

Greenways & Natural Lands Seminole Tracks Newsletter



The Outdoors are Calling...

Fall is such a beautiful time in Florida to get outside and take in the changing season. We may not have autumn leaves, but native flowers are blooming, birds are migrating and the air is growing cooler and crisper by the day.

Seminole County Natural Lands offers many opportunities to enjoy this season, whether you fancy leisurely strolls in nature, learning new facts about local creatures or creating natural works of art. We can't wait to see you out there!

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Last Season...

Summer 2023

During Summertime, Natural Lands suspends most hikes and events to welcome campers back to Eco Camp. This summer was full of fun, friendships and learning about the natural world!



Making Fire!



Exploring



Fort Building



Fishing Fun



Eco Friends



Dissections



Fun in the Sun



Nature Journaling



Dip Netting



Meeting Creatures

A BIG thank you to all of our amazing guest speakers who donated their time for our campers!

- Dr. Rosie Stanbrook– UCF: Dung Beetle Safari/Trapping & Presentation
- John McClelland– SGTV: Camper-made nature PSA's during "Lights, Camera, Nature" week
- Hannah Bevan– Curator: UCF Mammalogy Lab
- Creations from the Sand: sand art with Eco Artist week campers
- CEELAB @ UCF– marine biology stations for Wild Waters week
- Elizabeth Stevens– SERV:



Macro-invertebrates Lab and Biodiversity Lab



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 geared for families with children 5-13 who want a fun camping experience. Meals, tent pitching, campfire cooking, a live nature center, and s'mores roasting are included. Registration is required and must be completed by October 15th.

Location: Geneva Wilderness Area
3485 N. County Road 426
Geneva, FL 32744

Times: **October 27-28**
Saturday, 5:00pm - 9:00pm
Sunday, 9:00am - 1:00pm

Cost: \$20 per person

Register online at recreation.seminolecountyfl.gov



Families will enjoy a Halloween camp out! Activities will include tent-or-treat, pumpkin decorating and other spooky surprises! Costumes are encouraged!

Families must have a child 5+, no adult-only registrations allowed.



Winter Break Eco Camp

Winter Break Eco Camp is like Summer Camp, just without the heat and bugs!

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.

Find out more by visiting our Eco Camp webpage!



Dates: **December 26-29** (4 days)
Location: Ed Yarborough Nature Center
3485 N. County Road 426,
Geneva
Times: 9:00am - 4:00pm
(extended day available from 7:30am - 5:30pm)
Cost: \$132/week (extended day an additional \$15/week)
Ages: 7-12
Register online at recreation.seminolecountyfl.gov



Classes and Programs

Come learn something new by experiencing it first-hand! Natural Land's classes and programs offer learning opportunities for everyone. This Fall, we have a variety of events to choose from. Just make sure you register before you arrive. Classes fill up quickly, so sign up today by visiting: recreation.seminolecountyfl.gov



Crazy Cool Craniums

Animal bones can tell stories! Learn to read animal skulls to discover what they eat, how they're built and how they live. This fun and informational class will introduce you to the world of animal skulls and how to identify animals from their bones. Meet and greet with live animals in the Nature Center and piece together tiny skeletons by dissecting an owl pellet!

Date/ Time: Saturday, **August 26**, 2023, 10 AM—noon

Location: Ed Yarborough Nature Center
3485 N. County Road 426
Geneva 32732

Cost: \$8/person

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



Snakes of Florida Program

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

Date/Time: Saturday **September 16**, 9-11 AM

Location: Ed Yarborough Nature Center
3485 N. County Road 426, Geneva

Cost: \$8 per person

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



Eco Crafts

Join Natural Lands for family craft time! We will begin the morning with a hike through the woods collecting natural treasures. From the items you collect, we will create a one-or-a-kind nature craft!

Dates: Saturday **Nov. 4**, 9-11 AM (Sun Art, ages 5-7)

Saturday, **Nov. 4**, noon -2 PM (Watercolor Plant Paint, ages 8-10)

Location: Ed Yarborough Nature Center
3485 N. County Road 426
Geneva 32732

Cost: \$8 per person, adults must accompany children



Wildlife Photography Hike

Join adventure photographer TJ Waller as he shares some of his secrets of wildlife photography! This class will cover camera settings, techniques for stationary and moving subjects, approach techniques and more. Explore the Lake Harney Wilderness Area while practicing your new photography skills.

