

WAKULLA COUNTY

Wakulla County is located just 20 miles south of Tallahassee, Florida. Population for the county is estimated at 30,000 and the county seat is Crawfordville. Wakulla County was created in 1843. It may (although this is disputed) be named for the Timucuan Indian word for "spring of water" or "mysterious water." This is in reference to Wakulla County's greatest natural attraction, Wakulla Springs, which is one of the world's largest freshwater springs, both in terms of depth and water flow. In 1974, the water flow was measured at 1.23 billion gallons per day—the greatest recorded flow ever for a single spring. Wakulla County stands out in one statistical category: there is a near-absence of any municipal population in this county of perhaps 30,000. Two tiny municipalities hold maybe 3 percent of the population.

Fishing: The Wakulla, St. Marks and Ochlockonee Rivers are teeming with all types of freshwater fish and in the winter produce many saltwater species looking for warmer waters. Otter Lake and many other small refuge ponds and lakes dot the landscape of Wakulla County and can produce trophy-sized bass, bream and speckled perch.

If saltwater fishing better suits your fancy then you better get ready to get you line stretched. The Wakulla County shoreline goes from the East bank of the Ochlockonee River to a point several miles East of the St. Marks River. Numerous creeks and tributaries flow off the bay and produce fantastic fishing in the fall and winter for trout, red fish and sheepshead and also provide some of the most spectacular scenery of anywhere in the state.

Golfing: Nestled among rolling hills and ancient oak trees is Wildwood Golf Course, an 18 hole, 6,504 yard course that is designed to create unique and challenging golf for amateur and professional players. Located near the beautiful and historic city of Crawfordville, this breathtaking course holds four sets of tees to accommodate and entertain players of all ages and abilities, and our Golf Pro Shop is fully stocked with the finest equipment, apparel and accessories. Here, championship conditions and impeccable services combine to provide a treasured experience that will be enjoyed by all.

Hiking/Biking: **Florida Trail in Wakulla** - Florida's own National Scenic Trail, the Florida Trail, is a 1,400-mile footpath stretching from the northern edge of the Everglades at Big Cypress National Preserve to Pensacola Beach. Attracting hikers from around the country, the Florida Trail runs for nearly 100 miles through the wild lands of Wakulla County—Aucilla Wildlife Management Area, St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge, and the Apalachicola National Forest.

Bird Watching: Wakulla County and the surrounding Big Bend Region abound with birds and unique pristine places to view birds and nature in general. They are blessed with spring fed rivers like the St. Marks, Wakulla and nearby Wacissa. Wakulla Springs State Park, where one of the world's largest springs originates, even has Jungle Cruise boats to get you right next to such beauties as the Purple Gallinule, Prothotary Warbler and Swallow-Tailed Kites. By the time you've been down the river and walked the lovely grounds of the parks stately Inn, fifty species should easily be observed.

Canoeing/Kayaking: Wakulla County is fortunate to be blessed with paddling trails throughout the county, from the Ochlockonee, Sopchoppy and Wakulla Rivers to the St. Marks River, along with plenty of side trips to Shepherds Spring at Spring Creek and East River at the Lighthouse in St. Marks Wildlife Refuge or the many sink holes to visit.

Other recreation: Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park hosts one of the world's largest and deepest freshwater springs. The springs form the headwaters of the Wakulla River. The river runs through old-growth cypress swamp with abundant wildlife. Nature trails in the upland portion of the park traverse over 6,000 acres of park lands. Here is the perfect place to study and photograph purple gallinule, anhinga, osprey and over 180 other species of birds. Waterfowl and warblers traveling the Atlantic flyway are numerous during the winter months.

Guided river boat tours are offered daily to provide a view of how unspoiled, natural Florida may have appeared. Alligators and turtles bask in the sun at arms length, while birds feed on the native vegetation. Glass-bottom boat tours offer the visitor a unique opportunity to observe the underwater habitat.

The St. Marks Light is the second-oldest light station in Florida. It is located on the east side of the mouth of the St. Marks River, on Apalachee Bay.

