



# ANNUAL MEETING

May 19 - 20, 2026  
NACPRO Annual Meeting  
Sarasota, Florida

Sponsored by:

**BENDERSON  
DEVELOPMENT**



**Kaizen**



# 2026 Annual Meeting Schedule

## County Park Tour - Tuesday, May 19

\$75/person

8:45 am - Meet in the hotel lobby to walk over to Nathan Benderson Park for a tour and presentation\*\*

11:45 am - Board the bus at the hotel

6:00 pm - End the tour at Siesta Beach with drinks and appetizers

7:30 pm - Return to hotel

## Board and Membership Meeting - Wednesday, May 20

8:00 to 11:00 am - The first-floor meeting room at the Homewood Suites

Members are welcome to join us. Coffee and tea will be available.

## Classroom Sessions - Wednesday, May 20

\$35/person

1:00 to 5:00 pm – Finish Tower at Nathan Benderson Park, 5th floor (12-minute walk, 0.6 mi, flat)\*\*

Beverages and light snacks will be available.

## Awards Banquet - Wednesday, May 20

\$90/person

6:30 to 10:00 pm – Mote SEA Aquarium (7-minute walk, 0.3 mi, flat)\*\*

A cocktail reception begins at 6:30 pm (cash bar) and dinner begins at 7:30 pm. Following the meal, the NACPRO Awards of Excellence will be presented.

\*\*Please note on the registration form if you require transportation to and from the Finish Tower or Mote Aquarium.

## Registration Deadline: May 15, 2026

Register to attend: <https://nacpro.memberclicks.net/2026-sarasota-form>

## Lodging

### Homewood Suites Sarasota Lakewood Ranch

305 N. Cattleman Road, Sarasota, Florida 34235

This all-suite hotel offers the following amenities: Free hot breakfast, fitness center, outdoor pool, free parking, free Wi-Fi. Full kitchen with full-size refrigerator, coffee maker, microwave and stove.

**Room block:** May 17 to May 21

### Hotel Reservations:

<https://www.hilton.com/en/book/reservation/deeplink/?ctyhocn=SRQUNHW&groupCode=CHWPRC&arrivaldate=2026-05-17&departuredate=2026-05-22&cid=OM,WW,HILTONLINK,EN,DirectLink&fromId=HILTONLINKDIRECT>

**Or call:** (941) 309-3904

**Group Block Name:** National Association of County Park and Recreation Officials

**Group Rate:** \$199 + tax - Single or double occupancy room

Make your reservation by Thursday, April 17, 2026, to get the group rate.

## Optional Excursions Summary– May 18 and 21

Excursion Name	May 18	May 21	Limit	Time	Estimated Cost	Registration	Deadline
Kayaking or Paddling through Mangrove Tunnels	X	X	none	9:00 to 11:30 am	\$45 - \$130	Form	
Golf - Bobby Jones Golf Club	X		4	2:00 pm	\$60/person	Form	
Golf - Bobby Jones Golf Club		X	4	8:30 am	\$60/person	Form	
Golf - Riverwood Golf Club	X	X	2 foursomes per tee time	9:08 & 9:16 am tee times	\$60 + tax /person	Call direct	4/1/2026
Swamp Buggy Eco-Tours	X	X	none	9:00 am to 2:00 pm daily	\$24/person	Call direct	
Birdwatching		X	15	8:30-10:30 am	Free	Form	
Trap and Skeet		X	none	8:00 am	\$42.50 + tax/person	Form	
Peace River Botanical & Sculpture Gardens	X	X	none	9:00 am to 4:00 pm daily	\$21/person	No reservation required	

To sign up for an excursion, note the booking details. Some require you to sign-up in the NACPRO registration form. Others require you to book directly with the tour operator.

All excursions are at your own expense, and you are responsible for transportation to and from the excursion locations. NACPRO can connect participants to coordinate carpooling.



# PARK TOUR

**May 19, 2026  
NACPRO Annual Meeting  
Sarasota, Florida**

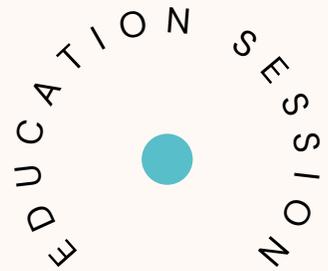
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Located in the heart of Florida's Gulf Coast, our parks and facilities offer a diverse tapestry of recreation and natural experiences for residents and visitors alike. From beautiful beaches and scenic nature trails, to exciting sports complexes and recreational facilities, Sarasota County provides opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts of all ages.

