



"Mockingbird"
Angela Chen, High School
Buchholz High School

2020
Saving My Alachua



THOUGHTS FROM THE DIRECTOR, CHRIS BIRD...

The 2020 Saving My Alachua Calendar highlights our local emerging environmental artists and shows what these artists perceive about the current state of the environment.



Art is a great way to engage youth with the natural world. Likewise, engaging youth in nature is a great way to inspire them to create art. Alachua County government recognizes art as an effective means to engage our community with local environmental issues in a way that cuts across culture, age, education level, and socioeconomic status.

Alachua County is blessed with clean water, air, and natural resources worth saving for future generations. In the future, today's youth will be making the public, business, and personal decisions that can either nurture or harm the environment. Future environmental stewardship will become increasingly challenging as humankind struggles to adapt to climate change locally and globally.

I hope these local artists' inspiring calendar creations will encourage you and others to act locally to better value and protect Alachua County's natural assets while thinking globally, now and into the future.

LET'S TALK ABOUT OUR FUTURE!

There has been much conversation lately about global warming, climate change, and the need to reduce our carbon footprint.

Global warming is the increase in the average temperature of the earth's atmosphere due to the trapping of heat known as the **greenhouse effect**.

Human activities, such as burning fossil fuels, deforestation, and intensive agriculture, have dramatically increased emissions of **greenhouse gases**, such as carbon dioxide, which are responsible for trapping the sun's energy in the atmosphere. An individual's **carbon footprint** is calculated by adding up the amount of carbon dioxide released into the environment based on their behaviors (transportation, electricity use, food, clothing, etc.).

As our planet heats up at unprecedented speed, changes in our global climate patterns are becoming more noticeable. Unlike **weather**, which describes short-term conditions, **climate** is the average pattern of weather conditions over a long period of time. Impacts of **climate change** are observed in shrinking sea ice and glaciers, rising sea levels, increased flooding and worsening droughts, shifting of seasons, and the increased occurrence of supercell storms, tornadoes and extreme heat.

Fossil fuels include gasoline, diesel, kerosene, natural gas, and petrochemicals (plastics, pharmaceuticals, fertilizers) we make from oil.



"Climate change is moving faster than we are"
- UN Secretary - General António Guterres

Adapting to and reducing the impacts of climate change will require large scale policy solutions and individual behavior changes to limit greenhouse gases.

CLIMATE CHANGE IS NOW

How you can help your community adapt and build resiliency

While it is vital to reduce our carbon emissions as quickly as possible, there will likely be impacts of climate change that cannot be avoided. Here are some simple ways to reduce your carbon footprint and build resiliency in your community:

REDUCE YOUR ENERGY USE

Heating and cooling typically account for almost half of your home energy consumption. Take advantage of free home energy audits provided by many local groups to find ways to reduce your utility bill.

To schedule a free energy audit, call the Community Weatherization Coalition at 352-450-4956 or GRU at 352-393-1460.

Throwing on an extra layer in the winter and using fans in the summer can make a huge difference (and save you money!).

Switch to energy efficient light bulbs (CFLs or LEDs) and Energy Star appliances (and only run them when full), and hang up your clothes to dry. Unplug "vampire" appliances such as TVs, computers and gaming consoles, or use advanced power strips to save energy.

REDUCE WASTE

We can dramatically decrease waste simply by... buying less! When making purchases, ask yourself... "Do I really need this? What is this made of? Where does it come from?"

We should all ask ourselves... "Do I really need this? What is this made of? Where does it come from?"

Consider buying second hand, shop locally whenever possible, and avoid plastics and excessive packaging. Use a refillable water bottle, reusable shopping bags and your own take-out containers and straws.



**Become an ambassador!
Know the facts and talk to people about climate change.
We all have areas where we can reduce our carbon footprint - which of these helpful tips are you passionate about?**

Every one of us should strive to do a little better each day. Walk or bike instead of driving when possible, be mindful of our consumption, and use less plastic. When we all pitch in, even small changes can add up and make a huge difference globally.

EAT LOCAL FOOD

Food production, distribution, and waste contribute greatly to greenhouse gas emissions. We can reduce our impact by buying locally grown food, reducing meat consumption, minimizing food waste, and composting. Look for local farms that implement verified organic, ecological, and social stewardship practices that support the environment and people, including farmworkers and farmers, and support retailers and restaurants that buy local foods.

