

Tamiami Trail (US-41) Naples to Dade Line = 65 miles.

In 90 minutes, we'll cover the highlights of what's there, including:

- A National Park.
- National Preserve.
- National Wildlife Refuge.
- State Parks.
- Wildlife. History. The Everglades.

Great day trips in the Naples area.




Marco Island Historical Museum
One of Five Collier County Museums

Website: www.colliermuseums.com

Where: 180 South Heathwood Drive, Marco Island.

When: Tues to Sat.
9am to 4pm.

Admission: Free.

What: Traces the settlement of Marco from Calusa (500 AD), to Spanish, to Seminoles (and Seminole Wars), to permanent settlement in 1870.

From there, the museum covers Marco's agricultural history (fishing, clamming, and pineapple farming), growth of the village (early 20th c), and major property development (1920s and again beginning in 1960s).



Brief History of Marco Island

500 AD: Calusa Indians arrived. Possibly descendants of the Mayans (Yucatan).

Mid-1500s: Spanish explorers arrived. By mid-1700s Calusa were wiped out or fled.

1700s: Creek Indians arrived from Georgia and Alabama. (Later renamed Seminoles.)

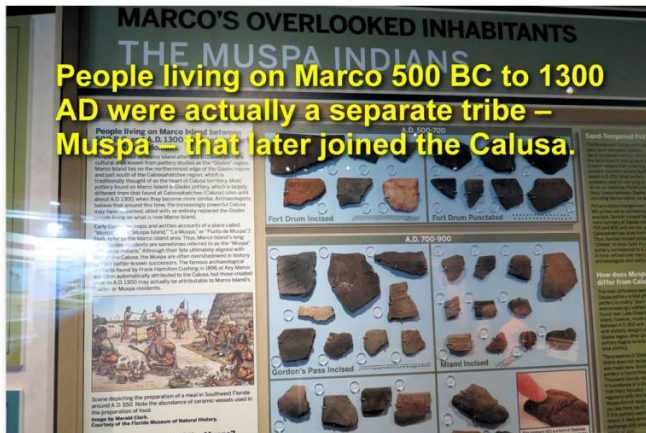
1816 to 1858: 3 Seminole Wars vs US Army. Most Seminoles wiped out or fled.

1845: Florida statehood.

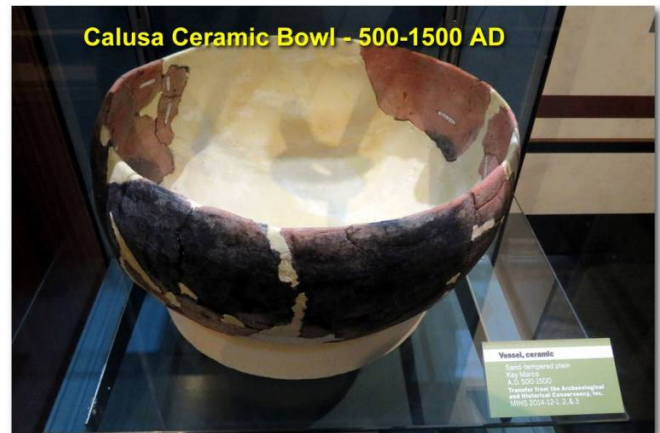
1870: First permanent settler William Collier arrived. Village of Marco founded. **Not related to Barron**
1896: Old Marco Inn opened by Colliers. Still stands.
1912: Ferry service to Marco began.
1920s: Barron Collier bought large amount of land. Incorporated Marco as Collier City. Development rush began. But failed in Great Depression. 1957 name reverted to Marco.
1938: First bridge to Marco (Goodland).
1960s: Mackell Bros. bought most of Barron Collier's land. Development took off.



Museum has extensive history of the Calusa and other early native Marco Island people including 200 pre-Columbian artifacts.



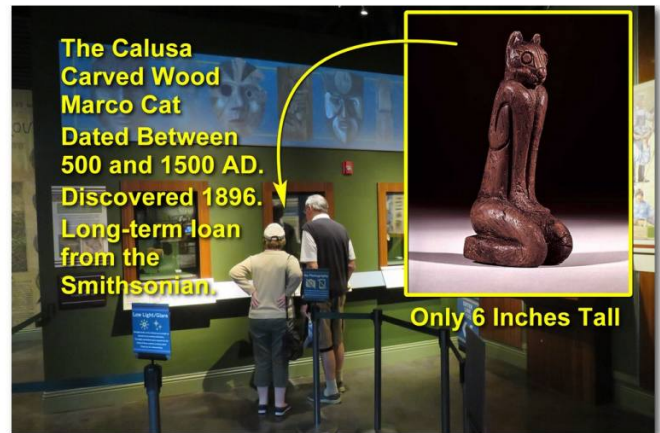
People living on Marco 500 BC to 1300 AD were actually a separate tribe – Muspa – that later joined the Calusa.



Calusa Ceramic Bowl - 500-1500 AD



Calusa Tools - 13th-16th centuries



The Calusa Carved Wood Marco Cat Dated Between 500 and 1500 AD. Discovered 1896. Long-term loan from the Smithsonian.

Only 6 Inches Tall



Spanish coin dated 1469-1566 – the time the Spanish were on Marco. Found on Marco 1974.

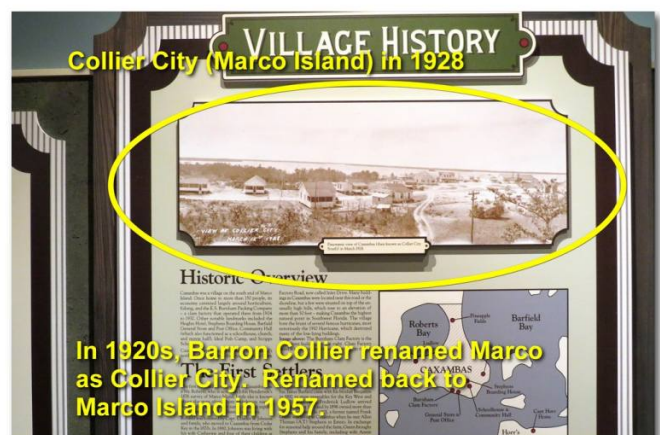
Coin (1 real)