Immerse yourself in the beauty of our well-maintained parks, where community, connection and environmental stewardship thrive.

# NATHAN BENDERSON PARK

## Public-Private Partnership



Session Length: 2 hours (includes tour)

Nathan Benderson Park’s story is a case study in how a community can transform an underutilized property into a nationally recognized sports tourism and recreation destination through a strong public-private partnership (P3). This session will trace the park’s development from early visioning and capital investments to the creation of a purpose-built rowing venue and supporting park amenities, highlighting the key milestones, stakeholders, and decisions that shaped its evolution.

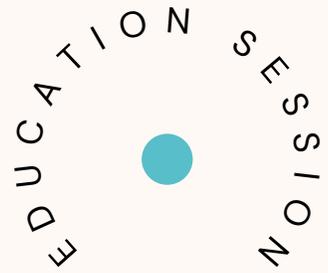
Participants will also learn how the park operates today—including governance structure, roles and responsibilities between the County and the operating partner, revenue streams, maintenance and event delivery, and how the model supports both public access and high-performing event operations.



# NATHAN BENDERSON PARK

## Public-Private Partnership

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### Learning Objectives

1. Learn about the potential benefits of a P3 model for park or facility development projects including accelerated project delivery, improved service levels and diversified funding.
2. Evaluate alternative park operations models and related impacts like increased tourism, economic activity, and expanded recreational opportunities.
3. Tour the facility to see, first hand, the different features and amenities.



# 17th STREET REGIONAL PARK and Circus Hammock Preserve



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## **Park Information:**

The 17th Street Regional Park is part of the North County Athletic Facilities Master Plan. Once complete, the full project will encompass approximately 165 acres. Phase 1 is under construction and will feature athletic facilities and amenities on the eastern side of the site. This includes four artificial turf multipurpose rectangle fields, eight youth softball fields, three adult softball fields and associated facilities. The western side of the regional park currently offers a popular dog park and softball fields. The master plan identifies a community park in this area that will be planned in the future when funding becomes available.

Circus Hammock Preserve is located along the west side of the regional park. It is a 22-acre natural area with unpaved walking trails through hydric hammock habitat. The property was purchased in 2006 through the Environmentally Sensitive Lands Protection Program (ESLPP). Wildlife inhabiting the area include box turtles, woodpeckers, red-shouldered hawks, and barred owls.

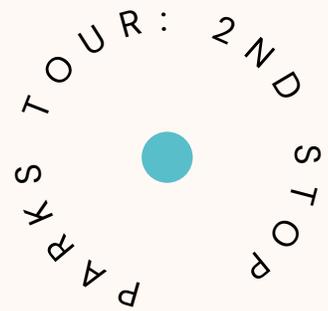
## **Current Amenities/Activities:**

- Dog Park
- Dog-Friendly (Leash Required)
- Restroom
- Softball Field
- Trail - Unpaved

# ED SMITH STADIUM AND PLAYER DEVELOPMENT COMPLEX

## Baltimore Orioles Spring Training

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### **Park Information:**

Sarasota County celebrated its 100-year anniversary as a Major League Baseball Spring Training destination in 2024. Over the years, several teams have called Sarasota home, including the Chicago White Sox, Boston Red Sox, Cincinnati Reds, and the New York Giants (now the San Francisco Giants).

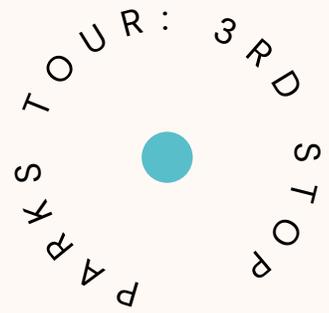
Today, the Atlanta Braves and Baltimore Orioles continue this legacy, hosting Spring Training at CoolToday Park and Ed Smith Stadium, respectively. Ed Smith Stadium opened in 1989 and underwent a complete renovation in 2010. Earlier this year, the Orioles further enhanced the facility with the addition of a Player Development Complex, a high-performance indoor batting and pitching center.