Visit our local Farmer's Markets:
• Wednesdays 4-7 pm Gainesville Union Street Downtown
• Thursdays 12-4 pm High Springs and 4-7 pm Alachua
• Fridays 3-6 pm (EST) Melrose
• Saturdays 8:30 am-12 pm 441-Alachua and 8:30 am-12 pm Haile Plantation

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION

Do you drive a lot? Is your vehicle fuel-efficient? Maintaining your car by changing the air filter and adjusting your tire pressure regularly can improve fuel efficiency. With Gainesville rated as the most bicycle-friendly city in Florida, consider commuting by bike. If driving cannot be avoided, carpool with a friend.

GREEN YOUR YARD

Is your yard helping or hurting wildlife? Chemicals used to maintain lawns often end up polluting our drinking water and harming beneficial pollinators. Try planting native and Florida friendly plants instead of turf to provide habitat that attracts birds and butterflies. Or simply let your lawn convert to a multi-species mix of grass and weeds. Your lawn will still look green, but will require much less maintenance and result in cleaner soil and water.



"Hummingbird Garden", Charlotte Lillico, 3rd Grade, Newberry Elementary

"Bird in the Forest"



Laila Thorndike, 1st Grade
J.J. Finley Elementary

Birds come in all shapes, colors, and sizes and can be found all over the world. They have a spectacular diversity of appearances and behaviors, with over 10,000 known bird species. Over 300 bird species have been observed in the great preserves and water bodies of Alachua County. Some species have expanded into our area recently, like the Snail kite (*Rostrhamus sociabilis*).

Birds are not immune to the effects of climate change. Of the 993 bird species inhabiting North America, the National Audubon Society's Birds and Climate Change report (2014) finds that 314 of them are "climate endangered." Florida is identified as a critical "climate stronghold," defined as an area capable to support numerous bird species. Protecting, maintaining, and restoring natural habitats in Florida is not just important for birds, but it is also crucial to support human population.

This calendar recognizes environmental events and dates of holidays established by law. For a multicultural calendar, visit: www.timeanddate.com/holidays/us/2020

January 2020

S M T W T F S

Many plants go dormant in the winter and don't need irrigation or fertilizer. Fertilizer is banned July - Feb.



			New Year's Day				
			1	2	3	4	
National Bird Day	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	12	13	14	15	16	Florida Arbor Day	18
	19	MLK Holiday	20	21	22	23	24
	26	27	28	29	30	31	

- New Moon
- ◐ First Quarter
- Full Moon
- ◑ Third Quarter



"Beautiful Sunset", Amani Gainey, 4th Grade, Caring and Sharing Learning School

"Wetland Alligators"



Summer Guan, 2nd Grade
Hidden Oaks Elementary

Dr. Sam Brody, Climate Expert at Texas A&M University, believes that "The most important local climate change adaption strategy for Alachua County is protecting wetlands and floodplains."

One way that Alachua County protects our valuable wetlands is through buffers. Most wetlands in the County are required to be separated from new development by a protective 75 foot natural vegetated buffer.

Plants and soil in buffer zones filter pollutants in stormwater run-off before they reach wetlands and surface waters. Under the recently adopted Countywide Wetlands Code, wetland buffers are now consistently protected countywide, including in the municipalities. Thanks to these protections, everyone in Alachua County can enjoy cleaner water and a decreased chance of flooding.

February 2020



Make sure to Scoop it, Bag it, and Trash it!
Pet waste can transmit diseases to humans and pets.



World Wetlands Day	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	

“Be a part of the solution, not the pollution!”



