

Friday, Oct 18, 2024

Fri-CA Cross Bar Ranch

Address: Lockett Ave, Spring Hill

8:00 am – 12:00 pm

Limited to 20 people, or 10 vehicles. High-clearance vehicles with AWD or 4WD are preferred since you will be driving dirt ranch roads. Carpooling is encouraged. No tolls or parking fees. Trip fee \$25.

Leaders: David Adams, (727) 723-5574, Christine Rowland, (917)459-2631, Quest Ecology biologist
Bring water, snacks. Restrooms are available at the starting buildings, but not out on the ranch. Bring snacks and beverages, as there is nothing available at the site.

This trip will be mostly driving, with stops to walk short distances. The 12,500-acre Cross Bar/Al Bar Ranch is managed as a wellfield by Pinellas County Utilities. With wetlands, oak hammock, pine flatwoods, and open pastures, it offers prime birding but is not normally open to the public. Accompanied by the site managers, you will carpool out to check the wetlands for waders and the pastures for the Burrowing Owl colony. Florida Scrub-Jays, Barred Owls and even coyotes are possible sightings. The drive will take you across the ranch, with several stops to look for birds around some of the ponds, in the oak hammock and hopefully a flock of turkeys in the fields. Tanagers, vireos, flycatchers, warblers and more will be along the way. Your leaders will stop whenever they see or hear something of interest, and there will be short walks into fields for better looks.

From Brandon Area: Take I-75 North. Continue 15 miles north.

Take Exit 275 to Rt 54.

At end of exit ramp turn Left/West onto FL 54 West. Continue a little over 5 miles west.

At US 41, red light, turn Right/North onto US 41. Continue a little over 11 miles north.

After you cross US 52, at 1.7 miles, watch for Lockett Ave on your Right. Look for storage sheds for sale at the corner.

Turn Right/East into Cross Bar Ranch and proceed through gate to buildings.

If the gate is locked, wait there for one of the staff to arrive and open it.

Vehicles with AWD or 4WD are preferred.

Alternate from central Tampa: Take Rt 41 north, about 17 miles from downtown Tampa, to US 52. Follow directions above.

