

# GREAT FLORIDA BIRDING TRAIL: West Florida Section

Name of site: **McKay Bay Nature Park**  
Site owner: **City of Tampa Parks & Recreation Department**

## 1. HOURS OF OPERATION

Dawn to Dusk

## 2. DIRECTIONS

Specific directions to the site from nearest town or major road:

**From Interstate 4, take exit 1 and proceed south on 22nd Street to Adamo Drive. Turn left onto Adamo and proceed east to 34th Street. Turn right onto 34th Street and proceed south. The entrance to McKay Bay Nature Park is on the left.**

## 3. BIRDING AREAS WITHIN PARK

Specific directions to good birding areas within site (specific trails, parts of the property, overlooks, etc.)

**A boardwalk trail winds through the mangroves toward the extensive mudflats of McKay Bay. Many species of wading birds can be seen foraging in these mudflats, particularly in the winter months, as well as ducks, pelicans, and other species typical of coastal environments. If mangrove growth prevents clear views from the boardwalk, birds can also be viewed in this area using a spotting scope from the park's observation tower. A paved bike path leads through the park and circles the peninsula to the south. A large pond along this path is a good location to see wading birds, particularly in the winter months. Visitors are recommended to explore the site in pairs or groups and lock valuables in their vehicles. Biting insects and afternoon thunderstorms are likely during the summer months.**

## 4. BIRD SPECIES AT SITE

The most easily viewed bird species at the site:

- |                               |                       |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Osprey                     | 9. Great egret        |
| 2. Brown pelican              | 10. Anhinga           |
| 3. Common moorhen             | 11. Snowy egret       |
| 4. American Avocet            | 12. Little blue heron |
| 5. Black-necked stilt         | 13. Tricolored heron  |
| 6. White Ibis                 | 14. Green heron       |
| 7. Yellow-crowned night heron | 15. Wood stork        |
| 8. Great blue heron           | 16. Mallard           |

## 5. BEST TIMES TO VIEW BIRDS

The following are good times to view birds at this site:

- |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> morning | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> evening | <input type="checkbox"/> all day           | <input type="checkbox"/> night             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fall    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> winter  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> summer | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> spring |

## 6. HABITAT TYPES

Percentage of habitat types:

- |                         |                    |                             |                       |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| ___ Freshwater swamp    | ___ Sandhills      | ___ Rivers & springs        | ___ Scrub             |
| <b>30</b> Coastal areas | ___ Flatwoods      | <b>40</b> Mangrove swamps   | ___ Hardwood hammocks |
| ___ Prairies            | <b>30</b> Mudflats | ___ Other (describe): _____ |                       |

Several listed species of wading birds utilize the site for foraging.

**7. TOUR INFORMATION:**

The site offers self-guided tours with interpretative signage about birding and plant species & wildlife found within the park.

**8. SITE AMENITIES**

Facility ( <i>check, if present</i> )	Handicapped Accessible	Not Handicapped Accessible	Description of structure (ramp, pavement, etc.):
<input type="checkbox"/> Restrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Telephone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Trails	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	paved trail through upland restoration area in park
<input type="checkbox"/> Boardwalks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ramped boardwalk through mangroves
<input type="checkbox"/> Campgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Picnic areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Observation structures	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	observation tower with ramp
<input type="checkbox"/> Visitor center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Interpretive materials	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	educational signage
<input type="checkbox"/> Boat ramp	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Concessions/rentals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Other recreation opportunities: <u>Bicycling, Walking</u>			_____

Does the site have parking available?  yes  no

Number of car spaces: **20**

Number of RV spaces: \_\_\_\_\_

Handicapped parking: **yes**

**9. OTHER INFORMATION**

Names, addresses, and phone numbers of others who regularly visit and are especially knowledgeable about this site:

1. **Ray Webb, Tampa Audubon Society, P.O. Box 320025, Tampa, FL 33679 (813)983-0258**
2. **Jim Valentine, Tampa Parks Dept., 7525 North Blvd., Tampa, FL 33604 (813)-231-1337**

## ***WHAT IS THE GREAT FLORIDA BIRDING TRAIL?***

The Great Florida Birding Trail (GFBT) identifies birdwatching sites throughout Florida, making it easier to find places to enjoy this great hobby, and bringing needed economic motivation to conservation efforts around the state. All sites will be marked by highway signage bearing the Trail's swallow-tailed kite logo; additionally, a guide to the Trail will be published, including maps and descriptions for each site.

The first, East Florida, section of the Trail includes 18 counties, and opened mid-November 2000. The next section to be completed is West Florida, followed by Panhandle Florida and South Florida, respectively.

## ***HOW DOES A SITE GET ON THE TRAIL?***

*Anyone can nominate a site*—birders, citizen conservationists, tourism executives or land managers.

*Each site is evaluated based on a set of criteria.*

Any accepted site must possess site resiliency, physical and legal access, and maintenance support. It must also possess at least two of the following: ecological significance, birdwatching characteristics or local economic significance. Educational significance may be used to bolster a site's ranking.

*A diversity of sites are appropriate for the Trail.*

They can be on public or private land; be excellent birding year-round or just in one season; their access can even be restricted to appointments only. Before you exclude a site because it's non-traditional, consult the Birding Trail Coordinator— you may be sitting on a fabulous birdwatching opportunity and a great benefit to your local economy.

## ***WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A SITE IS NOMINATED?***

*After a site nomination is submitted.*

First, the nomination is checked for completion. If it was not submitted by the property owner/manager, the Birding Trail Coordinator contacts the land manager to congratulate them, and then forwards it for their review, and hopefully, their concurrence.

*Site visits will begin in July 2001.*

The Coordinator visits each nominated site. Meeting with site managers and nominators is helpful, but not always possible; accordingly, the completeness of your application is very important.

*The West Florida Section is slated to open in early 2002.*