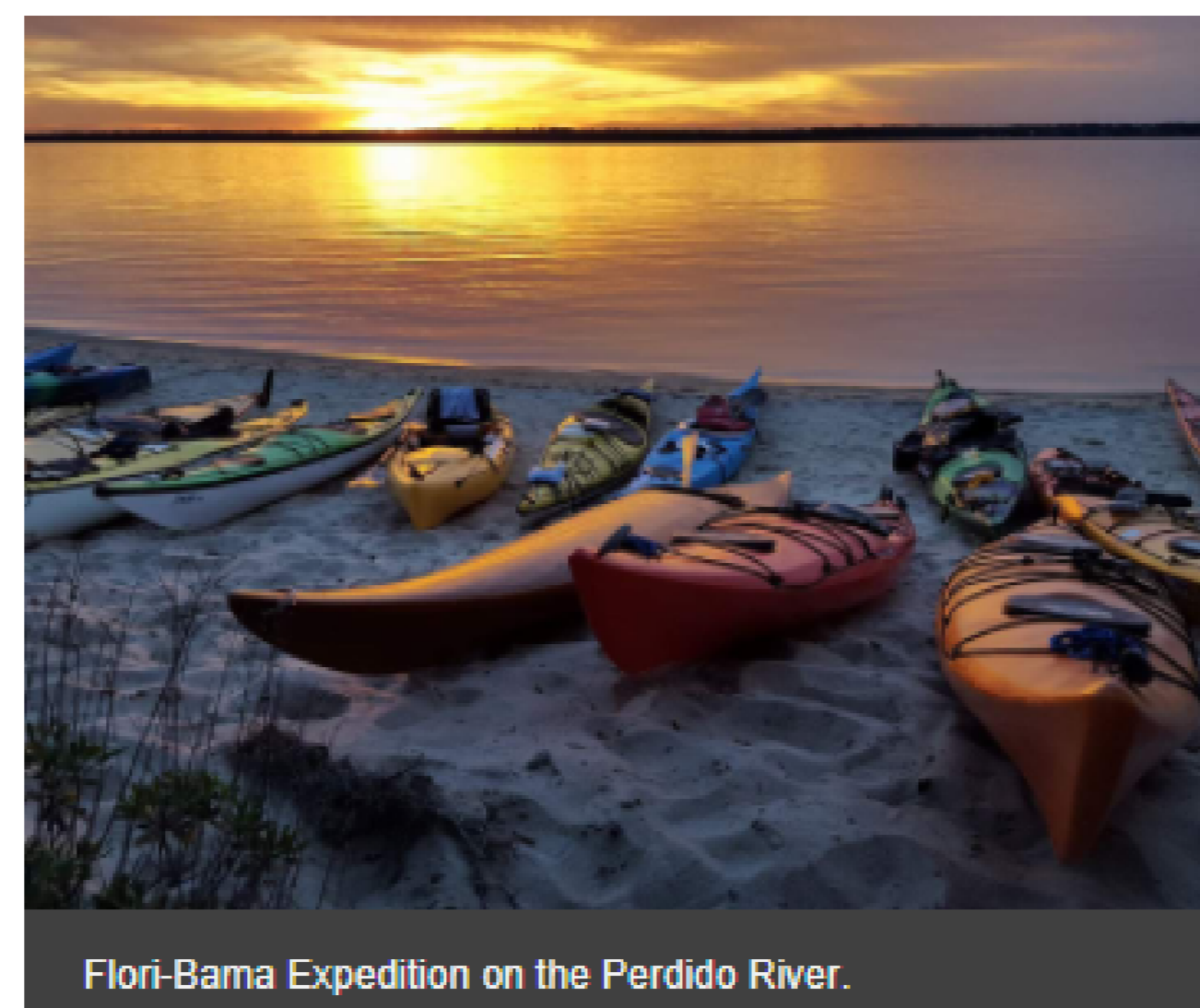


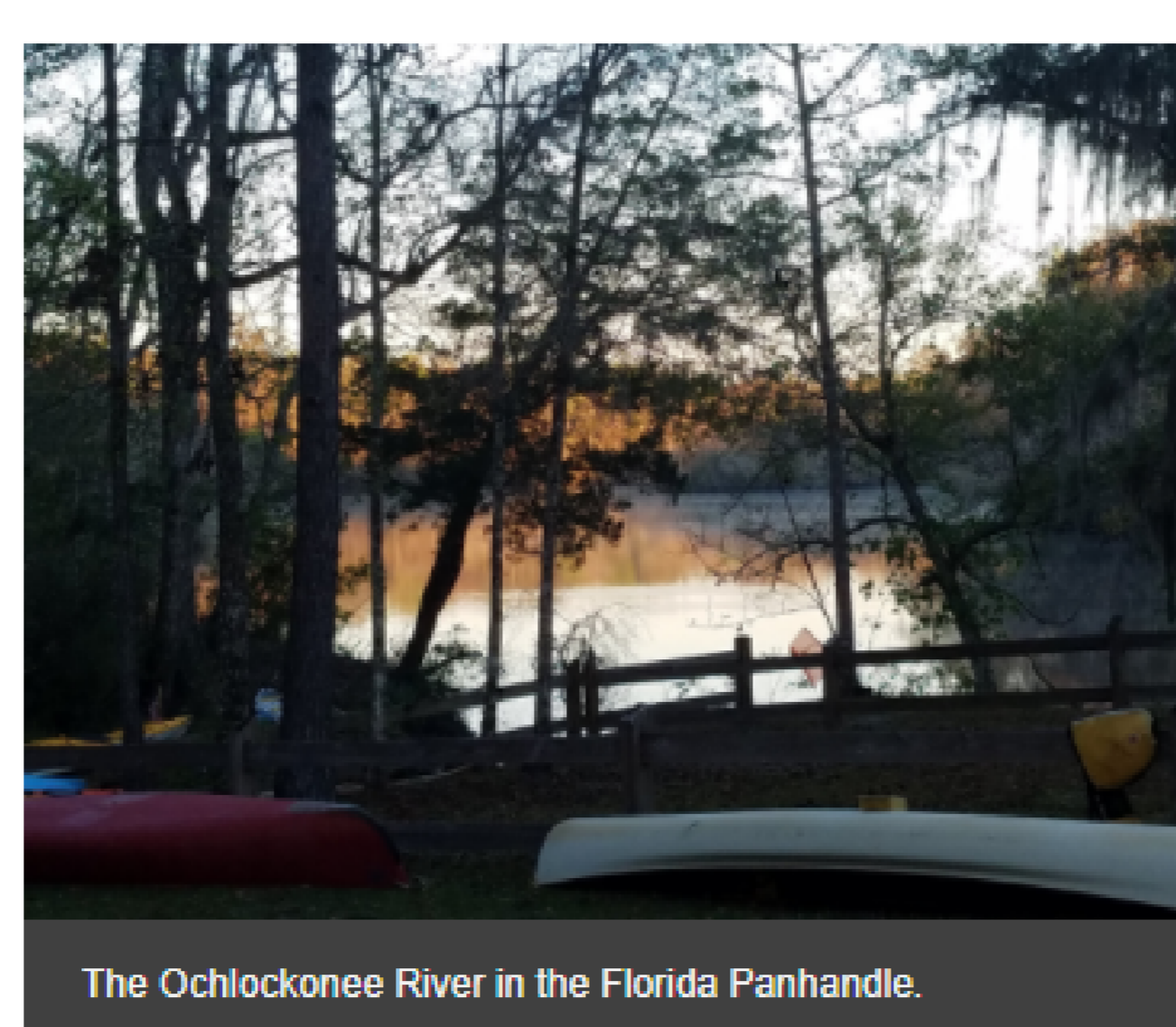


Two Trips Added to our 2019-20 Season!



Flori-Bama Expedition on the Perdido River.

In order to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, we have scheduled two events in April 2020. First, we will stage a redo of our Flori-Bama Expedition on the Perdido River from April 11-16 and then, with one day in between, we will do a shortened version of our Ochlockonee River trip from April 18 - 22, finishing at Bald Point State Park on Earth Day. Or you can make it an 11-day adventure by signing up for both trips since you will be in the panhandle anyway!