Skill level: Beginner to Intermediate

Date/time: Saturday, **October 28**, 7:30-10:30 AM

Location: Lake Harney Wilderness Area

Cost: \$8 per person

Ages: 18+ (adults only)



Orienteering Class

Navigate like an explorer! Join Natural Lands staff in the Ed Yarborough Nature Center to learn the basics of how to read maps, how compasses work and how to use them to find your way. Prove your skills by completing a challenge compass course in the woods! Each participant will receive their own compass to take home.

Time/Date: Saturday **December 9**, 9-11am

Location: Geneva Wilderness Area
3485 N CR 426
Geneva, FL 32732

Cost: \$8 per person (register each person attending)

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



Guided Hikes



Fall is one of the busiest hiking seasons here in Central Florida– and it’s not hard to see why! 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. All Natural Lands hikes require pre-registration. Call 407.665.2211 for more information.

SEPT
23

Owl Prowl
Saturday 7:30 - 9:30 PM @ Spring Hammock Preserve
Explore the park after dark in search of owls! Learn how to identify owls by sight and hoots.

Hike Rating
EASY

Oct
27

Hunter’s Moon Hike (rescheduled from Sept 29)
Friday 7:30 - 9:30 PM @ Chuluota Wilderness Area
Celebrate the beauty and history of the Harvest Moon during this moonlit night hike.

Hike Rating
MODERATE

SEPT
30

Butterflies and Blooms
Saturday 10 AM– noon @ Lake Harney Wilderness Area
Join a local expert in search of fragrant colorful flowers, and the many pollinators that visit them.

Hike Rating
EASY

OCT
7

Fall Foraging Hike
Saturday 8:30 - 10:30 AM @ Geneva Wilderness Area
Learn to identify seasonal wild edible plants while strolling through diverse habitats in the Geneva Wilderness Area.

Hike Rating
EASY

OCT
14

Morning Birding Hike
Saturday 7:30 - 9:30 AM @ Lake Jesup Wilderness Area
Join an expert birder as you search for feathered friends. Learn how to spot birds by sight and sound while meandering through the floodplain of Lake Jesup.

Hike Rating
EASY

OCT
21

Reptile Ramble
Saturday 8:00 - 10:00 AM @ Black Bear Wilderness Area
Search for scaly creatures during this exciting hike. Regular sightings include alligators, turtles, and snakes.

Hike Rating
MODERATE

NOV
18

Morning Birding Hike
Saturday 7:30 - 9:30 AM @ Black Bear Wilderness Area
Join an expert birder as you search for feathered friends. Spot many species of wading birds as you hike along river and swamp.

Hike Rating
MODERATE

Property
Addresses

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Spring Hammock Preserve | Chuluota Wilderness Area |
| 2985 Osprey Trail, Longwood 32750 | 3895 Curryville Rd. Chuluota 32766 |
| Black Bear Wilderness Area | Lake Harney Wilderness Area |
| 5298 Michigan Ave. Sanford 32771 | 2395 Osceola Fish Camp Rd, Geneva 32732 |
| Lake Jesup Wilderness Area | Geneva Wilderness Area/Ed Yarborough Nature Center |
| 5951 Sanford Ave. Sanford 32773 | 3485 N. County Road 426, Geneva 32732 |

