

NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA

THE SUWANNEE RIVER

The *Suwannee River* flows for more than 200 miles through Florida's Columbia, Hamilton, Madison, Suwannee, Lafayette, Gilchrist, Dixie and Levy counties—from the swamps of Georgia to the salt-marsh tidal creeks near the Gulf of Mexico. The *Suwannee River* yields good catch rates of largemouth bass. Catches averaging two pounds or less are hauled in on a regular basis. The smaller Suwannee bass also populate the river. Crawfish are found throughout the river system and are an important forage item. Soft plastic worms, lizards and crawfish imitators as well as jigs with orange skirts, pork rinds and metallic crankbaits are all lures that catch fish in the river. Bass congregate around structures in the water and take cover in fallen trees along the lower *Suwannee River* shoreline.

The *Suwannee River* also is a good spot for catfish. Tasty channel catfish, white catfish and bullhead catfish are present in the river. Smaller catfish are the best bet for anglers year-round.

Catfish gather around deeper bends and limerock areas in the river.

COLUMBIA COUNTY

Alligator Lake in Lake City produces catches of black crappie on live minnows. Bluegill and redear sunfish can be caught on live worms and crickets. Largemouth bass roam along the edges of aquatic vegetation and will take soft plastic baits, while catfish also can be caught with chicken liver fished on the bottom. Structures in the lake, including two fishing piers and a radio tower, are good spots to search for fish.

DIXIE, LEVY & TAYLOR COUNTIES

Bluegill, redear sunfish, catfish, black crappie and largemouth bass are abundant in *Lake Rousseau*, an impoundment of the *Withlacoochee River*. The cypress trees, hyacinth and pennywort islands that grow in the lake provide habitat for fish.

Bass can be caught year-round near vegetation on live shiners.

During the summer, medium-sized largemouth bass are schooling and can be caught with top water plugs or shallow divers.

Taylor County is home to the Econfinia and Fenholloway rivers, which empty into the gulf.

GADSDEN, WAKULLA & LEON COUNTIES

Lake Talquin is located on the *Ochlockonee River*, west of Tallahassee. Nationally recognized for its black crappie fishery, the lake reaches peak season for this species from January through April during pre-spawning and spawning times. The lake produced the current Florida record for crappie—3 lbs., 13.25 oz. Favorite baits for this area include live minnows, small spinners and panfish jigs.

Bluegill and shellcracker fishing will also be good using live worms and crickets. Striped bass fishing will pick up near creek mouths as waters cool. Favorite baits are deep-diving lures that imitate shad.

JEFFERSON COUNTY

Lake Miccosukee is known by fishing enthusiasts for its unusually large bluegill, which frequently measure 10-12 inches or longer. To lure the bluegill, anglers can work the shallow marshy areas, open water and lily pads with live crickets, grass shrimp and worms. Fishing in *Lake Miccosukee* can be impaired by low waters, so call ahead for current conditions.





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ALACHUA COUNTY

Newnan's Lake is located two miles east of Gainesville. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission stocks the lake periodically with sunshine bass. Most are caught from October to May, especially in deeper waters near fish

attractors. Grass shrimp and crawfish are two of the most popular types of bait used, particularly when fished near the bottom. Brown bullhead and flathead catfish are also found in the deeper waters.

SUWANNEE COUNTY

Largemouth bass enthusiasts love Suwannee Lake for the trophy-sized bass that are occasionally caught there. Largemouth bass fishing is at its best from September through May, and black and purple plastic worms are the baits of choice.

Boating & Fishing in National Parks & Refuges

Park	Phone	Camping	Fishing	Boating/ Canoeing	Boat Ramp
Cedar Key National Wildlife Refuge	352-493-0238		✓	✓	
Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge	352-493-0238		✓	✓	✓
Osceola National Forest	904-752-2557	✓	✓	✓	✓
St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge	850-925-6121		✓	✓	✓

Boating & Fishing in State Parks

Park	Phone	Camping	Freshwater Fishing	Saltwater Fishing	Boating/ Canoeing	Boat Ramp
Alfred B. Maclay Gardens State Park	850-487-4556		✓		✓	✓
Ecofina River State Park	850-922-6007		✓		✓	✓
Ichetucknee Springs State Park	386-497-2511	✓	✓		✓	
Lake Talquin State Park	850-922-6007		✓		✓	
Manatee Springs State Park	352-493-6072	✓	✓		✓	
Ochlockonee River State Park	850-962-2771	✓	✓		✓	✓
O'Leno State Park	386-454-1853	✓	✓		✓	
Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park	352-466-3397	✓	✓		✓	✓

