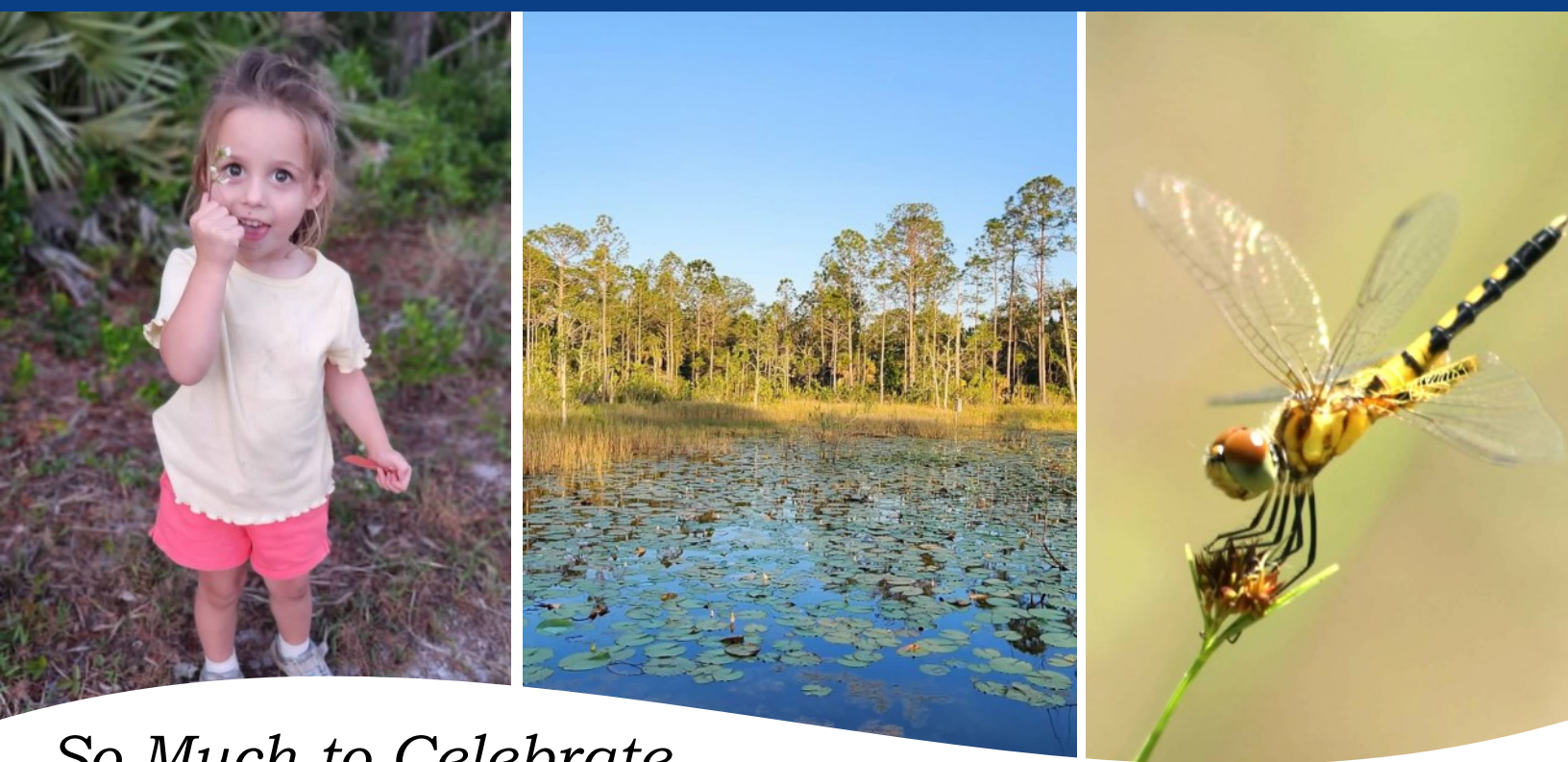


NATURAL LANDS PROGRAM

SEMINOLE TRACKS

NEWSLETTER



So Much to Celebrate...

