

# Nassau River - St. Johns River Marshes & Fort Clinch State Park

## AQUATIC PRESERVES

*“Situated amidst growing developmental pressure, these beautiful, natural and cultural areas require special attention and protection.”*

*Nicole Love, former Aquatic Preserve Manager*

### Key Accomplishments

- Ongoing partnerships with several agencies including: Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Northeast District; Talbot Islands State Park (Florida State Parks), Timucuan Ecological and Historical Preserve (National Park Service), US Army Corps of Engineers, US Fish and Wildlife Service and The Nature Conservancy. Through these partnerships we achieve improved monitoring and protection of the aquatic preserves.
- Newly formed partnership with the City of Jacksonville's Ambient Water Quality Section to participate in the collection of monthly nutrient samples at established water quality monitoring sites. These data will provide a means to assess the effects of land use changes on water quality.
- Assisted with the collection of ambient water samples for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) project. This project promotes comprehensive protection of water quality using basin-wide assessments to either maintain healthy waters or restore impaired waters.
- Our outreach program has touched thousands of both youths and adults. Through participation in events throughout the year, in schools as well as public venues, we teach about these complex natural systems, stressing why they are important to all of us, and focus on what can be done individually to help protect Florida's unique natural heritage..



The marsh offers expansive vistas.

### Project Spotlight

#### Water Quality Monitoring Program

At the beginning of 2004, the Northeast Florida Aquatic Preserves received federal grant money from the National Park Service



Water quality monitoring station attached to a piling

Timucuan Preserve to establish a water quality monitoring station at Kingsley Plantation. This was to become the first site in a series of sampling locations throughout the preserves that monitor a variety of water quality parameters on a continual basis. (Currently there are three other sites.) The data collected, thus far, has fostered collaboration and data sharing that has

yielded reports from two independent researchers regarding water quality and estuarine health within the Timucuan Preserve. Future goals of the water quality monitoring program include the addition of monitoring sites and nutrient analysis (in cooperation with the City of Jacksonville's Ambient Water Quality Monitoring Section.)

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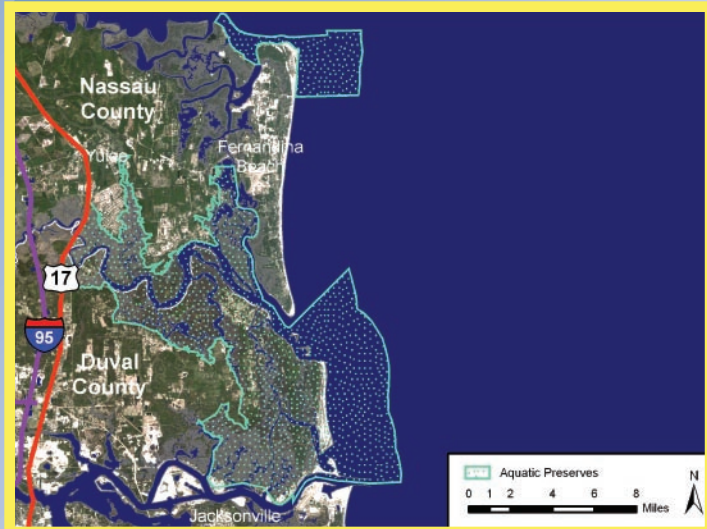
## Location:

Nassau and Duval counties

## Acreage:

Nassau River - St. Johns River Marshes:  
57,000 acres

Fort Clinch State Park:  
9,000 acres of sovereign submerged lands



## Local Contact:

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The Nassau River and surrounding marshes



Wood storks

## Aquatic Preserve Facts:

- These areas are dominated by salt marsh through which frequent tidal flushing ensures the continuous transport of nutrients in and out of the estuary.
- Oyster bars, tidal flats, and beaches are also integral parts of these dynamic systems.
- Provides critical habitat to a wide variety of fish and wildlife including endangered species, such as sea turtles, bald eagles, wood storks, least terns, Florida manatees and right whales
- Over 100 sites of archaeological and culture significance have been identified.
- The earliest inhabitants, the Timucuan Indians date back to 3500 BC, and were able to survive here because of the productive marsh areas.
- Shellfish such as clams, mussels, oysters and whelks provided not only food for the Timucuan, but materials for tool making as well.



Roseate spoonbill in a tree



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