Freshwater Fishing Piers

County	Water Body	Location	Barrier Free	Rest Rooms	Fish Attractor
Alachua	Lake Johnson	Hawthorne	✓	✓	✓
Alachua	Lochloosa Lake	Hawthorne	✓		✓
Bradford	Lake Sampson	Starke			
Columbia	Lake Montgomery	Lake City	✓		✓
Columbia	Watertown Lake	Lake City	✓		✓
Gadsden	Apalachicola River	Chattahoochee			
Gadsden	Lake Talquin	High Bluff Road	✓		✓
Jefferson	Lake Miccosukee	West of Monticello	✓		
Lafayette	Koon Lake	East of Mayo	✓		✓
Leon	Lake Talquin	Lake Talquin State Park	✓	✓	
Levy	Suwannee River	Chiefland, Manatee Springs State Park	✓	✓	
Madison	Lake Francis	Madison	✓		✓
Suwannee	Suwannee Lake	Northeast of Live Oak	✓		✓
Union	Lake Butler	City of Lake Butler	✓	✓	✓

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North Central Florida Marinas

County	Marina	Phone	Water Body	Restaurant	Lodging	Accepts Transients	Fuel	Mechanical Repairs	Store	Fishing Guides	Boat Charters	Overnight Dockage
Dixie	Horseshoe Marina & RV Park	352-498-5687	Gulf of Mexico		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Dixie	Angler's Resort at Suwannee, Inc.	352-542-7077	Gulf of Mexico and Suwannee River	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Dixie	Miller's Marina of Suwannee, Inc.	352-542-7349	Suwannee River & Gulf of Mexico		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Dixie	Suwannee Marina	352-542-9159	Suwannee River	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Gadsden	Ingram's Marina	850-627-2241	Lake Talquin		✓	✓	✓		✓			✓
Jefferson	Econfina River Resort	850-584-2135	Econfina River		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Levy	Cedar Key Marina	352-543-6148	Gulf of Mexico			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Levy	B's Marina & Campground	352-447-5888	Withlacoochee River			✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
Levy	Riverside Marina & Cottages	352-447-2980	Withlacoochee River		✓	✓		✓				✓
Levy	Yankeetown Marina	352-447-2529	Gulf of Mexico				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Taylor	Keaton Beach Marina & Motel	850-578-2897	Gulf of Mexico	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Taylor	Ideal Marina & Motel	352-498-3877	Steinhatchee River & Gulf of Mexico		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Taylor	River Haven Marina & Motel	352-498-0709	Steinhatchee River		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Taylor	Sea Hag Marina	352-498-3008	Steinhatchee River		✓	✓	✓		✓			✓
Taylor	Wood's Gulf Breeze Marina & Campground	352-498-3948	Steinhatchee River & Gulf of Mexico		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Wakulla	Alligator Point Yacht Basin	850-349-2511	Gulf of Mexico & Alligator Bay			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Wakulla	Bayside Marina	850-984-5548	Ochlockonee Bay			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Wakulla	Panacea Harbor Marina	850-984-5844	Gulf of Mexico			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Wakulla	Shields Marina, Inc.	850-925-5612	St. Marks River			✓	✓	✓	✓			✓

BRADFORD COUNTY

Lake Rowell is a 364-acre lake with a mucky bottom and cyclical hydrilla growth. Panfish are a good catch with worms and crickets in this fishing hole. Anglers should look for fish near hydrilla or along the banks by fallen trees.

CEDAR KEY

Fishing around *Cedar Key* depends heavily on the rising and falling of the tides. When fishing top water, redfish can be caught using shrimp. Redfish prefer feeding around oyster bars, while speckled trout—another local favorite—can be found on the grass flats. Trout, Spanish mackerel, ladyfish, pompano and bluefish can be taken with shrimp

and a variety of jigs.

King mackerel can be found near the reefs and rocky areas in the spring and summer. Tarpon fishing in Cedar Key runs May through September, with some lucky anglers bringing in tarpon weighing close to 200 pounds.

WACASASSA BAY

Wacasassa Bay, which borders the *Gulf Hammock Wildlife Management Area*, is a popular location for catching redfish and trout. Anglers fish for these species on the edges of oyster bars and sand bars in the fall.

HORSESHOE BEACH

Anglers fishing around *Horseshoe Beach* can catch a variety of species,

including redfish, seatrout, Spanish mackerel, sheepshead and cobia.

Redfish and seatrout can be caught in the spring and fall using live shrimp. Spanish mackerel and cobia can be caught throughout the spring, summer and fall. Winter is the most rewarding time to fish for sheepshead. Jigs or grub baits are successful when targeting these fish.

Offshore anglers search the waters near Horseshoe Beach for grouper in all seasons. While red snapper are also found in these waters year-round, their populations are at a peak in the summer. During spring and fall, king mackerel season is in full swing. Anglers use either frozen or live bait for all of these offshore species.



PWW/ Steve Kroll