The Baltimore Orioles' new Player Development Complex opened this past February. The 47,700 SF facility is an extension of their existing baseball operations center at Ed Smith Stadium, and features an indoor infield, biomechanics lab, 8-mound bullpen, outdoor agility field, classroom and player lounge. The complex is the first of its kind among MLB Spring Training facilities in Florida, and will allow the team to rehab, train, and assess players on a year-around basis.

# YOUTH ATHLETIC COMPLEX

## BMX Supercross Track

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### **Park Information:**

The Sarasota BMX track is the country's oldest continuously running BMX track. In 2016, the track was upgraded and now includes a 5-meter ramp, an 8-meter ramp and a dual-purpose amateur and supercross track. Sarasota has been a favorite spot for racers to return year after year.

Sarasota BMX is leading the way for the sport's youngest riders called the Striders. With a dedicated Strider-only track, the facility hosts races twice a month, giving toddlers and young children (ages 18 months to 6 years) the chance to join in on the excitement and be part of the action.

### **Youth Athletic Complex Amenities/Activities:**

- Baseball Field
- BMX Track
- Dog-Friendly (Leash Required)
- Football Field
- Pickleball Court (Outdoor/Dedicated)
- Picnic Shelter / Pavilion
- Playground
- Restroom
- Tennis Court

# POMPANO TRAILHEAD AND BABE RUTH PARK

## Access Point to The Legacy Trail

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### **Park Information:**

Opened in 2022, Pompano Trailhead features 12 lighted pickleball courts, basketball court, playground, community building, pavilion, restrooms, and opportunities for permitted mobile vending. It is also an access point to The Legacy Trail, a non-motorized multi-use trail, just under 20 miles in length, which extends from North Port to northern Sarasota. Formerly a railroad corridor, the trail passes through a variety of unique habitats and includes a series of interpretive signs and stop stations.

Neighboring Babe Ruth Park was acquired by Sarasota County in 1964 and is home to the Sarasota Youth Baseball Babe Ruth League for ages 13–15. This 22-acre athletic complex has four baseball fields, a concession stand, a passive play area, picnic facilities, restrooms and parking.

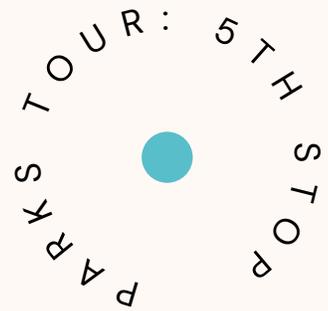
### **Amenities/Activities:**

- Basketball Court (Outdoor)
- Baseball Fields
- Dog-Friendly (Leash Required)
- Grills
- Indoor Rental Space
- Pickleball Court (Outdoor/Dedicated and Dual Use)
- Picnic Shelter / Pavilion
- Playground
- Restroom
- Trail – Paved

# RED BUG SLOUGH PRESERVE

## Natural Habitat in an Urban Area

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### **Park Information:**

Red Bug Slough Preserve was purchased in 2001 through Sarasota County's Environmentally Sensitive Lands Protection Program (ESLPP) and Florida Forever funds from the Florida Communities Trust. The diversity of habitats at the preserve support a variety of wildlife species. Look for animals such as river otters, bobcats, alligators, wood ducks, red-shouldered hawks, butterflies and wading birds. Native flowering plants, which can be found throughout the preserve during all seasons, include partridge pea, beautyberry, moonflower, loblolly bay and pickerelweed.

The preserve offers shaded, accessible nature trails, butterfly gardens, a small playground, benches, picnic shelters and restroom facilities. In addition, there is a fishing pier located on Red Bug Slough. Historically, the slough was a series of isolated marshes that would overflow during the wet season and form a flowing waterway during periods of high water. Today, the slough has been channelized and flows continuously throughout the year.