Silver, Spanish A.D. 1469-1566 Found on Marco Island in 1974

Donated by John Tatee MHS 2013-3-1

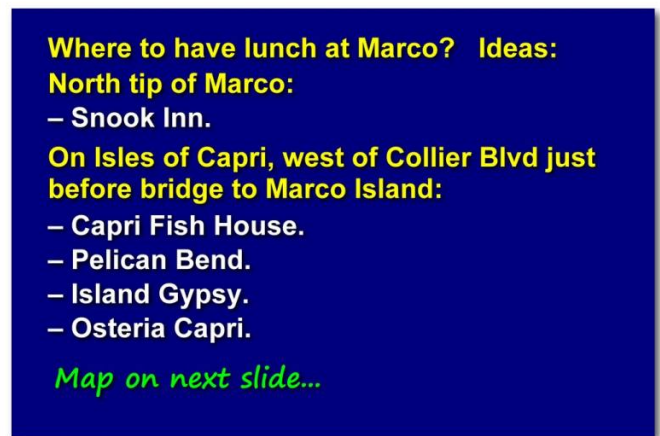
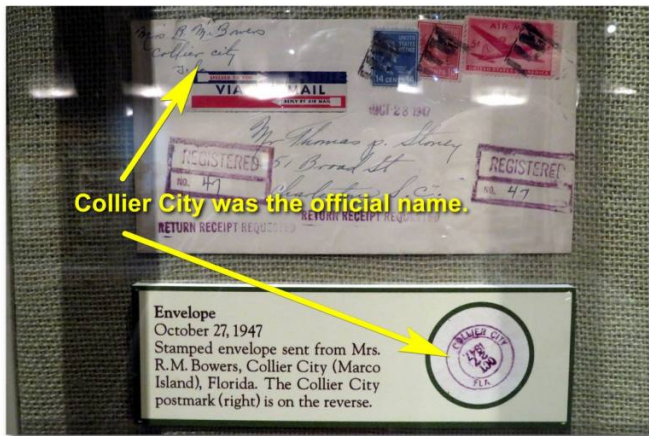
This coin bears the royal insignia of the Catholic Kings, Queen Isabella I and King Ferdinand II, who ruled Spain together between 1469 and 1504. They are forever known for authorizing Christopher Columbus's historic voyages (1492-1504) to the New World. This coin was likely

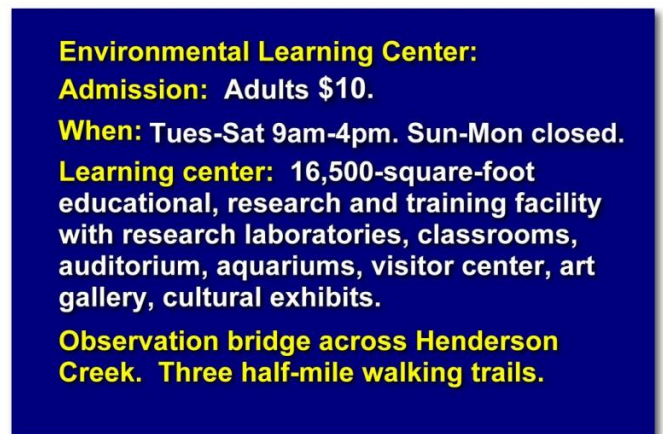
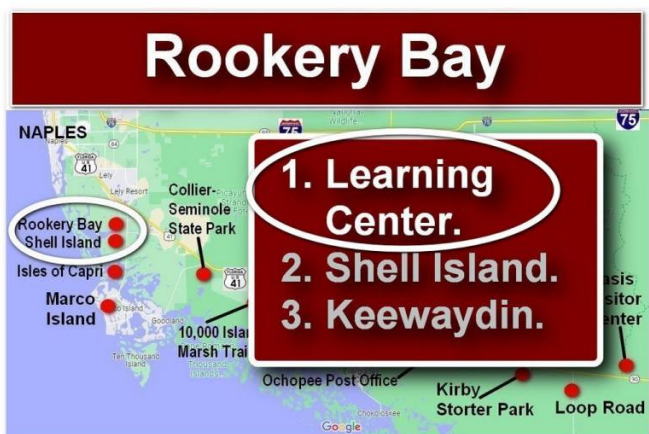
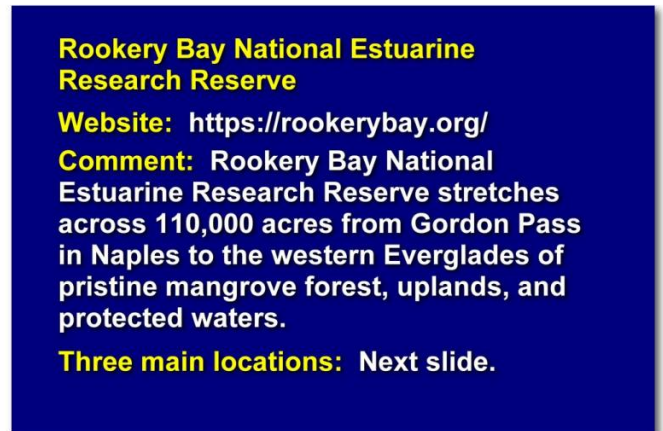
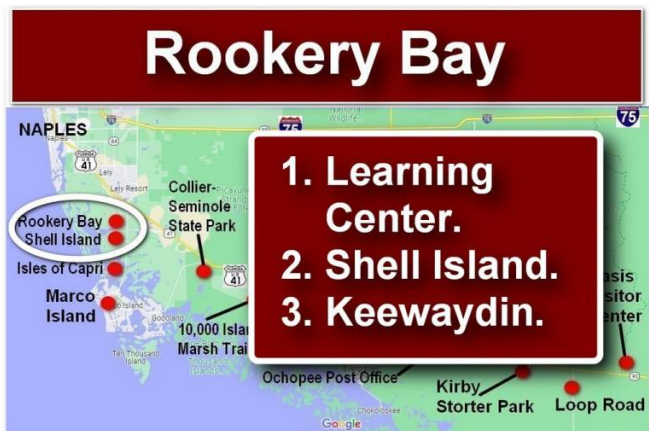
minted in Seville, Spain during this time, but could also have been minted post-humously by Isabella and Ferdinand's successors between 1537 and 1566. Just like the coins in use today, this one probably changed hands many times before winding up on Marco Island.

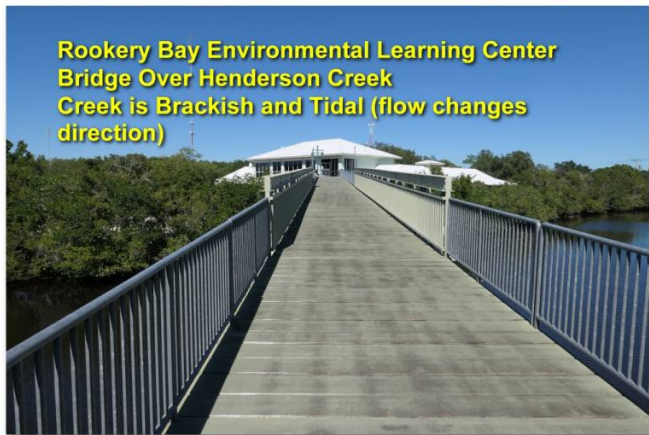


Collier City (Marco Island) in 1928

In 1920s, Barron Collier renamed Marco as Collier City. Renamed back to Marco Island in 1957.







