



WELCOME TO THE  
*Gulf Coast Heritage Trail*  
YOUR GUIDE TO PARADISE

The Gulf Coast of Florida is a sub-tropical paradise best known for its aquamarine waters and white sandy beaches. The area features outstanding fishing, boating and wildlife viewing opportunities. The area is also rich in history, culture and the Arts; providing a wide range of unique destinations for everyone to enjoy.



Discover Sarasota and Manatee Counties' natural areas, botanical gardens, wildlife and bird viewing, enjoy the wide variety of culture and history that abounds here on Florida's Suncoast.



Red Drum (Redfish), nice catch!

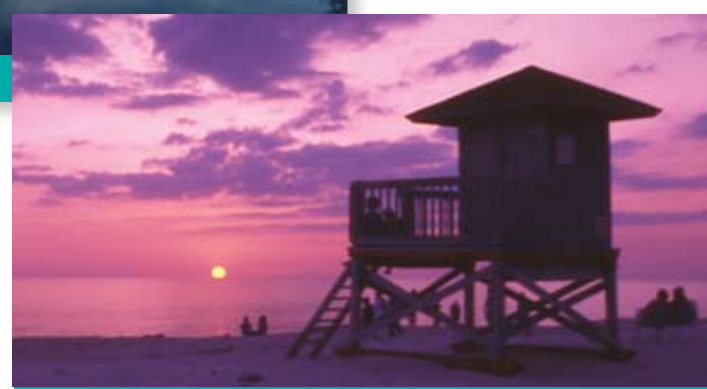


Paddle at the Myakka River State Park. (site 94)

Enjoy discovering paradise... On the Heritage Trail of Manatee and Sarasota Counties, you are invited to tour, visit and experience an array of environmental, cultural and historical gems throughout this region of Florida.



Joan M. Durante Park boardwalk. (site 43)



Siesta Public Beach, another beautiful sunset. (site 91)

Restoration and preservation efforts suggest that Florida will continue to be defined by the beauty and utility of its coast, allowing future generations to share its benefits.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE:

The map shown on the other side of this brochure assists you in locating points of interest identified by numbers which are color coded:

- Historical
- Natural (environmental)
- Cultural

The Trail promotes a scenic tour route and includes bicycle staging areas where visitors may park then pedal to nearby destinations. Additionally, nature walks, scenic trails and wildlife viewing opportunities can be found at many of the points of interest. If you are interested in canoeing and kayaking, launch areas and trails have been mapped. Our area's history and "the Arts" can also be enjoyed by using this guide. Because the Trail cannot be traveled in a day, it has been segmented into three areas: **North, Central and South.** The recommended scenic routes are the most pleasant and highlight the character of the area. Each North, Central and South tour route takes a full day or up to several days depending on the number of points of interest you decide to visit along the way. The **North** tour route takes you through Manatee County which is rich in agricultural heritage. Enjoy the downtown waterfronts of Palmetto and Bradenton, along the scenic Manatee River, which offer a wealth of cultural and historical attractions. The **Central** tour route focuses on the City of Sarasota and northern Sarasota County. It is best known for white sandy beaches, arts, culture and fine dining. Enjoy Sarasota's cultural coast and the local treasures surrounding the gem of the area, Sarasota Bay. The **South** tour route takes you through southern Sarasota County in and around the quaint historic district of Venice. Treasures in the area include pre-historic shark teeth finds, large nature preserves and canopy roads. Whether you're a naturalist, a cyclist, a kayaker, one who appreciates fine art and culture, or a history buff, the Gulf Coast

Heritage Trail has something for you. Enjoy exploring the wonders of paradise...

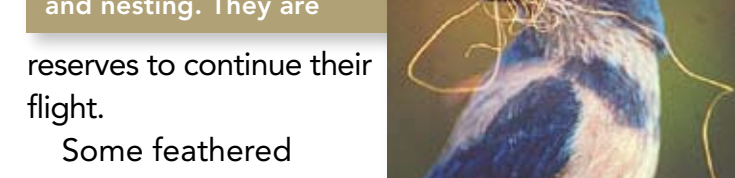
Birds

The migratory routes of birds, are referred to as "flyways". These flyways, are not specific, they are general routes that most migrating birds follow. Florida is a part of the Atlantic Flyway System, which accounts for the high number of bird species found in our area. Most migrating birds require the presence of wetland estuaries, rich habitats where a source of freshwater meets the Gulf. Large numbers of migrating



Roseate Spoonbill

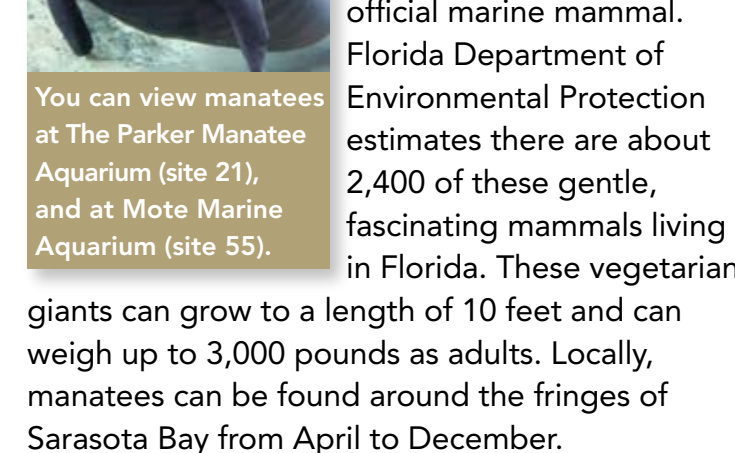
shorebirds will return to the same stopover site year after year. These large flocks of shorebirds will feed for several days or weeks in order to build up their energy



The wood stork are wetland dwellers and use fresh, brackish, and salt water for feeding and nesting. They are

reserves to continue their flight.

Some feathered friends who live and visit our area are the great blue heron, roseate spoonbill, snowy egret, wood stork, white ibis, anhinga, brown pelican, osprey, bald eagle and



You can view manatees at The Parker Manatee Aquarium (site 21), and at Mote Marine Aquarium (site 55).

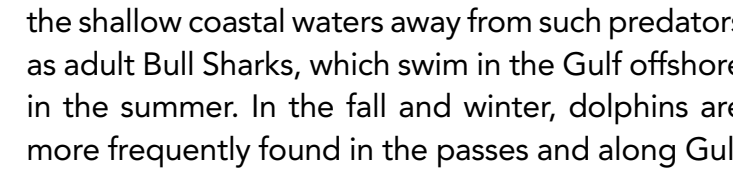
Sea Turtles

The Gulf beaches along the barrier islands support loggerhead turtles and their nesting activities May through October. Five species of sea turtles inhabit the Gulf Coast region: loggerhead, green, hawksbill, leatherback, and Kemp's Ridley. However, loggerhead turtles, which are classified as threatened, are the predominant species on our beaches. In 1998, more than 4,538 nests of loggerhead turtles were documented in the region.



Loggerhead Turtle

The shallow coastal waters away from such predators as adult Bull Sharks, which swim in the Gulf offshore in the summer. In the fall and winter, dolphins are more frequently found in the passes and along Gulf shorelines. A large Bottlenose Dolphin population call Sarasota Bay home year round.



The endangered Florida Scrub-Jay may be spotted in scrubby flatwoods habitats such as Oscar Scherer State Park (site #100), Rye Preserve (site 10), and Service Club Park (site 113).

You can be part of the solution...

Unfortunately, a leading cause of death and injures among Florida Manatees, Sea Turtles and Dolphins are human-related from collisions with boat hulls and propellers, entanglement in floats, fishing lines and ingestion of foreign objects, such as garbage thrown from boats. Please follow safety cautions to ensure protection for our region's wildlife.