2025 marks the 35th anniversary of the Natural Lands Program! Over the years, we've provided nature-inspired programs for thousands of Seminole County residents and visitors, and we're just getting started. This year, join us in celebrating our ongoing commitment to offering high-quality, affordable experiences for the whole family.

The Seminole County Natural Lands Program offers many opportunities to enjoy the season; search for migrating birds, celebrate Earth Day or spend time camping with your family! Whatever you're in to, Natural Lands has an outdoor event for you. We can't wait to see you out there!

What's Inside:

- Family Fun Camp Out 1
- Spring Break Eco Camp 1
- Classes and Programs 2
- More Classes & Open House 3
- Guided Hikes 4
- More Hikes & Free Hikes 5
- Additional Programming 6
- Partners and Summer 7

Location: Geneva Wilderness Area
3485 N. County Road 426
Geneva, FL 32732

Times: Saturday, 2:00pm to
Sunday, 9:00am

Dates: April 12– 13
Earth Day Celebration!

Cost: \$20 per person/per campout

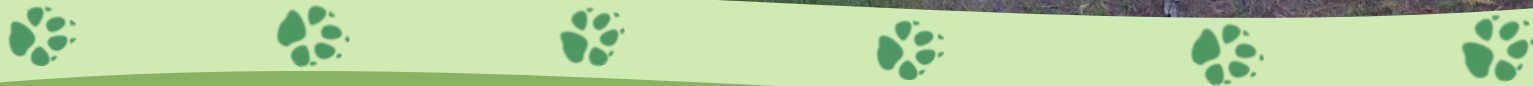


Family Fun Camp Out

This is one of our most popular Natural Lands events! Spend the night at the Geneva Wilderness Area and learn to camp with the experts.

This event is tailored for families with children ages 4-12 who want a crash course in camping. Meals included! We will have tent pitching assistance, cast iron cooking, a live animal program in the nature center, hiking, and dessert around the campfire.

Celebrate Earth during this fun Earth Day themed Camp Out! Enjoy nature crafts, night hikes and other fun earth day surprises!



Spring Break Eco Camp

Spring into nature at Spring Break Eco Camp!

Your kids will have a blast while learning about the natural world! Campers will explore the Geneva Wilderness Area through fishing, hiking, setting live traps, and learning about native wildlife and plants. Inside the nature center, they will create works of art, play games and meet our live animal residents.

Scholarships available. Find out more by visiting the Eco Camp webpage!



Dates: March 17-21

Location: Geneva Wilderness Area
3485 N. County Road 426,
Geneva

Times: 9:00am - 4:00pm
(Extended Day Care available from
7:30am - 5:30pm)

Cost: \$132/week (Extended Day
Care an additional \$15/week)

Ages: 7-12



Classes and Programs

Come learn something new by experiencing it first-hand! Natural Lands' classes and programs offer learning opportunities for everyone. This Spring, we are offering some classic programs, and also a few new ones! Just make sure you register before you arrive. Classes fill up quickly, so sign up today by visiting:

recreation.seminolecountyfl.gov



Fungi Fundamentals

Join a local expert for an introductory class on mushrooms and their identification. We'll explore various topics, including basic mushroom biology and their ecological roles, identification techniques, photography and documentation tips, and conservation efforts. The class will include a presentation in the nature center, followed by a hike in search of wild mushrooms.

Date/Time: Saturday, **January 18**, 9am-noon

Location: Ed & Imogene Yarborough Nature Center

Cost: \$8 per person

Ages: 5+ (children must be accompanied by an adult)



Star Gazing

Join the Natural Lands Program and the staff of the Emil Buehler Planetarium at Seminole State College for an evening exploring the wonders of the night sky. Program includes guided constellation laser tours of the sky and peering through large telescopes of many of the sky's best celestial objects.

Date/Time: Saturday, **February 1**, 7:00– 9:00pm

Location: Lake Harney Wilderness Area

Cost: \$5 per person

Ages: 9+ (children must be accompanied by an adult)



Mushroom Foraging Class

Do you know which mushrooms are edible? Learn to identify common mushrooms found in Central Florida. The session will feature an informative classroom presentation and discussion, complete with photos of local mushrooms, followed by a hike to search for these flavorful fungi.