“Protect Our Waterways”, Harper Bullock, 5th Grade, J.J. Finley Elementary

“Glorious Green Swamp”



Zora Beauvais, 4th Grade
Caring and Sharing Learning School

When it rains, water picks up pollutants as it travels into stormdrains. Our stormdrains do not lead to water treatment plants. Instead, stormdrains often drain directly into our creeks, lakes, or wetlands. Do your part to protect local water quality and wildlife habitat by taking these simple actions to reduce stormwater pollution:

- Scoop, bag and trash pet waste
- Eliminate the use of fertilizer and pesticides in your yard
- Keep grass clippings out of the street
- Wash cars at a car wash or in a grassy area away from the street
- Reduce waste, pick up trash, and recycle

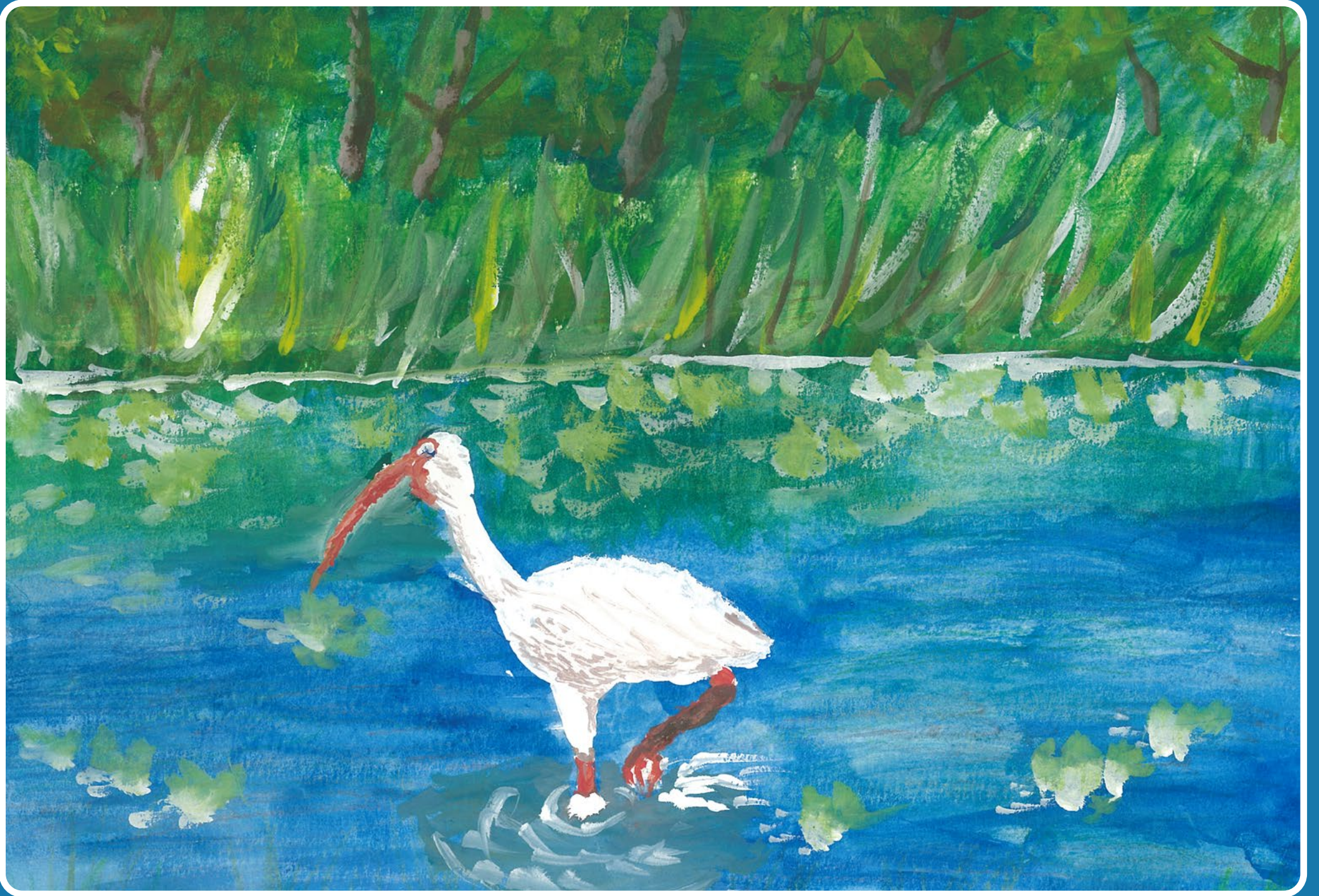
When it comes to protecting our waters for current and future generations, small actions add to big results when we all do our part.