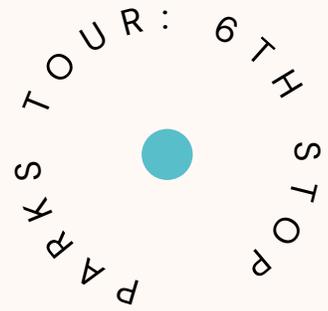
### **Amenities/Activities:**

- Birding
- Dog-Friendly (Leash Required)
- Fishing Pier
- Picnic Shelter / Pavilion
- Playground
- Restroom
- Trail - Paved and Unpaved

# PHILLIPPI ESTATE PARK

## Edson Keith Estate

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### **Park Information:**

Phillippi Estate Park, located on the shores of Phillippi Creek, is a scenic, 60-acre natural area park south of downtown Sarasota and east of Siesta Key. The park has environmental, recreational, historical and archaeological features, including the historic Edson Keith Mansion and Keith Farmhouse, which are both listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

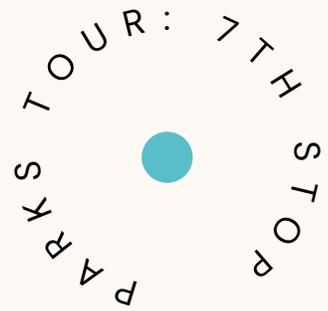
Edson Keith constructed the Phillippi Estate Farmhouse in 1916, where he resided during the mansion's construction. The property's second owner, Mae Hansen Prodie, was doll company proprietor from Chicago. After Prodie's passing, Sarasota County purchased the estate in 1986.

### **Amenities/Activities:**

- Canoe/Kayak Launch
- Dog-Friendly (Leash Required)
- Fishing Pier
- Historical / Cultural Resources
- Indoor Rental Space
- Picnic Shelter / Pavilion
- Playground
- Restroom
- Trail - Paved and Unpaved

# TURTLE BEACH PARK and Turtle Beach Campground

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## **Park Information:**

Turtle Beach Park is located at the south end of Siesta Key with more than a half-mile of beach frontage on the Gulf. The park's boat ramp provides easy access to Blind Pass Lagoon and Little Sarasota Bay, which is part of the Sarasota Bay National Estuary Program. Palmer Point Beach Park and Jim Neville Marine Preserve, a popular area for kayaking and bird watching, are a short boat ride away.

Turtle Beach Campground, Sarasota County's popular beachfront campground, is adjacent to the park and offers 39 full hook-up RV and tent sites.

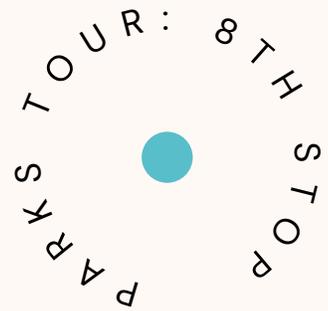
## **Amenities:**

- Beach access
- Birding/wildlife viewing
- Boat ramp
- Canoe/kayak launch
- Fishing pier/ fishing
- Grill
- Pavilion / Picnic Shelters
- Playground
- Restrooms
- Shelling
- Swimming

# SIESTA BEACH

## Number 1 Beach in USA

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### **Park Information:**

Siesta Beach continues to rank highly on the “Top Beach” lists curated by worldwide travelers and renowned coastal experts. Its nearly 100% quartz-crystal sand has been dubbed the “world’s finest, whitest sand.” The 2016 \$20 million-dollar renovation added a new playground, two concession stands, more restrooms, a half-mile long esplanade, many shelters and pavilions, and renovated the existing Sarasota School of Architecture pavilion. With 950 parking spaces, this venue provides the most parking for any public beach in Sarasota County.

### **Amenities/Activities:**

- Beach access mat and beach wheelchairs
- Birding
- Food and beach sundries concession
- Grills
- Pickleball and tennis courts
- Playground
- Restrooms
- Sand volleyball courts
- Scenic overlooks
- Shelters/pavilions
- Swimming
- Trail – paved



# EDUCATION SESSIONS

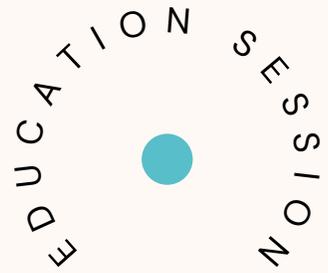
**May 20, 2026**  
**NACPRO Annual Meeting**  
**Sarasota, Florida**

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Held on the 5th floor of the  
Finish Tower at  
Nathan Benderson Park

# BABY BOOMERS TO ZOOMERS:

## The New Digital Age



Session Length: 60 minutes

Parks and recreation agencies are navigating one of the most complex workforce landscapes in history, often employing up to five generations at once. From communication styles to technology comfort and AI adoption, generational differences shape everything from staff morale to operational efficiency.

