

# Welcome to the North Sebastian Conservation Area!

The North Sebastian Conservation Area was purchased by Indian River County in 1996 with cost-share funds from the Florida Communities Trust.

The habitats throughout the Conservation Area provide visitors many opportunities to see a diverse array of plant and animal species. Trails are rated by difficulty and distance to the trailhead. As always, please use caution when visiting the conservation area. You may encounter poisonous snakes, feral hogs, alligators and poisonous plants. Sturdy walking shoes and a supply of drinking water are a must for a long hike. Also remember that ALL plants and animals on the conservation area are protected. Taking, harassing or otherwise disturbing any plant or animal on site is strictly prohibited and is enforced. There are many state and federally protected animals and plants on site and harassment of any kind will not be tolerated.

## 1 SEBASTIAN TRAIL - Easy

The trailhead begins in an area adjacent to a freshwater lake with a perimeter of Pine Flatwoods. Great Blue Herons and other wading birds are typically aloft in the Sand Pines or on the Lake's edge. Osprey and otters may be encountered searching for their lunch as well. This is a shady area perfect for a picnic or outdoor classroom activities. Two picnic tables are located here.



## 2 BROMELIAD BOULEVARD - Easy

This trail takes visitors from the trailhead entrance through Pine Flatwoods that surrounds the freshwater lake. Be sure to keep an eye open for Pileated and Red-bellied Woodpeckers and other songbirds. This area is typically quiet and shady and the northern edge of the trail begins to transition into Rosemary Scrub. The trees are laden with bromeliads, all of which are protected



by state law. You may also find Sky Blue Lupine blooming in the late winter and early spring on this trail.

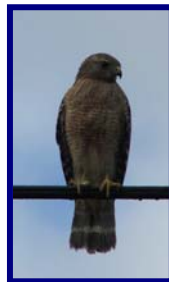
## 3 JAYS WALK - Easy

The Jays Walk is an area where platted roads for a subdivision were installed. (nesting jay photo right) This area is an easy walk within xeric oak scrub and is home to a family of scrub jays. Some of these jays are "banded", so if you see them, you may notice that some of the family members have "bracelets" on their legs. These bands are placed in a sequence that is unique to each bird. The Jays Walk Trail gives visitors a glimpse of prime Xeric Oak Scrub inhabited by many species that are becoming increasingly rare. Some of these species such as the Florida Scrub Jay are restricted to Florida's unique scrub habitat and are not found anywhere else in the world! Xeric Oak Scrub is composed primarily of Chapman's Oak, Scrub Oak and Myrtle Oak. While these trees can get taller, in optimal scrub-jay habitat, they should be no taller than 6' high. This area was successfully burned with assistance from the Florida Division of Forestry. Prior to the prescribed burn, there were no scrub jays using this area; a true sign of success was when the current family of jays moved in and began defending and nesting in this area. This family of jays is relatively tame, but please stay on the trails and respect their home.



## 4 CACTUS CAUSEWAY - Moderately Difficult

Walking through the Cactus Causeway, visitors will see an exceptional scrub area restored by timbering. The entire conservation area was timbered in 2001. There are remnant piles of logging debris left for a future prescribed burn. This area is a wonderful example of high quality scrub habitat. Also in this area, Curtiss' Milkweed was discovered in 2005, a State listed



Endangered species. It is very hard to find except when blooming because it resembles a small scrub oak seedling (photo right).



## 5 REINDEER RIDGE - Moderately Difficult

This trail is a beautiful walk through a variety of habitats including Rosemary Scrub and a freshwater wetland at the north end. The trail winds up a coastal ridge remnant, visitors will encounter a variety of plant species including coral bean and scrub hickory. Look for nesting osprey and foraging tortoises.

## 6 HOLLY'S HOLLOW - Moderately Difficult

This trail has a beautiful boardwalk that takes visitors through a native holly area surrounded by a freshwater marsh and scrub. When on the boardwalk, visitors get a unique view of the scrub to the south, distant pine flatwoods and a beautiful holly filled wetland. This is a special treat in the winter months when the holly is laden with bright red berries that the migrating songbirds adore.



## 7 MALLARD'S MARK - Moderately Difficult

This trail crosses the central wetland by way of a 200 foot boardwalk with observation deck. Be sure to visit this area where ducks, cranes, wood storks (photo left), wading birds and other wildlife abound in the freshwater marsh that lies centrally within the conservation area. The wetland dries periodically throughout the year and provides a feeding area for many wildlife species. This area is a must see any time of the year!

