

Friday, Oct 18, 2024

Fri-SW Se7en Wetlands

Meet at Se7en Wetlands office. Entrance is beside Legacy Lake RV Park, 4025 State Rd 60, Mulberry, FL 33860

Time: 8:00 am to 11:30 am

Limited to 10 participants. No parking fees. \$30 per person.

Leaders: Mary Keith, 813-767-5863, Libby Abney, Molly Klinepeter 7W Staff Biologist

Bring water, snacks, hat, insect repellent may be helpful. There is a restroom at the office and one halfway around the wetlands.

You will be riding around the wetlands in a van. Please do not bring bulky backpacks.

Se7en Wetlands is a gorgeous example of restoration. Once a phosphate mine, the City of Lakeland owns and operates Se7en Wetlands south of Lakeland. The 1,600 acres of marshes, swamps, uplands, and lakes are designed as a wetland treatment system using seven ponds of various depths. Water circulates from one to the next to provide final polishing treatment for the City's wastewater, with connection to the North Prong of the Alafia River, which flows directly to Tampa Bay. Se7en Wetlands boasts an outstanding and diverse community of plant and animal species. In the spring it hosts a waterbird breeding colony including Roseate Spoonbills and Wood Storks. In the winter American Bitterns and sandpipers use the wetlands habitats. Two pairs of Bald Eagles nest there. We will travel by van around the larger wetlands and uplands where the incoming water is distributed. We will stop to search for birds, alligators, otters or other wildlife. There will not be much walking, but we will be getting into and out of the van frequently.

Directions from Tampa area:

Entrance is 23 miles east of Brandon on Rt 60. **Do not use maps for public entrance to the park!**

Take Rt 60 east through Brandon and Mulberry. Two miles after you cross Rt 37 in Mulberry you will pass the model plane park on your left, then the entrance to Legacy Lake RV Park (used to be Ski Paradise). At the next U-turn crossing, make the U-turn, go immediately to the right lane, and enter through the gate **BESIDE** the Legacy Lake RV Park gate. Go north on the dirt road half a mile, through the next gate which will be open for you, and make an immediate left turn. Proceed to the office buildings, park your car, and meet your guides and the van.

