



NOAH VALENSTEIN
SECRETARY



PROTECTING **FLORIDA** TOGETHER

Every year, millions of anglers enjoy Florida's world-famous fisheries. Our 1,350-mile coastline and 12,000 miles of fishable freshwater attract sport fishers year-round and infuse the economic strength of Florida communities.

Protecting the environmental, recreational and economic value of our waterways is a priority for Governor Ron DeSantis and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

DEP's Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection manages 4.5 million acres of coastal areas, including 41 aquatic preserves and three national estuarine research reserves. These ecologically rich areas – including seagrass beds, salt marshes and mangrove hammocks – provide essential habitat for fish and other aquatic life. Additionally, Florida State Parks offer outstanding fishing spots, whether along rivers or beaches, or from bridges or boats.

Our coastal resources are diverse, but vulnerable to damage. Dozens of partners have joined DEP to respond to an outbreak of coral disease along the Florida Reef Tract. Florida's efforts are at the forefront of global coral disease research and response.

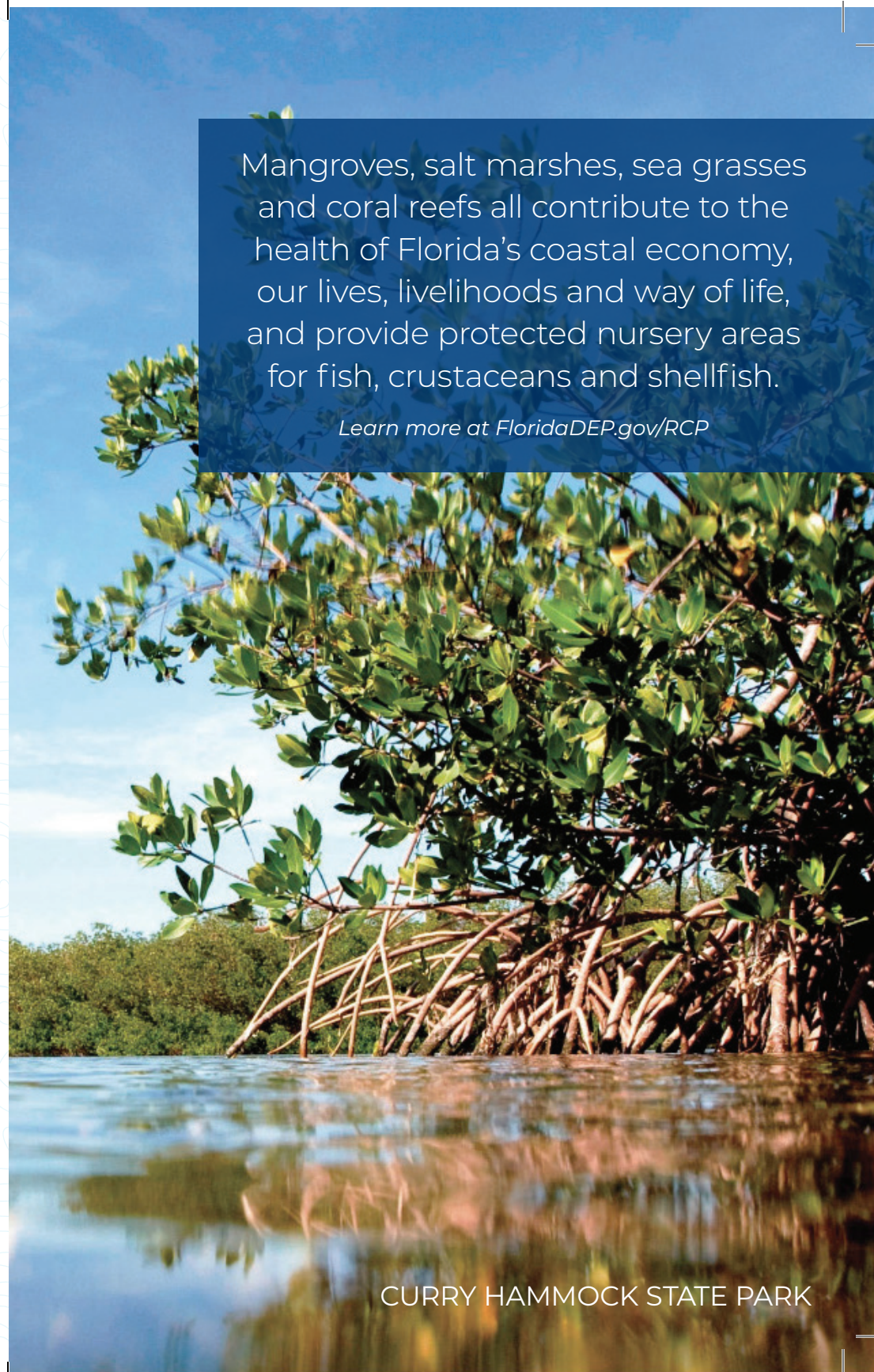
In the following pages, you'll find tips on how you can join DEP in protecting coastal resources, from eliminating marine debris to using navigation channels. I also encourage you to learn about the DEP Clean Boating Program, which provides guidance for boaters and businesses.