DEVERSE DESTINATIONS

Cultural Attractions

The Gulf Coast Heritage Trail offers an array of cultural attractions, which range from visual



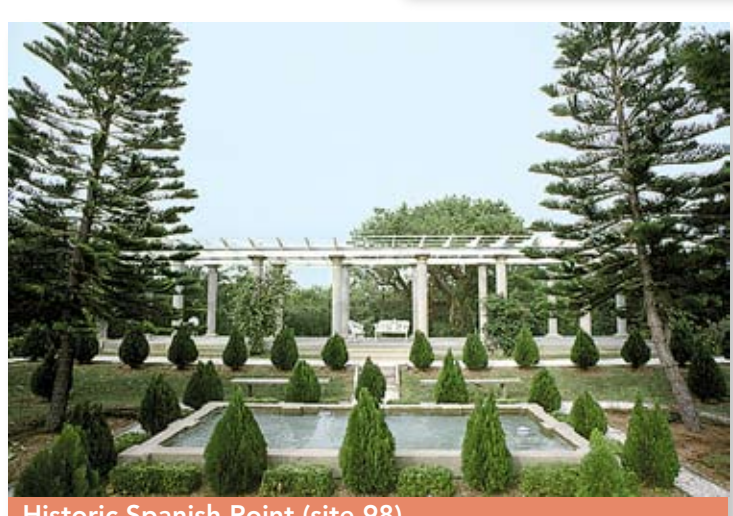
Bayfront BayWalk (site # 70 ) located near the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall (site 72).



Sarasota Opera House (site 75).



Circus Sarasota.



Historic Spanish Point (site 98).



Crosley Museum (site 45).



Ca'd'Zan (site #48) at Ringling Museum (site 47).



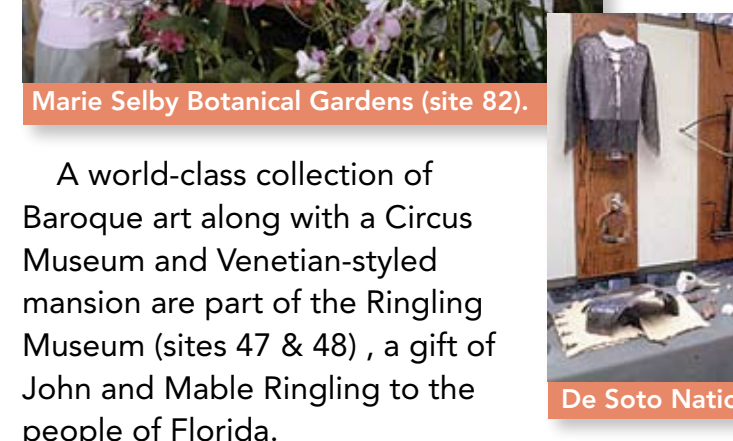
Marie Selby Botanical Gardens (site 82).



Historic Bridge Street Pier (site 35).



Gulf Coast Wonder & Imagination Zone (site 73).



De Soto National Memorial (site 19).



Mote Marine Laboratory and Aquarium (site 55).

A world-class collection of Baroque art along with a Circus Museum and Venetian-styled mansion are part of the Ringling Museum (sites 47 & 48) , a gift of John and Mable Ringling to the people of Florida.

Among the riches from which visitors and locals may choose are productions on theatrical stages, including professional theater companies and dinner theaters. At the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall (site 72), you can see a full season of artistic performances. Music lovers can select from among a symphony orchestra, an opera company, choral groups, smaller orchestras, concert bands and numerous jazz ensembles. The region's cultural community also offers outstanding ballet and ballroom dance companies.

Other sites and museums such as the Crosley Museum (site 45), Historic Spanish Point (site 98) , and De Soto National Memorial (site 19) educate visitors about the area's history. Visual arts are enhanced by community arts organizations, college galleries, fairs, festivals and commercial art galleries. There is a rich circus heritage that still can be seen through the performances of Circus Sarasota and Sarasota's Sailor Circus (site 84), the oldest continuously running youth circus in America.

Mote Marine Laboratory and Aquarium (site 55) is a renowned marine research and educational facility with exhibits featuring sharks, manatees, sea turtles and other marine life that inhabit nearby coastal waters. The South Florida Museum (site 21) triplex showcases Florida from the stone age to the space age, and also offers a planetarium and manatee aquarium. Experience natural and physical science hands-on exhibits at Gulf Coast Wonder & Imagination Zone; GWiz (site 73).

Sarasota Bay Estuary Program & The Gulf Coast Heritage Trail	941.955.8085
Arts/Cultural Interests	
Arts Hotline	941.745.ARTS
Manatee County Cultural Alliance	941.721.0405
Sarasota County Arts Council	941.365.5118
County Parks	
Manatee County	941.749.7123
Sarasota County	941.861.5000
Department of Historical Resources	
Manatee County Department of Historical Resources	941.741.4070
Sarasota County Department of Historical Resources	941.861.5000
Public Transportation	
Manatee County Area Transit (MCAT)	941.749.7116
Sarasota County Area Transit (SCAT)	941.861.1234
State Parks	
Myakka River State Park	941.361.6511
Oscar Scherer State Park	941.483.5956
Tourist Information	
Manatee County Tourist Information Center	941.729.7040
Sarasota County Tourist Information Center	941.957.1877
Anna Maria Chamber of Commerce	941.778.1541
Manatee Chamber of Commerce	941.748.3411
Longboat Key Chamber of Commerce	941.383.2466
Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce	941.955.2508
Siesta Key Chamber of Commerce	941.349.3800
Venice Area Chamber of Commerce	941.488.2236
Englewood Chamber of Commerce	941.474.5511

This publication is presented by the Sarasota Estuary Program (SBEP)

Mission Statement  
The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program (SBEP) is dedicated to improving and protecting the area's greatest and most important natural asset—Sarasota Bay. SBEP strives to improve water quality, increase habitat and enhance the natural resources of the area for use and enjoyment by the public.

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Gulf Coast Heritage Trail  
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

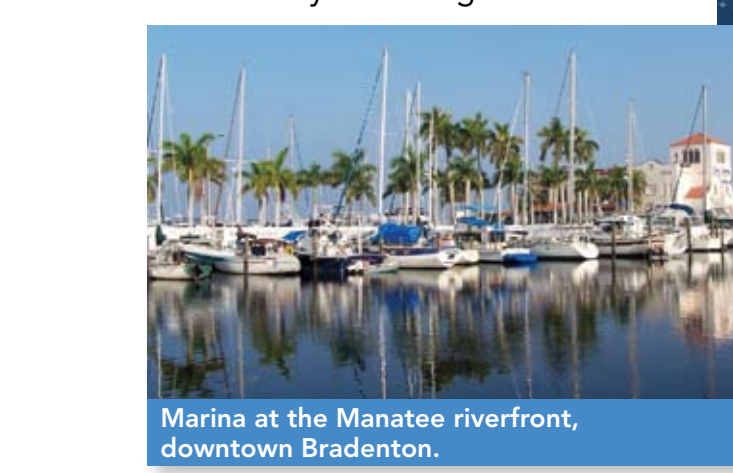
OUR AREA'S GREATEST NATURAL ASSET

Sarasota Bay  
MANATEE & SARASOTA COUNTIES

Sarasota Bay forms the coast of Manatee and Sarasota counties. This series of embayments start at the Anna Maria Sound and goes south to the Venice Inlets. Sarasota Bay has 50 square miles of open water and a 250 square mile watershed—the land, river and streams that drain into a body of water—forming the backbone of the social and economic vitality of the region.



Overlooking downtown Sarasota and Sarasota Bay.



Marina at the Manatee riverfront, downtown Bradenton.