Date/Time: Saturday, **March 8**, 9:00-11:00 am

Location: Ed & Imogene Yarborough Nature Center

Cost: \$8 per person

Ages: 7+ (children must be accompanied by an adult)



Bug Bash

Come party with bugs! This fun and informational class will show off the wide array of small crawly critters that share our wilderness, yards and even homes with. Meet and greet with insects and mollusks in the Nature Center, and end the program with a hike searching for wild bugs!

Date/Time: Saturday, **March 15**, 9:00-11:00 am

Location: Ed & Imogene Yarborough Nature Center

Cost: \$8 per person

Ages: 5+ (children must be accompanied by an adult)



Tracks & Scat Class

Learn to read the clues animals leave behind! Practice deciphering bones, tracks, scat and more. Enjoy an informative class in the nature center and create a plaster track of your own. Test your new tracking skills with a hike in the wilderness in search of animal sign.

Date/Time: Saturday, **May 3**, 9am-noon

Location: Ed & Imogene Yarborough Nature Center

Cost: \$8 per person

Ages: 5+ (children must be accompanied by an adult)

More Classes and Programs



Frog Songs: Identifying Frog Calls in Florida

What animals are croaking in your backyard? Listen up as you learn to distinguish the calls of local frog and toad species through expert instruction and interactive exercises. Practice your new skills with a night hike to the pond where you'll discover a chorus of croaks.

Date/Time: Saturday, May 10, 6:30-8:30pm
Location: Ed & Imogene Yarborough Nature Center
Cost: \$8 per person
Ages: 7+ (children must be accompanied by an adult)



Snakes of Florida Program

Join local expert, Jessie Yates as she introduces and dispels some of the myths about these often-misunderstood cold-blooded residents! Visit live snakes in the Nature Center, then end with a hike on the trails in search of wild snakes.

Date/Time: Saturday, May 17, 9am- noon
Location: Ed & Imogene Yarborough Nature Center
Cost: \$8 per person
Ages: 7+ (children must be accompanied by an adult)

FREE
EVENT

Spring Discovery Day

Stop in to visit the Ed and Imogene Yarborough Nature Center! Meet-and-greet with our animal residents and explore the exhibits and displays. Join a knowledgeable guide on a short hike around the wilderness area where you might spy some wild creatures! All ages are welcome.

Free Event! No registration required!



Earth Day Celebration

Celebrate Earth Day at the Nature Center! Festivities will include nature crafts for kids, art displays from the Senator tree, mini guided hikes and other fun surprises!

April
26

9 am- Noon





Guided Hikes



Did you know the Natural Lands Program manages over 6,600 acres of preserved land? Let our knowledgeable guides walk you through some of Seminole County's most beautiful wilderness areas. Hikes fill up quickly, so sign up today by visiting: recreation.seminolecountyfl.gov

All hikes are \$5 per guest. Children must be 7 years or older (unless otherwise noted) and accompanied by an adult to attend. Call 407.665.2211 for more information.

JAN
17

Florida Tree Trek

Friday 9:00-11:00 am @ Spring Hammock Preserve

Celebrate FL Arbor Day by joining a NLP guide for a hike through forests of oak, pine, cypress and other mixed hardwood trees in this beautiful preserve. Learn to identify native trees and find out how these giants impact our ecosystems and our lives.

Hike Rating
EASY

FEB
12

Full Moon Hike

Wednesday 7:00– 9:00 pm @ Chuluota Wilderness Area

Take a break midweek to enjoy the splendor of this month's full moon and search for hidden night creatures.

Hike Rating
EASY

MAR
1

Owl Prowl

Saturday 7:00-9:00 pm at Spring Hammock Preserve

Explore the park after dark in search of owls! Learn to identify owls by sight and hoots.

Hike Rating
EASY

MAR
29

Swamp Walk

Saturday 9:00– 11:00 am @ Spring Hammock Preserve

Follow your guide through the unmarked trails of a real hydric hammock! Wade waist-deep in the murky waters of a swamp while learning about the amazing plants and animals that call this habitat home. Ages 10+.