The Governor has made it clear that he is committed to protecting our coastline and other water resources. He worked closely with the 2019 Florida Legislature to secure record funding for immediate strategic action.

Florida's multibillion-dollar marine industry depends on a clean coastline, so join us in Protecting Florida Together.

Mangroves, salt marshes, sea grasses and coral reefs all contribute to the health of Florida's coastal economy, our lives, livelihoods and way of life, and provide protected nursery areas for fish, crustaceans and shellfish.

Learn more at FloridaDEP.gov/RCP



CURRY HAMMOCK STATE PARK

FISHING IN FLORIDA'S ENVIRONMENT

The Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, lakes, rivers, springs and estuaries provide endless boating and fishing opportunities in both saltwater and freshwater. Florida offers unique opportunities for visitors from all around the world to explore some of the most historical and beautiful lands in the country.

Florida's status as a fishing capital of the world can be attributed to the natural resources that provide food and shelter for aquatic species, stabilize the coast, protect water quality and define Florida's way of life.

As you enjoy your time on the water, or on land, make sure to take time to protect our natural resources.

OutdoorFlorida.org

EXPLORE OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES & LOCATIONS

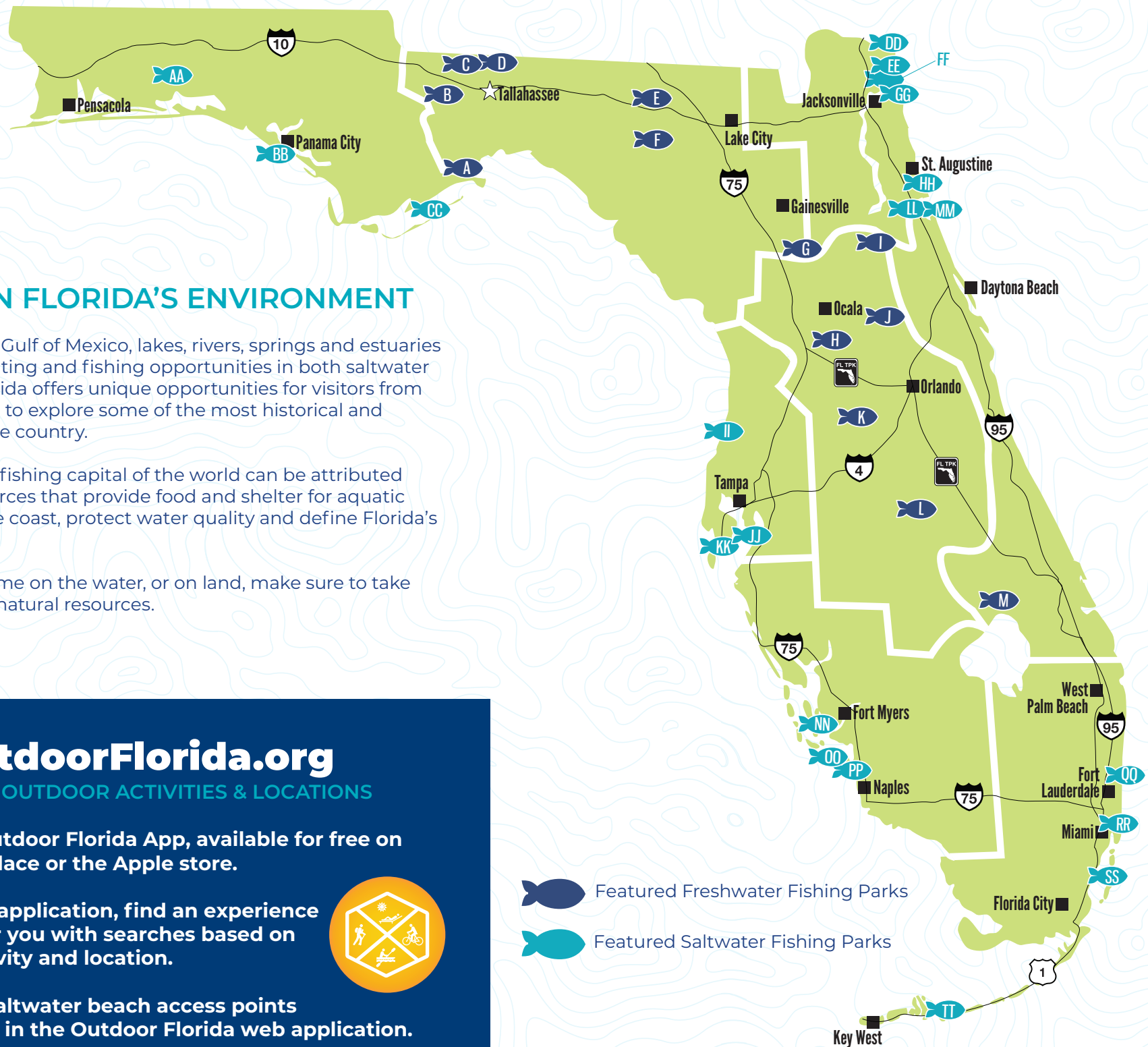
Check out the Outdoor Florida App, available for free on Android Marketplace or the Apple store.

With this simple application, find an experience that is perfect for you with searches based on your desired activity and location.