The Ochlockonee River in the Florida Panhandle.



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.
Register by: October 4

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.
Register by: October 18

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. At a total of less than 30 miles, this trip is perfect for beginners to paddle camping.
Register by: November 21

Europe Trip



Night paddle on the Daugava River in Riga.

As we mentioned in our June issue, Paddle Florida staff traveled to Europe on a working vacation, as always, promoting Paddle Florida along the way. The main point we'd like to make is that Paddlesports are thriving everywhere we traveled. Our first stop in Copenhagen revealed a business on the canal there, [KajakRepublik](#). Karoline introduced us to their operation and told us about another organization, [GreenKajak](#), who has established an organization that cleans up local waterways. Since 2017, they have removed over 12,000 kg of trash and waste from waterways. Their idea has since expanded to several locations in Norway, Germany and Ireland. We commend them on their efforts!

Next we visited Riga, Latvia, where kayaking is also very popular. We did a night paddle on Daugava River which runs through the heart of the city. What a treat! We traveled on to Poland where we witnessed paddlers of all types on the Vistula River in Warsaw and paddled it in Krakow. Near the end of our trip we met a dynamic young couple in Krakow who have a start up called [SUP Kultura](#) or SUP Culture. Santa and Sara invited us to paddleboard with them on our last day in Krakow. Another unexpected treat! We had one day left before leaving Copenhagen, so we took a short train ride to Malmö, Sweden, where again we saw serious paddlers plying the canals there. All in all, it was a great experience to learn that the paddling community extends across the globe.



SUP Kultura in Krakow.

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.
Register by: January 1

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. The adventure includes a side trip to the colorful Rainbow River and its world class first magnitude spring.
Register by: February 1

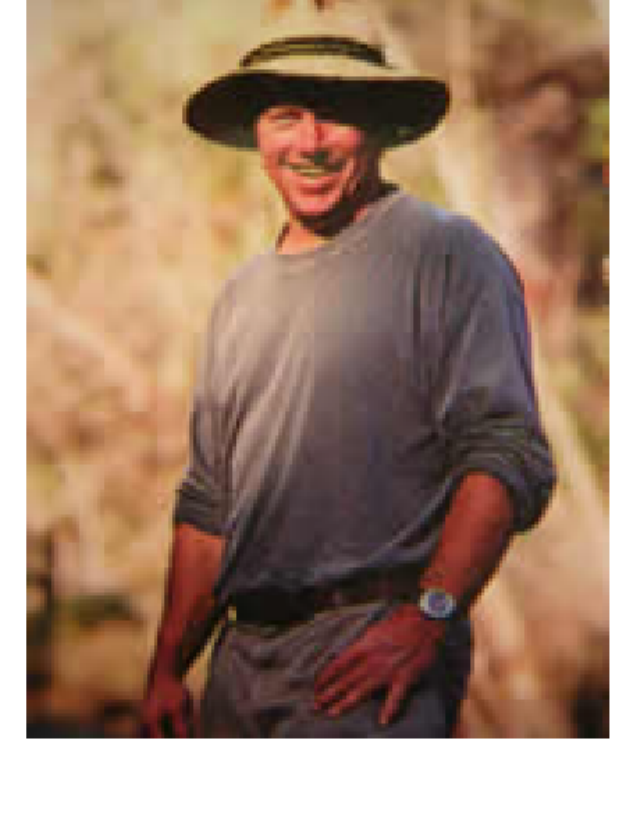
Choctawhatchee Challenge
March 13-19, 2020
Get away from it all into the heart of the Panhandle as we paddle 66 miles of the mighty Choctawhatchee. This is a journey into Wild Florida where wildlife far outnumber humans, and paddlers can stumble upon spectacular springs.
Register by: February 28

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.
Register by: March 20

Flori-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.
Register by: March 28

River Guide's Journal

Listening to Water



Lars Andersen is owner and paddling guide for [Adventure Outpost](#) in High Springs, FL. He outfits and guides kayak and canoe tours on over 40 waterways throughout North Florida's "Springs Country."

