

Red Bug Slough Preserve is home to at least 12 rare species of plants and animals

What do we mean by “rare” species?

Protected native plants and animals classified as “Threatened,” “Endangered,” “Species of Special Concern” or “Commercially Exploited” by the State of Florida or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

How do we discover them?

Professional staff, Audubon volunteers, scientists, grad students and others routinely survey the preserve looking for new species.

Rare Plants

Primary threats – over collecting and habitat loss

Giant air plant; giant wild pine – (*Tillandsia utriculata*)

State listed as **Endangered**

Additional Threat: The recent accidental introduction of the Mexican bromeliad weevil.



Cinnamon fern

(Osmunda cinnamomea)



Royal fern

(Osmunda regalis)



Status: Both State listed as **Commercially Exploited**

Rare Animals

Primary threat – Habitat loss and/or habitat degradation

Brown pelican

(Pelecanus occidentalis)



Limpkin

(Aramus guarauna)



Status: Both State listed as **Species of Special Concern**

Little blue heron
(Egretta caerulea)



Roseate spoonbill
(Platalea ajaja)



Snowy egret
(Egretta thula)



Tricolored heron
(Egretta tricolor)



Status: All State listed as **Species of Special Concern**

Least tern

(Sternula antillarum)



Status: State listed as **Threatened**

White ibis

(Eudocymus albus)



Status: State listed as
Species of Special Concern

Wood stork

(Mycteria americana)



Status: State and Federally listed as **Endangered**

How is the preserve managed to protect them?

1. Trails, parking areas, picnic shelters and other amenities have been carefully placed to avoid impacting rare plant habitat.
2. Non-native, invasive plants that compete with rare native plants and degrade wildlife habitat are being selectively treated or removed, as funding allows.
3. Wading bird feeding areas along the west bank of the slough have been enhanced by creating a shallow, shoreline area (littoral shelf) planted with native aquatic plants.

What can you do to help rare species?

1. Use designated trails and public use areas and avoid off-trail travel through native habitat areas.
2. Keep pets on leash so they don't trample sensitive plants or harass rare wildlife, especially wading birds.
3. Remove non-native, invasive plants in your home landscape and replace with native plants that provide food and shelter for wildlife.
4. Volunteer with the Friends of Red Bug Slough Preserve to assist with clean up days, invasive plant removal and habitat restoration activities.