March 2020

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
World Wildlife Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Irrigation restrictions change	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
World Water Day	22	23	24	25	26	27	Earth Hour 28
	29	30	31				

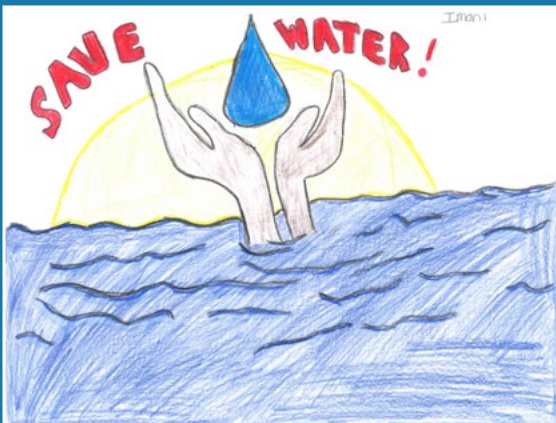


Stormdrains do not lead to treatment plants and often lead directly to our creeks and lakes. Only rain down the drain!



"White Ibis", Max Chapman, 8th Grade, Fort Clarke Middle School

"Save Water!"



Imani Robinson, 5th Grade
Boulware Springs Charter School

We rely on the aquifer beneath us for all our water needs including our drinking water. This is the same water that recharges the springs and rivers we love. When you adopt habits to conserve water, you leave more water in the aquifer to keep springs and rivers flowing and aquatic habitats healthy! Saving water reduces carbon pollution too, since it takes a lot of energy to pump, filter and heat your water.

Save water at home by fixing leaky faucets, running the dishwasher only when full, turning water off while brushing your teeth, and planting a landscape that doesn't require irrigation. Come celebrate water conservation month and learn more about conserving water at the Springs Celebration and Chili Cook-off at O'Leno State Park on April 4th!

April 2020



For indoor water savings, limit your shower to 5 minutes or less and install low-flow shower heads.



				1	2	3	O'Leno Springs Celebration 4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
19	20	21	Earth Day 22	23	National Arbor Day City Nature Challenge 24	25	
26	27	28	29	30			



"Magic Waters", Arielle Dorsey, 3rd Grade, Caring and Sharing Learning School

"Manatee"



Nicky Chronley, 2nd Grade
Kimball Wiles Elementary

Threatened and endangered species are animals and plants that are at high risk of extinction. Historically, many of these rare species have declined due to overhunting or overharvesting. Today, climate change, land degradation and loss of natural habitat are the greatest threats to biodiversity.

Some of the most well-known endangered animal species in Alachua County include the Snail kite, Florida sandhill crane, Gulf sturgeon, Frosted flatwoods salamander, Eastern indigo snake, gopher tortoise, and Suwannee alligator snapping turtle. Through the County's habitat protection requirements, we hope to ensure these species have the space they need to survive and thrive in Alachua County.

May 2020



Call before you clear! Contact EPD staff prior to clearing, under brushing, tree removal or other activities in natural areas. 352-264-6800



						1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	International Migratory Bird Day
Mother's Day 10	11	12	13	14	15	16	Endangered Species Day
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
24							
31	Memorial Day 25	26	27	28	29	30	



"Quick Hopper", Grace Lohengrin, 4th Grade, Expressions Learning Arts Academy

"Clean Up Your World"



Julia Wynn, 3rd Grade
Expressions Learning Arts Academy

Did you know that not all of our wastes should become trash? In fact, you can bring poisons and pesticides, paint and paint thinners, automotive fluids, oil filters, fertilizers, pool chemicals, batteries, household cleaners, old medicines, aerosols, retired electronics, CFL bulbs, and even waste cooking oil to the Alachua County Hazardous Waste Collection Center. That's A LOT of stuff!

The aim of our program is to decrease environmental pollution, and we appreciate your help in choosing to divert hazardous wastes from the landfill... if found there they may stick around forever!

