



Colt Creek State Park

Real Florida Guide

Note: Colored numbers correspond with numbers on the map. **Red** = State Park Overview and **Green** = Other Activities

Located near the City of Lakeland, Florida, [Colt Creek State Park](#) (1) is within the boundaries of the [Green Swamp Wilderness Preserve](#). This makes the state park a very popular area for wildlife viewing. Purchased in 2006, a former cattle ranch, it is one of the newest state parks. Check the website frequently for recently added amenities.

The park recently added four picnic pavilions, three of them for rent, ideal for reunions or weddings. A primitive group camping area for organized youth groups is available as well as primitive backcountry camps. To make camping or pavilion reservations, call the park at (863) 815-6761.



Day 1, Trails

Pick up a map of the 12 miles of beautiful, multi-use trails for horseback riding, hiking or biking through the pine flatwoods, cypress domes, bottomland forest and open pastures. Mac Lake Loop Trail is a .25-mile interpretive trail located at the parks' main



day use area. This trail is accessible for mobility assistance devices.

While out on the trails and park service roads bring a camera along with you because you never know what you might see. You may come across some native wildlife including American bald eagle, Florida black bear, eastern bluebird, gopher tortoise, white-tailed deer, bobcat, river otter and Sherman's fox squirrel. During a year-long survey for birds and butterflies in 2007, 150 bird species and 79 butterfly species were observed in the park.



Day 2, Fishing

Colt Creek State Park features three different lakes ranging in size from two to 25 acres located between the two day-use areas. Fish from the lake's bank or a universally accessible fishing pier. Your catch may include catfish, sunshine bass, bream, bluegill, shell-cracker or largemouth bass. A freshwater fishing license is required. In two of the lakes small boats may be launched, but gas propelled motors are prohibited. Canoes and kayaks can be rented from the park's ranger station.

Day 3, Paddling

The state park features three tributaries to the Withlacoochee River: Little Gator Creek, Gator Creek and the park's namesake, Colt Creek. You must bring your own boat to paddle these creeks. Currently, there is not a formal launch site. The nearby [Withlacoochee River Park](#) offers a canoe launch to the Withlacoochee River, described in more detail in next section.



Other Activities



[Friends of Colt Creek State Park](#) is the non-profit volunteer citizen support organization whose mission is to benefit this state park. This group hosts many special events in the park. Check their website for the most current list of events or signup for their e-newsletter. As an example, astronomy nights enable visitors to peer through a telescope to view star clusters, planets and galaxies. All ages are invited and all programs are free with regular park

admission.

Nearby recreational lands include:

[Hampton Tract \(2\)](#) – Is more than 11,052 acres managed by the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) and adjacent to Colt Creek State Park. Recreational opportunities include camping and fishing, and 28 miles of multi-use trails for bicyclers, equestrians, and hikers.

[East Tract \(3\)](#) – Is 51,149 acres of the Green Swamp Wilderness Preserve managed by the SWFWMD and adjacent to Colt Creek State Park. Recreational opportunities include 71 miles of unpaved service roads for bicycles and equestrians. Hikers can enjoy 14-mile and 8-mile hiking loops.

[West Tract \(4\)](#) – Is 37,350 acres of the Green Swamp Wilderness Preserve managed by the SWFWMD and adjacent to Colt Creek State Park. Recreational opportunities include tent camping, with reservation required. The park also features 46 miles of multi-use



trails and 60 miles of road for bicyclers, equestrians and hikers.

[Withlacoochee River Park \(5\)](#) – A Pasco County park, there is an 1840's replica church, trading post, pioneer cabin and a primitive log cabin. Tent and RV camping and two cabins are available to rent for a weekend stay or longer.

Climb up the 40-foot observation tower to view the entire property and observe the wildlife and lands' natural beauty. This park has a 3.5-mile perimeter nature trail and a 1.7-mile multi-use paved trail for bicycles, rollerblading or walking. Hike an additional 13 miles of unpaved trails. There is also a GPS orienteering course. Bring your own canoe or kayak to the parks' launch on the Withlacoochee River.

[Florida National Scenic Trail](#) – Approximately 32 miles of this 1,100-mile federally designated, non-motorized recreation trail runs through the Green Swamp Wilderness Preserve, West and East tracts.

[General James A. Van Fleet State Trail \(6\)](#) – Located east of Colt Creek State Park, this is one of Florida's most rural, paved multi-use rail-trails. The 29-mile trail is designated as a [National Recreation Trail](#).