Rookery Bay



Shell Island Road

Briggs Boardwalk: Half-mile boardwalk. Small nature center. Self-guided tours dawn to dusk. Guided tours Jan-March

Monument Point Trail: 1,000 feet from boat launch area to Henderson Creek. Can fish at Monument Point.

Boat tours: 3 hours. \$109.

Guided kayak tours: 2 hours. \$65 to \$75.

Rookery Bay - Shell Island Hiking, Boardwalk, Nature Cruises



Rookery Bay Briggs Boardwalk Half-Mile Loop



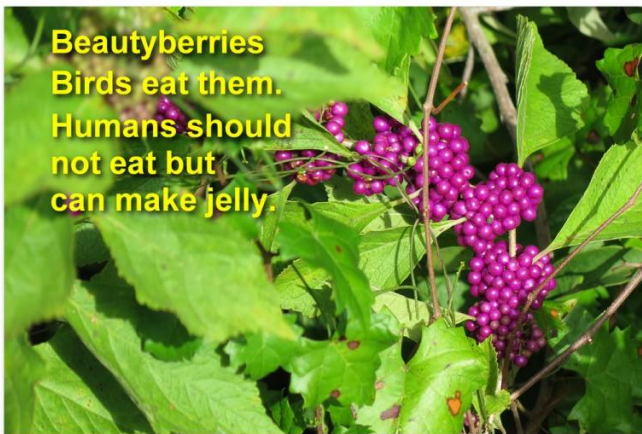
Rookery Bay - Briggs Boardwalk



Rookery Bay Dahoon Holly

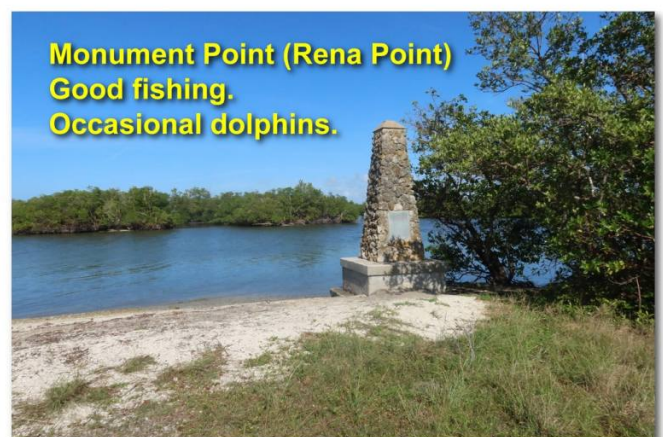
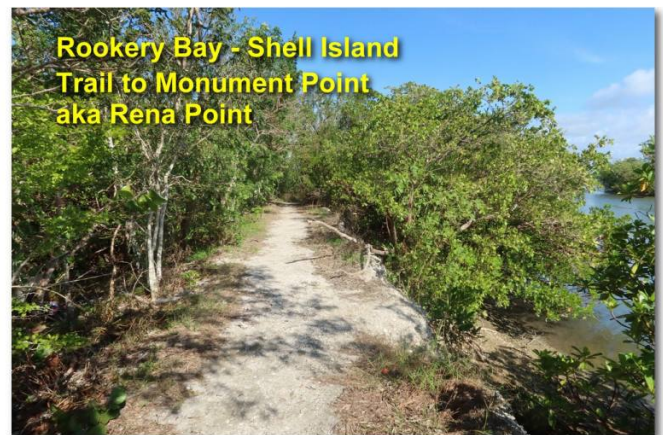
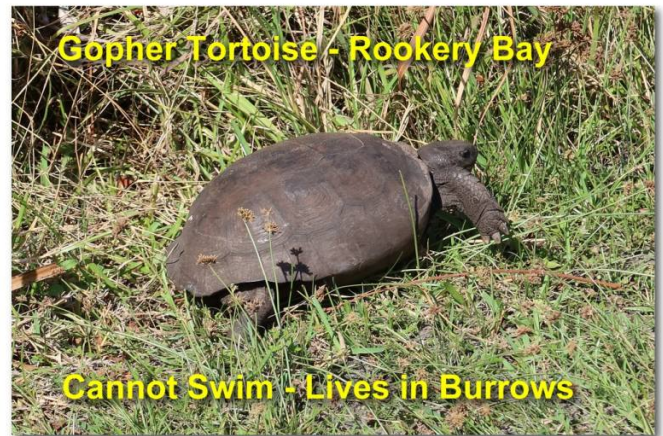


Beautyberries
Birds eat them.
Humans should not eat but can make jelly.



Rookery Bay Boardwalk Wood Stork

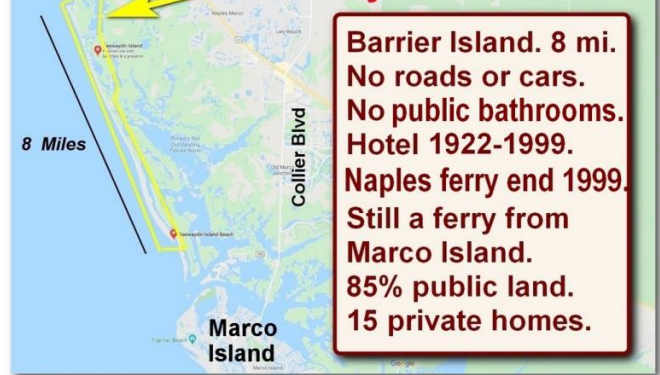




Rookery Bay



Keewaydin Island



Keewaydin Island



Keewaydin Ferry Boat - 1934



Collier-Seminole State Park



Collier-Seminole State Park

Where: US-41 Tamiami Trail, 8 miles east of Collier Blvd.

Daily: 5am to sunset.
\$5 or annual pass.

What: 7,271 acres. Mangrove swamp. Royal palms. Camping. Boat rentals. Hiking. History (Walking Dredge, Barron Collier).

Collier-Seminole State Park



Barron Collier's Impossible Dream Building the Tamiami Trail - 1920s

The Dream

Barron Collier came to Florida in 1911 and fell in love with the beauty of the area. This region was Florida's last frontier and its potential for development awakened a dream of bringing people to this tropical paradise.



Collier was born in Memphis, Tennessee. At the age of 20, he began a career in streetcar advertisement that would make him a millionaire. By the early 1920s his wealth enabled him to purchase over 100,000 acres in South Florida that would become Collier County.

The Challenges

In Collier's time, most people traveled to South Florida by rail. The coming of the automobile prompted schemes to connect cities and towns by highways. In 1915 a highway was planned from Tampa to Miami. Each county along the route was responsible for funding construction in its jurisdiction.



Lee County, which included Ft. Myers, Naples and land further south, soon ran out of money for the project. The difficulty and cost of building a road across the Everglades had been underestimated. Many said it was impossible. Barron Collier offered to fund the highway construction across the Everglades if a new county was created and named after him.