Florida's public saltwater beach access points are also available in the Outdoor Florida web application.

-  Featured Freshwater Fishing Parks
-  Featured Saltwater Fishing Parks





OCHLOCKONEE RIVER STATE PARK

Sopchoppy, Florida

Located west of Tallahassee, the Florida portion of this river is known for its **redbreast sunfish** fishery in periods of low water and **catfish** during high water events, as well as for its black crappie angling. This river is a good option for anglers looking for catfish and who want to try fishing for **flathead catfish** (not encouraged to catch-and-release these fish).



LAKE TALQUIN STATE PARK

Tallahassee, Florida

Lake Talquin contains quality **largemouth bass**, **black crappie** and **redear sunfish** and hosts fish attractors along public piers for shoreline fishing opportunities. April and early May are ideal for largemouth bass fishing. Best time to fish for crappie is from January through April.



With more than 1,000 springs in the state, and perhaps the largest concentration of freshwater springs on Earth, springs are purely and uniquely Florida. They are abundant with natural beauty and wildlife habitat, and are a source of fresh water for rivers and streams.

Learn more at FloridaDEP.gov/My-Home-My-Springs



ICHETUCKNEE SPRINGS STATE PARK



ALFRED B. MACLAY GARDENS STATE PARK LAKE JACKSON AQUATIC PRESERVE Tallahassee, Florida

The best **largemouth bass** fishing is in spring through early summer. Fishing for **bream** and **shellcrackers** picks up during the spring. **Black crappie** fishing is best December through March. There are several boat ramps that access the aquatic preserve, as well as nearby Lake Jackson Mounds Archaeological State Park with hiking trails and boardwalks.