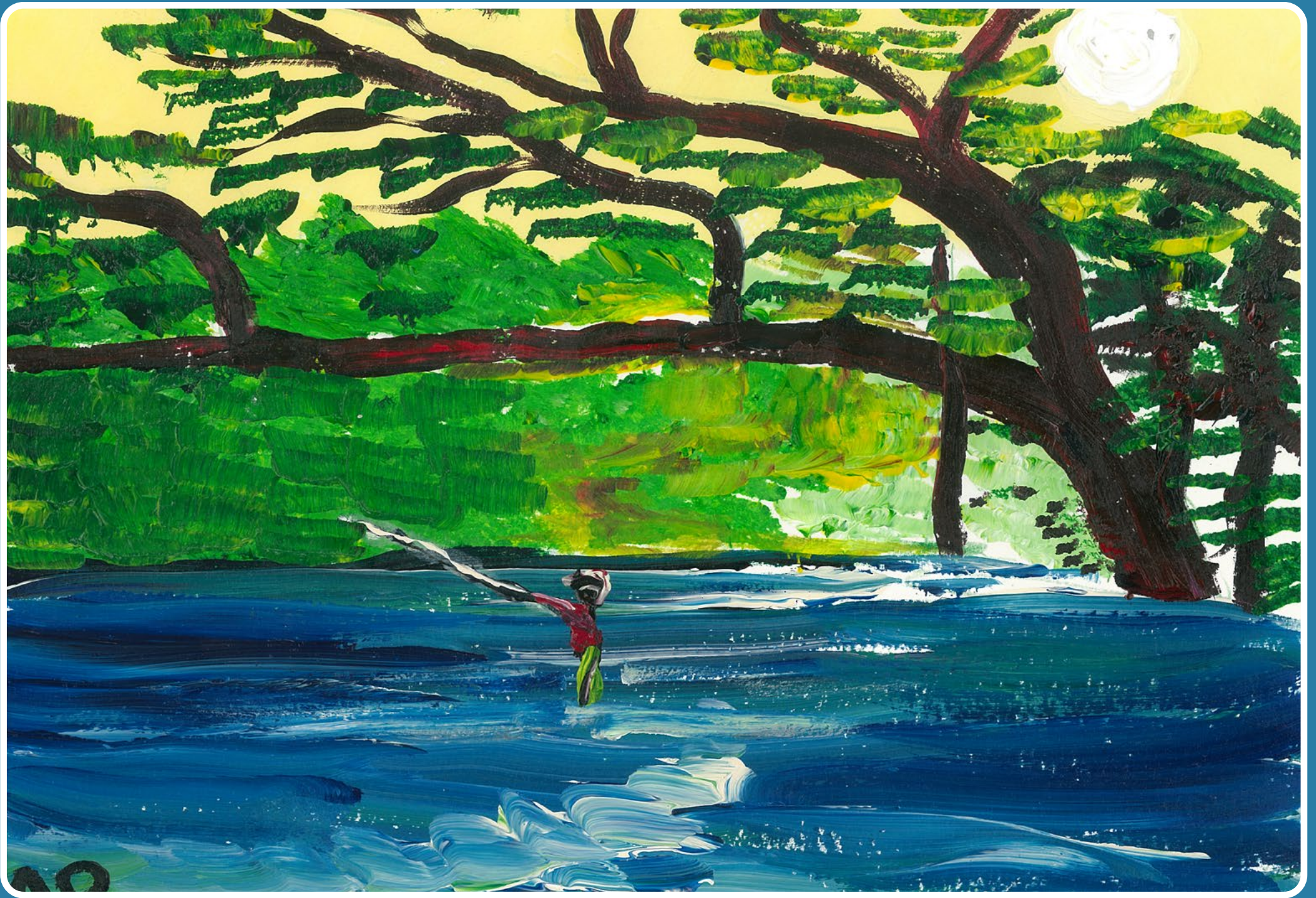
The HazWaste Center is open:
Monday through Friday from 7AM – 5PM
Saturdays from 8AM – 12PM

Call 352-334-0440 or visit
www.alachuacountyhazwaste.us for
more information.

June 2020

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5 World Environment Day	6 National Trails Day
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 Father's Day	22 National Pollinator Week	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	<p>You can help pollinators by replacing turf with Florida friendly landscapes. Check out the Waterwise plant database at www.Floridawaterstar.com for flowering natives that provide food for pollinators such as bees and butterflies.</p>			





"River Fishing", Alysia Rentz, 6th Grade, Caring and Sharing Learning School

"Stop Trashing My Swamp"



Aaya Haddad, 5th Grade
Expressions Learning Arts Academy

Springs are one of Florida's most iconic ecosystems, however many across the state are imperiled by thick mats of nuisance algae. The Alachua County Environmental Protection Department has formed partnerships with fellow agencies in an effort to help protect our springs. In a current restoration project, we are examining the role of dissolved oxygen and the abundance of native snails as a way to encourage native plants and animals.