## 8 ROSELAND TRAIL - Easy

This trail ends (or begins) at 130<sup>th</sup> Street and may be used by Roseland residents for access to the conservation area. The trail gives visitors an opportunity to see scrub jays, gopher tortoises, osprey and restored scrub.

## 9 HIDEAWAY HILL - Difficult

This trail takes adventurers next to a freshwater wetland and up the ancient coastal ridge. Inhabitants of this area include Osprey, Red-Tailed Hawks, and many songbirds. Keep an eye open for Bobcat, Raccoon, Opossum and other tracks from creatures who ventured through the previous night. This trail is sandy, may have trip hazards and is relatively steep, please watch your step.

## 10 OSPREY HIDEAWAY - Difficult

Osprey Hideaway runs along the top of an ancient dune line. The trail is adjacent to the Florida East Coast Railroad. The area is full of Scrub Hickory and other scrub endemic species. Watch for Osprey nests and gopher tortoises, they abound in this area. **FUN FACT:** Osprey can be distinguished from Bald Eagles by having a white belly and a black stripe along their eye. Adult Bald Eagles have a black belly, an all white tail and all white head and neck, with no back stripe on their eye. They are also larger than an Osprey. Osprey feed primarily on fish.

## 11 TERRITORY TRAIL - Moderately Difficult

This trail runs through an edge of scrub and saw palmetto. It is occupied by a family of scrub jays and sometimes one may see two families disagreeing over territorial boundaries, especially during the spring months. This trail is a beautiful trail that you won't want to miss.

## 12 POWERLINE ROAD - Easy (to water's edge)

Although you may not be able to cross the Powerline Road trail, it is certainly worth walking to the water's edge. This area is full of pond lilies, St. Johns Wort and other freshwater species. The wetland is typically 3-4 feet deep and makes a perfect feeding spot for herons (Great Blue Heron photo to left), egrets and ducks. If you are lucky, you may even find Roseate Spoonbills, Wood Storks and Sandhill Cranes in this area.



## 13 PALMETTO PATH - Difficult

Palmetto Path is a difficult trail that runs on the outer boundary of the conservation area. This

area is home to a family of scrub jays and many gopher tortoises.

**14 GOPHER'S GALLEY – Moderately Difficult**

The footpath of this trail is relatively easy to traverse, but does take visitors further from the trailhead. This area is a beautiful area of native grasses, sedges and rushes and when in full bloom, you will encounter a beautiful array of yellow bachelor buttons, white hat pins, and other native wildflowers. This area seems to be a favorite spot for our Gopher Tortoises (photo right) who relish the abundant variety of vegetation they can eat. This trail may be wet during parts of the year.



**15 PRAIRIE PATH – Moderate to Difficult**

Prairie Path is a beautiful trail that takes visitors through a freshwater wet prairie full of Bachelor Buttons, Bog Buttons, Road Grass, Hollies and other wetlands species. Just after or during a rain, you will hear a chorus of native frogs singing their love songs to attract a mate. This path may become significantly wet. When the trail crosses 14, you will enter an area to the north that is full of native holly, bay and oaks.

**16 LITTLE LOOP – Moderate to Difficult**



Due to the distance to the trailhead, this trail is rated as moderate to difficult. A trek through this area will take you through a Pine Flatwoods full of Sand Pine, Saw Palmetto, Gallberry and other native species.

Florida Scrub Jays may be found in the small patch of scrub here. This area is an excellent area to see a great variety of migrating songbirds in the fall, winter and spring.

**17 CRANE CROSSING – Difficult**

This trail takes visitors to the edge of a freshwater depression. Walk quietly and you may catch a glimpse of wading birds including Great Blue Herons, Egrets, Tri-Colored Herons and other birds feasting on freshwater fish. This

trail may not be passable during the summer months due to deep water.

**18 THE OUTERBANKS – Difficult**

This trail is a multi-use trail for horses, bicyclists and hikers. Use caution, as trails may be hazardous. This trail is the longest and runs along the outer edge of the Conservation Area. Users will traverse an array of habitats including Hydric and Mesic Pine Flatwoods, freshwater wetlands and scrub.

**TRAIL DEFINITIONS:**

**Easy Trails (white on map)** are easier to traverse, receive more maintenance to remove trip hazards, have accessible boardwalks and are relatively close to the trailhead. Equestrian users are discouraged from using these trails frequently. Trails 1, 2 & 3 are approximately 1mile round trip from the Friendship Park Trailhead.

**Moderately Difficult** Trails may be sandy or wet, have uneven surfaces and may have objects, roots or other trip hazards.

