

### Biozone 1: Demory and Lock creeks

Possibly the most alluring Suwannee paddle traverses small creeks off the river that wind through swamps and marshes. Light filtered through the leaves of tupelos, ashes and swamp bay casts an enchanted glow on a surprising variety of wildflowers.

Fishes and alligators are abundant here, but this is the true haunt of wood ducks, river otters and turtles— as many as 13 species of freshwater turtles may be found in the Suwannee, including a newly described Alligator Snapping Turtle unique to the Suwannee drainage. The largest freshwater turtles in North America, alligator snappers can live for a century and grow to 200 pounds.



### Biozone 2: Freshwater Marsh

Shallow backwaters of the Suwannee are often covered by vegetation characteristic of ponds or marshes such as spatterdock. Sawgrass and wild rice occupy patches in still shallower areas and, like

spatterdock, add to habitat diversity. More importantly, the leaves and seeds of these plants provide food for ducks and other wildlife.



Spatterdock (foreground) and sawgrass (mid-right) in a quiet area off the Suwannee

### Biozone 3: The Suwannee River

The parts of the Suwannee flowing through the refuge are mostly freshwater, but tidally influenced with the heavy saltwater wedging under the fresh. The regularity and degree of the twice-daily

flooding greatly affects the vegetation; bald cypress, tupelo and pumpkin ash dominate these swamp areas. Farther inland bottomland hardwood forests take over. The Gulf Sturgeon may be seen in the



West Indian manatee

Suwannee and in few other rivers. It is an ancient fish that may reach 8 feet in length and weigh 200 pounds. They are found in the Suwannee in spring and summer, and may be seen making spectacular jumps out of the water. A less frequently seen animal is the West Indian manatee.

Manatees may be seen near the mouth and outside the river during warmer months, and typically move into warmer spring runs in the winter.

### Spotlight: Bald Cypress

Bald cypress is emblematic of southern swamplands. Living for hundreds of years and growing to enormous size, their one tragic flaw is the great value of their wood. Soft, light and resistant to decay, it has been relentlessly sought after. Specialized for periodic flooding, cypress knees are thought to provide carbon dioxide and oxygen to roots. The height of knees is often an indicator of the average heights of floods.

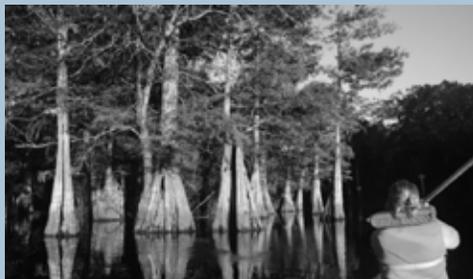
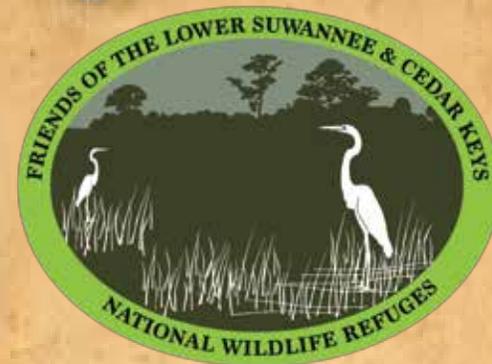


photo: Mark and Heidi Sterk

### [www.FriendsofRefuges.org](http://www.FriendsofRefuges.org)

As a membership organization, through voluntary action, Friends supports the Refuges and their work to conserve the region's wildlife and the places they need to thrive. We invite you to enjoy their pristine and primitive beauty with us.

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## THE REFUGE FROM THE WATER

## LOCK and SHINGLE CREEKS Paddle #6

*A tidal creek flowing  
through freshwater marshes  
along the Suwannee River.*

**Length:** 6.9 miles or 3.8 miles if you only paddle the Lock Creek loop.

**Time:** 3.5 hours for the 6.9 mile route.

**Skill Level:** Not recommended for beginner paddlers due to length of paddle and navigational skills required. Waters are protected along canals and Lock and Shingle creeks, but are subject to wind and tides along the wide Suwannee River.

**NOTE:** The creek banks are muddy with dense vegetation, it is difficult to disembark along this loop. Sand gnats can be fierce unless there is a nice breeze.

## DIRECTIONS TO LAUNCH SITE

Once you have entered the community of Suwannee, look for the paved boat ramp on the left just before Anderson Landing Campground.



Start/Finish  
Anderson Ramp

### BIOZONE 1

- Turtles
- American Alligator
- Wood Duck
- River Otter

### BIOZONE 2

- Sawgrass
- Wild Rice
- Spatterdock
- Great Egret

Demory Creek

Lock Creek

Shingle Creek

N29° 19.7523"  
W83° 8.1505"

N29° 19.7548"  
W83° 7.5952"

N29° 19.6399"  
W83° 6.5440"

N29° 19.6184"  
W83° 8.5967"

N29° 19.3403"  
W83° 7.7281"

### BIOZONE 3

- Bald Cypress
- Gulf Sturgeon
- Manatee
- Anhinga

Suwannee River

**Lock, Shingle and Demory creeks** are part of a paddling trail maintained by the Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge, a unit of the U.S. National Wildlife Refuge System.

Backwater portions of the trail are serene and the scenery is often described as primeval.