Hike Rating
STRENUOUS

MAR
29

Fluorescent Fungus Walk



Saturday 7:00-9:00 pm at Spring Hammock Preserve

Explore the unseen world of bioluminescent and UV fluorescent fungi! Learn about the biology of these glowing organisms and their importance in our local ecosystems. Ages 10+.

Hike Rating
MODERATE

APR
5

Spring Foraging Hike

Saturday 8:30-10:30 am @ Geneva Wilderness Area

Hike in search of edible and useful wild plants. Learn to identify common edibles in your community.

Hike Rating
EASY

Property
Addresses

Econ River Wilderness Area
3795 Old Lockwood Rd. Oviedo 32765
Black Bear Wilderness Area
5298 Michigan Ave. Sanford 32771
Lake Jesup Wilderness Area
5951 Sanford Ave. Sanford 32773

Chuluota Wilderness Area
3895 Curryville Rd. Chuluota 32766
Lake Harney Wilderness Area
2395 Osceola Fish Camp Rd, Geneva 32732
Geneva Wilderness Area/Nature Center
3485 N. County Road 426, Geneva 32732

More Guided Hikes

APR

5

Owl Prowl

Saturday 7:00-9:00 pm @ Lake Proctor Wilderness Area

Explore the park after dark in search of owls! Learn to identify owls by sight and hoots.

Hike Rating

EASY

APR

26

Nocturnal Reptile Ramble

NEW PROGRAM!

Saturday 7:00-9:00 pm @ Black Bear Wilderness Area

Join our first ever NIGHT hike in the Black Bear Wilderness Area! Search for hidden swamp creatures including nocturnal snakes and alligators. This program is designed for adventurous and agile hikers. Ages 10+.

Hike Rating

MODERATE

MAY

3

Spring Migration Birding Hike

Saturday 7:30-9:30 am @ Lake Jesup Wilderness Area

Celebrate World Migratory Bird Day exploring the Lake Jesup Wilderness Area and its diverse ecosystems. Join an expert birder to spy migrating birds.

Hike Rating

EASY

MAY

10

Florida Pollinators Hike

NEW PROGRAM!

Saturday 9:00-11:00 am @ Lake Harney Wilderness Area

Discover the multitude of Florida's pollinating insects while hiking along blooming trails.

Hike Rating

EASY

Special Event Hikes

NEW PROGRAM!

Special event hikes occur seasonally to offer free guided hikes for the community. Just like our regularly scheduled guided hikes, make sure to bring water, bug repellent and wear comfortable closed-toed shoes. Children must be at least 7 years of age and accompanied by an adult. Please call ahead if your group of 6+ plans to join. Call 407-665-2211 for more information.

Free Program. No registration required.

First Day Hike

Wednesday, January 1 11:00 am– 12:30 pm @ Lake Proctor Wilderness Area

Kick off the new year on the right foot! Join Natural Lands guides on the first day of the year for a leisurely hike through the diverse habitats of the Lake Proctor Wilderness Area.

Earth Day Sunset Hike

Tuesday, April 22 7:00– 8:30 pm @ Lake Harney Wilderness Area

Celebrate Earth Day by marveling at Earth's natural beauty during this special guided hike. Enjoy a walk through the picturesque trails of the Lake Harney Wilderness Area, end the evening on the observation deck with breathtaking views of the floodplain and the setting sun.

FREE EVENT

Private Hikes, Rentals and Programs

Location: Ed & Imogene Yarborough Nature Center, Geneva

Cost: \$170, includes 3-hour facility rental and a Natural Lands Program party host.

Registration: To coordinate times and availability, please email: nswanson@seminolecountyfl.gov



Eco Birthday Parties

(Click [HERE](#) for more information)



Give your child an unforgettably wild birthday celebration! A Natural Lands party host will greet your guests, present an exciting live animal program, and guide the group on a scenic hike through our 180-acre property. Plus, enjoy time to explore the Nature Center and relax with your refreshments.

Private Hikes

Do you want to take a hike with your favorite people? Schedule a private hike with Natural Lands! Great for scout groups, field trips, team building and family reunions.