The Bay supports 50 water-dependent industries. Tourism, the largest industry in Sarasota County and the second largest industry in Manatee County, depends strongly on the condition and quality of the Bay and the Gulf of Mexico.

Our area is a tropical paradise best known for its aquamarine waters and white sandy beaches. From the coastal shores to the scenic Manatee and Myakka Rivers you can find outstanding fishing, boating, canoe/kayak trails, and wildlife viewing.



Sunset on the Manatee River.

Do your part to help protect the natural beauty of our community and maintain our healthy Bay—

- Respect wildlife - appreciate from a distance.
- Do not litter.
- Pick-up after your pet and dispose of the waste properly.
- Follow all boating regulations and posted signage.

Estuaries, where fresh water from rivers and creeks mixes with saltwater from the sea, are also known as "cradles of the sea." Estuaries provide important spawning grounds and nurseries for at least two-thirds of the nation's fisheries and are among the most biologically productive areas in the world. The two most locally important Bay habitats are seagrasses and mangroves.

**Seagrasses**  
Seagrass beds are important to estuarine productivity in many ways. The grass beds provide protective nursery area for juvenile fish, shrimp, and crabs, and provide growth of algal epiphytes which serve as food for fish and crustaceans. Manatees feed directly on seagrasses. Seagrass roots also bind soils and reduce erosion and turbidity during strong tidal currents or storms. You can visit and learn more about the importance of these habitats at one of the many restoration sites located on Sarasota Bay by referencing this guide. Each restoration site offers boardwalks, nature trails, educational signage and brochures. Sites such as Quick Point Nature Preserve (site 53), Coquina BayWalk at Lefkis Key (site 38) and the Sarasota BayWalk (site 56) are accessible by boat and by land.

Mangroves

Mangrove are also known as "walking trees," changing tides giving their extensive root system the illusion of movement. They are a critical part of the Sarasota Bay ecosystem. There are three types of mangroves: the red mangrove, the black mangrove, and the white mangrove.



Great Blue Herons nesting in the mangrove treetops.



Quick Point Nature Preserve (site 53) has educational; habitat markers along the nature trail.

Mangroves are rich with life, providing food and safe haven for coastal and marine creatures. Mangroves also provide benefits to humans, helping to filter pollutants and play a major role in stabilizing shores, preventing erosion and as a buffer for our communities from storm surges.

Other types of Habitats

In addition to the important saltwater wetland habitats of the Sarasota Bay Region, there are other habitats that are equally significant to the health of the watershed: flatwoods, prairies, hammocks, and freshwater marshlands. These types of diverse habitats with unique wildlife and important biological functions can be seen at state

and county parks within the region. For a glimpse of "Old Florida," visitors should not miss the spectacular Myakka River State Park (site 94). The park includes more than 30,000 acres where deer, bobcat, bald eagle and the American alligator roam free.

Because Florida has such diverse habitats there are an abundance of unique wildlife. Be aware that Manatee and Sarasota Counties are home to several endangered or threatened species, such as the scrub-jay, West Indian manatee, gopher tortoise and indigo snake, so keep your distance while you enjoy viewing these fantastic creatures.



Pinewood flatwoods at Carlton Reserve (site 101).



Explore the mangrove tunnels at South Lido Park (site 64).



Endangered Gopher tortoise.

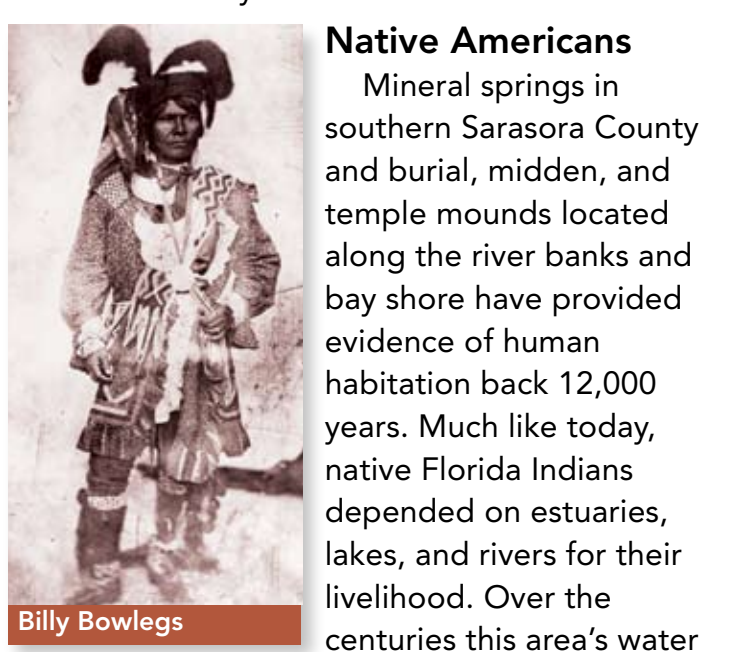
UNIQUE ECOSYSTEMS OF THE GULF COAST

Habitat

THE AREA'S RICH HERITAGE

History

The rich heritage of Manatee and Sarasota counties centers around the Manatee River and Sarasota Bay.

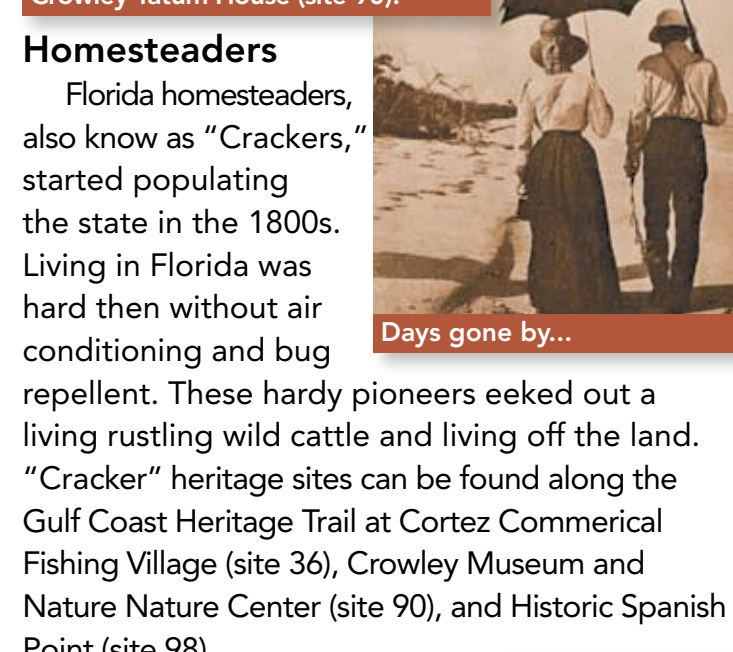


Billy Bowlegs

**Native Americans**  
Mineral springs in southern Sarasota County and burial, midden, and temple mounds located along the river banks and bay shore have provided evidence of human habitation back 12,000 years. Much like today, native Florida Indians depended on estuaries, lakes, and rivers for their livelihood. Over the centuries this area's water resources continued to attract inhabitants. When settlers first arrived in the 1840s, Florida was not yet a state. The territory was populated by scattered fishermen who came from Cuba and established fishing camps called ranchos on the coast. Seminole Indians, though restricted by the federal government to interior lands, mingled with the new arrivals. By the early 1850s one of the few important Seminole War Chiefs left in Florida was Billy Bowlegs. Billy Bowlegs would frequently visit settlers in the Manatee River area. Visit the South Florida Museum (site 21), and the De Soto National Memorial (site 19) to learn more of the areas' Native Americans and early Spanish explorers.



Crowley-Tatum House (site 90).



Days gone by...

