



Greetings from "Nature's Wonderland!"

Thought you might enjoy this article about our area's unique ecosystem and exceptional natural Parks.

It would be our pleasure to help you or any of your friends with any Real Estate advice – Give us a call on our toll-free number, 1-800-423-2962, Ext. 3200 for a **FREE** consultation. We look forward to hearing from you.

Alan, Linda,
Cathy, Nancy, Tom, Mari-Jo, Rachel & Robin

Natural wonders abound!

Marco Island/Naples is the hub of a natural wonderland.

Marco is the largest of a 10,000 island aquatic preserve and an official sanctuary for the Bald Eagle.

It is surrounded by enormous expanses of the most unique ecosystem in the nation and is home to exceptional wildlife and vegetation.

A short distance north of the island off State Road 951 is the 9,400-acre **Rookery Bay Natural Estuarine Research Reserve**, managed by the Florida Department of Natural Resources.

In its mangrove forest you will find oysters, crabs, mullet, snapper, snook, pelicans, osprey, bald eagles, roseate spoonbills, deer, bobcats, snakes and gopher tortoises.

Tours, boat trips, kayaking, hiking and workshops can be arranged at the Rookery Bay, where visitors can get information on wildlife, enjoy excellent displays and participate in many programs.

Hours of operation at the center vary according to the season so it is recommended that visitors call ahead at 239-417-6310 or visit their website at www.rookerybay.org Facilities are limited.

Collier-Seminole State Park, 10 miles east of the State Road 951 intersection along U.S. 41, was named after the Indian tribe and the county's founder, Barron G. Collier.

It is a 6,423-acre mangrove preserve that is home to alligators, the

endangered American crocodile, black bear, panthers and manatees.

The ecosystem's diversity, consisting of tidal creeks, mud flats, marshes, cypress swamps, tropical hammocks and pine flatwoods, can be viewed via a 13.6 mile canoe trail or a 6.5 mile hiking trail.

Tent camping and recreational vehicles are welcome.

The entrance to **Everglades National Park** in Everglades City is only 45 minutes away from Marco Island.

The park is the third largest park in the nation, encompassing 1.5 million acres of wilderness that features rare and colorful birds and an abundance of wildlife on its extensive prairies and in its mangrove forests.

The park offers campsites, picnic areas, restrooms, cabin rental, lodgings, groceries, bicycling, kayaking, hiking, boating, fishing and guided tours.

The 63,172-acre **Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve** has its access and headquarters on Jane Memorial Scenic Drive off State Road 29 at Copeland.

The preserve is home to the Florida panther and many other endangered or threatened wildlife species. It has the largest concentration and variety of epiphytic orchids in North America.

Just a short trip is the **Big Cypress National Preserve** located on U.S. 41 at Ochopee.

In the 716,000-acre preserve visitors can see cypress swamp, exotic mangroves, sawgrass prairies and

natural freshwater rivers. Wildlife on the preserve include alligators, panthers, snakes, bobcats, bear, wild boar, deer and a variety of colorful birds.

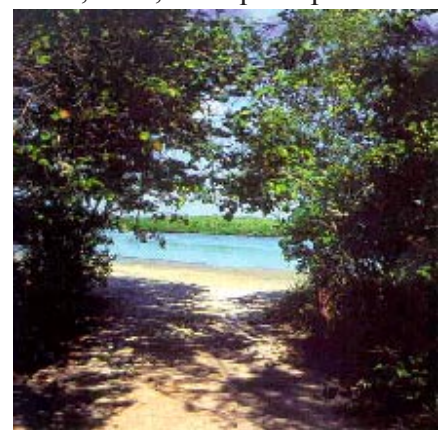
The Conservancy in the City of Naples on Merrihue Drive off Goodlette-Frank Road houses a natural science museum, an auditorium, nature store, environmental education building and offers education courses and a wildlife rehabilitation center.

The Conservancy is headquarters for a local group dedicated to environmental protection.

Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, which is located on Sanctuary Road off Immokalee Road in north Collier County, offers the country's largest remaining stand of virgin bald cypress trees and the country's largest colony of nesting woodstorks.

While walking the sanctuary's 2-mile long boardwalk, it is not unusual to see a pileated woodpecker, a red shouldered hawk, an alligator, a great blue heron, a white ibis or a deer and a bobcat.

Hanging from the 130-foot cypress trees one may find Spanish moss, orchids, ferns, and aquatic plants.



With Compliments From:

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