Of all Leonardo Da Vinci's great ideas, one of my favorites is also one of his simplest. No diagrams, no assembly required, just a simple re-purposing of an everyday item—the canoe paddle. He suggested if we put its blade into water and then pressed our ear against its shaft, we could hear the sounds of aquatic life. Once again, Leonardo was way ahead of it's time. Not only did this idea pre-date sonar, it predated the belief that the sea was worth listening to.

In a study published in 2009, a group of biologists in Australia described a rich "vocal repertoire" of vocalizations among long-necked freshwater turtles, *Chelodina oblonga*. The list of sounds included "clacks, clicks, squawks,hoots, short chirps, high short chirps, medium chirps, long chirps, high calls, cries or wails, hoos, grunts, growls, blow bursts, staccatos, a wild howl, and drum rolling." Of course, to assume that other turtles—including any of the 15 species in our beloved Santa Fe—have similar "vocabulary" is to enter dangerous and highly unscientific territory. But, non-scientifically speaking, it seems unlikely that one species of turtle is chatting away in a language of 17 unique sounds and that others are mute. I'd love to think that that our own turtles occasionally kick back their heads and let out a "wild howl," in decibels we can't hear—their own version of the alligator bellow—or that on nights when the moon is just so, and the owls assure them there are no humans in earshot, they crowd onto logs and launch into fevered bouts of "drum rolling." [\[Read more...\]](#)

5 Reasons to Get Involved with Your Regional Water Management District

By Rebecca Burton, UF Thompson Earth Systems Institute



Florida is home to more than 7,800 freshwater lakes, 1,700 streams and rivers, 700 springs, 11 million acres of wetlands and five major aquifer systems. Each of these sources supply freshwater to a Florida's agricultural sector, 20 million residents and our natural environment.

In 1972, Florida lawmakers established the Florida Water Resources Act, which called for the establishment of five water management districts around the state that would be responsible for flood control and managing the state's water resources.

"The Act was in response to a growing need for a more comprehensive approach to water management in the State, and received recognition as a model water statute from the National Water Commission for its regional approach and comprehensive scope," reads the South Florida Water Management District website.

The districts' governing boards are unpaid citizen volunteers appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Florida Senate. They serve four year terms. The governing board also appoints the district's executive director, who is also confirmed by the Senate. [\[Read more...\]](#)

Florida Flora & Fauna Spotlight

Bowfin, *Amia calva*



Photo: Isaac Szabo

Bowfin, also known as "mudfish" or "lungfish", are often described as "prehistoric relics". This is because species of the Amidae family can be traced to fossils from the Cretaceous, Eocene and Jurassic period – 150 million years ago! Today bowfin are the only surviving species from its family. Fossils show that bowfin very close to their present form have existed for over a hundred million years. Bowfin have an air bladder rich with blood vessels, allowing them to breathe air directly from the surface and survive in water with low oxygen levels. This also allows bowfin to bury themselves in the mud and survive for at least three weeks if their habitat dries up.

Bowfin could be mistaken for the similar-looking non-native snakehead. Both species have very long dorsal fins, but the snakehead will have a very long anal (underside) fin as well, while the bowfin have a short anal fin. The already strange-looking bowfin is made even stranger-looking by long tubular external nostrils. Be sure to look for those if you find a bowfin. [\[Read more...\]](#)

Check out the Florida Springs Institute's [Springs Field Guide](#). [Fish](#) to learn more about common springs fish species.

Upcoming Music Performances

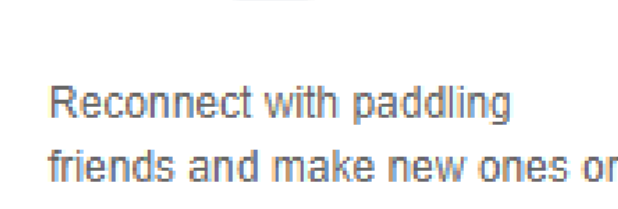
- Grant Peoples,** Suwannee River Wilderness Trail
- Lis and Lon Williamson,** Flagler Coastal Wildlife Festival
- Bing Futch,** Wekiva/St. Johns River Ramble

How To: Self Rescue if You Capsize

When kayak touring alone, it is important to know how to self rescue if you capsize. [\[Read more...\]](#)

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