



# Peace River preserve

This 450-acre site is a mixture of scrubby flatwoods, mesic flatwoods, xeric and mesic hammocks, scattered depressional marshes and mangrove swamp. The western and northern portions of the site consist of mesic and scrubby flatwoods, with a few depressional marshes and hydric hammocks. This area supports a vegetative structure that could provide suitable habitat for scrub-jays and other scrub dependent species. The southern and eastern portions of this site transition into high marsh and mangrove communities, that are typically flooded.

Most of the upland areas were historically transitional habitat between mesic flatwoods and scrubby flatwoods, meaning these uplands have characteristics of both these habitat types. The site has been historically fire-suppressed, allowing for an accumulation of fuels. In 1995 a wildfire burned most of the site, resulting in the vegetative structure of most of the upland habitats structurally resembling scrub, but the soils and species diversity still reflect mesic to scrubby flatwoods. The scattered depressional marshes were also improved by the fire; however they continue to be excessively drained by ditches.

The potential exists for the northern portion of this site to provide suitable habitat for scrub jays. The majority of the scrubby flatwoods are in good condition. Prescribed burning and mechanical fuel reduction will improve the habitat quality by reducing the shrub canopy and providing more open areas.

Because of fire suppression, areas not burned by the 1995 wildfire have succeeded into xeric and mesic hammock. Land management treatments in these areas include: thinning the overgrown oaks and implementing a cycle of prescribed burning.

