

1) Scrub - Scrub is a very harsh environment for plants and animals. The deep, porous sand of the ridge makes it difficult for plants to obtain water and nutrients. Plants and animals of the scrub have adapted several mechanisms to survive here. This one-half mile trail will identify some of these special plants and animals.

2) Palafoxia - *Palafoxia feayi* - An herb, stems erect grows 5-7 feet; with leaves linear one to three inches long. Flowers are white or pinkish which produce a fruit. It flowers and fruits in Spring and again in the Fall. Nectar and pollen from the flowers provides food for many insects including bees and wasps.

3) Prostrate Scrub Spurge - *Chamaesyce cumulicola* - Other name: Sand dune spurge. An herb, with leaves elliptic shaped and flower clusters long with petal-like appendages. This is an endangered species and until the late 1970's was thought to inhabit only the Marco Island area on the west coast of Florida. It was found along the eastern coast of the state and is often called a sidewalk crack weed because it tolerates the extremes dryness and heat which makes it ideal for a rock gardens.

4) Jointweed - *Polygonella gracilis* - Other names: October flower, wireweed. This shrub grows eight to twenty inches tall; bushy-branched with leaves oblong and thin. It flowers September and October with fruit appearing late Fall. The fruit of this shrub has small wings and, as a result allows for wind and water dispersal away from the parent plant. Jointweed simply means "little knees."

5) Wild Pineapple - *Tillandsia recurvata* & *T. utriculata* - Other names: Wild pine, ball moss, giant wild pine, giant air plant. Of the bromeliad family, the two species have adapted in different ways to survive areas of limited moisture. *Tillandsia recurvata* uses atmospheric moisture by trapping it below a thick layer of star-shaped plant hairs that are spread over its leaves and stems. Once captured the plant absorbs it into its vascular systems and use it to live. The *Tillandsia utriculata* on the other hand, captures falling rain water, storing it in its overlapping leaf bases. The water collects, as a form of an aerial cistern, where not only the plant benefits, but mosquito larvae hatches and tree frogs come to eat. Frogs will also use it as a humid place to hide.

6) Sand Live Oak - *Quercus geminata* - Has thick leaves with rolled edges. The leaves are dark green, somewhat corrugated on top, and white on the bottom.. They are usually found in dry, well-drained sandy soils that lack organic materials. It shares its habitat with Sand Pine that creates and overstory with Scrub, Chapmans=s and myrtle oak. Other woody plants found may include saw palmetto, rosemary, rusty lyonia, tallowood, hickory and others. The evergreen, thick leaves of many of these plants are probably adaptations to moisture retention, due to living in arid, harsh environment.

7) Love Vine - *Cassytha filiformis* - Other names: dodder, old man berry and others. This is a vine with stems usually matted, yellow or green. Flowers are mostly in spikes, white to yellowish in color and fruits are fleshy, turning white when mature and has a single seed. It is a parasitic plant that grows special root-like structures into their hosts and withdraw liquid. It's considered a hemi-parasite (half-parasites) because their stems do have some chlorophyll. Birds and other animals eat the fleshy fruits when it ripens causing the spreading of the plant. Its name refers to a "tangled wisp or hair" referencing to the way the stems twine and twist around each other and their host plants.

8) Regeneration of the forest - This tree has died and allowed sunlight and heat to penetrate the sand, germinating the dormant pine cones. The many young seedlings that have resulted, now compete for the limited nutrients and water. Many will die. The one or two to survive will have adapted quicker than the others.

9) Sand Pine - *Pinus clausa* - Sand pine occurs on both the Atlantic and Gulf coastal areas in deep, dry, infertile acid sands. It is a small to medium sized tree with a conical crown. The bark of large trees remains fairly smooth particularly near the top. Trunk and branches of this are frequently twisted. The two needles in each bundle or fascicle are 2 to 4-1/2 inches. The trees' thin needles reduce moisture loss. Many "wetter" species of pine have as many as 5 needles per bundle. This tree has only 2 per bundle to tolerate drought conditions. The shallow root systems can catch rainfall at the surface, before it percolates down to the deep water table. Due to the shallow root systems, the tree is easily blow down.

10) Slash Pine - *Pinus elliotti* - Appropriately named as it was oftentimes "slashed" for turpentine and rosins. The sap was gathered in clay pots nailed to the tree. Many of the older pines may still show the characteristic V shaped scars on the trunks. Early settlers used the wood extensively for home construction. The species prefers wetter sites.

11) Hickory - *Carya* - The tree commonly reaches from forty to sixty feet in height with a trunk from one to two feet in diameter, covered with medium gray and comparatively thin bark, broken into shallow furrows and small ridges. The branchlets are bright reddish brown and smooth which is one of the guiding points to identify this tree. Compound leaves are smooth and vary widely in length. Flowers appear in April producing a pear shaped nut. Both the husk and nut are noticeably four-angled.