MARJORIE KINNAN RAWLINGS HISTORIC STATE PARK Cross Creek, Florida

Orange Lake is a great spot for targeting a variety and abundance of fish, especially **bream** and **crappie**. A very large and recent catch of a 15 lb 13 oz **largemouth bass** was caught in this lake. Crappie fishing is at its peak during the winter/early spring. The best time to fish for bass is March through April. **Panfish** activity increases during spring/early summer.



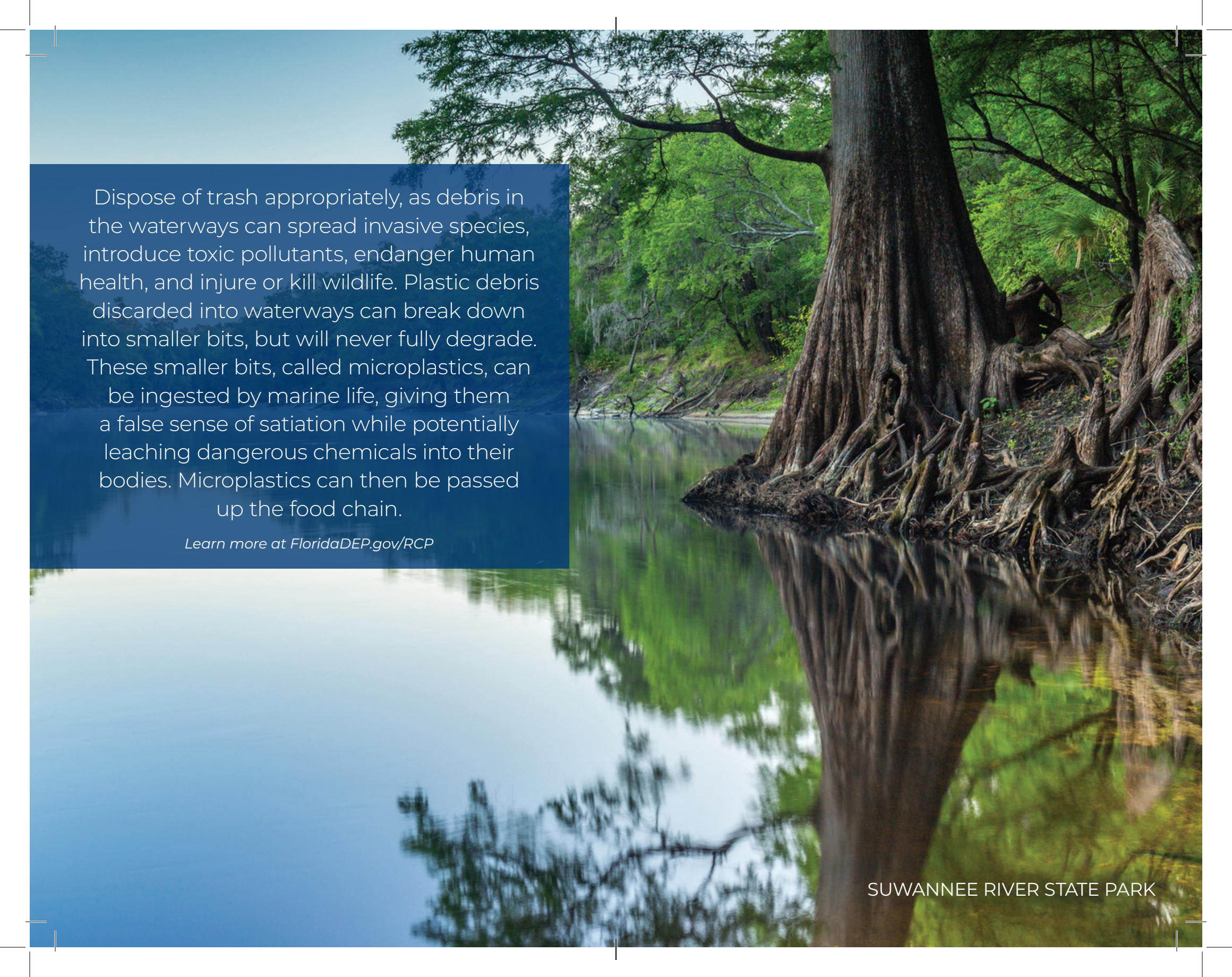
SUWANNEE RIVER STATE PARK WES SKILES PEACOCK SPRINGS STATE PARK Live Oak, Florida

