

TIMUCUAN

Ecological & Historic Preserve
National Park Service
U.S. Department of Interior

The 46,000-acre Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve encompasses numerous components of America's most precious possession, its natural and cultural heritage. Nestled between northeast Florida's lower St. Johns and Nassau Rivers, the Timucuan Preserve was created in 1988 to preserve certain wetlands, historic and prehistoric sites in the St. Johns River Valley, Florida.



The management and success of the area involves the assistance and cooperation of a variety of landowners. The National Park Service, State of Florida, City of Jacksonville, Jacksonville Electrical Authority and many private landowners, all share a common goal: To preserve and protect the ecological communities and historical treasures within the bounds of Florida's newest national park area.

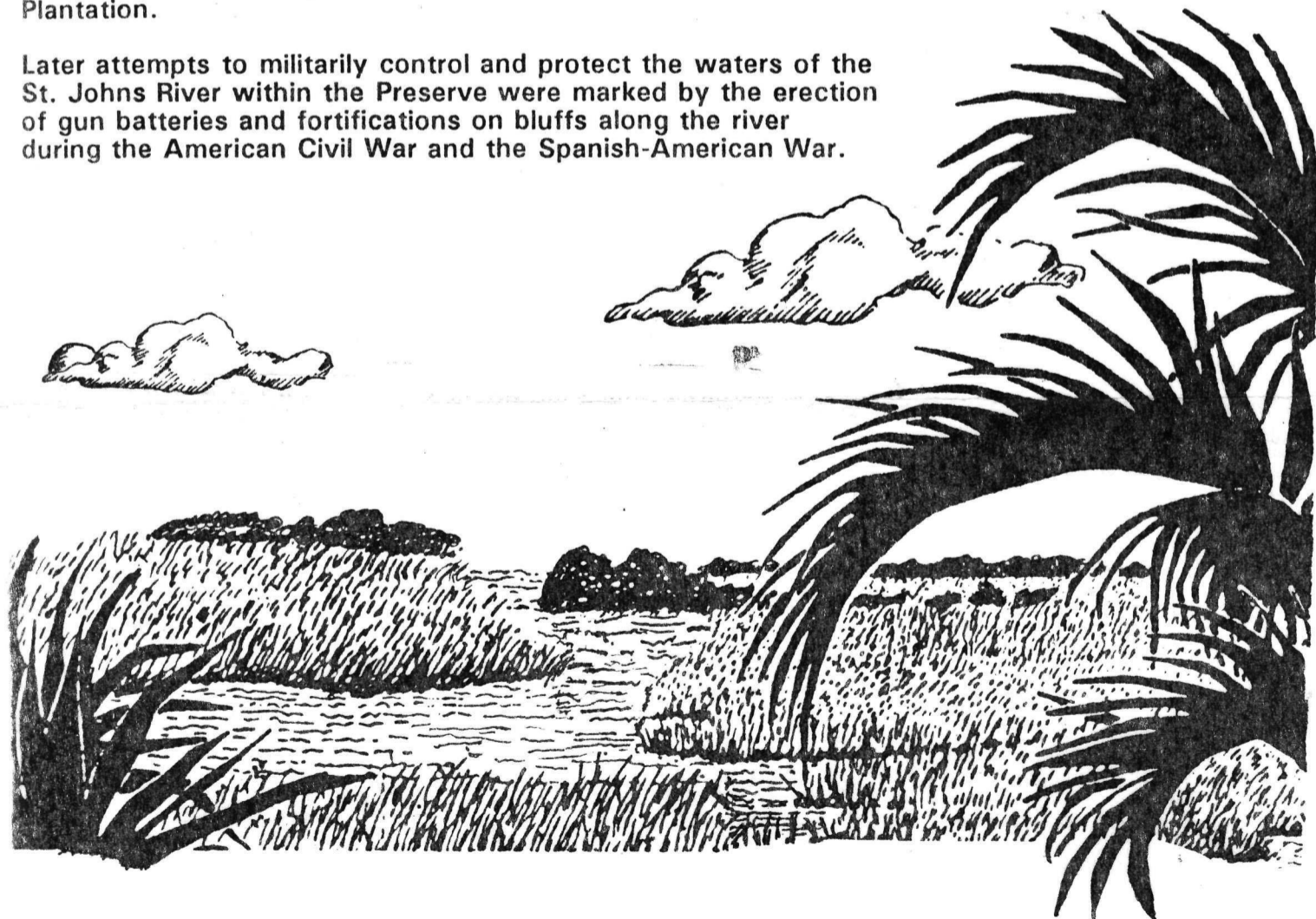
The Timucuan Preserve contains several significant sites representing important chapters in America's history. The earliest evidence represents that segment of North America's native population who gave the Preserve its name. Timucuan Indians occupied northeast Florida for thousands of years before they first met European explorers. Within a century of this fateful meeting their culture had all but vanished. Today, archeological and historical records provide all that is known of these people. A number of Timucuan artifacts are on display in the museum at Fort Caroline National Memorial, headquarters of the Preserve.