**Homesteaders**  
Florida homesteaders, also known as "Crackers," started populating the state in the 1800s. Living in Florida was hard then without air conditioning and bug repellent. These hardy pioneers eked out a living rustling wild cattle and living off the land. "Cracker" heritage sites can be found along the Gulf Coast Heritage Trail at Cortez Commercial Fishing Village (site 36), Crowley Museum and Nature Nature Center (site 90), and Historic Spanish Point (site 98).

**Golden Age**  
By the 1870s the Sarasota Bay region was being advertised as a place for recreation and relaxation. This probably originated with advertisements for the Webb Resort Hotel in Osprey but was brought to

a new height in the 1920s which sparked the area's first housing boom. Mansions and winter retreats from this time can still be found including the Gamble Plantation (site 8), the Crosley Musuem (site 45), the Cad'a Zan (site 48), home of John and Mable Ringling, and Historic Spanish Point (site 98).

**Modern Era**  
Always important industries, agriculture and fishing eased the counties though the depression of the 1930s. The region experienced a population explosion after World War II, with the accompanying growth in industry, shopping centers, schools, tourist attractions and accommodations. As they did decades ago, the scenic and bountiful waters of Manatee and Sarasota still draw new residents and visitors to its beautiful shores.

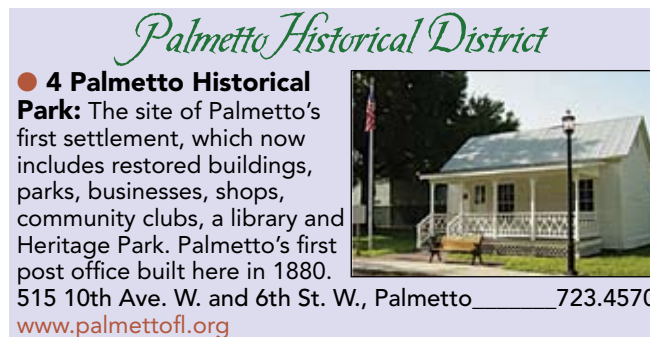


John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art (site 47).



# NORTHERN SITES

- Area code: 941
- 1 Sunshine Skyway Fishing Pier State Park:** Among the longest piers in the world. Offering spectacular views from both ends on the bridge, there is a bait and tackle shop, canoe/kayak launch, restaurants and restrooms. The piers are open 24 hours a day year-round. Located north and south ends of the Skyway Bridge on I-275 (US 19). [www.floridastateparks.org](http://www.floridastateparks.org)
  - 2 Frog Creek Campground:** An 18-acre campground. Electricity, fishing, laundry facilities, restrooms and shower houses are available. 8515 Bayshore Rd., Palmetto. 800.771.3764 or 772.6154 [www.frogcreek.com](http://www.frogcreek.com)
  - 3 Emerson Point Preserve:** A 365-acre public park offering woodland trails, boardwalks and scenic vistas; along with a sheltered canoe/kayak launch and archaeological exhibits on Native Americans and early Florida settlement life. Picnic areas and a pavilion is available by reservation. 5801 17th St. W., Palmetto. 721.6885 [www.mymanatee.org](http://www.mymanatee.org) click on: Conservation Lands Management



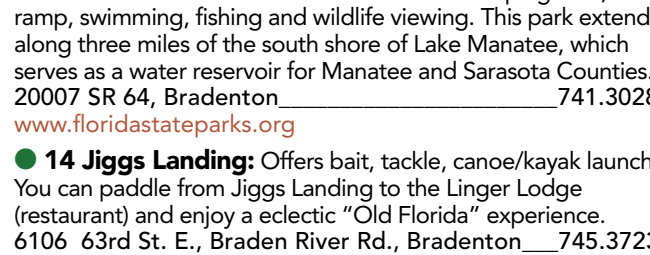
- 4 Palmetto Historical Park:** The site of Palmetto's first settlement, which now includes restored buildings, parks, businesses, shops, community clubs, a library and Heritage Park. Palmetto's first post office built here in 1880. 515 10th Ave. W. and 6th St. W., Palmetto. 723.4570 [www.palmettooff.org](http://www.palmettooff.org)
- 5 Olympia Children's Theatre:** Built in 1916, it originally served as a theatre and the Palmetto Bakery which remained in operation until the 1950s. Today it is under renovation for use as a performing arts and community center. 512 10th Ave. W., Palmetto. 721.3456
- 6 Lamb House:** Built by Julius A. Lamb in 1899, and purchased in the 1920s by J. Pope Harline (son of Palmetto's first settlers). The beautiful home has been restored and is now a private residence. Viewing only, no tours available.



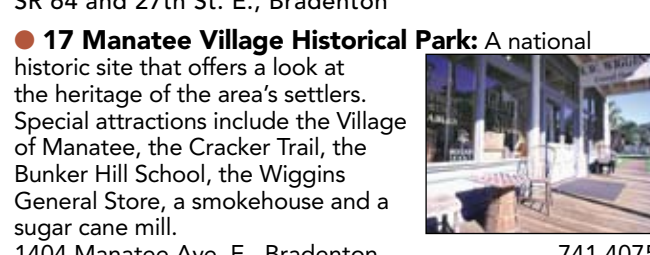
- 7 Green Bridge Fishing Pier:** Built for \$1,000,000 in 1927; named for E.P. Green who first petitioned for the new bridge that spanned the Manatee River. Open 24 hours. Great fishing and scenic views and a waterfront restaurant. 101 Eighth Ave. W., Palmetto. 723.4570 [www.palmettooff.org](http://www.palmettooff.org)



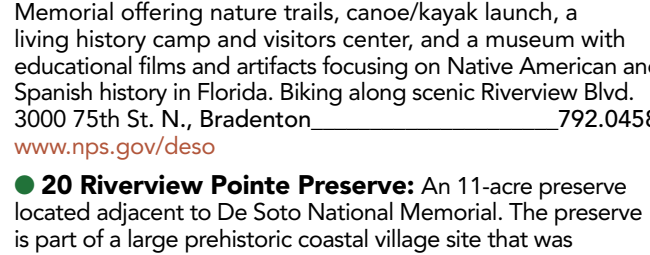
- 8 Gamble Plantation Historic State Park:** Built in 1844, it was one of the most successful sugar mill plantations in Florida. This confederate memorial offers a guided tour depicting old Florida living. Also, located on the grounds are the sugar mill ruins. 3708 Patten Ave., Ellenton. 723.4536 [www.floridastateparks.org](http://www.floridastateparks.org)
- 9 Ray's Canoe Hideaway:** Near Rye Wilderness Park. Offers facilities for canoe/kayaks rentals, primitive camping, fishing, bait and tackle shop and swimming. 1247 Hagedl Park Rd., Bradenton. 1.888.57CANOE or 747.3909 [www.rayscanoehideaway.com](http://www.rayscanoehideaway.com)



- 10 Rye Preserve:** Located along the Manatee River this 145-acre park offers picnic areas, pavilion, playground, camping, nature trails, bike trails, horseback riding trails, wildlife observation, fishing and canoe/kayak launch. 905 Rye Wilderness Trail, Parrish. 776.0900 [www.mymanatee.org](http://www.mymanatee.org) click on: Conservation Lands Management
- 11 Headwaters at Duette Preserve:** Possessing the unique distinction of comprising the headwaters of the Manatee River. A primitive preserve that offers 2,200-acres of trails, parking available for horse trailers. 745.3723 [www.mymanatee.org](http://www.mymanatee.org) click on: Conservation Lands Management
- 12 Duette Preserve:** Offers miles of nature trails, horseback riding trails, non-motorized bicycle trails, camping, managed hunting and fishing. Picnic areas and a pavilion is available by reservation or as a first-come-first-serve basis. 2649 Rawls Rd., Duette. 776.2295 [www.mymanatee.org](http://www.mymanatee.org) click on: Conservation Lands Management



