida previously won the Gold Medal award in 1999, 2005 and 2013.

Movement grows in Florida to preserve nature and drinking water by granting legal rights to rivers

By Dave Plotkin, Orlando Weekly



Photo: CELDF

Efforts in five Florida counties could result in legally enforceable rights for rivers, as a way to save drinking water and ecosystems.

According to a release from the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF) and Speak Up Wekiva on Wednesday, grassroots groups in Alachua, Orange, Lee, Brevard, and Osceola counties are advancing county-wide laws to recognize the legally enforceable rights of the Santa Fe River, Wekiva River, Econlockhatchee River, Caloosahatchee River, Indian River Lagoon and the Kissimmee River.

The laws are being proposed in each county through the citizens' ballot initiative process or through county charter review commissions. In addition to "Rights of Nature," the proposed laws would also recognize rights of local residents to a healthy environment and clean water.



No time to cry for ailing springs

By Dr. Robert Knight

Executive Director, Howard T. Odum Florida Springs Institute

Last weekend, the Florida Springs Institute and Kings of the Springs environmental nonprofits came together to host a springs outing on the Chassahowitzka River in southern Citrus County.

The "Chaz," as regulars and locals call it, is a little-known but locally popular hangout on hot summer days. With its rope swings, wildlife and swim-through caves, it's no wonder this spring system has become such a beloved hangout spot for locals and visitors alike.

World health report raises concerns about microplastics in drinking water

By Pamela Falk, CBS News



Just when you thought it was safe to drink bottled water, a new U.N. report raises concerns about what you may be consuming: tiny particles of microplastics.

The just-published 124-page report from the World Health Organization (WHO) is the first major international study to examine the potential human health risks caused by exposure to microplastics in drinking water — and it found there are more microplastics present in bottled water than in tap water.

"Every day we are ingesting tiny, often microscopic pieces of plastic known as 'microplastics' with our food, beverages and the air we breathe," the report warns.

The adult human body, which is about 60% water, needs to be replenished with 2 to 3 quarts per day from drinking water and foods. But when water or food is packaged in plastics, and plastic waste gets into the environment, people end up with that in their systems, too.

IRS Required Minimum Distribution Rules and Gifts to Not-for-profits

By Tony Kendzior



Photo: John Reinsten

According to the AARP, about 10,000 Americans turn 70½ every day of the year. If you're in that group, and have money parked somewhere that you've identified as a retirement account, chances are you'll be persuaded to start taking a Required Minimum Distribution or RMD.

Some of you reading this may not need the money you are required to withdraw. Instead, you might prefer to direct your forced withdrawal amount to a properly configured not-for-profit enterprise. Paddle Florida is a good example.

Florida Flora & Fauna Spotlight

The "Coral Ark" hums with water pumps and creatures that look like small brains. There, I meet Kerl O'Neil, senior coral scientist at the Florida Aquarium.

By Steve Newborn, WUSF News



Photo: Steve Newborn, WUSF Public Media

The "Coral Ark" hums with water pumps and creatures that look like small brains. There, I meet Kerl O'Neil, senior coral scientist at the Florida Aquarium.

She's part scientist, part matchmaker.

"I've been called the Coral Whisperer, the Coral Queen, various different names," she laughs.

What O'Neil does is try to get coral to create little baby coral. It might not be as easy as it sounds. After all, coral spawns only once a year.

And just how do you get coral in the mood?

You just play a little Barry White. [Read more...]



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.

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 13-18, 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.

Choctawhatchee Challenge
March 13-19, 2020
Get away from it all into the heart of the Panhandle as we paddle 85 miles of the mighty Choctawhatchee. This is a journey into Wild Florida where wildlife far outnumber humans, and paddlers can stumble upon spectacular springs.

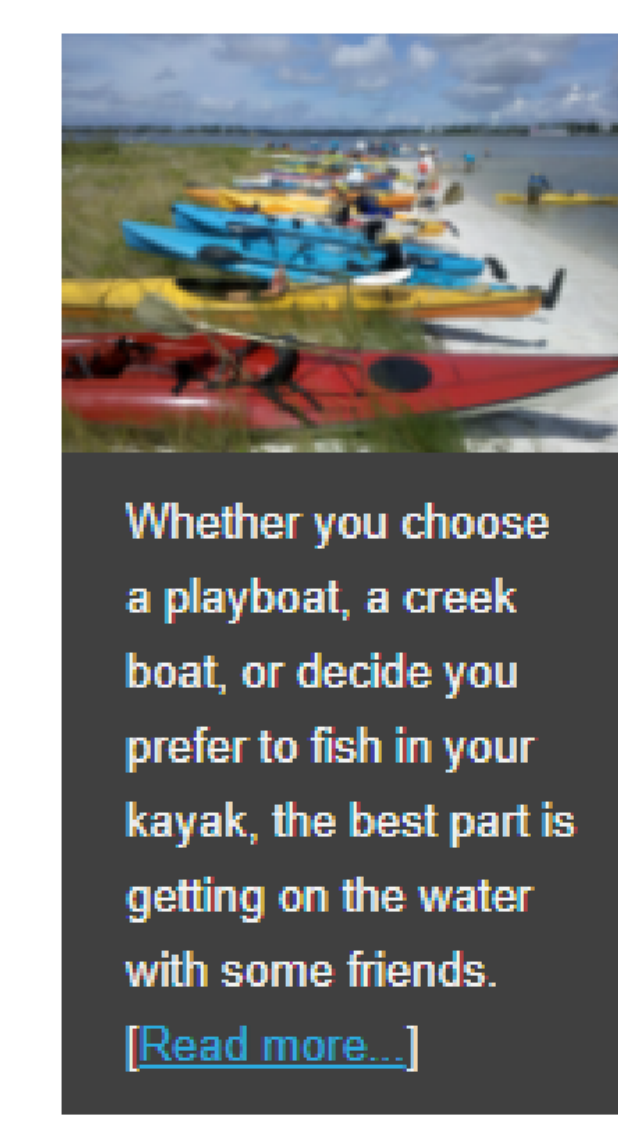
Suwannee River Paddling Festival
April 3-5, 2020
With camping atop the bluff overlooking two beautiful rivers, our season-capping festival takes place at Suwannee River State Park near Live Oak. The weekend will offer supported 8-12 mile paddling options on both the Suwannee and Withlacoochee Rivers,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

Earth Day Celebration: Eloti Bama Expedition on the Perdido River
April 11-16, 2020
Paddling the Florida/Alabama border, enjoy beach camping along a cozy meandering river to the more open waters of Perdido Bay as we explore the most diverse set of ecosystems of the season.

Earth Day Celebration: Springtime on the Ochlockonee
April 18-22, 2020
From wild Tupelo honey to fresh Gulf oysters, experience the Panhandle's Ochlockonee River which winds through state and national forest lands on 76 miles of Florida's most remote wilderness river trail.

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: Choose the Best Kayak For You



Whether you choose a playboat or a creek boat, or decide you prefer to fish in your kayak, the best part is getting on the water with some friends.

Upcoming Community Event
2019 WORLD TOUR PADDLING FILM FESTIVAL
Hosted by Alachua Conservation Trust
Date & Time: Saturday, October 5th
Doors open at 6 PM, films start at 6:30 PM
Location: Prairie Creek Lodge
7204 SE County Rd. 234
Gainesville, FL 32641
Buy tickets [here](#).

Like us on Facebook
28,253 fans and counting!

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. Send us your favorite photo depicting paddling in Florida and it might be selected as our "Picture of the Day!"

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.

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