

Guana River Marsh

AQUATIC PRESERVE

“The Guana River Marsh Aquatic Preserve contains a rich variety of habitats including saltmarshes, tidal flats, a man-made freshwater / brackish water impoundment, freshwater marshes, a beach with a natural dune system, and 25,000 acres of ocean making it the ideal living laboratory and classroom for the Guana Tolomato Matanzas NERR.”

*Michael Shirley, Manager
Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve*

Key Accomplishments

- Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas (CAMA) coordinates with the DEP Regulatory program to ensure that Environmental Resource Permits and Submerged Land authorizations are as protective of Aquatic Preserve resources as possible. CAMA can provide support to permit review staff through its resource staff familiar with preserves, boat access, GIS mapping, and field support.
- CAMA staff continue to collect nutrients and other water quality data to contribute to the maintenance of the System Wide Monitoring Program.
- Implemented prescribed burn plan, monitored least tern and sea turtle nesting seasons and completed gopher tortoise survey as part of the ongoing natural resource management program
- CAMA began the Learning in Florida's Environment (LIFE) hands on environmental education program in partnership with Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Sebastian Middle School's 7th grade to enhance learning opportunities within the region.
- Coastal Training workshops, seminars, and brown bag lectures have addressed prescribed burning, estuarine ecology, sea turtles, invasive species, landscape design, and water quality issues.



The Environmental Education Center is adjacent to Guana River and offers exceptional views.

Project Spotlight

The Environmental Education Center

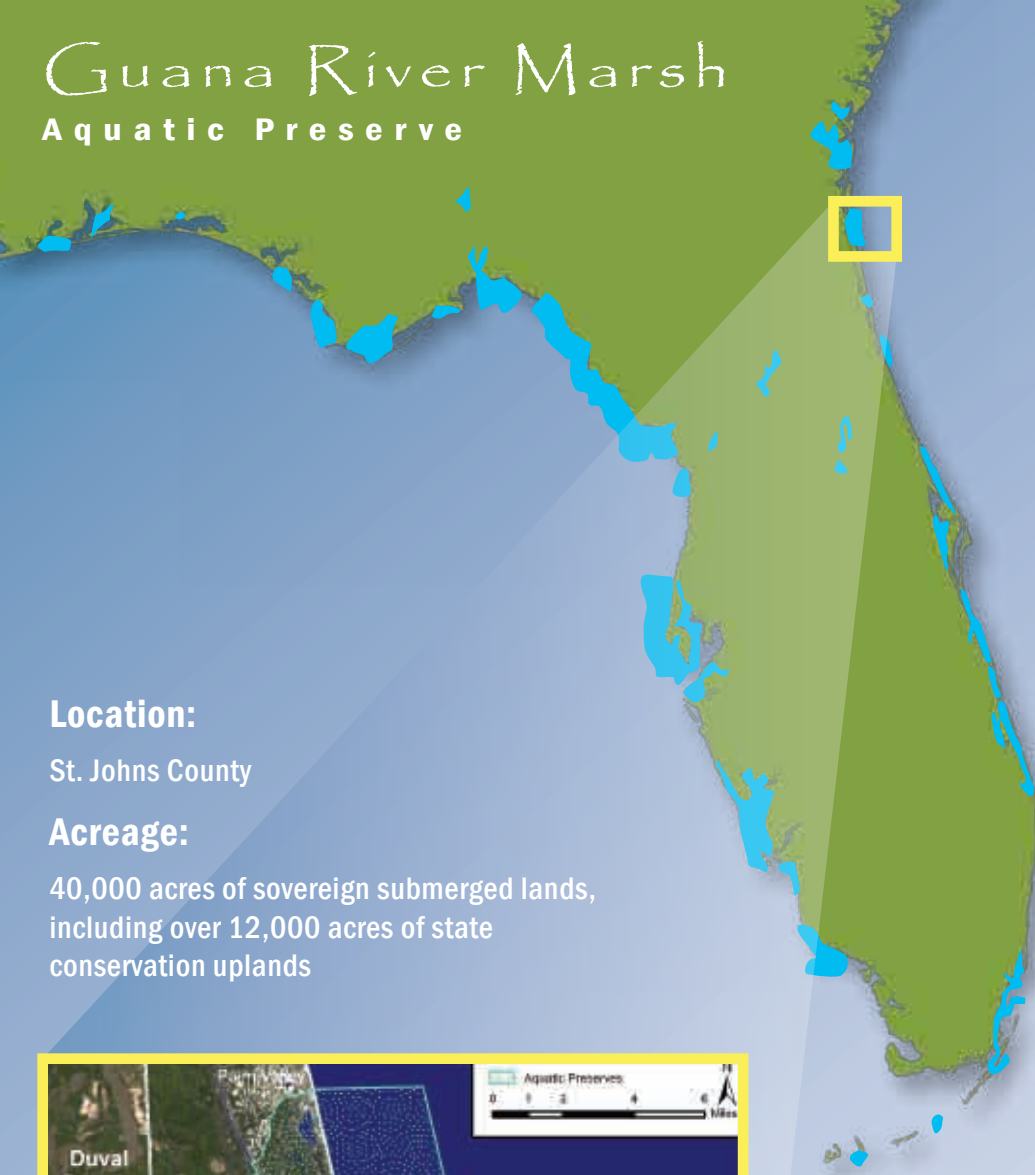
The Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve (GTMNERR) staff oversee the management of the Guana