12) Deer Moss - *Cladonia evansii* spp. - There are a half dozen species of ground lichens, or "reindeer moss" that sometimes carpet the sand in Florida scrubs. A lichen is not a single plant, but actually a combination of a fungus and an alga. Neither the fungus nor the alga can live alone, and the relationship is a type of symbiosis called obligate mutualism. Lichens are extremely slow-growing. You won't find them in cities. Looking like gray puffy ground clouds. Lichens have no roots, obtaining moisture instead from the evening air and the dew. They are brittle and crunchy underfoot when dry, but soft as cotton balls when moist. They are killed by fire and slow to repopulate. The longer a scrub has been without fire, the larger and more numerous are the lichens.

13) Boston Fern - *Nephrolepis exaltata* - This fern is hardy, in that can live on tree trunks or decaying logs as well as in the ground. The clustered fronds are elliptic. The round sori, or clusters of sporangia, are between the midrib and margin on the underside of the leaflets.

14) Tallowood - *Ximenia americana* - Other names: Spanish plum, hog plum, purge nut: Shrub or small tree up to twenty-three feet in height, containing sharp thorns. The fruit is a favorite of the Gopher Tortoise.

15) Paradise Tree - *Simarouba Glauca* - Other names: Juan primero, bitter ash, mois amer, and others. The tree grows to fifty feet tall, leaves are compound with ten to twenty leaflets on each branch. Flowers are in large terminal stalks bearing fruit from one-half to one inch in length. The fruit is bright red and ripens to dark purple or black. The tree is considered a pioneer species, as they are often among the canopy dominant in the old hammocks. The wood of the tree is white or yellow; smooth and is used for interior decorating and cabinetry.

16) Spanish Stopper - *Eugenia Foetida* - Grows to a large shrub or small tree, it has small, rounded evergreen type leaves, flowers in the summer, bearing small purplish berries in the Autumn.

17) Live Oak - *Quercus Virginiana* - This tree is characteristic of it's wide spread canopy, sometimes reaching one hundred feet across with a short, stout trunk, up to three to four feet in diameter. The trunk divides in several large limbs with nearly horizontal branches, forms a low, dense, rounded head. It's height can reach up to fifty feet. The bark of the trunk and large branches is dark brown tinged with red, and slightly furrowed. It is moderately slow in growing with a long life span. The leaves are thick, leathery, oblong and smooth, with edges being slightly rolled under; from two to four inches in length. The fruit is an acorn about and inch long. The wood is very heavy, hard, strong and tough, light brown or yellow, which makes it appealing for furniture.

18) Scrub Mint - *Coradina grandiflora* - Other names: Large flowered rosemary - A scrub that grows three to four feet, slender, usually with curved branches. Leaves are narrow and flowers are blue. It flowers in Spring and early Summer, fruiting in Summer and Fall. This species is endangered. It is restricted to the southeastern part of Florida and because it requires this special habitat, it occurs nowhere else.

