



FALL GUIDE to Wakulla County

When the days begin to turn a little cooler and the highways get a little less crowded, the opportunities for adventure in scenic Wakulla County are just heating up. Fall is an incredible time to visit our natural paradise and explore many of the adventures that are unique to this season. Many species of wildlife that aren't around during the summer come out to embrace the cooler temperatures. You can enjoy the serenity of our longer hiking and nature trails without the sweltering summer heat. Add in our numerous autumnal community festivals and events, and you have the makings of an unforgettable season.

Events and Festivals



Morning Nature Walk

*Date: September 24, 2019 | Time: 10 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. | Location: Wakulla Spring State Park
Phone: (850) 561-7286*

Wakulla Springs State Park will host a ranger-led early morning trek through its varying forest communities. Be on the alert for fall-blooming ground orchids and beech drops.

Fall Wildflower Walk

*Date: September 28, 2019 | Time: 9 a.m. to Noon | Location: St. Marks Wildlife Refuge
Email: saintmarks@fws.gov | Phone: (850) 925-6121*

Offered twice a year—once in the spring and once in the fall, the Wildflower Walk at St. Marks Wildlife Refuge is a fun way to see beautiful blooms in the area. Additional activities include a nature walk that goes through areas not usually open to the public and an oral history of Wakulla County flowers from local experts.

St. Mark's Stone Crab Festival

*Date: October 24, 2019 | Time: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. | Location: St. Marks Wildlife Refuge
Email: info@stmarksstonecrabfest.com*

You know it's fall in Wakulla County when the Stone Crab Festival is just around the corner! Celebrate the opening of stone crab season with thousands of visitors and seafood enthusiasts while enjoying great food, music, attractions including a parade, children's activities, educational displays, and more.

2019 Monarch Butterfly Festival

Date: Late October of 2019 | Time: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. | Location: St. Marks Wildlife Refuge

A signature event in Wakulla County, the Monarch Butterfly Festival celebrates the migration of millions of butterflies as they travel southward for warmer weather. Visit educational displays, special wildlife exhibitions, and more. You can also help tag butterflies



Autumn Activities

Wildlife Experiences

Wildlife observers, hunters, and anglers alike will discover an abundance of outdoor experiences waiting for them when they visit Wakulla County in the fall. This is the time when hunting season opens for several animals, and opportunities for nature photography are plentiful. Anglers, too, can embark on some amazing journeys of their own. Throughout most of the fall it's still warm enough to enjoy a pleasurable day on the river, lake, or ocean, while lower water temperatures bring more fish to the surface.



Hunting Season

Every outdoor adventure is a lifetime memory, and hunting in Wakulla is no exception. During the fall, deer, turkey, gray squirrel, and quail seasons are open. To see dates, regulations, and more, visit the Florida Wildlife Conservation Commission website.

myfwc.com/hunting/season-dates/



Fishing

Fall in Wakulla County is a great time to go fishing. With cooler water in our many lakes, rivers, streams, and seas, you are more likely to encounter your favorite underwater species as they come closer to the surface during the day. Whether you bring your own boat or need a rental, everything you need is in Wakulla County for a successful day on the water.

www.visitwakulla.com/Things-to-Do/Hunting-and-Fishing

Autumn Activities



Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park

Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park is a 6,000-acre park that overflows with wildlife. Take the 45 - 55-minute riverboat ride through the protected corridor of the Wakulla River to see some of Wakulla's many natural residents or hike down one of many paths to see species unique to our area. The historic Wakulla Springs Lodge, built by financier Edward Ball in 1937, still welcomes guests for lodging with a full-service dining room, soda fountain, gift shop, and bathhouse with seasonal concessions. Wakulla Springs State Park and Lodge is listed on the Natural Register of Historic Places and is designated as a National Natural Landmark.

Open 8 a.m. until sundown year round

PARK ENTRANCE

\$6 per vehicle with between 2 - 8 people.

\$4 per vehicle with a single occupant.

\$2 per extra vehicle occupant

\$2 per pedestrian or bicyclist

GLASS BOTTOM OR RIVER BOAT TOURS

\$8 (13 years old and up)

\$5 (3 - 12 years old)

Free (under 3 years old)

465 Wakulla Park Drive | Wakulla Springs, FL 32327 | (850) 561-7276

www.floridastateparks.org/wakullasprings

Nature Trails and More



Wakulla County is where you'll find lush southern forests with rivers and streams that trickle alongside you as you walk, marshlands that hug the gulf coast and are home to beautiful waterfowl, and historical trails that were vital corridors of the past. Whether you're looking for a short nature walk or a trek through the deep wilderness, this is the ideal time to enjoy the lovely hiking weather and take a stroll through a natural wonderland.