Students examining the contents of a seine net

River Marsh Aquatic Preserve. A 21,000 square foot Environmental Education Center was built at Guana River in 2005 to promote the conservation, cultural and educational values of NE Florida's coastal natural resources. The center contains environmental education exhibits including life size models of the North Atlantic right whale and other marine life, scavenger hunts for all ages, and an estuary diorama teaching the interconnections among the coastal uplands, the estuary and the ocean. The center hosts workshops and meetings, students, and visiting scientists. It serves as a regional center for coastal resource management programs on Florida's East Coast.

Guana River Marsh Aquatic Preserve

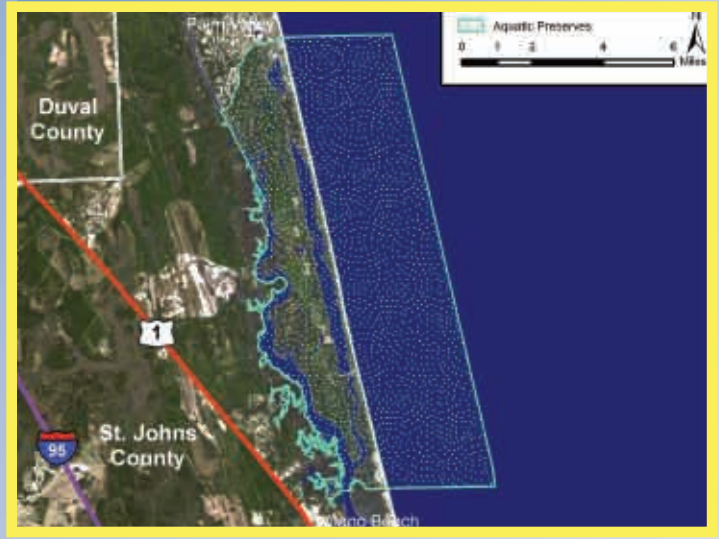


Location:

St. Johns County

Acreage:

40,000 acres of sovereign submerged lands, including over 12,000 acres of state conservation uplands



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Guana River and the Guana Peninsula



Anastasia Island beach mouse

Aquatic Preserve Facts:

- Represents a complete cross-section of a relatively undisturbed barrier island with a combination of cultural and natural resources found nowhere else in the region.
- The coastal waters of the Aquatic Preserve are important calving grounds for the endangered North Atlantic right whale.
- The Florida manatee, woodstork, bald eagle, Anastasia Island beach mouse and peregrine falcon find refuge in the Aquatic Preserve.
- Many prehistoric and historic archaeological sites are found in the submerged and upland habitats of the Guana peninsula.



Extensive salt marsh and islands of the Tolomato River provide critical habitat along the North Atlantic Flyway.



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