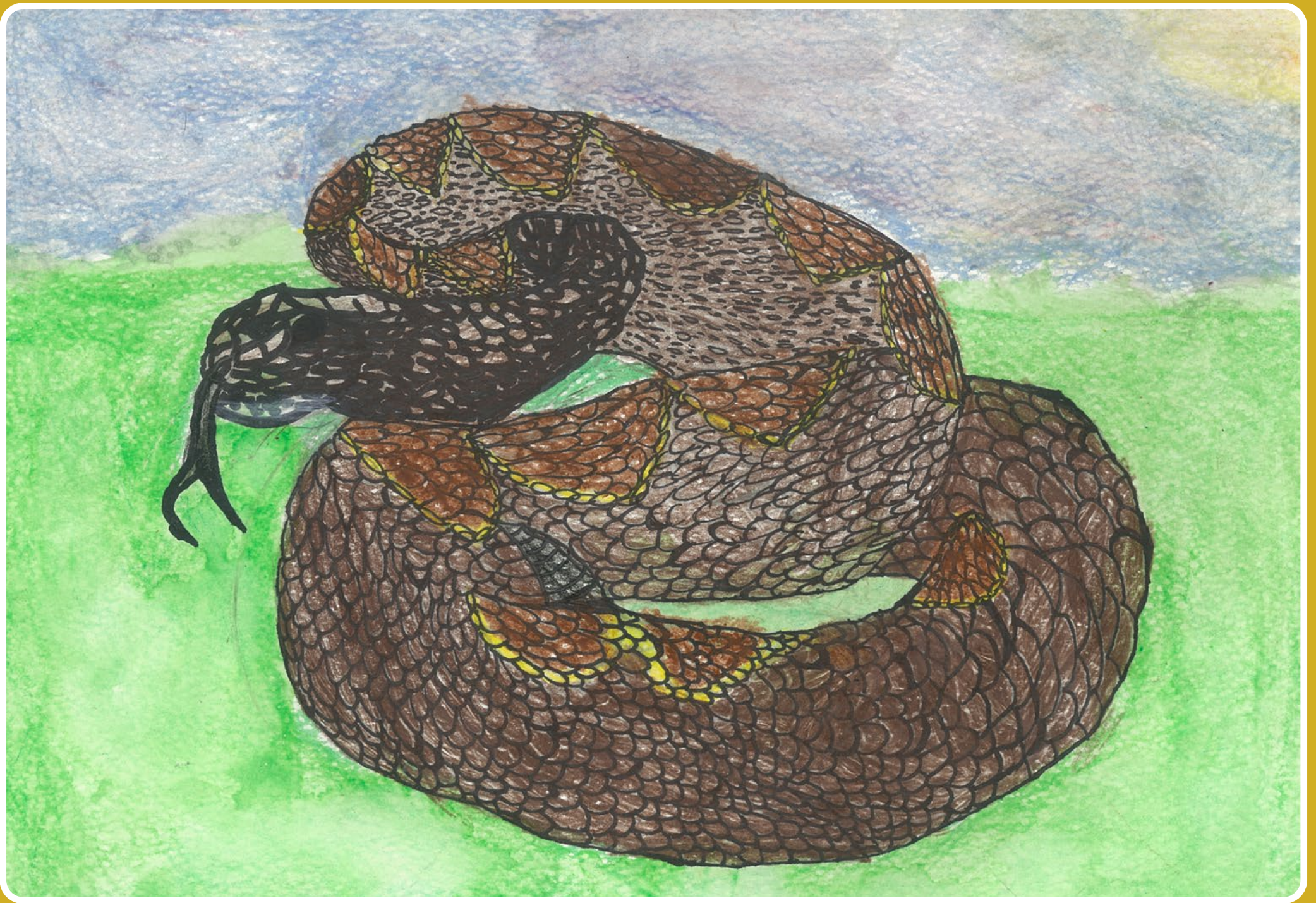
Springs are direct connections to our aquifer. Projects like this help us gain insight into what may be impacting our springs and groundwater so we can prevent future harm and better protect these resources.

