



Get To Know The Tampa Riverfront

A Nature Guide



Dan Vickers | Macaulay Library

Brown Pelican

*Pelicanus
occidentalis*

Brown pelicans are large birds with an oversized bill and a dark body. They are coastal birds that are found in Florida year-round. When pelicans spot their potential food, they plunge-dive into the water and use their bill to scoop up small fish.

Roseate Spoonbills are known for their bright pink feathers and giant spoon-shaped bill. They feed on crustaceans, aquatic insects, and small fish. You may spot a roseate spoonbill nest in the mangroves.

Roseate Spoonbill

Platalea ajaja



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Snowy Egret

Egretta thula

Snowy Egrets are all white with a black bills, black legs, and yellow feet. They are found in Florida year-round in coastal habitats. During breeding season, adult birds will grow curving, lacy plumes on their head, breast, and back.

Great Blue Herons are widespread across North America. They are highly adaptable birds that are found in water environments ranging from the mangrove swamps in Florida to the rivers of Alaska.

Great Blue Heron

Ardea herodias



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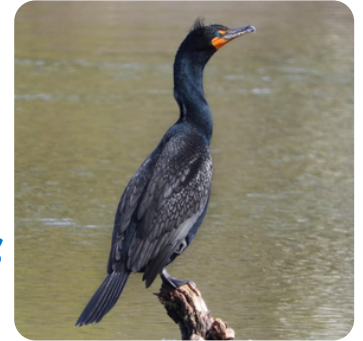
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Anhinga *Anhinga anhinga*

Anhingas are sometimes referred to as the “water turkey” for its turkey-like tail or “snake bird” for its snake-shaped neck. You may spot the Anhinga with its wings outstretched and head held up as they are drying their waterlogged feathers.

The double crest of the Double-crested Cormorant is only visible on adults during breeding season. They are a matte-black fishing bird with yellow-orange facial features. This bird is found in Florida year-round.

Double-crested Cormorant *Phalacrocorax auritus*



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Great Egret *Ardea alba*

The Great Egret is a large heron with all white plumage and a dagger-like yellow bill. A cool fact about Great Egrets is that they are the symbol of the National Audubon Society. You can spot Great Egrets in Florida marshes year-round.

The Little Blue Heron is a common resident of marshes and estuaries in Florida. They are a small heron with a purple head and a dark blue-gray body. Juveniles have a white plumage but still have the two-toned blue and gray bill.

Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea*



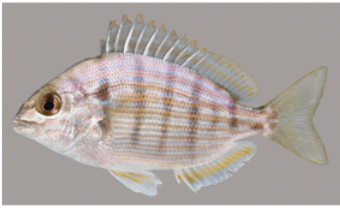
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White Ibis *Eudocimus albus*

White Ibises nest in colonies in trees along the water’s edge. They are almost entirely white except for their black wingtips. This type of ibis also has a strikingly red bill and red legs.



Zachary Randall | Florida Museum

Pinfish *Lagodon rhomboides*

The pinfish is a small marine fish that ranges in size from 4 to 8 inches. They have sharp spines on their dorsal and anal fins with blue and yellow stripes running down its body. You can identify a pinfish by a large dark spot behind its gill cover.

The sheepshead is a marine fish with four to seven dark bars on the side of its body. They have prominent teeth with incisors, molars, and rounded grinders that have been compared to human teeth. They are omnivorous, meaning they feed on small fish, oysters, and clams, as well as plant material.

Sheepshead *Archosargus probatocephalus*



Zachary Randall | Florida Museum



Zachary Randall | Florida Museum

Common Snook *Centropomus undecimalis*

The common snook are a popular game fish in Florida. They have a distinct black lateral line running lengthwise down its body. You can identify a snook by its protruding lower jaw. The common snook can grow over 40 inches long and are common along both Florida coasts.

Florida's native green anole reside in the trees within mangroves, feeding on insects.

Green anoles find themselves in competition with the brown anoles that are an invasive species in Florida. The green anole varies from brown to green but can be differentiated from the brown anole by their white underside.

Green Anole *Anolis carolinensis*



Adam P. Summers | Museum of Vertebrate Zoology



Douglas R. Clifford | Tampa Bay Times

Florida Manatee *Trichechus manatus*

The Florida Manatee is a plant-eating aquatic mammal with a paddle-like tail. Also known as sea cows, manatees can grow up to 12 feet and weigh over 1000 pounds. The main threat to manatees is collisions with boats and habitat loss.



NOAA

Bottlenose Dolphin *Tursiops*

The bottlenose dolphin is a common marine mammal that feeds on small fish, squid, and crustaceans. They can live to at least 40 years old and weigh between 300 and 1400 pounds. Bottlenose dolphins are found in temperate and tropical waters around the world.

Red mangroves are distinguished from other species by their tangled reddish prop roots. Prop roots grow downward from the branches to increase stability of the tree and soak up all available nutrients.

Red Mangrove *Rhizophora* *mangle*



Cathleen Bester | Florida Museum



Cathleen Bester | Florida Museum

Black Mangrove *Avicennia* *germinans*

The black mangrove has long horizontal roots and grows at higher elevations than the red mangrove. They produce white flowers that blossom in spring and early summer.

Make Our Riverwalk Beautiful