The Achievement

The 50-mile section of road across the Everglades took four years to complete. Workers built over a mile a month. The Big City Walking Dredge located here was one of the machines used to help build the road. In 1928, the 273-mile Tampa to Miami road (Tamiami Trail) officially opened.



The Tamiami Trail completed, Collier envisioned developing a national park here, but failed to rally support for his idea. The land first became a county park and then in 1947, a state park. Collier-Seminole State Park represents a part of the tropical paradise that Collier loved.

Bay City Walking Dredge

The park is the site of a National Historic Mechanical Engineering Landmark, the last existing Bay City Walking Dredge.

Built in 1924, it was used to build the Tamiami Trail Highway (US-41) through the Everglades and Big Cypress Swamp, linking Tampa and Miami.

Opened southwest Florida to travelers.

Bay City Walking Dredge - 1924 One mile per month



BARRON COLLIER MEMORIAL

IN THE 1920'S BARRON COLLIER OWNED A MILLION ACRES. THIS SPOT WAS A SMALL HARDWOOD FOREST KNOWN AS ROYAL PALM HAMMOCK BECAUSE OF A MAGNIFICENT STRAND OF NATIVE ROYAL PALM TREES. COLLIER RESERVED 150 ACRES HERE FOR WHAT HE HOPED TO HAVE DESIGNATED "LINCOLN-LEE" NATIONAL PARK. THOUGH COLLIER ADDED ENOUGH ADDITIONAL LANDS FOR A NATIONAL PARK, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DID NOT ACCEPT. THE LAND BECAME A COUNTY PARK AND WAS TURNED OVER TO THE STATE IN 1944.

Barron Collier Memorial Collier-Seminole State Park



"To the Memory of the Founder and Father of Collier County, Florida and the Faithful Friend of All Mankind".
January 1, 1941.

Dugout Canoe - Carved from a Cypress Tree Transportation through the Everglades

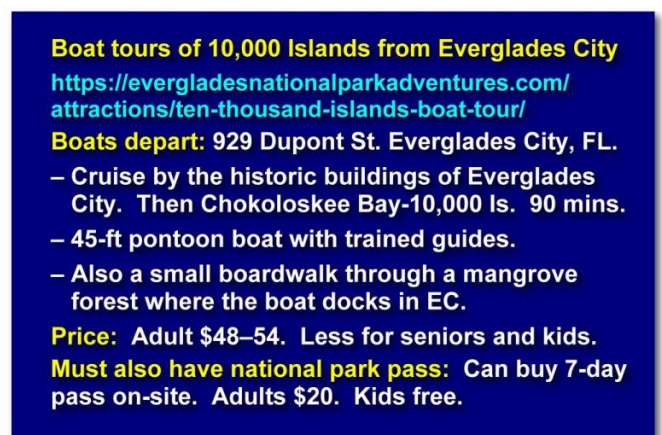
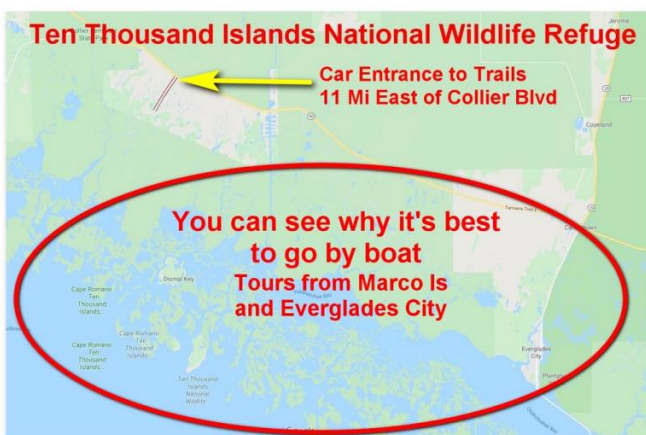
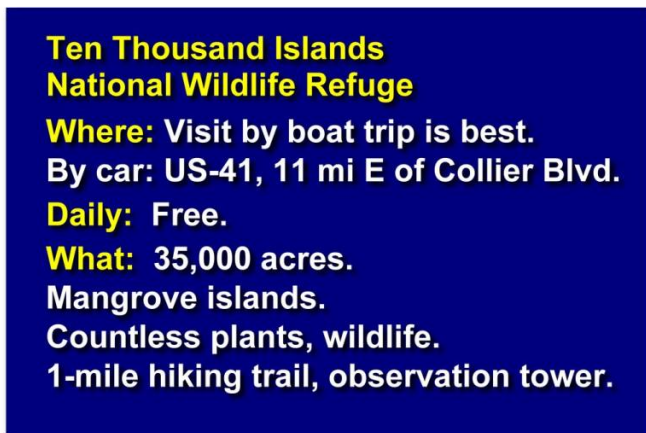
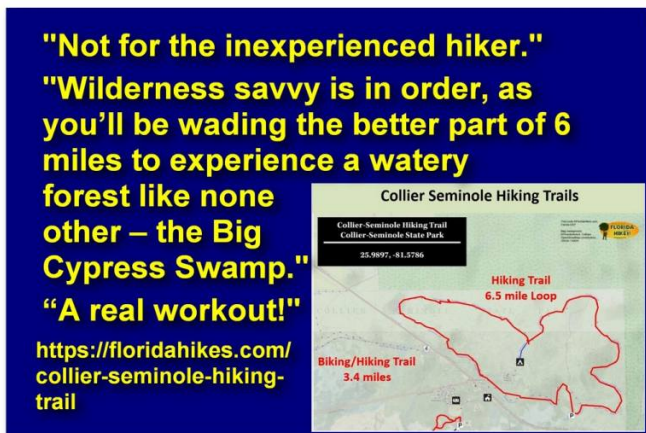


Collier-Seminole State Park Blackwater River Kayaking and Canoeing



Collier-Seminole State Park Canoe and Kayak Rentals Bicycles Too





Boat Tours from Marco Island

Eco Endeavors

<https://ecoendeavors.org/>

2.5 hours. 25 miles round-trip.

Through the mangrove forests and barrier islands.

Stop at a quiet barrier island only accessible by boat. Shelling. Swimming.

\$420 whole boat charter up to 6 people.
May be some shared-boat options too.

Ten Thousand Islands National Wildlife Refuge

Start of Marsh Trail 1.2 miles.
First 1,000' paved. Then gravel.



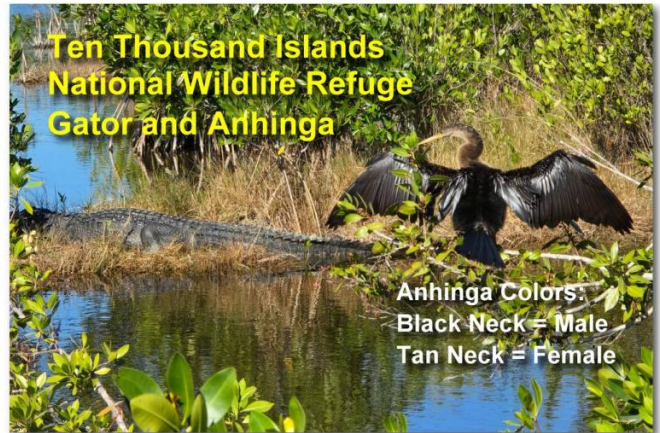
Do Not Forget!