- 13 Lake Manatee State Park:** Offers camping area, boat ramp, swimming, fishing and wildlife viewing. This park extends along three miles of the south shore of Lake Manatee, which serves as a water reservoir for Manatee and Sarasota Counties. 2007 SR 64, Bradenton. 741.3028 [www.floridastateparks.org](http://www.floridastateparks.org)
- 14 Jiggs Landings:** Offers bait, tackle, canoe/kayak launch. You can paddle from Jiggs Landing to the Linger Lodge (restaurant) and enjoy a eclectic "Old Florida" experience. 6106 63rd St. E., Braden River Rd., Bradenton. 745.3723 [www.mymanatee.org](http://www.mymanatee.org) click on: Conservation Lands Management
- 15 Pine Island Preserve:** Boat access only. South of Braden River Bridge. SR 64, Bradenton. 745.3723 [www.mymanatee.org](http://www.mymanatee.org) click on: Conservation Lands Management



- 16 Braden Castle Ruins:** Once the site of Dr. Joseph A. Braden's Sugar Plantation is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Contains 209 frame bungalows, built from 1924 to 1929 for winter tourists. SR 64 and 27th St. E., Bradenton
- 17 Manatee Village Historical Park:** A national historic site that offers a look at the heritage of the area's settlers. Special attractions include the Village of Manatee, the Cracker Trail, the Bunker Hill School, the Wigwags General Store, a smokehouse and a sugar cane mill. 1404 Manatee Ave. E., Bradenton. 741.4075 [www.manateeclerk.com](http://www.manateeclerk.com) click on: Clerk Services/Historical
- 18 Family Heritage House Museum:** A gallery and resource center for the study of African American achievements, this museum is also a facility on the Natural Underground Railroad Program. 1707 15th St. E. & 5840 26th St. W., Bradenton. 752.5319 [www.familyheritagehouse.com](http://www.familyheritagehouse.com)
- 19 De Soto National Memorial:** A 27-acre National Memorial offering nature trails, canoe/kayak launch, a living history camp and visitors center, and a museum with educational films and artifacts focusing on Native American and Spanish history in Florida. Biking along scenic Riverview Blvd. 3000 75th St. N., Bradenton. 792.0458 [www.nps.gov/deso](http://www.nps.gov/deso)
- 20 Riverview Pointe Preserve:** An 11-acre preserve located adjacent to De Soto National Memorial. The preserve is part of a large prehistoric coastal village site that was inhabited by Florida Indians from about 356 B.C. to A.D. 110. Manatee Ave to the end of 75th St. N., Bradenton. 745.3723 [www.mymanatee.org](http://www.mymanatee.org) click on: Conservation Lands Management

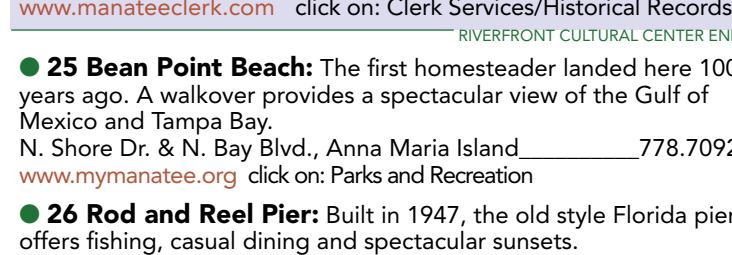
Photos courtesy of: We would like to thank all appropriate sites for supplying photos. Other images courtesy of: Sarasota Bay Estuary Program, Manatee County, Sarasota County, Sarasota Convention & Visitors Bureau, Bradenton Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, Alsea Photography, Eba Photography, Reef Photography, Tom Cross Inc., Sarasota County Dept. of Historical Resources, Florida State Archives, and SWMDC.

# BRADENTON RIVERFRONT CULTURAL CENTER

- 21 South Florida Museum, Bishop Planetarium, Parker Manatee Aquarium:** Explore Florida from "Astronomy to Zoology" with exhibits on the area's cultural and natural history, astronomy and local shows and the aquarium's manatee, Shooey, the oldest manatee "born and raised" in captivity. Great for kids! 201 10th Street W., Bradenton. 746.4131 [www.southfloridamuseum.org](http://www.southfloridamuseum.org)
- 22 Manatee Players Riverfront Theatre:** An award-winning theatre company that presents six mainstage productions, including live musicals, theatrical plays, and children's programs during their season. 102 12th St. W., Bradenton. 748.5875 [www.manateeplayers.com](http://www.manateeplayers.com)
- 23 ArtCenter Manatee:** A long-standing creative presence offering art with exhibitions, lectures and workshops. 209 9th St. W., Bradenton. 746.2862 [www.artcentermanatee.org](http://www.artcentermanatee.org)
- 24 Carnegie Library:** Built in 1918 and houses Manatee County's early records. The first county archival library of its kind in the state of Florida. 1405 4th Ave. W., Bradenton. 741.4070 [www.manateeclerk.com](http://www.manateeclerk.com) click on: Clerk Services/Historical Records



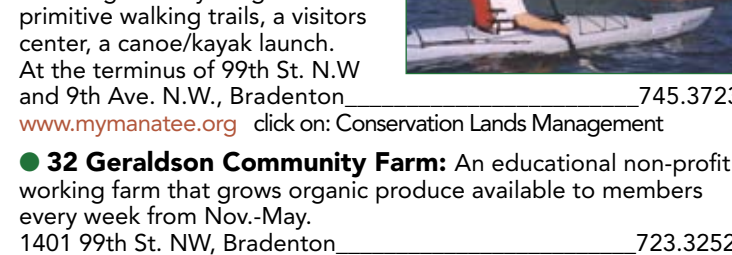
- 25 Bean Point Beach:** The first homesteader landed here 100 years ago. A walkover provides a spectacular view of the Gulf of Mexico and Tampa Bay. N. Shore Dr. & N. Bay Blvd., Anna Maria Island. 778.7092 [www.mymanatee.org](http://www.mymanatee.org) click on: Parks and Recreation
- 26 Rod and Reel Pier:** Built in 1947, the old style Florida pier renovation for use as a performing arts and community center. 875 North Shore Dr., Anna Maria Island. 778.1885
- 27 Bayfront Park:** Offering picnicking, walking and biking to nearby Bean Point Beach and the local fishing pier. 310 N. Bay Blvd., Anna Maria Island. 742.5923 [www.mymanatee.org](http://www.mymanatee.org) click on: Parks and Recreation
- 28 Anna Maria City Pier:** Originally built in 1911 as a dock for excursion boats from Tampa, the 736-foot pier attracts many sightseers and anglers. 1112 Riverside Dr., Palmetto. 746.2700
- 29 Anna Maria Island Historical Society Museum:** Built in 1920 as an ice house, the museum houses rare photos of settlers and artifacts such as shells, fossils, sharks teeth and antique quilts. Old City Jail. (Next to museum) built in 1927, this landmark is a favorite for photographers. 402 Pine Ave. Anna Maria Island. 778.0492 [www.theislandplayers.org](http://www.theislandplayers.org)



- 30 Island Players:** Founded in 1948, it offers community stage productions. 10009 Gulf Dr. N., Anna Maria Island. 778.5755 [www.theislandplayers.org](http://www.theislandplayers.org)
- 31 Robinson Preserve:** A 487-acre preserve including 40-acres of peaceful waterways for canoeing and kayaking. Paved and primitive walking trails, a visitors center, a canoe/kayak launch. At the terminus of 99th St. N.W. and 9th Ave. N.W., Bradenton. 745.3723 [www.mymanatee.org](http://www.mymanatee.org) click on: Conservation Lands Management
- 32 Geraldson Community Farm:** An educational non-profit working farm that grows organic produce available to members every week from Nov.-May. 1401 99th St. NW, Bradenton. 723.3252 [www.geraldsoncommunityfarm.org](http://www.geraldsoncommunityfarm.org)

