

2014 Florida Master Naturalist Program Conference

UF IFAS
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA



March 28-30, 2014
Cape Canaveral, Florida

Field Trip Opportunities – Saturday, March 29, 2014

Ritch Grissom Memorial Wetlands at Viera (Tour limited to 15 people)

Itinerary:

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| 12:15pm | Load bus |
| 12:45pm | Depart Radisson Resort at the Port |
| 12:45-1:15pm | Travel to Viera Wetlands |
| 1:30-4:00pm | Wildlife photography hike |
| 4:00-4:15pm | Load bus |
| 4:15-4:45pm | Bus returns to Radisson Resort at the Port |

Description:

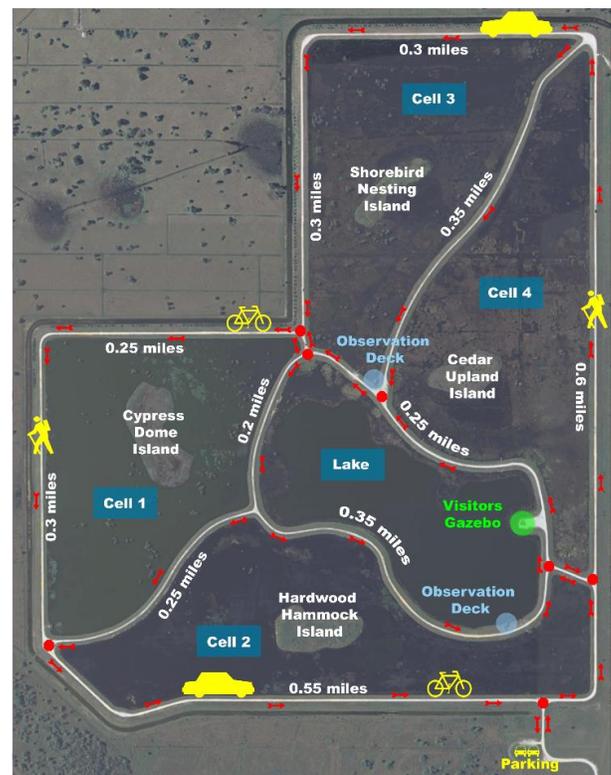
Located between the Moccasin Island Tract of the River Lakes Conservation Area and the Brevard Zoo, the wetlands are a popular site for birders, photographers, and eco-tourists. Also known as the Viera Wetlands, the area consists of 200 acres divided into four cells of approximately 35 acres each, plus a central lake. The cells were designed to maintain differing depths of water, reflecting diverse wetland conditions. The wetlands are an integral component of Brevard County's water reuse system. Providing increased water quality and savings over traditional water treatment methods, the constructed wetland system polishes reclaimed water for irrigation or overflow into the adjacent Four-mile Canal. A special mitigation littoral zone along the lake's shoreline is carefully monitored to assess wetland health and wildlife utilization. The wetlands provide for a biologically diverse ecosystem, affording visitors a wonderful, close-up opportunity to view Brevard County's native wildlife and vegetation. The entire wetlands central lake perimeter, approximately one mile of shoreline, has been seeded with Florida wildflower species. A covered gazebo serves as a visitor information center overlooking the lake and is surrounded by a butterfly garden and demonstration rain barrel irrigation system. Approximately 60,000 visitors pass through the main entrance to the wetland system each year, many drawn by the site's breathtaking views and stunning abundance of wildlife.



The conference tour will include a 2-mile wildlife photography hike led by teaching photographer and FMNP graduate Robert Amoruso. Tour discussion will include an overview of bird species and ethical wildlife photography techniques.

What to Wear & Bring: Dress for walking – hiking boots or tennis shoes, hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, bug spray

Food Provided: Lunch and bottled water



Driving Distance: The Ritch Grissom Memorial Wetlands at Viera are located in Melbourne, approximately 25 miles from the Radisson Resort at the Port

Cost of Tour: \$60.00 per person

(includes lunch, transportation, and any admission fees)

For Questions about the Tour Site, contact:

Raleigh Berry, Environmental Land Manager

Phone: (321) 633-2016 | Email: raleigh.berry@brevardcounty.us

For Questions about Tour Logistics, contact:

Jasmine Garcia, Conference Coordinator

UF/IFAS Office of Conferences & Institutes

Phone: (352) 392-5930 | Email: j.garcia@ufl.edu