Ten Thousand Islands National Wildlife Refuge Great Everglades Views Great Bird Watching Year Round



Ten Thousand Islands National Wildlife Refuge Gator and Anhinga



Anhinga Colors:
Black Neck = Male
Tan Neck = Female

Ten Thousand Islands National Wildlife Refuge

Roseate Spoonbill
Anhinga
Cormorant



Gator

All of the
bushy trees
are mangroves

Ten Thousand Islands National Wildlife Refuge Observation Tower



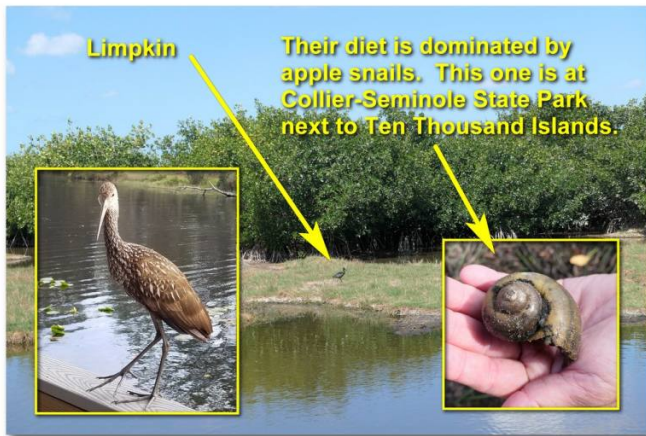
Spectacular View from Observation Tower Ten Thousand Islands National Wildlife Refuge

This is between rainy and dry seasons.
Rainy: Cannot see mangrove roots at all.
Dry: Mangrove islands have land around them.

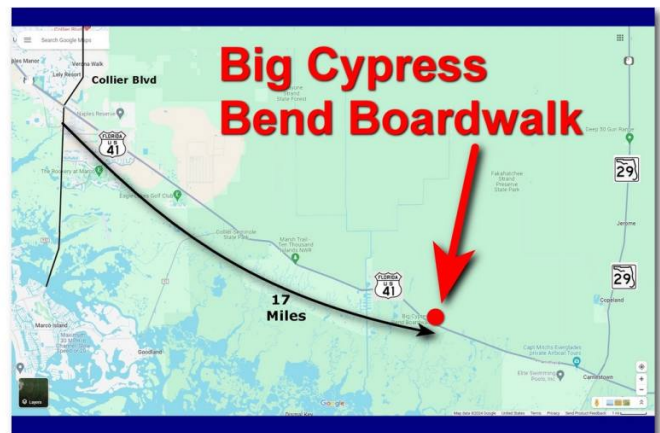


Same place at
10,000 Islands
March 2020 to
May 2021.





Big Cypress Bend
Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve
Website: www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/fakahatchee-strand-preserve-state-park
Where: US-41, Copeland FL 34137.
Get There: US-41 East 17 miles from Collier Blvd intersection.
When: 8am to sunset.
Admission: \$3.



What: Fakahatchee Strand Preserve is the largest State Park in Florida (out of 175 parks).
 Big Cypress Bend Boardwalk is one feature of the Preserve.

At the moment, there are TWO Big Cypress Bend Boardwalks: One closed and one partially open.
Eventually the two will be connected to form a loop.

Why are there currently two Big Cypress Bend Boardwalks?

- There is an old 3,200' boardwalk plus 1,000' gravel path thru a swamp to an alligator pond. Lots of wildlife.
- The State had planned a major loop extension of the old boardwalk – and had started work on a small part of the extension plus new parking and visitors' center – when Hurricane Ian hit in Sept 2022.

Ian made the old boardwalk unusable.

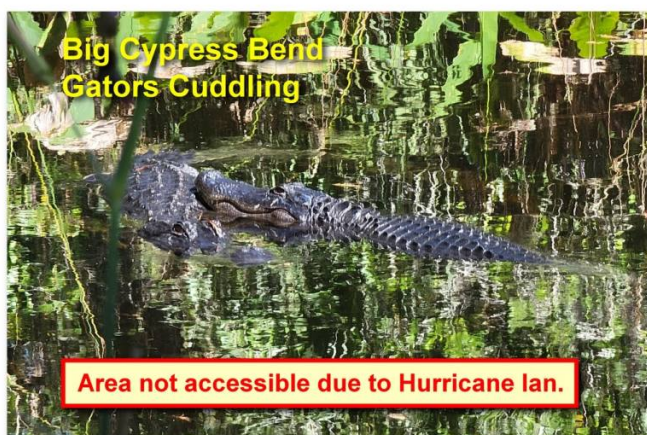
- The State had funding for only part of the new extension.
- Finally, in Feb 2024, about ½ mile of the new extension opened, along with a parking area and visitors' center.
- The State still needs funding for the rest of the new extension and also for repairs to the old boardwalk.

The map on the next slide illustrates all of this.

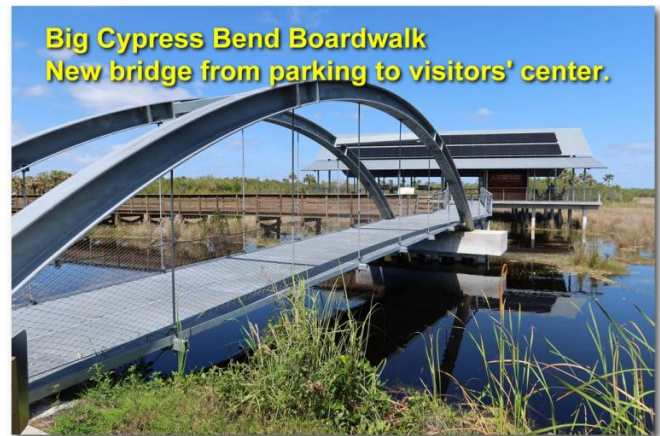


The next 5 slides show the OLD boardwalk and alligator pond.

- These are not currently accessible due to Hurricane Ian damage.
- After the old boardwalk is repaired, it will become part of the expanded hiking loop (including boardwalk, canopy walk, and trails) shown in the previous map.



The rest of the slides illustrate the parts of Big Cypress Bend that are now open.



Visitors' Center Overlooks a Wet Prairie



Start of New Big Cypress Bend Boardwalk



Under the Boardwalk at Big Cypress Bend



Big Cypress Bend Boardwalk At Green Heron Lake



Big Cypress Bend



Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park

Florida's largest State Park.

Where: SR-29 just north of US-41.