Suwannee Lake is a hotspot for **bass** and the fish are growing quickly. Nine trophy bass were caught and released during a population assessment. There are a variety of structures to fish around, including submerged wood, underwater ridge, cypress trees, piers, an island and abundant vegetation. Winter and spring are good times to hook large fish.



LAKE GRIFFIN STATE PARK Fruitland Park, Florida

Prominently known for year-round **bass** fishing in the northern part of the lake, with an abundance of submerged vegetation, such as eel grass. In the winter months it's best to drift in open water for schools of **black crappie**. Some of the lake's best fishing is between the boat ramp and Lake Griffin, especially **catfish**.



Dispose of trash appropriately, as debris in the waterways can spread invasive species, introduce toxic pollutants, endanger human health, and injure or kill wildlife. Plastic debris discarded into waterways can break down into smaller bits, but will never fully degrade. These smaller bits, called microplastics, can be ingested by marine life, giving them a false sense of satiation while potentially leaching dangerous chemicals into their bodies. Microplastics can then be passed up the food chain.

Learn more at [FloridaDEP.gov/RCP](https://www.floridadep.gov/RCP)

SUWANNEE RIVER STATE PARK



DUNNS CREEK STATE PARK
HONTOON ISLAND STATE PARK
Pomona Park & DeLand, Florida

The southward of the St. Johns River offers most of Florida's freshwater sportfishes including **largemouth bass**, **bluegill**, **redeer sunfish**, **black crappie**, **striped bass** and **channel catfish**. Most of these fish can be caught throughout the year. The most successful times of the year for this river and its surrounding lakes are late winter, throughout spring and early summer.



LAKE KISSIMMEE STATE PARK
Lake Wales, Florida

Lake Kissimmee offers plenty of successful **largemouth bass** fishing, along with great catch rates of **blue gill** and **redeer sunfish**. Best time to fish for bass would be in the spring, and for the blue gill and redear during the specific months of March and April.



LAKE LOUISA STATE PARK
Clermont, Florida

This chain of 11 lakes range in size from 20 to 3,634 acres. The chain is composed of primarily cypress lakes and offer opportunities to catch **bass**, **bluegill**, **redeer**, **black crappie** and **channel catfish**. A fishing pier on Lake Minneola provides access for bank anglers, and most of the chains have fish attractors that are marked with a buoy to indicate the center of the attractor. Public boat ramps are located at Lake Minneola, on the Palatlahaha River and Lake Louisa.



OKEECHOBEE BATTLEFIELD HISTORIC STATE PARK
Okeechobee, Florida

Nationally and internationally recognized as a premier destination for **bass** fishing, Lake Okeechobee is also one of the best **black crappie** fisheries in south Florida. The bass fishing can be good year-round, but peaks in late winter and early spring. Crappie fishing is best during the winter.

Red Tide & Blue-Green Algae

RED TIDE

Red tide is a common term used for a harmful algal bloom that produces toxins which can cause harmful effects on people, marine life and birds. Florida red tide is a naturally occurring phenomenon that has been documented along Florida's Gulf Coast since the 1840s and probably occurred much earlier.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission updates red tide status regularly. The current status of red tide blooms can be found by visiting myfwc.com/RedTide.