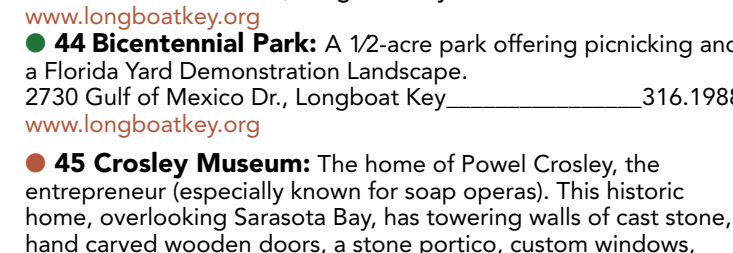


- 33 Manatee County Public Beach:** 10-acres of white sand with concessions, lifeguards, a playground, fishing, volleyball, picnic tables, and restrooms. SR 64 and 4200 Gulf Dr., Holmes Beach. 742.5923 [www.mymanatee.org](http://www.mymanatee.org) click on: Parks and Recreation
- 34 Neal Preserve:** 116-acre to explore. Located at the southwest tip of the Perico parcel known locally as Spoonbill Bay. 5801 17th St. E., Bradenton. 776.0900 [www.mymanatee.org](http://www.mymanatee.org) click on: Conservation Lands Management
- 35 Historic Bridge Street:** Quaint shopping, restaurants and commercial district and location of the Bridge St. Fishing Pier, the center of the Historic Old Town District. The first bridge to Anna Maria Island, built in 1920. At the end of Bridge Street is the newly renovated Bradenton Beach City Pier overlooking Sarasota Bay. Bridge St., Bradenton. 778.1005 [www.cityofbradentonbeach.com/bridgestreet](http://www.cityofbradentonbeach.com/bridgestreet)



- 36 Cortez Commercial Fishing Village:** Built in the 1880s, this quaint community has preserved the local heritage and offers walking tours and restaurants. The annual Fishing Festival is held every 3rd weekend of February. 123rd St. and 124th St. off Cortez Rd., Bradenton. 794.1249 [www.fishnews.org](http://www.fishnews.org) or [www.cortezvillage.org](http://www.cortezvillage.org) [www.fishnews.org](http://www.fishnews.org)
- 37 Florida Maritime Museum at Cortez:** Located at this historic site is a historical schooner. Contains 209 frame bungalows, built from 1924 to 1929 for winter tourists. SR 64 and 27th St. E., Bradenton. 708.6120 [www.clerkservices.com/ClerkServices/HtsVill/cortez\\_maritimuseum.org](http://www.clerkservices.com/ClerkServices/HtsVill/cortez_maritimuseum.org)
- 38 Coquina BayWalk at Leftis Key:** Popular with the locals and tourists alike, this scenic walk while enjoying the company of Florida's most beautiful wading birds, this 30-acre preserve includes tidal lagoons, a foot bridge, and boardwalks for public access. Gulf Dr., Bradenton Beach. 745.3723 [www.manateeclerk.com](http://www.manateeclerk.com) click on: Conservation Lands Management
- 39 Coquina Beach and Bayside Park:** 96-acres of white sand beach, swimming, fishing, picnicking and wildlife viewing opportunities. (Over 200 species of birds have been spotted here. W. side of Gulf Dr. just past Longboat Key Bridge, Longboat Key. 742.5923 [www.mymanatee.org](http://www.mymanatee.org) click on: Parks and Recreation
- 40 Greer Island Beach:** Also known as Beer Can Island, perfect for seclusion beach walks, brilliant sunsets and wildlife viewing opportunities. (Over 200 species of birds have been spotted here. W. side of Gulf Dr. just past Longboat Key Bridge, Longboat Key. 742.5923 [www.mymanatee.org](http://www.mymanatee.org) click on: Parks and Recreation
- 41 North Shore Rd. Beach Access:** A pristine beach providing access to Greer Island Beach/Beer Can Island. 100 N. Shore Rd., Longboat Key. 742.5923 [www.mymanatee.org](http://www.mymanatee.org) click on: Parks and Recreation
- 42 Longboat Key Center for the Arts:** Established in 1952, offering exhibits and art classes in sculpture, pottery, copper enameling, jewelry, photography and more. 6860 Longboat Dr. S., Longboat Key. 383.2345 [www.lbkca.org](http://www.lbkca.org)