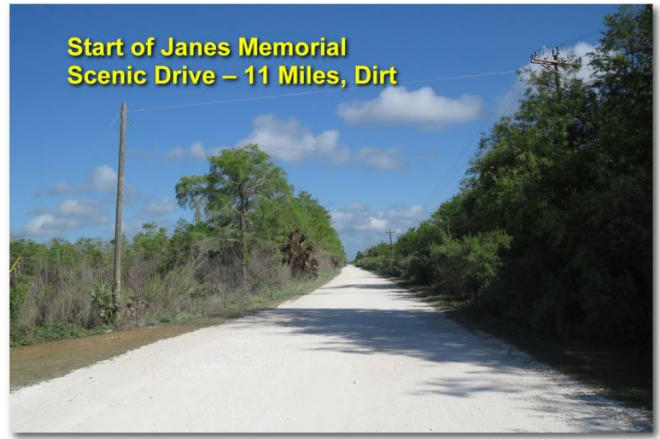
What: Florida's Amazon.

– Big Cypress Bend Boardwalk.

– Janes Memorial Scenic Drive.

11-mile dirt road with hiking, wading, alligators (on road), wild orchids.

Start of Janes Memorial Scenic Drive – 11 Miles, Dirt



Janes Scenic Drive

11 mile dirt road.

Ruts and potholes.

Goes through subtropical wilderness, swamp, prairie.

Along the road, basking alligators and snakes.

Hiking trails. Bring bug repellent.

Not for your pampered BMW or Mercedes!



Janes Memorial Scenic Drive Along the road (from car window)

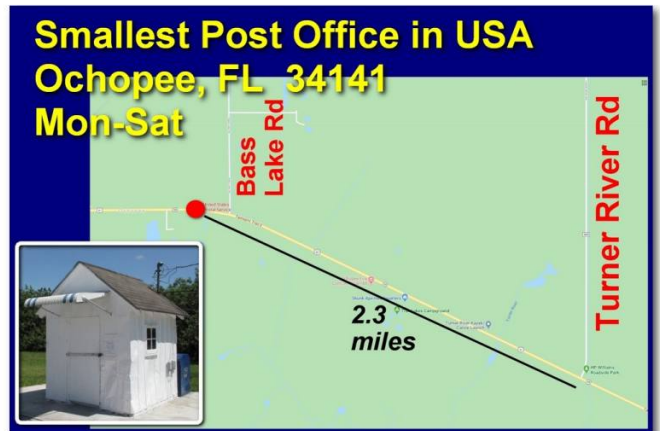


Ochopee Post Office



Smallest Post Office in USA

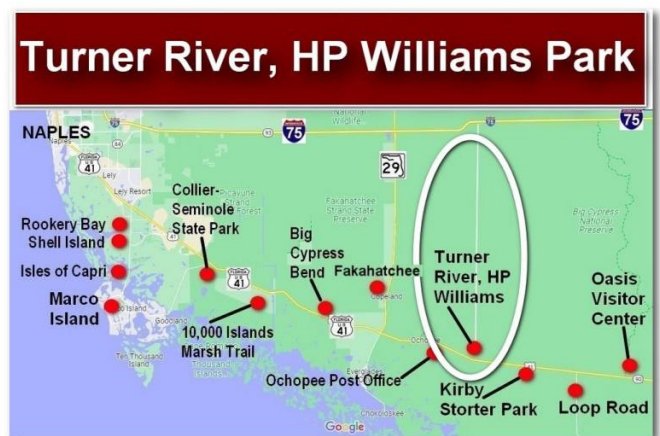
Ochopee, FL 34141
Mon-Sat



1953



Turner River, HP Williams Park



HP Williams Park – Turner River Rd

Where: US-41 Tamiami Trail 30 mi E of Collier Blvd (6 mi E of SR-29).

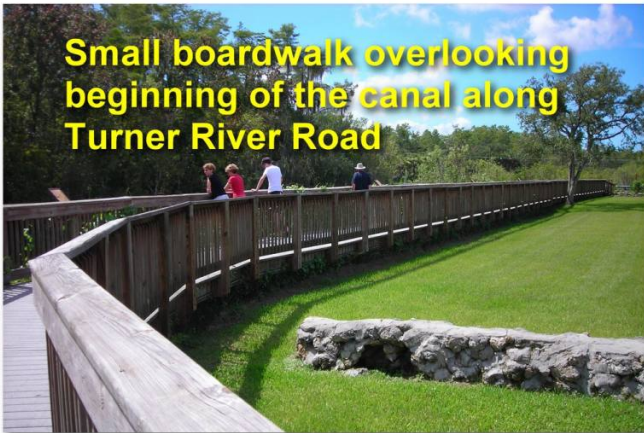
What: Small park with boardwalk and alligators. *H P Williams Park*

Plus 21-mile dirt road along a canal, also with gators and other wildlife.

- Do not feed gators.
- Be cautious getting out of your car.



Small boardwalk overlooking beginning of the canal along Turner River Road

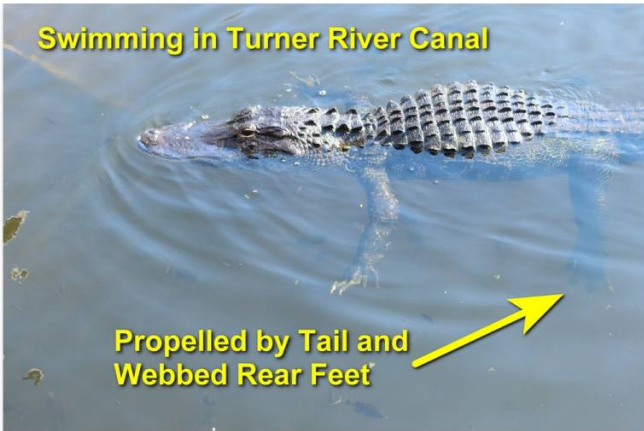


Turner River Canal Near the Boardwalk



Upward-facing nostrils for breathing while under water.