Forest Trail

Travelling the Forest Trail will expose you to several different forest types and take you past many freshwater rivers and streams. A large portion of the Forest Trail winds through the Apalachicola National Forest, which features the best remaining example of a native longleaf pine and wiregrass ecosystem in the United States. The Forest Trail is subdivided into three distinct segments of East, Central and West. Wakulla County falls within both segments of Forest Trail East and Forest Trail Central. The trail begins from the eastern side at the historic town of Newport, passes the Wakulla State Forest and Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park, then south to Tallahassee, before it turns west to become Forest Trail Central. The trail continues along the Ochlockonee River with a jog through the charming town of Sopchoppy, past Ochlockonee River State Park, and then ends just south of St. Teresa Beach where it joins with the Coastal Trail.

Florida National Scenic Trail

The Florida National Scenic Trail is 1,400 miles long and passes through 75 different habitats throughout Florida. Seventy-five miles of the trail is in Wakulla County. The trail wanders through the Carraway Cutoff Trailhead to the western edge of the county through the Apalachicola National Forest into one of the longest wilderness sections of the Florida Trail before following the winding Sopchoppy River where it leads hikers along high bluffs and in and out of ravines under a canopy trees. Finally, the trail leads to Bradwell Bay National Wilderness Area and then to the steephead ravines of the Ochlockonee River.

Open daily year round | (850) 286-1494

Starry Nights

One of the most unique experiences you will have in Wakulla County is simply looking up on a cool night. Wakulla County has some of the darkest skies in the state, making it the perfect place for stargazing, clocking in at a 2 or 3 Bortle Dark-Sky Scale. The lowest the scale goes is a 1, which is the equivalent of a sky in Antarctica uninterrupted by city lights. This shows how natural and undisturbed the sky is out in Wakulla.

Cycling

Enjoy Wakulla County and the beautiful fall weather in the Panhandle at your own pace on a bike ride down one of our many trails. [Download our free Cycling Guide today.](#)

Where to Eat



BW's Grill and Restaurant

BW's Grill is known for its homemade country-style dishes, especially for their half-pound, hand-pattied beef, bison or venison burgers.

Signature dishes/specials: BW's homemade special seasoning can be found on most dishes. They are also known for their cheesecakes.

27F Azalea Dr. | Crawfordville, FL 32327 | (850) 745-6257

Holy Smoke BBQ

This casual barbecue and fast food restaurant is a local and visitor favorite in Crawfordville known for their ribs, brisket, and pulled pork.

2500 Crawfordville Hwy | Crawfordville, FL 32327 | (602-510-4421

Bay Leaf Market

Bay Leaf Market makes a fresh offering of organic sandwiches, wraps and soups. Signature dishes/specials: Homemade tabbouleh and hummus

19 Shadeville Rd | Crawfordville, FL 32327 | (850) 926-9355

New Ming Tree Garden and Restaurant

Open since 2000 in South Crawfordville, The New Ming Tree is a Chinese restaurant that also offers a specialized sushi menu. The New Ming Tree also has an extensive menu of traditional Chinese classics such as Sesame Chicken, Beef and Broccoli and General Tso's Chicken.

3278 Crawfordville Hwy | Crawfordville, FL 32327 | (850) 926-9888

Karen's Kitchen and Bakery

If you still have room for dessert, or even more dessert, stop by Karen's Kitchen and Bakery. Crawfordville's only full-service bakery offering made-to-order or pre-made birthday and wedding cakes, as well as daily fresh-baked cookies, doughnuts, Danishes, bread and rolls.

2650-5 Crawfordville Highway | Crawfordville, FL 32327 | (850) 745-6289

Where to Stay: Hotels



Every great natural adventure begins with a comfortable and welcoming place to stay. Whether you prefer roughing it in a campground, meeting new people at a charming bed and breakfast, or taking advantage of the amenities of a full-service hotel, you'll find the perfect base to explore the beautiful environs of Wakulla County.

Hotels

Shell Island Fish Camp and Motel

Overlooking the Wakulla River in St. Marks, Shell Island Fish Camp and Motel has been family owned and operated since 1962 and is the only lodging accommodation in Wakulla County that caters to fishermen and boaters. Located on a well-marked, easy-to-run channel of the Wakulla River, Shell Island can handle large or small groups, families, companies and tour groups, as well as accommodating RVs. They feature three types of lodging: a 24-room motel, four 2-bedroom cabins with full kitchens and 5 one-room cabins, all of which have daily maid service. Other amenities include a covered pavilion with picnic tables and free use of the boat ramp. The motel is also adjacent to Shell Island Marina, which is a full-service marina. Shell Island is convenient to many of the area's attractions, such as the St. Marks Wildlife Refuge, Wakulla Springs State Park and Fort San Marcos de Apalache.

