

OYSTER CREEK

Regional Park



photos by Tina Powell

Oyster Creek Regional Park encompasses over 250 acres of environmental lands, as well as a 50-acre active use area. The environmental lands at Oyster Creek Regional Park are a sanctuary of old growth pines, scrub habitat, and mature pine flatwoods with mangrove fringe along Oyster Creek.

The pine flatwoods are overgrown with a 50-70% canopy of healthy, mature South Florida Slash Pine. In the open areas of the pine flatwoods broomstraw, wiregrass, blueberry, runner oak, St. John's wort, blackroot, pine braken fern, and dwarf wax myrtle are the most common ground cover species. In the sparse, drier parts of the mesic flatwoods, gopher tortoises have been observed, and along the creek perching snags are commonly used by osprey and bald eagles.

There is approximately 18 acres of xeric oak habitat found on the San Casa side site that is being managed and maintained to provide quality habitat for gopher tortoises and scrub jays. The use of prescribed fire, mechanical alteration, design planning and educational signage is utilized in the protection of these specific habitat areas.

The boardwalk crossing Oyster Creek displays the variety of birds that utilize Oyster Creek and the surrounding tidal mangroves. The wetlands and mangroves provide habitat for wading birds species such as the wood stork, white ibis, roseate spoonbill, little blue heron, reddish egret, snowy egret, limpkins, and tricolored heron. The wetlands also help maintain water quality in the streams and bay.