Swimming in Turner River Canal

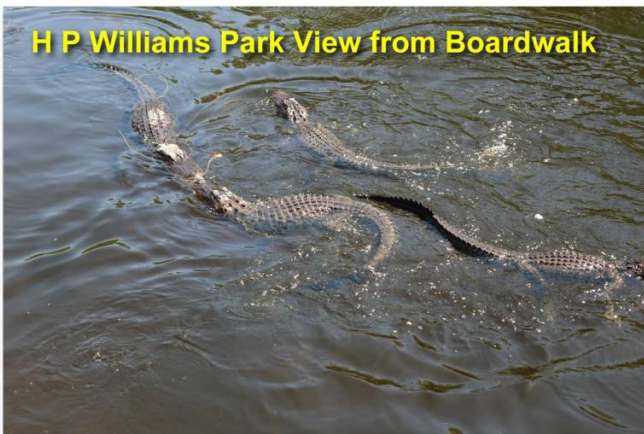


Propelled by Tail and Webbed Rear Feet

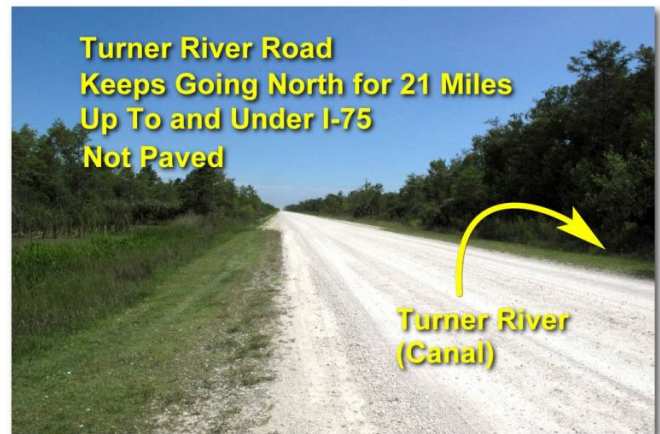
Behind the Bathrooms Next to the Boardwalk



H P Williams Park View from Boardwalk



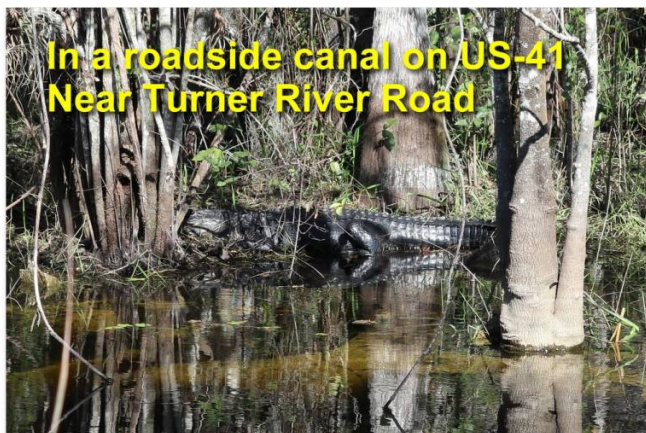
Turner River Road Keeps Going North for 21 Miles Up To and Under I-75 Not Paved



Turner River (Canal)

If you do decide to drive up Turner River Road to see wildlife, some tips:

- It's a dirt and gravel road. Dusty.
- River & wildlife on the right driving north.
- 2 or 3 miles is usually all you need.
- Be very careful if you get out of your car.
- Best to take photos from the car window.
- Good photo ops where you see these signs →
- Obey the sign!



Kirby Storter Park



Kirby Storter Park
Part of Big Cypress National Preserve

Website:

www.nps.gov/bicy/planyourvisit/kirby-storter-roadside-park.htm

Where: 48900 Tamiami Trail E, Ochopee, FL 34141.

Get There: On US-41 (Tamiami Trail) 37 miles east of Collier Blvd. Or take I-75 to State Rd 29 exit then down to US-41.

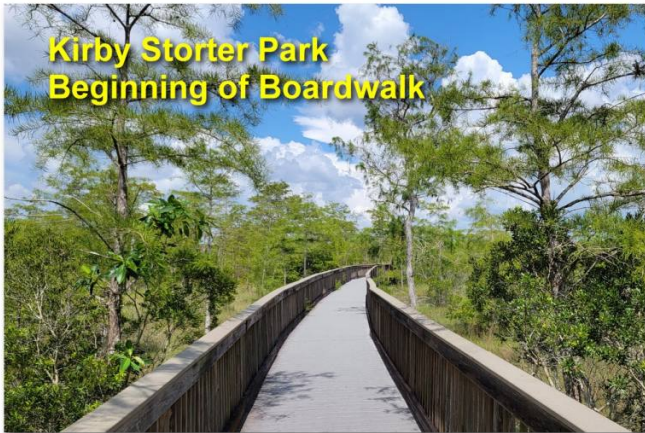
Admission: Free. Open dawn to dusk.

What:

- Half-mile boardwalk. Non-strenuous.
- Starts on a sawgrass prairie.
 - **Chickee hut for birding.**
- Continues through a cypress swamp.
- Ends at an overlook at a gator hole.
 - **Gator hole is a pond dug out by alligators to assure deep water even during dry season.**
- Wildlife include birds, snakes, fish, turtles, and alligators.



**Kirby Storter Park
Beginning of Boardwalk**



Kirby Storter Park

In October 2024, fire destroyed part of the Kirby Storter boardwalk. Part has now reopened, but the damaged part is not yet rebuilt.



**Kirby Storter Park
Cypress Swamp**



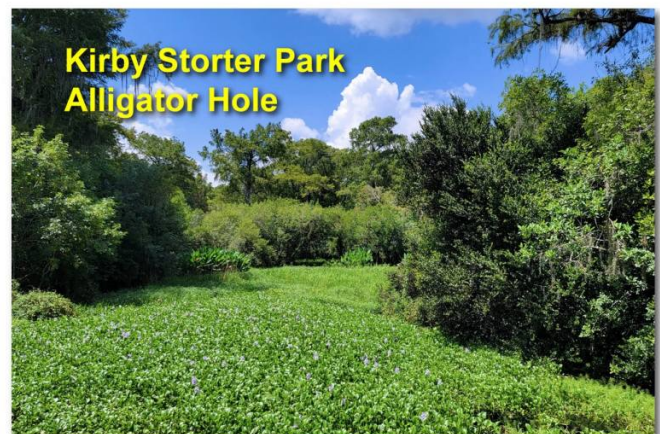
Kirby Storter Park - Swamp

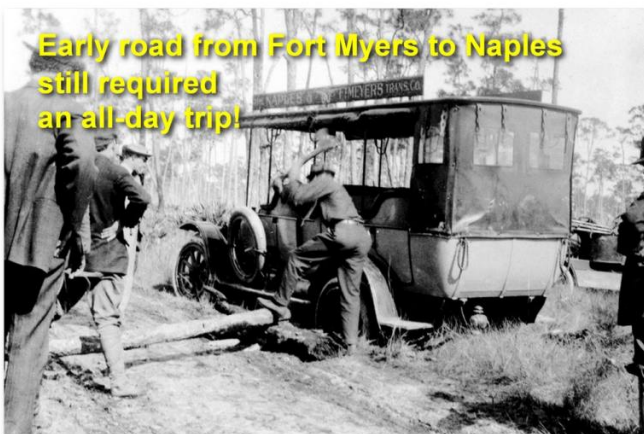
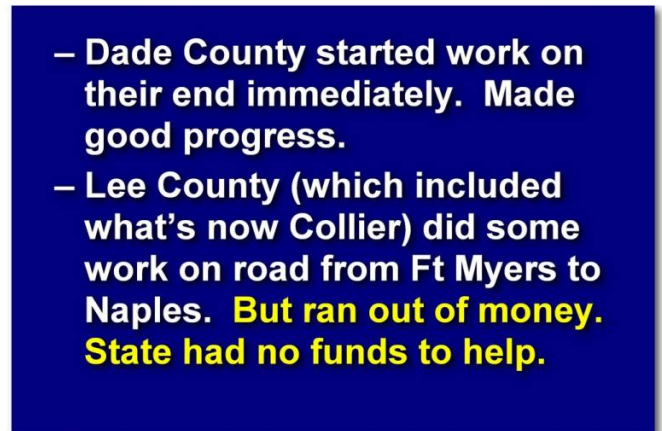


Tillandsia Epiphyte in Kirby Storter Park



**Kirby Storter Park
Alligator Hole**





Construction started 1923. Completed 1928. Opened April 26, 1928.