One of our knowledgeable staff members will guide you through the trails of the wilderness area of your choice. Along the way, hikers can ask questions and the instructor will stop to point out notable sights. Hike takes approximately 2 hours. \$5 per person. Up to 25 guests.

Facility Rentals

Rent one of our amazing facilities for your party, family reunion, business meeting or other events!

- North Campsite/Pavilion @ GWA
- Yarborough Nature Center
- Full & half days or overnight



Field Trips & In-School Programs

Field trips to the Ed & Imogene Yarborough Nature Center can serve as a wonderful opportunity for your students to explore natural science first-hand. Program includes a nature presentation with live animals in the Center, a hike around the trails and time for lunch. Open to public, private and home school groups. Only \$5 per student! Teachers and chaperones are free.

Let Natural Lands come to you! During the 45-50 minute in-school program, students will learn about standards-based science topics and have opportunities to view and handle skulls, biofacts and live animals. This program is FREE!

For more information, please call 407.665.2211 or email nswanson@seminolecountyfl.gov

Next Season and Program Partners

Summer

During the Summer, Natural Lands hosts Summer Eco Camp for children 7-12 and Biology Boot Camp for 13-15 year olds.

Keep checking back on the Leisure Services registration page to sign up!

recreation.seminolecountyfl.gov



We look forward to welcoming everyone else back for hikes and programs in the Fall.
Happy Adventuring!

Program Partners



The Cuplet Fern Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society joins Natural Lands for Open Houses, plant-related hikes, plant rescue events and maintains the demonstration garden at the Ed & Imogene Yarborough Nature Center. Cuplet Fern also provides several [scholarships](#) each season for children to attend Eco Camp. Thank you for all your support!



Seminole Audubon Society works closely with Natural Lands to lead birding hikes and programs, give informative presentations and hikes to our Eco Campers, provide [scholarships](#) for children to attend Eco Camp and help Natural Lands purchase materials for programming including Audubon Adventures educational materials and binoculars for Eco Camp. Thank you for your continued support of our programs!



More to Explore

Natural Lands— Wilderness Areas and Preserves

Did you know that Natural Lands manages 9 public wild lands for you to explore? No matter where you live in the county, there is likely a wilderness area close by.

Trails are open from sun rise to sun set every day of the year (unless otherwise noted).
Parking and entry are always free!

Enjoy [recreational activities](#) like hiking, birding, biking, photography, horseback riding, fishing and more! Each location has a unique combination of plant communities, animals and ecosystems. We can't wait to see you out there!

Happy Adventuring!

Experience
Seminole County
Naturally



in our
Wilderness
Areas

The **Black Bear Wilderness Area**'s approximately 1,600 acres in northwest Seminole County features a 7 mile loop trail with boardwalks that showcase a variety of wetland habitats within the floodplain of the St. John's River. Wet prairie, Hydric Hammock and Cypress swamps form a mosaic of habitat diversity which host wildlife such as the White-tailed Deer, Swallow-tailed Kite and Florida Black Bear. Its large size and proximity to other public lands, make this site an important piece in a puzzle connecting natural areas between the Wekiva/St. John's basins and the Ocala National Forest.



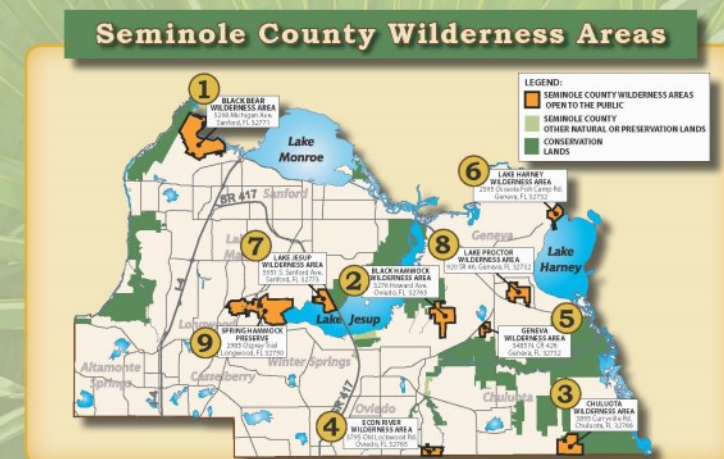
The **Black Hammock Wilderness Area** is a 700+ acre property located in east Seminole County, on the southeast side of Lake Jesup. A joint purchase with the St. Johns River Water Management District, this land was acquired as part of a comprehensive effort to preserve significant habitat along the shores of Lake Jesup. A walk on the 4.5 mile loop trail and boardwalks will take you through habitats such as hydric hammock, mixed hardwood swamp, pine flatwoods and sand pine scrub. Wildlife observed on this site includes the barred owl, white-tailed deer, bobcat and eastern coral snake.