This session offers practical, people-first strategies for bridging those gaps while introducing modern digital tools in ways that build trust, not resistance. We'll explore how technology, and AI-powered tools, can unite multigenerational teams rather than divide them, meeting each generation where they are while moving the whole organization forward.

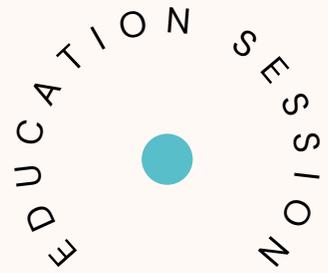
Attendees will leave with leadership frameworks to improve collaboration, recruitment, retention, and resident engagement, all without losing the human-centered mission that defines parks and recreation. Whether you're managing a seasoned staff member who prefers a phone call or a Gen Z hire who regularly interacts with a chatbot, this session will equip you to lead with confidence in the new digital age.



# BABY BOOMERS TO ZOOMERS:

## The New Digital Age

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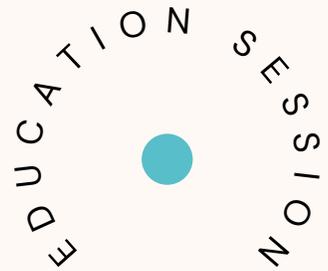


### Learning Objectives

1. Analyze how generational differences influence communication, workplace expectations, and technology adoption within parks and recreation departments.
2. Apply inclusive leadership and change management strategies that increase buy-in when implementing new systems, including AI and other digital tools.
3. Design actionable recruitment, onboarding, and retention approaches that resonate with a multigenerational workforce and evolving community expectations.



# LAND ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS Sarasota and Charlotte Counties



Session Length: 60 minutes

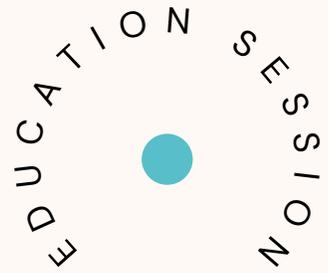
This session explores how Sarasota and Charlotte Counties have successfully implemented voter-supported land acquisition programs to protect environmentally sensitive lands while expanding public access to parks and natural areas. Participants will learn how both counties structured referenda and dedicated funding mechanisms to acquire and manage environmentally sensitive lands. The session will highlight how site selection, citizen oversight committees, and partnerships with conservation organizations help guide acquisition efforts and ensure transparency. The outcomes from both counties demonstrate how acquisition and protection of these lands ensures wildlife and habitat conservation, water quality and flood protection, outdoor recreation opportunities, and that these natural areas will be there for future generations. Attendees will gain practical insights into building environmentally sensitive land acquisition programs that protect natural resources while supporting community priorities and long-term resilience.



# LAND ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

## Sarasota and Charlotte Counties

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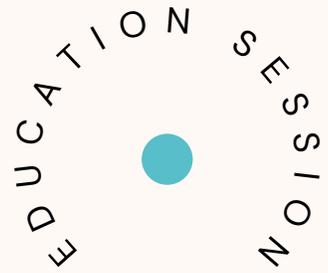
### Learning Objectives

1. Learn about the history of the voter-supported land acquisition programs in Sarasota and Charlotte Counties.
2. Identify key components of successful local land acquisition programs, including voter-approved funding mechanisms, bond financing, and dedicated tax revenues.
3. Learn about successful acquisition case studies of the programs, while also learning about possible roadblocks, and do's and don'ts.
4. Identify ways to implement a similar program by becoming familiar with funding options, resources, partners and tools for land acquisition and management.



# CAPRA ACCREDITATION: Tools, Tips and Teamwork

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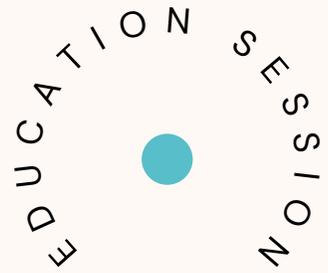
Session Length: 60 minutes

This session provides a comprehensive overview of the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) accreditation process, covering requirements, timelines, and best practices. Learn how to efficiently use document management tools, promote staff engagement, and create a collaborative environment. Gain actionable tips for overcoming challenges and leveraging organizational strengths to achieve successful accreditation.



