

You Are Invited to “Celebrate Our Natural Treasures” May Community Events



The Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough County in partnership with the Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation and Conservation Department is inviting the public to “Celebrate Our Natural Treasures” this May. The events are being held in conjunction with EPC’s annual tradition of celebrating May as Clean Air Month. We are pleased to offer the public an opportunity to enjoy with us the many natural resources of our community with these special outdoor events.

There is no charge to participate for the events. However, residents are asked to bring their own bike to the bike ride and helmets are mandatory. Canoes will be provided. **Space is limited and pre-registration is required.** Please contact Barbara Motte at 627.2600 ext. 1008 to register.

Saturday, May 3, 2008 Cockroach Bay Aquatic Preserve Land and Water Tour

- **Tour Times:** 9am - 12pm and 1pm – 4pm
- **Location:** Cockroach Bay Preserves at 3709 Gulf City Road, Ruskin
- **Description:** Join us for a “hayride” tour of a 1000 acre preserve highlighting the wetland and upland restoration efforts at Cockroach Bay Aquatic Preserve. Following the land tour, guests will weave through estuarine restorations via canoe or kayak, out into Little Cockroach Bay through canopied mangrove forest and arriving at Big Pass in Tampa Bay. Participants will be delighted to see common visitors such as jumping mullet, wading birds, diving birds, birds of prey, otters, alligators, snakes, raccoons, coyotes and bobcats.

Saturday, May 10, 2008 Wilderness Park Guided Bike Rides

On-Road Bike Ride

- **Time:** 8:30 am-10:30 am
- **Location:** Flatwoods Park at 14302 Morris Bridge Road, Thonotosassa
- **Description:** The eight-mile on-road guided bike ride will take place in the 5,400 acres Flatwoods Park located in Wilderness Park. Best known for its paved loop road, a shared-used trail, Flatwoods Park provides a welcome getaway from Tampa’s developed landscape. The Morris Bridge well field is located within the park, and well houses can be observed along the trail. The location is also Site 102 on western section of Great Florida Birding Trail.

Off-Road Bike Ride

- **Time:** 8:30 am-10:30 am
- **Location:** Trout Creek at 12550 Morris Bridge Road, Thonotosassa
- **Description:** The 12 mile guided off – road bike ride will take place in the 42 acre Trout Creek located in Wilderness Park, a site popular for fishing, canoeing and off-road biking. A small hill and gravel roads will lead the group across the flood control dam overlooking the breathtaking Hillsborough River into a canopy of woods, and circumnavigating a beautiful wetland area, full of water birds as well as few alligators!
- **Off-road bikes are required for this ride.**

Saturday, May 17, 2008
Guided Nature Hikes

Lettuce Lake Park

- **Time:** 10 am – 12 pm
- **Location:** Lettuce Lake Park at 6902 East Fletcher Avenue, Tampa
- **Description:** Guided two hour nature hike that will highlight the unique plant and animal communities in Lettuce Lake Park. The hike will navigate visitors through pine flatwoods and live oak upland forests. The second part of the hike will include wading bird observation from a 3,500 foot boardwalk in a beautiful riverine swamp, bordering the Hillsborough River. To top off the hike, guests will enjoy a "bird's eye view" of Lettuce Lake and the Hillsborough River from a 35 foot high observation tower.

Upper Tampa Bay Park

- **Time:** 10 am – 12 pm
- **Location:** Upper Tampa Bay Park at 8001 Double Branch Road, Tampa
- **Description:** Guided two hour nature hike that will highlight the parks pine wood forests and coastal wetlands on Old Tampa Bay. Hikers will have the opportunity to see common visitors such as snakes, birds and raccoons. Rare visits by one of two Florida bobcats at the park have also been sited. The hike will also feature a visit to the Nature Center containing artifacts from the Tocobaga Indian tribe, including tools and arrowheads. The center also has displays featuring an active bee-hive, non-poisonous snakes, native turtles and fish.

Saturday, May 31, 2008
John B. Sargeant Senior Memorial Park Guided Canoe Trips

- **Times:** 9 am – 11 am and 11 am - 1:00 pm
- **Location:** 12702 Highway 301 North, Thonotosassa – 3 miles north of Fowler and 301
- **Description:** Guided two hour canoe trip of the Hillsborough River. Guests will learn about the importance of the Hillsborough River and its vital resource for drinking water. The subtropical environment is alive with alligators, oak hammocks and sea birds. Known as the most primitive area of the Hillsborough River, historically the site was a popular for logging Cypress trees. It was also home to several fish and Indian camps.

**To sign up or for additional information, please contact Barbara Motte at 813.627.2600 ext 1008
or via e-mail at motte@epchc.org.**

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