In the 1820s, the town of St. Marks, Florida was considered an important port of entry. The town served as a port for the prosperous planting region of Middle Florida and some counties of South Georgia. Growers hauled their agricultural products down to the port town in wagons by way of an early road which connected the then territorial capital of Tallahassee to the town of St. Marks. Later, this road would be widened and improved upon by the Tallahassee Railroad Company and would become the state's first railroad.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.wakullacountychamber.com/Index.aspx>

GADSDEN COUNTY: TOWN OF HAVANA

The Town of Havana is located 14 miles north of Tallahassee in beautiful Gadsden County, Florida. In 1902, after the completion of a railroad track for the Georgia, Florida and Alabama Railroad, families who had originally settled in nearby Salem decided to move about a mile east to the present site of Havana. The railroad was very important to the town, as was tobacco. The Town was incorporated on December 5, 1906. The name "Havana" was proposed by a local schoolteacher, James Mathewson. Shade tobacco, used in fine cigars, was the major crop in the area at that time. Over the years, tobacco crops dwindled and now the Town of Havana is well known for its many Antique Shops, Art Galleries, and Specialty Shops. Havana is an excellent place to spend the day shopping or just browsing. The town contains an eclectic assortment of shops and restaurants. Come and enjoy our down-home charm and southern hospitality. Feel free to bring the entire family.

Though less than a half-hour from the hustle and bustle of the state capital, life in Gadsden County is decidedly more laid back. Gadsden County offers the best of both worlds. Cultural and recreational activities abound, as do opportunities for involvement in any of the county's 30+ civic organizations, and more than 100 houses of worship. Or, residents can simply sit back and enjoy the aesthetic beauty and historical charm of Gadsden County. Citizens enjoy an economical lifestyle, with low cost of living. Prices for housing, food, apparel and services have been found to be low in Gadsden County in comparison to other counties in Florida. Plentiful housing is available, and newcomers can take their pick from a wide array of options from contemporary to historical.

Gadsden County offers homes in modern developments and old established neighborhoods, as well as peaceful waterfront living. There is a quality of life in Gadsden County that combines the best of the past with the convenience of the present. As a well-used slogan declares, "Gadsden County is a great place to spend an hour, a day, or a lifetime."

With the Apalachicola National Forest, Lake Seminole, Lake Talquin, Ochlocknee River, and the Apalachicola River, there is ample hunting, fishing, biking and hiking!

For more information, please visit: <http://www.gadsdenfla.com>

JEFFERSON COUNTY

Jefferson County is known as the Keystone County, the only Florida county that reaches from Georgia to the Gulf of Mexico. The county was chartered in 1827 while Florida was a Territory. Ante-bellum and Victorian architecture, giant live oaks forming canopy roads, spring dogwoods and summer crape myrtles make the county a beautiful visit or a delightful home. Jefferson County is located in the Florida panhandle, 25 miles east of Tallahassee. The population of 13,000 is predominately rural. Monticello, the county seat, has a population of about 3,000. Agriculture has been the traditional base of the economy, but the community is in transition. The county serves as a bedroom for Tallahassee, the state's capital. Almost one half of the non-farm workforce commutes outside the county for employment, many to professional, academic, state government, service and trade jobs. In like manner, consumers in Jefferson County depend on Tallahassee and Thomasville, Georgia (20 miles north of Monticello) markets for hospitals and specialized health care, consumer durables, automobiles, sports and entertainment, and specialized retail purchases.

Canoeing: The Department of Environmental Protection lists two county rivers that are part of the Florida Canoe Trails.

Aucilla River: The Aucilla has swift current, shoals and man-made dams that make this a trail for experienced canoeists. The river is not navigable to the Gulf; it flows into sinkholes underground, and re-emerges several times before being joined by the Wacissa at Nutall Rise for its flow to the Gulf of Mexico.

Wacissa River: Sparkling spring waters are part of the charm of this pristine north Florida river. The Wacissa River is a clear, spring-fed stream. Wildlife is abundant along this narrow, fairly swift trail. Warbles can be heard singing in the trees, and wading birds can be seen searching for food.