BLUE-GREEN ALGAE

Blue-green algae, or cyano bacteria, is found naturally in freshwater environments worldwide. Some, not all, blue-green algae can produce toxins that can contribute to environmental problems and affect public health. Blue-green algae can be found all over the world, and occur in Florida's freshwater and brackish habitats, such as lakes, rivers and estuaries.

DEP posts weekly updates and algal bloom info online at FloridaDEP.gov/AlgalBloom. The Florida Department of Health issues advisories for recreational waters where there is a health risk to the public due to an algal bloom.

Although blue-green algae are found naturally, increases in nutrients can exacerbate the extent, duration and intensity of blooms. Other factors that contribute to blooms include warm weather, reduced water flow, and lack of animals that eat algae.

While they can occur at any time, blue-green algal blooms are most common in Florida during the summer and early fall, with high temperatures and abundant sunlight.

Different types of blue-green algal bloom species can look different and have different impacts. However, regardless of species, many types of blue-green algae can produce toxins that can make you or your pets sick if swallowed or possibly cause skin and/or eye irritation due to contact.

We advise to stay out of water where algae is visibly present as specks, mats or water is discolored pea-green, blue-green or brownish-red.

Pets should not come into contact with the algal bloom-impacted water, or algal bloom material or fish on the shoreline.

Report Blooms

FRESHWATER BLOOM

- Observe an algal bloom in a lake or freshwater river
- Information about blue-green algal blooms



CONTACT DEP

855-305-3903
(to report freshwater blooms)

FloridaDEP.gov/AlgalBloom

SALTWATER BLOOM

- Observe stranded wildlife or a fish kill
- Information about red tide and other saltwater algal blooms



CONTACT FWC

800-636-0511 (fish kills)
888-404-3922 (wildlife Alert)

MyFWC.com/RedTide

HUMAN ILLNESS

Florida Poison Control Center can be reached 24/7 at 800-222-1222

(DOH provides grant funding to the Florida Poison Control Center)

OTHER PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS

CONTACT DOH

(DOH county office)

FloridaHealth.gov/all-county-locations.html





FRED GANNON ROCKY BAYOU STATE PARK Niceville, Florida

This beautiful park's centerpiece is Rocky Bayou, the trailing arm of Choctowhatchee Bay, popular for boating and fishing. With a freshwater stream feeding the tidal influenced Rocky Bayou, the park offers many varieties of fishing. Some of the more common fish are **mullet**, **trout** and **flounder**. Saltwater fish may be caught in Rocky Bayou while freshwater fishing is available where Rocky Creek flows into the bay.



DR. JULIAN G. BRUCE ST. GEORGE ISLAND STATE PARK St. George Island, Florida

On the Gulf side of the island, enjoy perfect blue waters, miles of sugary white sands, and perhaps even catch sight of a pod of dolphins. On the bay side, marshes are home to wading birds and abundant saltwater fish. Surf and bay fishing may yield catches of **flounder**, **redfish**, **spotted seatrout**, **pompano**, **whiting**, **marlin**, **tuna**, **dolphin** and sometimes **Spanish mackerel**.



ST. ANDREWS STATE PARK Panama City Beach, Florida

Year-round fishing opportunities include deep-sea jetty and surf fishing. Two fishing piers and jetties provide excellent vantage points. Catches include **Spanish mackerel**, **red fish**, **flounder**, **spotted seatrout**, **bonito**, **cobia**, **dolphin**, **sheepshead**, **ladyfish**, **tuna**, **marlin**, **king mackerel** and **bluefish**. A boat ramp is located on the Grand Lagoon near the fishing pier.



FORT CLINCH STATE PARK Fernandina Beach, Florida

This park provides many options for anglers to enjoy a full day of excitement. Popular locations within the park include surf fishing along the Atlantic shoreline and St. Mary's Inlet as well as adjacent to the jetties. The most common fish caught within the park are **redfish**, **black drum**, **whiting**, **flounder**, **mullet**, **sheepshead**, **sea trout** and an occasional **grouper**. A small variety of fishing tackle / bait is available at the park's visitor center.



