

STATE FOREST SPOTLIGHT

Etonia Rosemary

A unique feature of this forest is a small green shrub known as Etonia Rosemary, *Conradina etonia*. This fragrant plant is federally endangered and only occurs naturally in Putnam County. Etonia Rosemary is a member of the mint family (Lamiaceae). This plant requires full sun, seems to respond well to soil disturbance, and grows to a height of five feet.

Etonia Rosemary is found in deep white-sand scrub dominated by sand pine and scrubby oaks. Plants of this genus are generally most abundant in natural openings or artificial clearings rather than in the scrub. Flowering occurs from early spring to late fall. The pleasant minty smell is stronger when blooming. This plant can be found 100 yards west of the picnic area on North Cablegate Road.

Love the state forests? So do we!

The Friends of Florida State Forests is a direct-support organization of the Florida Forest Service dedicated to ensuring Florida's state forests are available for future generations to enjoy. Make a difference by joining today to help protect Florida's forests.

Membership dues go to the forests for conservation and improvement projects. To join Friends or for more information, visit:

www.FloridaStateForests.org



Things to Know When Visiting Etoniah Creek State Forest

- The forest is only open during daylight hours except for campers at designated sites.
- Pets are welcome but must remain on a leash.
- Do not create new trails.
- All horses must have proof of current negative Coggins test results.
- Take all garbage when you leave the forest. Containers are not provided.
- Primitive camping requires a State Forest Use Permit. Permits are issued through Etoniah Creek State Forest office, Monday-Friday, 8a.m.-5p.m.
- Removal of plants or animals is prohibited (with the exception of legal game during scheduled hunts).
- Vehicular access is allowed on designated open roads only.
- We encourage all visitors to check the Wildlife Management Area regulations and hunting season dates before visiting the forest at www.MyFWC.com
- Visitors may be required to pay entrance or recreation use fees in designated areas. Annual Day Use Entrance Passes are available at Etoniah Creek State Forest office.

For more information, visit:

www.FDACS.gov/FLStateForests

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Florida Forest Service

Etoniah Creek State Forest



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AND CONSUMER SERVICES



History

Etoniah Creek State Forest was acquired as part of the Etoniah/Cross Florida Greenway Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) project. The forest was purchased using Preservation 2000 bond funds from the CARL program. The first land purchase of 7,146 acres was made in 1995 with an additional 1,408 acres purchased in 1997. Smaller acreages have been purchased since then.

Etoniah Creek State Forest is named after Etonia Creek, a creek which travels 2.5 miles through the eastern portion of the forest. Etonia Creek is named after E'tonia, a town noted on Seminole war era maps near the historic Bellamy Road.

Forestry

The Florida Forest Service's mission is to protect and manage the forest resources of Florida, ensuring that they are available for future generations. The Florida Forest Service manages more than one million acres of state forests for multiple public uses including timber, recreation and wildlife habitat.

Timber management practices on Etoniah Creek State Forest are important in the restoration and maintenance of forest ecosystems and provide a variety of benefits to Floridians. Suitable areas have been planted with longleaf pine seedlings. These plantings are generally done to create a more visually appealing natural forest while also providing a supply of timber products for future generations.

Prescribed fire is an important management tool used on the forest. The prescribed fire program helps to stimulate the recovery of native ground cover and promotes the regeneration of native pines.



Longleaf planted area



Etonia Rosemary



Florida National Scenic Trail overnight shelter

For more information contact:

Etoniah Creek State Forest

390 Holloway Road

Florahome, FL 32140

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www.FDACS.gov/FLStateForests

Natural Resources

Etoniah Creek State Forest is forested with mostly medium-aged sand pine and smaller amounts of longleaf pine on the sandhills, and slash pines and hardwoods in the flatwoods. Upland ecosystems include mesic flatwoods, hammocks, sandhills and scrub. There are also numerous ponds, marshes, cypress domes and bays on the forest and several hundred feet of frontage on George's Lake. All waters contained in or flowing through Etoniah Creek State Forest are Class III waters and are therefore suitable for recreation.

Etonia Creek, along with Rice Creek and Falling Branch drift through scenic bottomland hardwoods lined with steep, sloping banks. Falling Branch flows out of George's Lake which has 491 feet of lake frontage along the state forest's boundary. In addition, Rice Creek flows through one mile of the Manning Tract. A unique species found in most of the forest's waterways is the Black Creek crayfish.

Recreation

Recreational opportunities on the forest include hiking, horseback riding, primitive camping, nature study, photography and hunting. Bicycling is also allowed on the forest roads. There are four designated trailheads. Three trailheads (George's Lake, Lake Blossom, and Longleaf Pine) are for hiking trails while the fourth trailhead on Fieldhouse Road is the starting point for the 12-mile multi-use trail through the forest. Many of the trails are included in the Florida Forest Service's Trailwalker and Trailtrotter programs.

Florida's Rails-to-Trails project converts old railroad line routes into multiple-use trails. One of these trails (Palatka to Lake Butler) crosses the south side of the forest. A portion of the Florida National Scenic Trail also passes through the forest and is easily identified by orange blazes.

Etoniah Creek State Forest is a Wildlife Management Area where hunting is regulated by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Visit myFWC.com to find the dates hunting occurs on the forest.