The **Chuluota Wilderness Area** is a 625 acre site located to the east of the town of Chuluota in the southeast corner of Seminole County. This site has extensive and diverse natural communities such as pond pine flatwoods, sand pine scrub, and bayhead swamp. Its remote location and variety of habitats make it an excellent destination for bird watching, wildlife study and nature photography.



The trail system consists of two main loop trails totalling approximately 6 miles that offers visitors the chance to view an abundance of wildlife. See white-tailed deer, gopher tortoise, Sherman's fox squirrel and the eastern diamondback rattlesnake.



The **Econ River Wilderness Area** is a 240 acre property located on the Seminole/Orange County line, south of the city of Oviedo, on the west side of the Econlockhatchee River.

A scenic walking trail of approximately 3 miles leads visitors through habitats such as pine flatwoods, sandhill and river swamp. Wildlife observed on this site includes the great horned owl, white-tailed deer and golden mouse. Benches are provided at a bend in the river so you can rest and enjoy the quiet, serenity of this little piece of natural Florida.

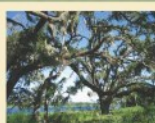


The **Geneva Wilderness Area** is a 180 acre property south of the Geneva community in east Seminole County. This site features a beautiful mosaic of flatwoods, ponds, sand pine scrub and bayhead swamp, all supporting an equally diverse collection of wildlife. A hike through approximately 2 miles of trails can reward visitors with sightings of gopher tortoise, white-tailed deer, wild turkey and gray fox.

This property has a fishing pier, large pavilion with a barbeque and the Ed Yarbrough Nature Center which features exhibits and displays that highlight the ecology of Central Florida. The Nature Center is open by appointment only.



The **Lake Harney Wilderness Area** is approximately 300 acres located on the St. Johns River and the northwest shore of Lake Harney. This site is home to a historic crossing of the Okeechobee Branch of the East Coast Railway, several bald eagle's nests, oak hammocks and mixed hardwood swamps. A viewing tower overlooks the floodplain of Lake Harney which serves as important feeding grounds for wading birds and as a natural filter improving water quality.



The **Lake Jesup Wilderness Area** is a 490 acre site located on the north shore of Lake Jesup, west of Highway 417. Purchased in cooperation with the St. Johns River Water Management District for the purpose of preserving significant habitat to aid in the restoration of Lake Jesup. Visitors can walk, ride their horse or mountain bike on approximately 3 miles of trails to view the extensive flood plain of this lake. Trails are seasonally flooded. Countless species of wildlife call this site home including the anhinga, bald eagle, and American alligator.



The **Lake Proctor Wilderness Area** is a 475 acre property located near the town of Geneva in east Seminole County.

A hike on approximately 6 miles of trail through habitats such as sand pine scrub, pine flatwoods, sandhill and bayhead swamp can reward visitors with sightings of wood duck, white-tailed deer, red fox and Florida worm lizard. The yellow trail provides the best opportunity for viewing a variety of wild flower species.



The **Spring Hammock Preserve** is a 1,500 acre property on the west shore of Lake Jesup in Longwood. It is a well-known landmark to both residents and visitors because of its oasis-like appearance in the midst of a rapidly growing urban area and includes Big Tree Park and Soldier's Creek Park. The property offers protection to listed species such as the gopher tortoise, bipinnate cuplet fern and Okeechobee gourd which occur in the following plant communities: pine flatwoods, hydric hammock and floodplain forest, respectively. The Seminole County School Board operates an Environmental Studies Center on the property for all grade 5 classes throughout Seminole County.

