

St. Joseph Bay Buffer and Aquatic Preserves Day

Presented by Friends of St. Joseph Bay Preserves, Inc.
and the St. Joseph Bay State Buffer Preserve.
Proceeds to benefit the Friends of St. Joseph Bay Preserves (501 (C) 3 Non-Profit).

LOCATION: The Bay Day event is located at the St. Joseph Bay Preserves Center, 3915 State Road 30-A (C-30), Port St. Joe, Florida. The Preserves Center is approximately 5 miles south of Port St. Joe; approximately one hour east of Panama City; and approximately two to two and a half hours south and west of Tallahassee.

REGISTRATION: Reservations will be taken in advance ONLY for the 8:00 am (EST) birding trip and the 9:30 am (EST) bay boat tour. (by phone only - 850.229.1787)

Sign up sheets for all other trips will be available at the Preserves Center on Saturday October 3rd (the day of the event) at 9:00 (EST).

PLEASE, if you sign up for a trip, **show up or let us know that you aren't going to show up so that someone else can take your place.** Trips usually fill up quickly and we hate to turn people away and then have empty spots that go unfilled from no-shows.

TOURS: All depart on time from the Preserves Center. **ALL TIMES ARE EASTERN TIME ZONE.** Remember to bring water, insect repellent and sunscreen. Normal birding courtesy rules apply.

AREA ACCCOMODATIONS:

PORT ST. JOE, CAPE SAN BLAS, County Road C-30, and INDIAN PASS: Gulf County Chamber of Commerce 1-800-239-9553 www.gulfcountychamber.com
Gulf County Tourist Development Council (850)-229-7800 www.visitgulf.com

DISABLED ACCESS: Special accommodations will be made for the disabled whenever possible, but must be requested in advance. The Preserves Center is accessible for the disabled, including parking, bathrooms and access ramps. Bird spotting over St. Joseph Bay from the deck allows good bird viewing for those unable to access the more remote areas.

QUESTIONS: For more information please email info@birdfestival.info or call (850) 229-1787. Also see www.stjosephbaypreserves.org for more information and on-site weather.

PRESERVE TOURS

The following tours depart from the Preserves Center and are included free of charge. Pre-registration (on signup sheet on the day of the event) is required as space is limited.

BACKWOODS WILDFLOWER TOUR OF THE BUFFER PRESERVE (RIDING)

Experience the backcountry of the Buffer Preserve with Jean Huffman, fire ecologist and Buffer Preserve Manager, or Bill Boothe, naturalist and photographer extraordinaire. Riding in benches in a tour wagon, you'll get a good view of recently burned areas to see the dramatic post-fire flowering of grasses and wildflowers and the butterflies and other life that is attracted to these areas. Hear about the history of this land and the importance of fire to the resident plants and animals. Learn about research going on in the Preserve that is uncovering information about fire and water over the past hundreds and thousands of years. This is mostly a riding trip with short walks interspersed and covers many areas within the heart of the Preserve.

AQUATIC PRESERVE TOURS

The following tours will meet at the Preserves Center and then car pool to Eagle Harbor in St. Joseph Peninsula State Park, located at the very end of Cape San Blas Road, approximately 20 miles from the Preserves Center.. Pre-registration (on signup sheet on the day of the event) is required as space is limited. Suggested donation to Friends of St. Joseph Bay Preserves of \$10 for Aquatic Preserve Boat tours.

SEAGRASS LIFE OF ST JOE BAY (WADING)

Join Rosalyn Kilcollins from the Apalachicola Estuarine Reserve on a walking/wading tour to explore the shallow waters of south St. Joe Bay. Rosalyn will discuss the five species of seagrass found in the bay, the creatures that inhabit these seagrass beds and what is being done to protect this valuable habitat. Come and get a closer look at bay life.

ST JOSEPH BAY AQUATIC PRESERVE BOAT TOUR (\$10 suggested donation to Friends of St. Joseph Bay Preserves)

Take a boat tour with Aquatic Preserve Manager Kim Wren to view a part of St. Joseph Bay and discuss research and monitoring activities that are helping to protect the natural resources in St. Joseph Bay. You will see extensive habitats of sea grass beds, salt marshes and near shore communities. Kim will show you the state's sea grass and scallop monitoring sites as you cruise across the bay. This year we have a pontoon boat generously loaned to us by Seahorse Charters.

BIRDING TRIPS

The following tours will meet at the Preserves Center and then car pool to the appropriate tour locations. Pre-registration (on signup sheet on the day of the event) is required as space is limited. These tours are included free of charge.

Alan Knothe, who usually leads our birding trips has been sick and probably will not be able to lead these trips.

We are very lucky to have two other expert birders, Dean and Sally Jue from Tallahassee, who have volunteered to do some birding trips for us this year.

More trips and more detail on these trips will be announced here in the coming week..... **and we wish Alan a speedy recovery!!**

MIGRATORY HAWK WATCH ON THE DEAL TRACT (WALKING)

Visit the bird tower with expert birders for a bird's eye view of migrating hawks and other birds. The bird tower is a large viewing tower built on the Deal Tract of the Buffer Preserve by its former owner. The tower offers an excellent view of the surrounding area and, on good flight days, an unparalleled view of migrating hawks. Time permitting, we will also check the surrounding woods for migrating songbirds. Tour meets at the Preserves Center and then car pools to the Deal Tract located on Cape San Blas Road just past Stump Hole, approximately 10 miles from the Preserves Center.

BIRDING AT THE BUFFER PRESERVE MONEY BAYOU MARSH TRAIL (WALKING)

Join noted birders on a birding walk at the Buffer Preserve Island Trail. Your guides will help you learn to identify birds by their calls and habits, as well as discuss local ecology and other species of interest. This is a fascinating and informative tour for both the beginner and the seasoned birder. Tour meets at the Preserves Center and then car pools to the Island Trail gate located on State Road 30-C, approximately 3 miles from the Preserves Center.