Star Gazing and Program Partners

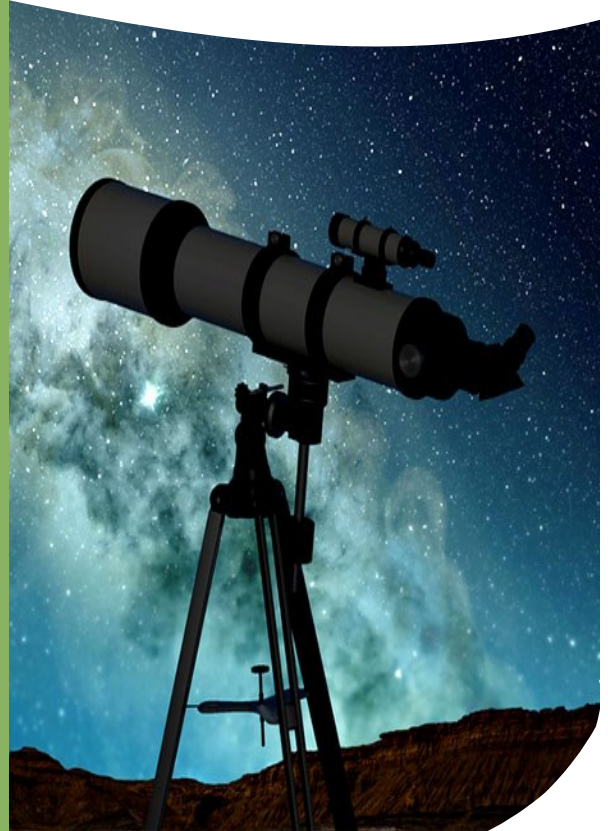
Star Gazing

Join Natural Lands and the Director of the Emil Buehler Planetarium at Seminole State College, Derek Demeter, for an evening exploring the wonders of the night sky. Peer through large telescopes as you tour many of the cosmos' best celestial objects. Beach chairs and/or picnic blankets are recommended.

When: Friday, **December 15**

Where: Lake Harney Wilderness Area
2395 Osceola Fish Camp Road
Geneva 32732

Time: 6:30-10:00 PM



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 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!



Private Hikes, Rentals and Programs

Location: Ed Yarborough Nature Center
Geneva Wilderness Area
3485 N. County Road 426
Geneva, FL 32732

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

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



Eco Birthday Parties



Create a birthday party experience your child will never forget! A trained staff member will welcome your party guests, present an exciting live animal program and take the group for a hike on our 180-acre property. Enjoy time in the Nature Center for exploration and 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. 15-25 guests.

Facility Rentals

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

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



Field Trips & In-School Programs

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






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, displays and live animals. This program is FREE!

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

At a Glance




September 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Labor Day						Open House @ EYNC- Native Plant Day! 
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
						Snakes of Florida @ GWA 
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
						Owl Prowl @ SHP 
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
					Harvest Moon Hike @ CWA 	Butterflies and Blooms @ LHWA 

October 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
						Fall Foraging @ GWA 
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
						Morning Birding Hike @ LJWA Eco Crafts @ EYNC 
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
						Reptile Ramble @ BBWA 
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
						Wilderness Photo Hike @ LHWA Family Fun Camp Out @ GWA
29	30	31	1	2	3	4

At a Glance


November 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	31	1	2	3	4 Eco Crafts @ EYNC 
5 Daylight Saving Time Ends	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18 Morning Birding Hike @ BBWA 
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30 Thanksgiving	1	2

December 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9 Orienteering Class @ GWA 
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26 Winter Break Eco Camp	27 Winter Break Eco Camp	28 Winter Break Eco Camp	29 Winter Break Eco Camp Winter Solstice	30

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 sunrise to sunset 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.

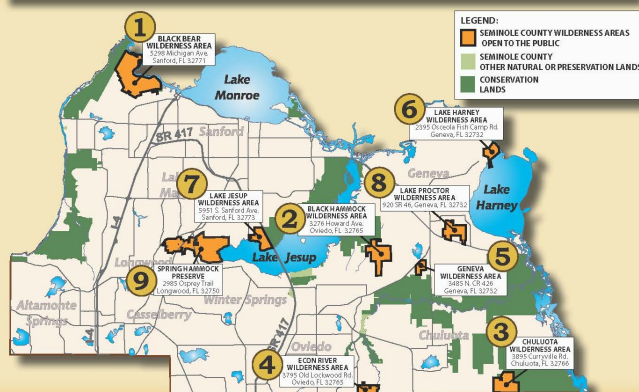


The **Chuluota Wilderness Area** is a 625 acre site located to the east of the town of Chuluota in the southeast corner of Seminole County. This site has extensive and diverse natural communities such as pond pine flatwoods, sand pine scrub, and bayhead swamp. Its remote location and variety of habitats 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.

Seminole County Wilderness Areas



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.

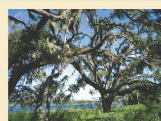


The **Geneva Wilderness Area** is a 180 acre property south of the Geneva community in east Seminole County. This site features a beautiful mosaic of flatwoods, ponds, sand pine scrub and bayhead swamp, all supporting an equally diverse collection of wildlife. A hike through approximately 2 miles of 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 facility hosts both school programs and public classes. 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.