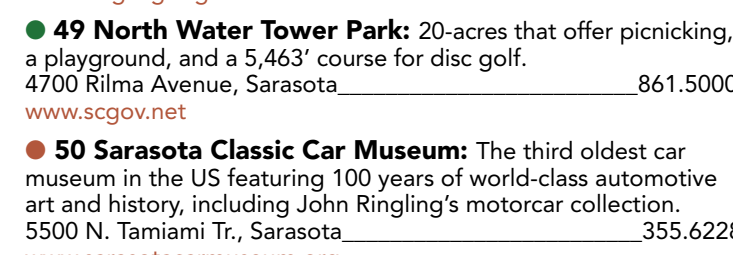
- 43 Joan M. Durante Park:** This 32-acre site is located on Sarasota Bay two miles south from the north end of Longboat Key. This park offers nature trails and boardwalks through a wetland and mangrove system, also includes gazebos, botanical garden, restrooms, playgrounds and picnic areas. Available for special events Call for reservations. 5550 Gulf of Mexico Dr., Longboat Key. 316.1988 [www.longboatkey.org](http://www.longboatkey.org)
- 44 Bicentennial Park:** A 1/2-acre park offering picnicking and a Florida Yard Demonstration Landscape. 2730 Gulf of Mexico Dr., Longboat Key. 316.1988 [www.longboatkey.org](http://www.longboatkey.org)
- 45 Crosley Museum:** The home of Powell Crosley, the entrepreneur (especially known for soap operas). This historic home, overlooking Sarasota Bay, has towering walls of cast stone, hand carved wood columns, a stone portico, custom windows, fireplaces and a grand compass room. 1 Seagate Dr. / 8374 N. Tamiami Tr. 722.3244 [www.powelcrosleymuseum.com](http://www.powelcrosleymuseum.com)
- 46 Asolo Repertory Theatre:** Two theaters featuring professional artists and Florida State University students. The Sarasota Ballet of Florida attains the highest international standards by performing mixed repertoires of treasured classics, contemporary and modern ballet. 5555 N. Tamiami Tr., Sarasota. 800.361.8388 or 351.8000 [www.asolo.org](http://www.asolo.org)
- 47 John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art:** The state art museum of Florida featuring 22 galleries with 500 years of European art; the Ringling complex also features the Ringling Mansion (Ca'd'Zan) and the Circus Museum. 5401 Bayshore Rd., Sarasota. 351.1660 [www.ringling.org](http://www.ringling.org)
- 48 Ca'd'Zan:** The home of John and Mable Ringling, it's the "crown jewel" of the Ringling complex with stained glass windows, whimsical carvings, marble terraces, gardens, and historical furnishings. 5401 Bayshore Rd., Sarasota. 359.5700 [www.ringling.org](http://www.ringling.org)
- 49 North Water Tower Park:** 20-acres that offer picnicking, a playground, and a 5,463' course for disc golf. 4700 Rima Avenue, Sarasota. 861.5000 [www.fwcs.org](http://www.fwcs.org)
- 50 Sarasota Classic Car Museum:** The third oldest car museum in the US featuring 100 years of world-class automotive art and history, including John Ringling's motorcar collection. 5500 N. Tamiami Tr., Sarasota. 355.6228 [www.sarasotaclassicmuseum.org](http://www.sarasotaclassicmuseum.org)
- 51 Sarasota Jungle Gardens:** Sarasota's oldest attraction (1936) Features 10-acres of beautiful gardens and jungle trails; bird and reptile shows; Kiddie Jungle; educational programs; shell museum; eco-safaris; and animals from around the world. 3701 Bay Shore Rd. 355.5305 [www.sarasotajunglegardens.com](http://www.sarasotajunglegardens.com)
- 52 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park:** A quiet park offering picnicking near the historic Newburg Community. 2523 Coconut Ave., Sarasota. 861.5000 [www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net)
- 53 Quick Point Nature Preserve:** A 34-acre nature park offering trails, boardwalks, tidal pools, scenic vistas and wildlife viewing. Biking along beautiful Gulf of Mexico Drive, City Island and restrooms. 100 Gulf of Mexico Dr. 316.1988 [www.longboatkey.org](http://www.longboatkey.org)
- 54 Overlook Park/New Pass Fishing Pier:** provides access to Quick Point Nature Preserve. Canoe/kayak launch; limited parking. 101 Gulf of Mexico Dr., Longboat Key. 316.1988 [www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net)
- 55 Sarasota Garden Club:** Offers native plants, a butterfly garden, a 1/2-acre pond with turtles and ducks, and other wildlife viewing opportunities including wild parrots and herons. 1131 Blvd. of the Arts, Sarasota. 955.0875 [www.sarasotagardenclub.org](http://www.sarasotagardenclub.org)
- 56 Sarasota Opera:** Listed on the National Registry of Historic Buildings and the League of Historic Theaters. Public tours are available of the newly renovated historic 1926 opera house. 61 N. Pineapple St., Sarasota. 366.8450 or 888.OPERA.12 [www.sarasotaopera.org](http://www.sarasotaopera.org)
- 57 Golden Apple Dinner Theatre:** A Sarasota landmark, founded in 1971 offers cocktails, candlelight dining and a professional Broadway show. 25 N. Pineapple Ave., Sarasota. 366.5454 [www.thegoldenapple.com](http://www.thegoldenapple.com)
- 77 Florida Studio Theatre:** Mainstage is located in a historic Sarasota building which presents one of the leading avant garde theaters in the area. 1241 Palm Ave., Sarasota. 366.9000 [www.floridastudioteatre.org](http://www.floridastudioteatre.org)
- 78 Burns Court:** Unique shopping. A cluster of 1925 Mediterranean Revival bungalows, offering antique shops, jewelry, clothing, restaurants and the Burns Court Cinema. Burns Ct, Sarasota. 861.5000 [www.mysarkariver.org](http://www.mysarkariver.org)
- 79 Palm Avenue:** In the roaring 20's Palm Avenue was Sarasota's most prestigious address. Today this avenue is a delightful blend of historic Sarasota, fabulous shopping, dining, and artistic highlights showcasing several top art galleries. 1700 Ken Thompson Pkwy., Sarasota. 373.9660 [www.palmavenue.net](http://www.palmavenue.net)
- 80 Towles Court Artist Colony:** Includes working artists and artisans living in a renovated, picturesque downtown setting. Open studios and classes. Adams Lane and Morrill St., Sarasota. 861.5000 [www.towlescourt.com](http://www.towlescourt.com)
- 81 Island Park:** Offers spectacular Bay views, children's and dolphin fountains and unforgettable sunsets on Sarasota Bay. Bike nearby Palm Ave. to downtown and/or along the bayfront to nearby Selby Gardens. Bayshore Rd., Sarasota. 861.5000 [www.sarasotaparks.org](http://www.sarasotaparks.org)
- 82 Marie Selby Botanical Gardens:** On Sarasota Bay, it offers 20 distinct garden areas that showcase plant species from all over the world. Take a stroll through the butterfly garden, the bamboo pavilion, koi pond, banyan grove, palm grove, shoreline restoration and the baywalk. Selby Gardens also offers a collection of more than 6,000 orchids and a museum showing more than 20,000 colorful plants. 811 S. Palm Ave., Sarasota. 366.5731 [www.selby.org](http://www.selby.org)
- 83 Payne Park:** The newest and largest park within the City of Sarasota. 29-acres featuring a state park open daily 2pm-7pm, there is an admission fee and a signed waiver from parent or guardian and a helmet is required. Also there are nine green clay tennis courts with lights that are open to the public in the evenings and on weekends. 2000 Adams Ln., Sarasota. 861.5000 [www.floridastateparks.org/oscarscherer](http://www.floridastateparks.org/oscarscherer)