Fort Caroline commemorates the earliest European settlement site within the Timucuan Preserve. Here in 1564, the establishment of a short-lived French colony, "la Caroline", began nearly three centuries of European activity. During that time many explorers, missionaries and colonizers left their legacy within the boundaries

of the Preserve. In addition to the French, the mission site of San Juan del Puerto, as well as the defensive fortifications of Dos Hermanas, San Estaban and San Gabriel provide archeological and historical evidence of Spanish activities in the area.

The establishment of St. Johns Town in 1781 and Fort St. George in 1736 mark the presence of British colonists in the area. The southernmost battle of the American Revolution occurred in May, 1777 at Thomas Creek Battlefield in the western portion of the Preserve. Fort George Island, named for King George of England, is also the location of the antebellum Kingsley Plantation.

Later attempts to militarily control and protect the waters of the St. Johns River within the Preserve were marked by the erection of gun batteries and fortifications on bluffs along the river during the American Civil War and the Spanish-American War.



The Timucuan Preserve also encompasses significant natural resources. Among the most important is the Preserve's 30,000 acres of wetlands. This vanishing ecological community is a vital link in the life-support system of our planet. Wetlands provide habitat for many threatened and endangered species, such as bald eagles, sea turtles, manatees, wood storks and many species of waterfowl. Wetlands also store water, help control the effects of erosion and flooding, and serve as a natural filter for water pollution. As the value of this resource becomes even more evident, the importance of cooperative protection measures such as the Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve becomes greater.

Most of the land within the boundaries of the Preserve is privately owned and Federal development is limited. Visitors are reminded to respect private property owners' rights and ask permission before visiting any land not designated as public. The National Park Service currently owns or cooperates in managing several upland and wetland areas. They provide important habitat for birds and other wildlife which live in and around the Preserve. The Theodore Roosevelt Area, Kingsley Plantation, Yellow Bluff Fort and Fort Caroline National Memorial are open for visitation. State park areas on Big Talbot and Fort George Islands allow for additional recreational opportunities. For further information telephone (904) 641-7155 (TDD).



In 1862, Confederate troops from Florida constructed **Yellow Bluff Fort (#1)** to prevent Union gunboats from advancing on Jacksonville during the American Civil War. Utilized alternately by both Confederate and Union forces, this fortification did not see extensive action during the war. Managed by the State of Florida, the Yellow Bluff State Historic Site is open daily during daylight hours. (904) 251-2320



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Fort Caroline National Memorial (#2), headquarters of the Timucuan Preserve, commemorates the 1564-5 French Huguenot colony of "la Caroline." The museum and fort model help interpret the 16th century struggle between European powers for control of the vast "continent" of Florida. Fort Caroline is open daily, 9 am to 5 pm. Guided walks available on weekends. Picnic area, trails, restrooms. (904) 641-7155 (TDD)

The Theodore Roosevelt Area (#3) preserves 600 acres of the once vast wilderness that lined the lower St. Johns River. Hiking trails in this beautiful area wind through several distinct ecological communities and offer the chance to view many varieties of both common and rare plants and animals. The Theodore Roosevelt Area is open daily during daylight hours. Guided walks available on weekends. Picnic area and restrooms. No drinking water is available. (904) 641-7155 (TDD)

Kingsley Plantation (#4) offers visitors a glance back in time to the antebellum South. Two different views of frontier life in 19th century Florida are revealed by the restored plantation buildings and visible remains of 23 of the original 32 slave cabins. Kingsley Plantation is open daily 9 am to 5 pm. Guided tours available Thursday - Monday. Restrooms available. (904) 251-3537