**AMELIA ISLAND STATE PARK
BIG & LITTLE TALBOT STATE PARK
Jacksonville, Florida**

Nassau Sound is one of the best fishing areas in northeast Florida and home to the state record flounder. Fishing is popular from the shore of Amelia Island as well as from the adjacent George Crady Bridge Fishing Pier State Park spanning Nassau Sound. Many different species of fish, such as **whiting, redfish, flounder, speckled sea trout, jacks, pompano, grouper** and **tarpon**, can be caught.



**ANASTASIA STATE PARK
FAVER-DYKES STATE PARK
St. Augustine, Florida**

The fishing area on Salt Run in Anastasia State Park features a fish identification kiosk, a monofilament disposal bin and a fish-cleaning station. Waters off the north end of the park are also popular. At Faver-Dykes, **red drum, black drum, sheepshead, spotted seatrout** and **common snook** can be caught from the park's fishing dock.

Hidden within the tangle of salt marsh plants are animals in various stages of life. Many of Florida's popular marine fisheries species spend the early part of their lives protected in salt marshes. Young fish often have a varied diet, foraging for food in the muds of the marsh bottom, on the plants themselves, and on smaller organisms that also dwell in the marsh system.

Learn more at FloridaDEP.gov/RCP/SaltMarshes



TOMOKA STATE PARK



WERNER-BOYCE SALT SPRINGS STATE PARK

Port Richey, Florida

This park protects four miles of pristine coastline along the Gulf of Mexico in western Pasco County. The salt spring looks small, but it is an amazing 320 feet deep. Inshore saltwater fishing can yield catches of **flounder**, **snook**, **trout**, **redfish**, **snapper**, **whiting**, **sheepshead**, **cobia**, **red drum** and **tarpon**.



WASHINGTON OAKS GARDENS STATE PARK

Palm Coast, Florida

Fishing can be enjoyed from the park's seawall on the Matanzas River. Surf fishing is allowed from the beach. A number of different species are routinely caught, including **whiting** and **blue fish** in the surf. Several species of **trout**, **redfish**, **drum** and **flounder** can be caught along the seawall.



COCKROACH BAY PRESERVE STATE PARK

Ruskin, Florida

These islands are located in the mouth of the Little Manatee River and extend southward along the shore of Tampa Bay and are accessible only by water on private watercraft. Common catches include **snook**, **tarpon**, **sheepshead**, **red snapper**, **speckled sea trout**, **flounder** and **mullet**.



ESTERO BAY PRESERVE STATE PARK

Estero, Florida

Much of the undeveloped property along the Estero Bay are conservation lands and provide great fishing and recreational boating opportunities. Fishing in the Estero River can be done by hiking 0.75 miles to the end of the blue trail at the Estero River Scrub. Commonly caught species are **snook**, **sheaphead**, **tarpon**, **red drum** and **grouper**.

The canopy of seagrass protects smaller marine animals, including the young of such species as drums, sea bass, snappers and grunts, from larger predators. Some animals, such as manatees, urchins, conches and sea turtles, eat seagrass blades. Other animals derive nutrition from eating algae and small animals that live upon seagrass leaves. Avoid damaging seagrass. Know your boat's operating depth and navigate in marked channels. Anchor only in bare sandy bottoms.

Learn more at FloridaDEP.gov/RCP/Seagrass

ST. MARTINS MARSH AQUATIC PRESERVE



LOVERS KEY STATE PARK Fort Myers Beach, Florida

Lovers Key is one of the best fishing areas in Fort Myers Beach. Many anglers get their live and frozen bait from the shop located at the boat ramp. Fishing is great from the bridges inside the park, on a canoe or kayak, or from the shoreline of the beach. **Trout, redfish, snook** and **tarpon** are caught seasonally. Castnetting for **mullet** in the bay is a popular activity.