Basic process: Use dynamite to create an east-west canal. Use the resulting dirt to build the roadbed in the swamp above flood level. Called a "borrow canal" because the soil was borrowed to build the road.



2.6 million sticks of dynamite were used.

Brought in by log tram or by oxen.



This machine bored the dynamite holes.



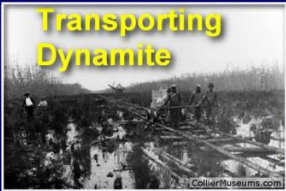
Blasting Crew



2.6 million sticks of 60% nitroglycerin dynamite



Transporting Dynamite



After dynamiting, digging was done by a:

Walking Dredge

or a:

Floating Dredge.



Dredges were built in Bay City, Michigan



Mobile worker bunks, kitchens, toilets moved in the canal as the road progressed. Workers paid \$60/month. Worked all day standing in swamps, bitten by mosquitos.



Mobile Bunks

**Bay City Walking Dredge - 1924
Dredge One Mile Per Month**



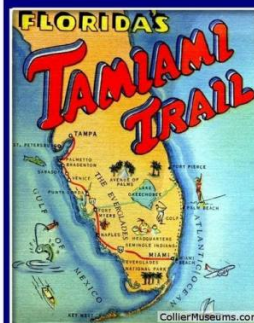
See it at Collier-Seminole State Park.

Collier built 6 stations along the Trail. Each staffed by a husband and wife. He got a motorcycle and patrolled the road. She ran the gas station and store. All 6 stations are now gone.

Last one, Monroe Station in Ochopee (above) burned in 2016. Vandalism.



**Tamiami Trail
Opened Apr 25, 1928**



Festivities in Everglades

N-S was US41
E-W was US94



Loop Road



Side story about Collier's Tamiami Trail:

- State decided to build Tamiami Trail in 1915.
- Miami developer James Jaudon agreed to build section from Miami to 24 miles west of Dade County line.
- Along this road, Jaudon planned to build "the Next Miami" called "Pinecrest".



James Jaudon

Map of Jaudon's Loop Road. Now a gravel wilderness road.



- Jaudon's company built a few rustic homes.
- But Jaudon ran out of money. And could not attract outside investors.
- Then the state awarded the Tamiami Trail contract to Barron Collier.
- Including Jaudon's 24-mile section.

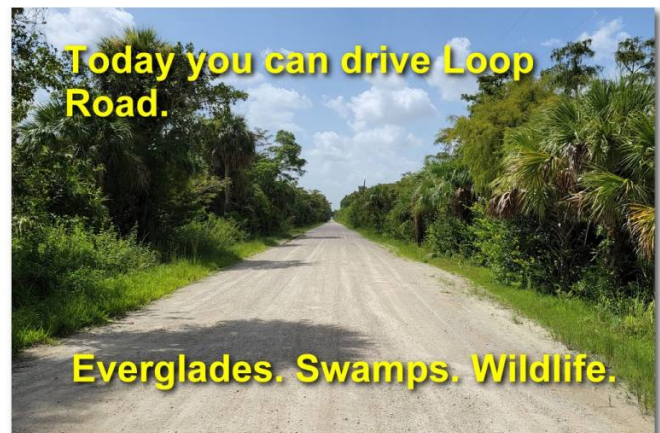


Barron Collier

Collier did not agree with Jaudon's loop.

- He built a straight road to the Dade line.
- Loop Road gravel road survived.
- **But not as part of Tamiami Trail.**
- By early 1930s, 200 people lived along Loop Road. Pinecrest had a saw mill, school, store, gas station, bunk house.
- In 1937 Jaudon's company filed for bankruptcy. Land sold to Government.
- Today a few pioneer types live in "Pinecrest".

Today you can drive Loop Road.



Everglades. Swamps. Wildlife.

And you can see the ruins of (supposedly) Al Capone's home in the ruins of Pinecrest.



Oasis Visitor Center



**Big Cypress National Preserve
Oasis Visitor Center**
33100 Tamiami Trail East
Ochopee, FL 34141
Info and exhibits, plus...
Great boardwalk to see
lots of alligators
swimming in a canal.
On US-41
45 mi East of Collier Blvd.



**Big Cypress
National Preserve
Boardwalk**
Open Daily



**Big Cypress Preserve
Oasis Visitor Center**



Views from the Boardwalk



Rear legs
4 toes



Front legs
5 toes



Everglades National Park

Everglades National Park

- Legislation passed 1934.
- 1.5 million acres of land acquired 1934-1947.
- Dade, Monroe, Collier Counties.
- Largest subtropical wilderness in US.
- Elevation 0 to 8 feet.



Everglades National Park opened in 1947.

- Dedication ceremony in Everglades City.
- Attended by President Harry Truman.

UNESCO World Heritage Site 1979



1947

Everglades National Park Dedication Dec 6, 1947 Everglades City

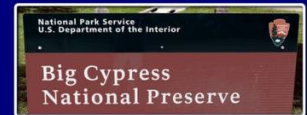


President Truman

Big Cypress National Preserve Abuts Everglades National Park.

Established 1974. Adds 729,000 acres. Very similar topography.

Classification as Preserve is political. Preserve allows more commercial and recreational activity than Park.



Everglades National Park Gulf Coast Visitor Center destroyed by Hurricane Irma in 2017. A temporary replacement visitor center was destroyed by Hurricane Ian in 2022.

New visitor center is under construction. Opening late 2025.



*Marjory Stoneman Douglas Visitor Center
Everglades City - Opening Late 2025*

Sum Up: Where We've Been Along Tamiami Trail

Marco Island and Isles of Capri.
Rookery Bay.
Marsh Trail – Ten Thousand Islands.
Ochopee. Collier-Seminole State Park.
Big Cypress Boardwalk.
Fakahatchee Strand State Park.
H P Williams Park and Turner River Road.
Kirby Storter Park.
Oasis Visitor Center (Big Cypress National Preserve).
Building the Tamiami Trail and Loop Drive.
Everglades National Park.



**THE END
Along the Tamiami Trail
South and East of Naples**



**Copyright Paul Pacter
All Rights Reserved
www.PaulVisits.com**