



The Blue Run of Dunnellon Park was acquired in 2008 through a grant from the Florida Communities Trust. The park was purchased to protect the flora and fauna of the Rainbow River corridor and to provide recreational and educational opportunities for local residents and visitors.

Blue Run Park allows access to the Rainbow River for kayaking, tubing and fishing, as well as the Great Florida Birding Trail and the Gum Slough State Canoe Trail. A three-acre spring-fed pond offers opportunities for wildlife observation and fishing.

Three trails include six Florida natural communities in the park including floodplain forest, hydric hammock, upland mixed forest, xeric hammock, sandhill, and spring run stream. There are two trailhead-parking areas, one at CR 484 and the second at San Jose Blvd. Connection to the Withlacoochee Trail Extension is planned for the near future.



Canoe enters river at access point in park

Blue Run Trail follows the Rainbow River, one of the clearest aquatic systems on earth. The Rainbow River is an Aquatic Preserve, an Outstanding Florida Water and a National Natural Landmark. The Rainbow River provides habitat for many species of wildlife including forty species of fish and ten turtle species. Look and listen for the numerous wading birds found along the river and wood ducks in the pond. Otters and raccoons are frequently seen along the shoreline feeding on bivalves or crayfish. The floodplain forest along the river contains an array of wetland plants including the stately bald cypress, bays, red maple, sweet gum, Florida elm and lush emergent vegetation.



Blue Run Trail looking north with pond on right

The Pond Trail enters a mature forest with stands of hickory, slash pine, water oak, live oak, sweet gum and sabal palm. The soil here is fertile and well-drained, supporting the diverse upland mixed forest community. White-tailed deer, gray fox, gray squirrel and turkey are frequently seen. Look up into the forest canopy for black vultures, red-shouldered hawks and noisy pileated woodpeckers. The pond supports several fish species and is home to American alligators that should never be fed and always treated with caution.

The Sandhill Loop Trail enters a natural community of sandy soil and low moisture. The sandhill community is very different from the rich habitats along the river and supports unique plants. Turkey

oak, sand live oak, wiregrass, and prickly pear cactus can tolerate the dry, infertile soils. Look for the burrows of the gopher tortoise, a listed species that thrives here. **Enjoy your walk!**

For Your Safety

Poison ivy is found in the park. Remember "Leaves of three, leave it be". Proper footwear is always recommended as fire ants are found in the park. Feral hogs are sometimes present and should be avoided.

Some of the park rules are given below:

- Fires are prohibited
- Alcoholic beverages are prohibited
- Motorized Vehicles are prohibited beyond the parking area
- Overnight use or camping is prohibited
- Pets must remain on a leash not longer than 8 feet
- Removal or cutting of vegetation is prohibited
- Collecting or harassing wildlife or their eggs is prohibited
- Discharging of any firearm is prohibited
- Trash must be placed in designated containers. Personal trash from off-site is prohibited.
- Damaging or defacing any park facility or sign is prohibited
- Park hours are from sunrise to dusk.



Blue Run Park frontage on Rainbow River

Additional copies of this brochure can be downloaded from the web site

www.RainbowRiverConservation.com

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