July 2020



If there is magic on this planet, it is contained in water.
- Loren Eiseley

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4 Independence Day
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	



"The Snake of Destiny", Hiro Miyaji, 1st Grade, Expressions Learning Arts Academy

"Fun or Destruction?"



Cecilia Duda, 6th Grade
Lincoln Middle School

Climate change affects everyone. In Florida, nuisance flooding, extreme weather, and sea level rise are already impacting coastal communities, home to the majority of the state's population. Looking ahead, inland cities and counties have a responsibility to prepare for climate change and the influx of displaced residents.

Alachua County's climate change adaptation strategies include:

- Building environmental resiliency, including protecting and restoring wetlands, floodplains and sensitive natural habitats
- Promoting development and consumption practices that reduce impact on water resources
- Protecting water quality and quantity through monitoring, restoration and water conservation efforts
- Partnering and collaborating with other climate change initiatives, agencies and organizations in the region
- Educating our community and staff on climate mitigation and adaptation issues

August 2020



If your irrigation system is turning on with consistent summer rains, your rainfall shut off device may not be working. Visit www.AlachuaCountyWater.org.

							1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
30	31						



"Nighttime Owl and Panther", Arden Kirk, Kindergarten, Jordan Glen School

"Midnight Moon"



Taniya Daniels, 5th Grade
Caring and Sharing Learning School

In 1983, Florida began the process of protecting groundwater quality by passing the Water Quality Assurance Act. With increasing concerns from leaking underground gasoline tanks, the Inland Protection Trust Fund was created in 1986 to help pay for their cleanup and remediation. This fund is generated by taxes on every barrel of petroleum products brought into the State of Florida.

Cleaning up petroleum contamination helps ensure our groundwater remains clean and usable for generations to come.

October 2020



The HazWaste Collection Center accepts waste vegetable oil for recycling and processing into a 100% biodiesel fuel for use in county vehicles and equipment. Call 352-334-0440 for more information.

S	m	t	w	t	f	S
				○		
				1	2	3
World Animal Welfare Day 4	5	6	7	8	9	10
					●	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
					●	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
						○
25	26	27	28	29	30	31



"The Two Sandhill Cranes" Claudia Thomas 2nd Grade Expressions Learning Arts Academy

"Alligator Pond"



Bennett Hunt, Kindergarten
Jordan Glen School

Did you know that much of the County's water use occurs outdoors? With sea level rise threatening water supply, particularly in coastal communities, the demands on groundwater and freshwater sources will continue to grow. As a community, we can collectively create big water savings by adopting landscaping practices that limit the need for water.

Creating resilient, Florida friendly landscapes that are drought tolerant and mulched to retain moisture also benefits local springs and rivers which are fueled by the same aquifer that is the source for our tap water and sprinklers. Resilient landscapes eliminate or reduce the need for fertilizer or pesticide and provide habitat for wildlife.

November 2020

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
Irrigation Restrictions change 1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	Veterans Day 11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	Thanksgiving Day 26	27	28
29	30	 <p>With cooler weather, irrigation is limited to one day a week, based on your house number:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Odd House Number - Saturday • Even House Number - Sunday • Non-residential - Tuesday 				



"Viewing Clean Water", Kyleigh Lewis, 5th Grade, Caring and Sharing Learning School

"Don't Take My Home!"
Sincerely, Mr. F. Mouse'



Kindred Rook-Lopez, 5th Grade
Expressions Learning Arts Academy

Staying mindful about current practices that protect the environment is important. In 100 years, will our current practices be enough to maintain a healthy environment and sustainable life on the only planet we call home? Perhaps now more than ever, our actions today should be evaluated by their ability to protect our planet in the future.

If we ponder the effects of our actions in the long term, and adjust our habits accordingly, maybe there will be a paradigm shift that could change the future of our planet for a better tomorrow!

December 2020



The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new.
- Dan Millman

		1	2	3	4	5
	6	7	8	9	10	11
	12	13	14	15	16	17
	18	19	20	21	22	23
Christmas Bird Count	24	25	26	27	28	29
	30	31				



Get out and EXPLORE



There is simply no better way to gain an appreciation for the natural environment than to go out and explore it, canoe it, hike it, float it... you get the idea! Below are some of our favorite local spots. See you on the trails!