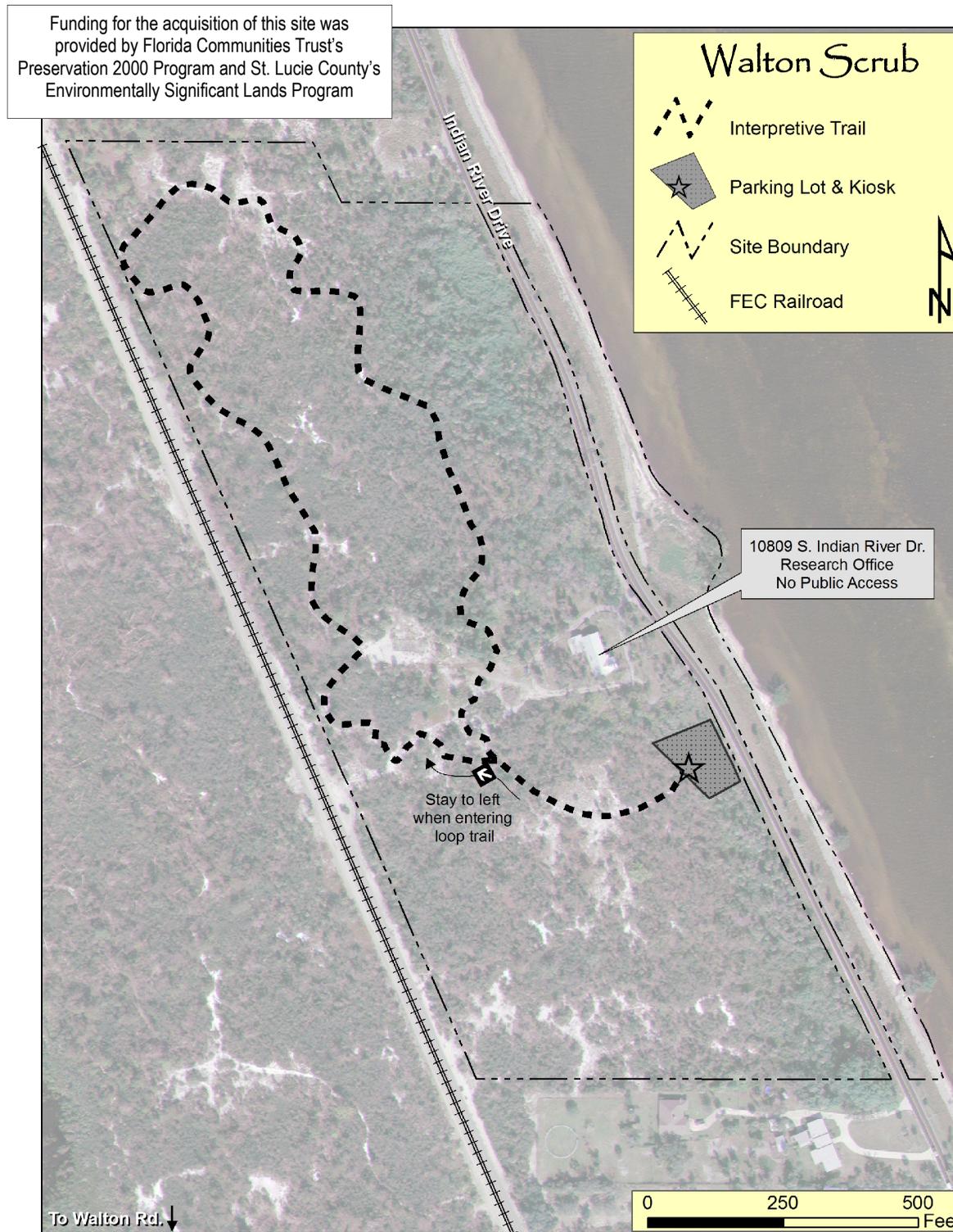
19) Wild Coffee - *Psychoria nervosa* - Scrub that grows to ten feet tall with thin branches, leaves are dark green, glossy, oval, pointed, and up to six inches long with prominent veins. Trunk is multi-stemmed, shrub-like with brown bark. The blooms are small white flowers, that appear in clusters during Spring and Summer. The fruits are red oval shaped berries about 1/3 inches long. Roasted seeds have been used as a coffee substitute.

20) **Red Bay** - *Persea boronia* - Belonging to the evergreen family, this tree has aromatic qualities and typically grows as a large understory tree up to sixty feet. Like other bay trees, the Red Bay is closely related to the Avocado. Leaves alternate from glossy green on top to grayish underneath. Ends are often tapered with flowers that are yellowish green and in clusters. Flowers April through October and December through February. Wood from this tree has been used in cabinets and leaves can be used for teas or flavoring of meats and soups as a substitute of store bought Bay leaves. This tree species is under **serious threat** by the African Ambrosia Beetle (*Xyleborus galbratus*) that entered the U.S. at Port Worth, GA. in 2002. Trees in North Florida and throughout the Northeastern United States have experienced high mortality rates and are now being compared to that of Ash Tree epidemic by the Emerald Ash Borer in the Northeast U.S. in past years.

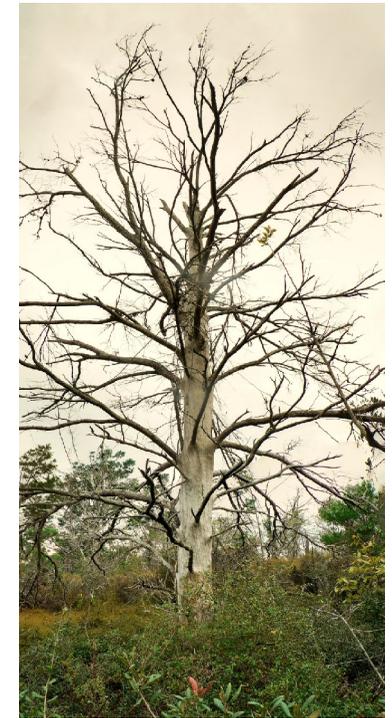
Guidelines and Safety Information:

- Be cautious of uneven trail surfaces.
- Please remain on the trails.
- Carry adequate drinking water.
- In case of lightning, seek a low area away from trees, fence lines and tall objects.
- In case of emergency, call 911.
- While hiking the trail you may encounter animals indigenous to this area. Please observe from a safe distance.
- Leave all plant life intact.
- Please leave site cleaner than you found it. "Pack it in, pack it out."
- Use at own risk.

To learn more about St. Lucie County's natural heritage, there are more than 20 self-guiding interpretive trails located within the Natural Areas/Preserves. Each trail describes the most common plants, as well as significant geographical and historical features of the site.



Walton Scrub



Interpretive Trail



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Environmental Resources
Department**

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http://www.stlucieco.gov/erd/environmental_lands.htm

Site Open: Sunrise to Sunset