**Difficult Trails** are furthest from the trailhead, receive less maintenance, may be wet throughout parts of the year and are more difficult to traverse. Trail markers are also spaced further apart. Trails may also be less distinct and are narrower. Before venturing onto these trails make sure you have plenty of water and a first aid kit. Equestrian users are encouraged to use these trails.

Trails that are color coded in Gray are connector trails that may be used for variety.

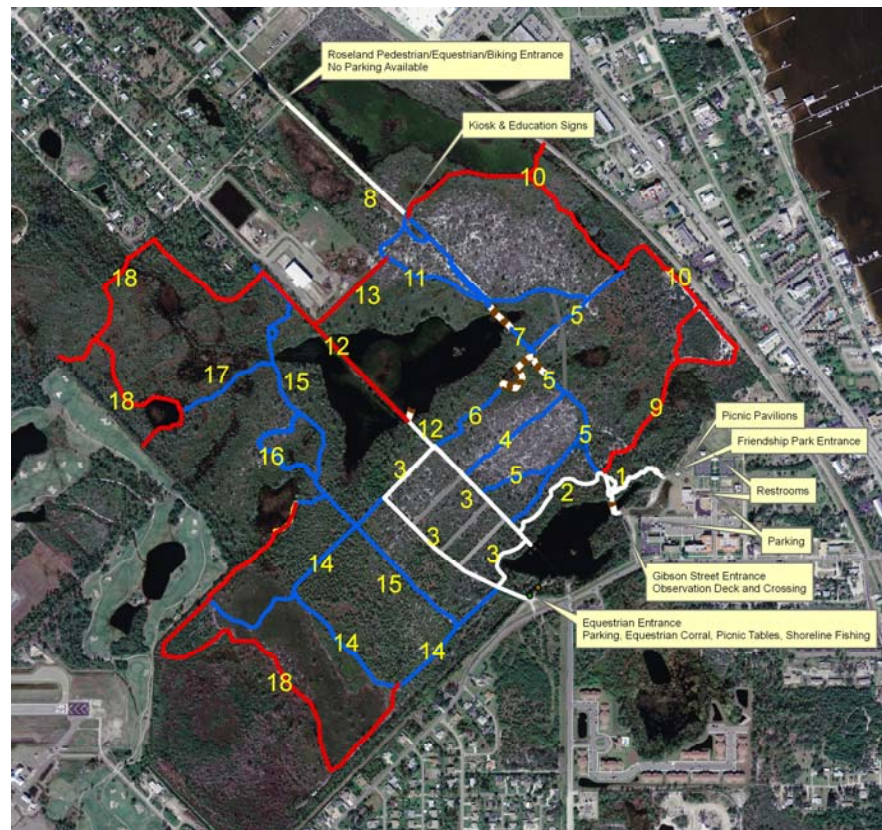
**PET OWNERS: When you visit the conservation area come prepared to pick up your pet's waste and dispose of it properly. Trash bins are located at the trailheads.**

**ALL DOGS MUST BE KEPT ON A LEASH. FAILURE TO DO SO MAY RESULT IN HAVING TO PROHIBIT DOGS FROM THE CONSERVATION AREA IN THE FUTURE.**

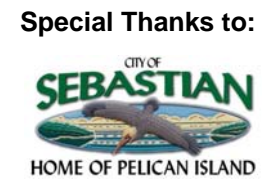
- Trail conditions are rustic: be prepared for uneven ground, exposed tree roots and primitive conditions.
- Bicyclist are welcome, but please use caution on the trails and be cautious of other visitors.
- Horses are welcome, please stay on designated trails and be cautious of other users. Horses are not allowed on the boardwalks.
- You may encounter bees, poison ivy, alligators, rattlesnakes or other dangerous wildlife, please use caution and don't feed the wildlife.
- Taking of any plant or animal is strictly prohibited.
- Motorized vehicles of any kind (including boats) are strictly prohibited.
- Please report damages or violations to the conservation lands manager or Sebastian Police Department immediately.
- Bringing wildlife to the conservation area is strictly prohibited. Please contact the conservation lands manager if you are concerned about native wildlife.
- Please be respectful of the area, this is home to many species of animals and plants.

**TAKE ONLY PICTURES,  
LEAVE ONLY FOOTPRINTS  
DESTROY NOTHING and  
ENJOY EVERYTHING!**

**NORTH SEBASTIAN  
CONSERVATION AREA**



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Special Thanks to:

For more information or to schedule group tours, please contact the Indian River County Conservation Lands Manager at 772-589-9223; bpowell@ircgov.com or visit [www.ircgov.com/conservation](http://www.ircgov.com/conservation)

The Conservation Area is open from dawn until dusk each day.