Park Name	Location	Description	Icons
Barr Hammock - Levy Prairie	14920 SE 11th Dr, Micanopy	Accessible from the northern entrance off of SE 11th Drive, the 6.5 mi Levy Loop Trail encircles a wet prairie and offers vistas along the unshaded northern trail. Spring and fall wildflowers, and migratory birds in fall and winter. Southern portion of loop is shaded.	
Barr Hammock - South Entrance	300 SE 175th Ave, Micanopy	13 miles of shared, forested trails; a favorite loop for hikers is the Bayhead trail; for equestrians, Hammock Trail. If you are up for a long hike or ride, the Landing Overlook offers magnificent views.	
Cellon Oak Park	4100 NW 169th Pl, Gainesville	Small park with no trails but known for its picturesque setting featured in many family photos. Home of the Florida Co-Champion Live Oak tree.	
Cofrin Park	4810 NW 8th Ave, Gainesville	Small urban preserve with short 0.5 mi unpaved trail through hardwood and seepage-slope forest.	
Lake Alto Preserve - North (and Lake Alto Park)	14512 Co Rd 1471, Waldo	3.5 miles of unpaved trails accessible both from the Preserve entrance and the Park/Boat ramp entrance just to the south off of CR 1471. Fishing allowed at the Boat Ramp/Park area. Look for black bear tracks in the north portion of the preserve.	
Lake Alto Preserve - South	Co Rd 1471 and NE 132nd Ave, Waldo	The 1.2 mile Canal Loop is accessible from NE 132nd Ave, less than 1/2 mi east of CR 1471. Wildflowers abound in fall near the entrance.	
Longleaf Flatwoods Reserve	Main parking area located on CR 325, about 2.3 mi south of Hawthorne Rd/SR 20	Managed by SJRWMD, the preserve features relatively intact natural communities including sandhill, mesic flatwoods, and cypress swamps. Wildflowers can be plentiful spring thru fall. Group camping is available by reservation only at https://www.sjrwmd.com/lands/recreation/camping	
Mill Creek Preserve	14505 NW County Road 236 (intersection with CR 241)	This preserve features about 5 mi of trails and the southernmost extent of American beech trees. There are several easy to moderate marked loop trails of various lengths. See migratory birds in fall.	
Newnans Lake Conservation Area	3 tracts: Hatchet Creek Tract trailhead is 0.9 mi east of the Hatchet Creek bridge on SR 26; North Tract trailhead is on CR 234, 2.2 mi south of SR 26; South Tract trailhead is near Newnans Lake boat ramp on SE 3rd Place, Windsor	Managed by SJRWMD, the best time to visit this area is winter as some trails can be wet and buggy during the summer, and there are trail closures during hunting season in fall and spring. Horses are limited to the Hatchet Creek and North Tracts. Group camping is available by reservation only at https://www.sjrwmd.com/lands/recreation/camping .	
Phifer Flatwoods	Parking area located at intersection of CR 2082 and CR 325 on the Gainesville-Hawthorne State Trail (GHST)	Several trailheads accessible from the Gainesville-Hawthorne State Trail. Wildflowers are prominent in the fall along the north side of the Turpentine Loop Trail.	
Poe Springs Park	28800 NW 182nd Ave, High Springs	This park offers swimming in the springs, picnic facilities, play areas as well as hiking trails. Parking fee is \$5 per vehicle.	
Sweetwater Preserve	2 trailheads: one located at the east terminus of SE 16th Ave, at 309 SE 16th Ave, Gainesville; the other located 0.3 mi north of Boulware Springs City Park (3300 SE 15th St, Gainesville) on the GHST	The 1.75 mile West Trail accessible from SE 16th Avenue offers full shade along Sweetwater Branch. It connects to the 1.2 mile East Trail, which is partially shaded and weaves through 8 different natural communities. The East trailhead is accessible via the Gainesville-Hawthorne State Trail.	
Watermelon Pond Park and Preserve	10700 SW 250th St, Newberry	A marshy, sandhill lake, accessible for shallow water boaters from the boat ramp at Watermelon Pond Park. A short hiking trail is available from the trailhead.	



Hiking/Nature Trails



Horseback Riding Trails



Dogs on leash



Fishing



Bicycling Trails



Group Camping (reservation only)



Boat Ramp



Hunting (during season)