Bicycling: The Florida Sierra Club in its manual, *Adventuring in Florida*, recommends one of Florida's major bicycle routes -- the 100-mile Canopy Roads. The route loops east in Jefferson County from its western trailheads in Tallahassee. A beguiling route over rolling hill country through stately oaks and wildflowers, the 30-mile section, called the Tallahassee Hills, passes Wacissa Springs and goes north to Wacissa Tower, the site of the old Spanish Missions of San Francisco de Oconi and La Conception de Ayubale. It passes through Monticello with its 27-block historic district with a number of properties in the National Register of Historic Places.

Hunting: Hunting is a popular outdoor sport for Jefferson County residents and visitors. Wild turkey, quail, wild hogs, deer and other game are plentiful. Private plantations are scattered across the northern region of the county. They provide recreational opportunities as well as green space and water recharge sites. The Aucilla Wildlife Management Area and commercial timber lands dominate the southern portion of the county. Wildlife may be observed in the St. Marks wildlife Refuge along the Gulf coast. Contact the Tax Collector's office for hunting and fishing licenses as well as information about seasons, limits and other restrictions especially the Aucilla Wildlife Management

Area Regulations Summary and Area Map. The Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission regulates hunting and fishing within the state. Get a copy of their Hunting Handbook Regulations Summary and their Freshwater Fishing Regulations Summary from the Tax Collector's office, The Florida Marine Patrol enforces marine restrictions along the Gulf coast.

Other recreation: JCKC, the Jefferson County Kennel Club, is located between Monticello and the Georgia state line on US 19. Greyhound racing and parimutuel betting have been a part of the Jefferson County economy and the region's entertainment for 25 years. JCKC offers year-round racing as well as a poker room. Please contact them directly at <http://www.jckcgreyhounds.com/> for hours of operation or further information.

Residents and visitors celebrate the county's traditional agricultural heritage through the annual Watermelon Festival. At one time, farmers in Jefferson County produced and processed over 80% of the watermelon seed sold nationally. The Watermelon Festival is held during the peak of the melon season. Whether you buy or sell craft items, run in 5 kilometer foot races or just cheer for those who do, play in the marching band or sit on the shady side of the street and watch the parade go by, the Festival offers traditional small-town, mid-summer fun.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.co.jefferson.fl.us>

TAYLOR COUNTY

Taylor County is located just 50 miles from Florida's state capitol, Tallahassee with an estimated population of 20,000. The county seat is Perry, Florida. It is adjacent to Jefferson County.

Taylor County is a real Florida adventure -- a serene getaway in the natural beauty of coastal Florida. Whether your adventure is fishing hot spots, summer scalloping, or simply savoring some hospitality and relaxation, you will love Taylor County.

If you are looking for a hometown atmosphere where the pace is slower, hunting and fishing are plentiful, and nature is in abundance, then this community is what you are seeking.

New communities continue to develop changing the face of Taylor County's residential areas. The community has become a destination for residents from all over as an ideal place to live.

Steinhatchee Falls – Steinhatchee River, Park facilities, Picnic Area, Restrooms, Swimming, Pets, Boating and Canoeing. A nature lovers paradise!!

Hagan's Cove – Fishing, Scalloping, Birdwatching Tower, Picnic Tables & Nature Trails. Enjoy discovering the many species of birds and fish while walking the sandbars at Hagan's Cove. A favorite vacation stop of former President Jimmy Carter.

Keaton Beach, Public Beach, Park, Picnic Area, Swimming, Fishing Pier, Public Boat Ramp, No Pets, Travel the "Scenic Coastal Loop" while visiting Keaton Beach!!

Scalloping (Scallop Season Opens July 1) A fun activity for the family. Get out of the heat and swim after scallops. All you need is a snorkel, swim shoes and a mesh bag!!

Econfina River & Horse Trails Horse Back Riding, canoeing, fishing, boating and hiking. Many acres of undeveloped scenic wonders for all to enjoy!!

For more information, contact <http://www.taylorcountychamber.com/index2.ivnu>