- 84 South Lido Park:** This bays to beaches park provides expansive views of the Gulf of Mexico, Big Pass and downtown Sarasota. The park also offers a nature trail, a self-guided nature gazebos, volleyball court, horseshoe court and restrooms. 190 Taft Dr. and 2201 Ben Franklin Dr., Lido Key. 861.5000 [www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net)
- 85 Celery Fields:** 300-acres that mainly consist of open marshlands, ponds and canals, edged by oaks, willows and pines. This regional stormwater flood control site is also a prime bird-watching location. Located east of I-75 Exit 210, Fruitville Rd., east. Make right at Colburn Road light and follow road to the Celery Fields. The Celery Fields will be on your left. Ackerman Lake will be on your right. To get to the beach, proceed about 1/2 mile south from Ackerman Lake and make a left onto Palmer Blvd. After about 1/4 mile, make a left into the small parking lot near the gazebo. 2650 Waldemere St., Sarasota. 861.5000 [www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net)
- 86 Sarasota Audubon Society:** Palmer Blvd. adopted by the society, is just east of I-75 up to Tatum Road, right through to the Celery Fields. The program consists of monthly meeting open to the public. Sarasota County has long been known for its wildlife and protected areas, and many of these areas have been selected as part of the Great Florida Birding Trail. (listed on the website) P.O. Box 15423, Sarasota. 364.9212 [www.sarasotaudubon.org](http://www.sarasotaudubon.org)
- 87 Arlington Park and Aquatic Complex:** Features an outdoor pool offering swimming instruction, walking trails, fishing, picnic areas, playground and restrooms. 707 N. Tamiami Tr., Sarasota. 861.5000 [www.arlingtonpark.com](http://www.arlingtonpark.com)
- 88 Florida Home Learning Center:** A model home and landscape featuring readily available environmentally friendly materials and methods for new and existing Florida homes and yards. The house features an energy-saving passive cooling design and many cost-effective and affordable building methods and materials available through off-the-shelf technology. 4455 Beneva Rd., Sarasota. 316.1200 [www.sarasota.extension.ufl.edu/FHLC](http://www.sarasota.extension.ufl.edu/FHLC)
- 89 Red Bug Slough Preserve:** Occupies 72-acres with hiking and biking trails that lead away from the road. They're shaded by pines and palmettos that give way to oaks draped with Spanish moss and signposts mark the paths. Park benches look out over the lake. 5200 Beneva Road. 861.5000 [www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net)
- 90 Crowley Museum and Nature Center:** A 190-acre park with nature center, wildlife sanctuary, education facility, nature trails and pioneer museum. Bird watch from the observation tower. Learn the history of the Florida pioneer spirit in five historic buildings on this native land. 16405 Myakka Rd., Sarasota. 322.1000 [www.crowleymuseumnaturectr.org](http://www.crowleymuseumnaturectr.org)
- 91 Siesta Public Beach:** Recognized as one of the most beautiful beaches anywhere and as having the whitest sand in the world (99% pure Quartz); offering concessions, picnic shelters, tennis courts, pavilion, ball field, volleyball courts, fitness trail, and physical science exhibits (great for kids). The Florida Yard Demonstration Landscape and Butterfly Garden offers a showplace of native Florida plants, a cistern, and a turtle and fish pond. 1001 Blvd. of the Arts, Sarasota. 309.4949 [www.gwiz.org](http://www.gwiz.org)
- 74 Sarasota Garden Club:** Offers native plants, a butterfly garden, a 1/2-acre pond with turtles and ducks, and other wildlife viewing opportunities including wild parrots and herons. 1131 Blvd. of the Arts, Sarasota. 955.0875 [www.sarasotagardenclub.org](http://www.sarasotagardenclub.org)
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- 92 Phillippi Estates Park/Edson Keith House:** A 60-acre park with inland midians dating back 2000 years. The Edson Keith Mansion was built in 1916 in the classic Italian renaissance style, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Enjoy a stroll on the nature trail. This park has a picnic area, canoe/kayak launch, playground, gazebo, fishing pier, and restrooms. 6700 Clark Road, Sarasota 34241. 861.5000 [www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net)
- 93 Twin Lakes Park Facility:** A 123-acre Professional baseball games are open to the public for no charge February to October. Also popular for youth activities such as little league baseball, soccer, and football. Adults make use of the tennis and racquetball courts. There is a lot of open space available for picnics, walking, and playing as well as lakes for those who enjoy fishing. Many special events are held on the grounds including, but not limited to: weddings, trade shows, corporate picnics, seminars, dog shows, musical events, and even a circus made its way to Twin Lakes Park. 6700 Clark Road, Sarasota 34241. 861.5000 [www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net)
- 94 Myakka River State Park:** One of Florida's largest and most diverse natural areas, 28,876-acres. Experience "Old Florida" offering fishing, canoe/kayak and bicycle rentals, hiking, nature trails, camping, horseback riding, boat and team sports. 13207 SR 72, Sarasota. 486.2626 [www.mysarkariver.org](http://www.mysarkariver.org)
- 95 Potter Park:** Offers picnicking, nature trails and tennis and racquetball courts. 8587 Potter Park Dr., Sarasota. 861.5000 [www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net)
- 96 Turtle Beach:** A bay to beach park with a tidal lagoon connecting to Little Sarasota Bay, offering a large picnic shelter, volleyball court, horseshoe courts, and restrooms. 8918 Midnight Pass Rd., Sarasota Key. 861.5000 [www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net)
- 97 Palmer Point Park/Neville Marine Preserve:** Secluded bays to beaches area; popular spots for boaters, canoeists and excellent for bird viewing. 1/2 mile south of Turtle Beach, Siesta Key. 861.5000 [www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net)
- 98 Indian Spanish Point:** Features pioneer homestead built in 1820s; a beautiful prehistoric Indian Middens (dating from 1250 BC) and nature trails. 337 N. Tamiami Tr., Osprey. 966.5214 [www.historicspanishpoint.org](http://www.historicspanishpoint.org)
- 99 Blackburn Point Park and Bridge:** A historic one lane swing bridge with an adjacent park offering picnicking and fishing with views of Little Sarasota Bay. 800 Blackburn Point Rd. 861.5000 [www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net)
- 100 Oscar Scherer State Park:** Offers nature and hiking trails, camping, swimming, picnicking, canoe/kayak and bicycle rentals. Look for the endangered Florida Scrub-Jay. 1843 S. Tamiami Tr., Osprey. 861.5000 [www.floridastateparks.org/oscarscherer](http://www.floridastateparks.org/oscarscherer)



- 101 T. Mabry Carlton, Jr. Memorial Reserve:** Offers picnic areas, a pavilion, nature trails, restrooms, and a historic log cabin located at this site. There are more than 80 miles of primitive hiking trails that run through large expanses of pine flatwoods, dry prairie, oak-palm hammocks and wetlands. 1800 Carlton Pkwy., Venice. 861.5000 [www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net)
- 102 Myakkaatchee Creek Environmental Park:** A 206-acres of mostly shady oak hammock on both sides of the creek. This park offers a rare opportunity to enjoy an "Old Florida" experience of a blackwater creek. It features birding, hiking, picnicking, camping, and bicycling. There is a nature trail, canoe/kayak launch, and restroom facilities. 6969 Reister Road, North Port. 861.5000 [www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net)
- 103 Nokomis Beach:** Sarasota County's oldest public beach with a pavilion, canoe/kayak launch, picnic shelters, a boardwalk and restrooms. 901 Casey Key Rd., Nokomis. 861.5000 [www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net)
- 104 North Jetty Park:** One of the best surfing beaches on the gulf coast of Florida. Popular for fishing it provides a bait stand, picnic shelters, volleyball courts, a concession stand, canoe/kayak launch, and restrooms. 100 Casey Key Rd., Nokomis. 861.5000 [www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net)
- 105 Curry Creek Preserve:** A foot path serves as the site entrance. This is a 82-acre primitive preserve that has one of the few remaining coastal creeks in southwest Florida. A wonderful wildlife and birding location. Pinebrook Rd., Venice. 861.5000 [www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net)
- 106 Heritage Park:** Runs down the center median of West Venice Avenue from Harbor Drive to The Esplanade. It has historical displays, commemorative plaques, benches and a pedestrian path. Offering history of prehistoric times, native Americans and fishermen who lived in the area. Venice Ave., Venice. 486.2626 [www.venicegov.com](http://www.venicegov.com)
- 107 Venice Archives and Area Historical Collection:** Located in the historic Triangle Inn, built in 1927. Permanent displays include exhibits regarding the life of Dr. Fred Albee and local fossils collected by Dr. and Helen Burgess. A special exhibit is changed periodically. 351 S. Nassau St., Venice. 486.2487 [www.venicegov.com](http://www.venicegov.com)
- 108 Venice Art Center:** Offers free year-round exhibits of local artists' work and classes for all ages. 390 Nokomis Ave., Venice. 485.7136 [www.venicestage.com](http://www.venicestage.com)
- 109 Venice Little Theatre:** In the charming downtown district, offering stage presentations from comedies to musicals. 140 W. Tampa Ave., Venice. 488.1115 [www.venicestage.com](http://www.venicestage.com)
- 110 Venice Beach:** Best known for collecting sharks teeth, enjoy diving on a reef containing fossilized material located a quarter mile offshore. Also offers a pavilion, picnic tables, volleyball court, dune walkers and rest rooms. 100 The Esplanade, Venice. 861.5000 [www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net)
- 111 Snook Haven:** An "Old Florida", bayou-style restaurant and pleasantly primitive entertainment venue, Snook Haven Restaurant & Historic Park has been in Venice for more than 50 years. River boat tours, canoe/kayak launch on site. 5000 E. Venice Ave., Venice. 861.5000 <http://snookhavenretreat.com>
- 112 Jek Preserve:** A primitive 615-acres natural area that showcases the area's vast ecological wealth along the Myakka River. North and south of the preserve are campgrounds and on the east side of the river is Deer Prairie Creek Preserve. Pet-friendly. 2300 N. River Rd., Sarasota. 861.5000 [www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net)
- 113 Service Club Park:** Includes boardwalks, native scrub habitat, a secluded beach, volleyball courts, picnicking and restrooms. Look for the endangered Florida Scrub-Jay. 1190 S. Harbor Dr., Venice. 861.5000 [www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net)
- 114 Venice Fishing Pier at Brohard Park:** Sunsets, fishing adventures. Individuals fishing from the 700-foot long pier are not required to have their own fishing license. Nearby picnic shelters, two sand volleyball courts and a restaurant. 1600 S. Harbor Dr., Venice. 486.2626 [www.venicegov.com](http://www.venicegov.com)
- 115 South Brohard Beach:** Located south of