1440 Shell Island Rd | St. Marks, FL 32355 | (850) 925-6226 | www.shellislandfishcamp.com/

Best Western Wakulla Inn & Suites

Best Western Wakulla Inn & Suites is an eco-friendly lodge located on Coastal Highway, just a few miles from nearly all of Wakulla County's waterways, beaches, and attractions. The Best Western's amenities include a spacious open-air courtyard and gazebo, swimming pool, fitness facility and a 40-person capacity meeting room and business center, which is complete with two Internet-ready community computers for guests to use. The Best Western Plus Wakulla also offer free Internet wi-fi and flat-screen televisions in every room, and all guests are treated to a full, hot complimentary breakfast seven days a week.

Rooms: 57 | Pets allowed: No.

*3292 Coastal Highway 98 | Crawfordville, FL 32327 | 850-926-3737
www.wakullainn.com*

Where to Stay: Hotels



Wakulla Springs Lodge

In keeping with the Lodge's peaceful and intimate setting, Wakulla Springs' 27 rooms have no televisions and feature scenic views of the spring or the park. The Lodge, which has an extensive gift shop downstairs that's complete with a hot and cold deli, also has a full-service restaurant with breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Free Internet wi-fi is available for all rooms, each of which has private baths, and the Lodge is home to a conference and meeting area that's large enough to accommodate up to 125 people. Wakulla Springs Lodge is a Florida Certified Green Hotel with loads of outdoor amenities, such as picnic tables and community grills, hiking trails, a designated swimming area in crystal clear water and glass-bottom and riverboat tours.

While enjoying your stay at the Lodge, be sure to check out our Trivia Night every Thursday at 7:00 p.m. View more details below:

550 Wakulla Park Dr. | Crawfordville, FL 32327 | (850) 421-2000 | www.wakullaspringslodge.com

The Magnuson Inn at Wildwood

Located on Coastal Highway and convenient to all of Wakulla County's waterways, beaches and attractions, the Inn at Wildwood has many desirable amenities including a fitness center, pool, and tennis court. Wildwood also has two large meeting and banquet rooms that can accommodate up to 200 people and an outdoor wedding area. They also offer free Internet wi-fi connections in every room, as well as Internet-ready community computer in the lobby, and provide guests with a free complimentary breakfast seven days of the week.

**3896 Coastal Highway | Crawfordville, FL 32327 | (800) 878-1546 or (850) 926-4455
www.innatwildwood.com**

Where to Stay: Campgrounds



Panacea RV Park

Panacea RV Park is about as quiet a campground as one will find. Located on the edge of the Apalachicola National Forest and on the outskirts of the Panacea fishing village, this campground is a short walk from Rock Landing and the Gulf of Mexico. It offers 37 RV and tent sites with full electricity and water hook-ups, bathrooms and showers, a laundry facility, a picnic area, and a recreation room. Cable, Internet wi-fi and sewer is included in the stay, and boats, canoes, and kayaks are available for rent nearby.

1089 Coastal Hwy | Panacea, FL 32346 | (850) 984-5883 | www.panacearvpark.com

Newport Park

Newport Park is a small but cozy campground on the banks of the St. Marks River. It offers five full RV hook-ups and 20 primitive campsites off the scenic Coastal Highway. There are full bathrooms, a playground for the kids, and several community grills for cookouts. Newport is also a fisherman's dream since the campground is adjacent to the Newport Bridge boat ramp and allows full access to the St. Marks River. After a day on the water, take advantage of Newport Park's large boat and fish cleaning area. Newport Park is also a block from Ouzt's Too Oyster Bar and Grille and directly across the street from the St. Marks Wildlife Refuge, which offers a wide range of amenities like hiking, biking, fishing, wildlife and bird watching, and a chance to tour the Historic St. Marks Lighthouse.

8046 Coastal Hwy | Crawfordville, FL 32327 | (850) 925-4530

Ochlockonee River State Park

Ochlockonee River State Park is a 543-acre attraction that caters to every kind of visitor and outdoor activity with full-facility waterfront campsites. The park has amenities such as picnic areas, bathrooms and showers, as well as hiking and biking trails, wildlife watching, swimming areas in the Ochlockonee River, and even a large boat ramp for those utilizing the park's outlet to freshwater and saltwater fishing excursions. The park also has a designated youth group camping area and calm, backwater freshwater trails for kayaking and canoeing.

*429 State Park Rd. | Sopchoppy, FL 32358 | 850-926-2771
www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/ochlockonee-river-state-park*

Where to Stay: Vacation Rentals



Ochlockonee Bay Realty

Ochlockonee Bay Realty offers a wide variety of vacation rentals and specializes in water views, from gulf-front beach homes to bay-front and riverfront options. These vacation homes can be rented for a weekend, week, or month so you can go and enjoy the beautiful outdoors and experience Florida beaches, fishing, hiking, hunting, sailing, bicycling and much more.