DELNOR-WIGGINS PASS STATE PARK Naples, Florida

There are specific areas designated for anglers to drop their lines in the northern areas of the park for trophy catches. Boaters will also find the launch area into Turkey Bay easily accessible for most vessels, in order to experience the delicate natural estuaries of the Cocohatchee River, leading out to the Gulf of Mexico. Commonly caught species include **snook, sheepshead, tarpon, spotted sea trout, red drum** and **grouper**.



HUGH TAYLOR BIRCH STATE PARK Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Hugh Taylor Birch is the city's own Central Park, complete with boat access from the intracoastal waterway. Fishing is a popular activity at the park and is allowed only from the Intracoastal Waterway seawall or offshore. Commonly caught species include **snook, sheepshead, grunt, catfish, mangrove snapper, spotted sea trout, red drum, bonefish, king mackerel, dolphin, snapper** and **sailfish**.



OLETA RIVER STATE PARK North Miami Beach, Florida


The fishing pier is always a popular site for fishing as well as the shores of the park along the Intracoastal Waterway that borders the eastern boundary of the park. Commonly caught species include **snook, sheepshead, grunt, catfish, mangrove snapper, spotted sea trout, red drum, bonefish, king mackerel, dolphin, snapper** and **sailfish**.

By adopting pollution prevention measures, Florida Clean Boaters can take satisfaction in knowing they are doing their part in keeping Florida's waterways clean and preserving them for the future.

Learn more at FloridaDEP.gov/CleanBoating



CRYSTAL RIVER PRESERVE STATE PARK



Coral reefs lay the foundation of a dynamic ecosystem with tremendous biodiversity. Most of Florida's sport fish species and many other marine animals spend significant parts of their lives on or around coral reef ecosystems.

HELP US PROTECT CORAL

- While swimming, snorkeling or scuba diving, avoid kicking or touching corals. Disturbed sediments can smother and kill corals.
- Tie up to mooring buoys or anchor in sand.
- Use navigational charts to locate coral reefs.

Learn more at FloridaDEP.gov/RCP/Coral

JOHN PENNEKAMP CORAL REEF STATE PARK



BILL BAGGS CAPE FLORIDA STATE PARK

Key Biscayne, Florida

Some of the best shoreline fishing in the region is available from the seawall along Biscayne Bay. The waves are very gentle due to a coral reef six miles offshore. Species commonly found are *sheepshead*, *mangrove snapper*, *spotted seatrout*, *bonefish*, *snook*, *king mackerel*, *dolphin*, *snapper* and *sailfish*.



BAHIA HONDA STATE PARK

Big Pine Key Florida

Tarpon fishing in the area rates among the best in the state. Fish off the old sea walls on either side of the Old Bahia Honda Bridge if you like to bottom fish for *snapper* or *grouper*. The shallow sand flats are better for fly-fishing for *bonefish*, *permit* or *barracuda*. Other species commonly found are *pompano*, *cobia*, *mackerel*, *dolphin*, *tuna* and *yellow tail snapper*.

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection is committed to providing resources to prepare Florida's coastal communities and habitats for the effects of climate change.

Learn more at FloridaDEP.gov/ResilientCoastlines



OLETA RIVER STATE PARK

BE A CLEAN BOATER

The Clean Boating Program involves boaters in protecting Florida's waterways through education on the importance of protecting the state's native vegetation, wildlife and natural environment.

In collaboration with the Clean Marina Program, it provides guidance on adopting environmentally friendly practices, including proper trash management, using bilge socks and fueling collars, EPA Safer Choice products, and practicing good recycling

habits. By adopting pollution prevention measures, Florida Clean Boaters can take satisfaction in knowing they are doing their part in keeping Florida's waterways clean and preserving them for the future.

Regardless of why we're out on the water, for recreation or to make a living, we share responsibility for preserving the boating life we love by keeping our waterways and shorelines vibrant, clean and healthy.

Take the Clean Boating Pledge at FloridaDEP.gov/CleanBoating

CLEANBOATING



For more information, visit us online at
FloridaDEP.gov