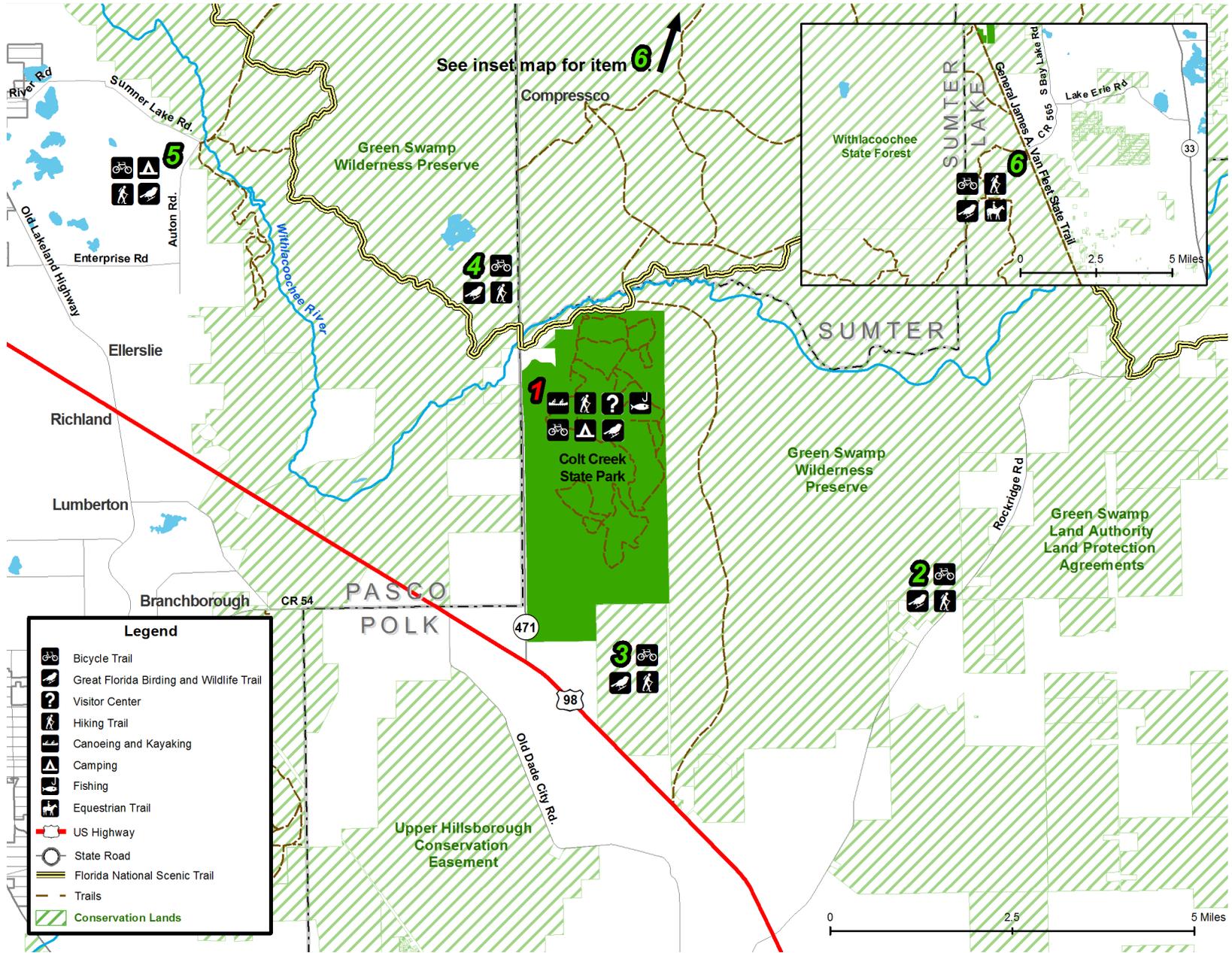
[Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail](#) – The Withlacoochee River Park and Green Swamp Wilderness Reserve, West Tract are both sites on the trail.



Florida State Parks 2011 Photo Center
www.FloridaStateParks.org

Photo by Diana Borer
Colt Creek State Park





Legend	
	Bicycle Trail
	Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail
	Visitor Center
	Hiking Trail
	Canoeing and Kayaking
	Camping
	Fishing
	Equestrian Trail
	US Highway
	State Road
	Florida National Scenic Trail
	Trails
	Conservation Lands

See inset map for item 6