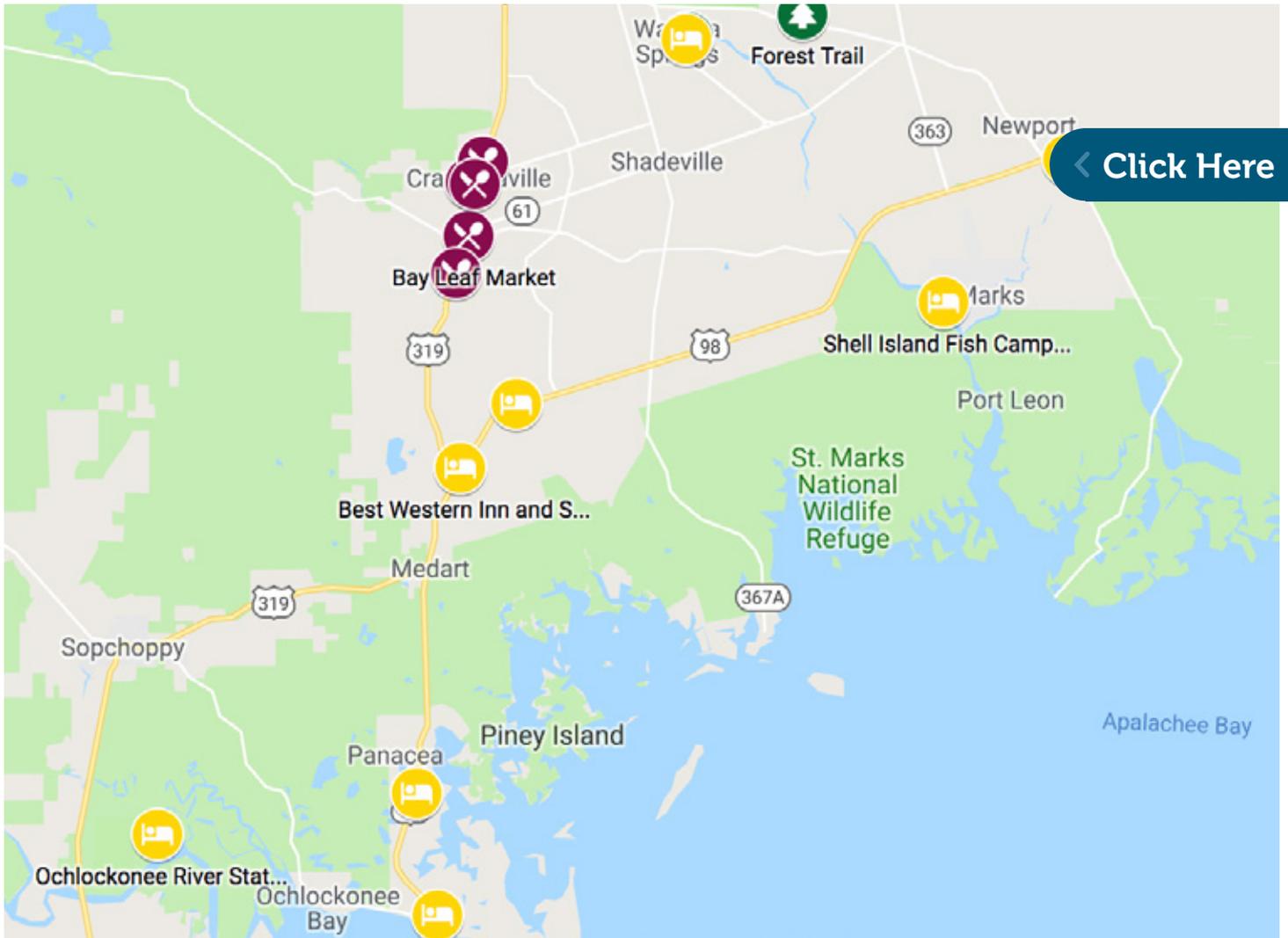
146 Coastal Highway | Panacea, FL 32346 | (850) 984-0001 or (850) 926-9260
<http://www.alligatorpointbeachrentals.com/>

Sopchoppy River House

Located on Florida's Nature Coast with fresh seafood white sand beaches, and relaxing ocean breezes at your fingertips, stay at the Sopchoppy River House. This area is perfect for any fan of the great outdoors as biking, kayaking, fishing, birding, hiking, and relaxing can all be done without leaving the Sopchoppy River House. The vacation rental sits along 377ft of your very own secluded piece of the lazy Sopchoppy River. Drop in a line and pull in some dinner or spend a little time relaxing on a floating raft. The Sopchoppy River House is located on over two acres of private woodland area in the Apalachicola National Forest.

Phone Hours: Daily from 8am-7pm (central time) seven days a week.

Sopchoppy, FL 32358 | 920-535-0242 | www.sopchoppyriverhouse.com/



Explore our Interactive Map!