# CAPRA ACCREDITATION: Tools, Tips and Teamwork

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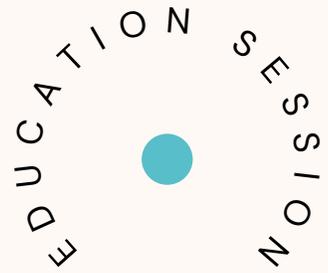


## Learning Objectives:

1. Gain an overview of the CAPRA accreditation framework, including requirements, timelines, and best practices.
2. Learn to use document management tools to organize, track, and submit materials efficiently.
3. Explore strategies to promote staff engagement, creating a collaborative environment to support CAPRA goals.



# BUSINESS IN PARKS: Balancing Mission, Revenue and Public Trust



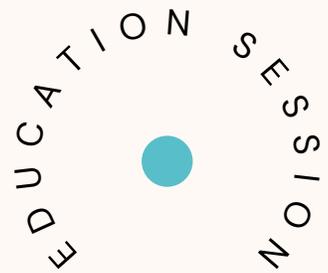
Session Length: 60 minutes

This session highlights how Sarasota County Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources has developed a comprehensive “Business in Parks” model to generate sustainable revenue while protecting public access and natural resources. It explores the structure and management of initiatives such as commercial recreation permits, mobile vending, concessions, the Phillippi Farmhouse Market, and campground operations at Turtle Beach Campground and Snook Haven Campground. Attendees will learn about the legal foundations, operational oversight, funding strategies, and real-world challenges behind these programs, gaining practical tools to structure commercial use policies, support small businesses, and balance entrepreneurship with park stewardship.



# BUSINESS IN PARKS: Balancing Mission, Revenue and Public Trust

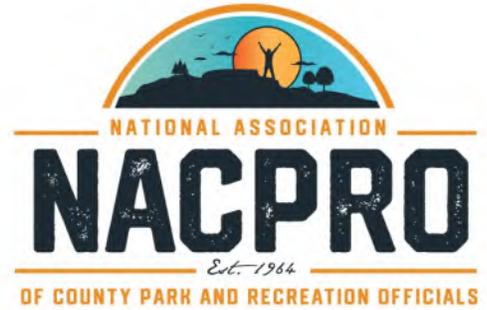
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## Learning Objectives

1. Develop or refine commercial use policies that balance revenue generation, small business support, and protection of park resources.
2. Design effective fee and permit systems that are practical to administer and aligned with operational realities.
3. Identify and evaluate park sites suited for commercial services, applying real-world lessons to enhance visitor experience while maintaining park integrity.





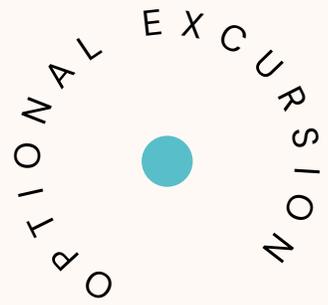
# OPTIONAL EXCURSIONS

May 18 & 21, 2026  
NACPRO Annual Meeting  
Sarasota, Florida

Enhance your conference experience by participating in optional excursions offered in conjunction with the Annual Meeting program. These experiences provide unique opportunities to explore, connect, and engage beyond the conference sessions.

Space is limited. Participants are responsible for arranging their own transportation to and from the excursion locations and paying participation fees.

# KAYAKING OR PADDLING Through Mangrove Tunnels



Offered on Monday, May 18 and Thursday, May 21

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## Excursion Location:

Ted Sperling Nature Park  
190 Taft Dr., Sarasota / Lido Key, FL 34236

**Time:** 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

## Estimated Cost:

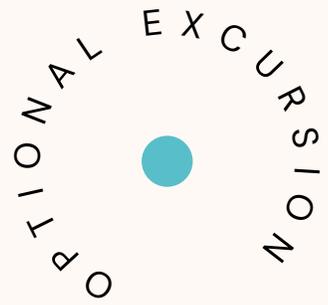
	Two-hour Guided Tour (Recommended)	Three-hour Rental (Self-guided)
Single Kayak	\$65	\$45
Tandem (Double) Kayak	\$130	\$85

## Other Information:

- Indicate your intent to sign up for this excursion in the conference registration form.
- No prior experience necessary.
- Guided tours will provide more structure and education about Sarasota and Sarasota Bay while the self-guided rental is best for those who would like to explore on their own.
- Paddleboard rentals are also available, if preferred.
- Wearing sun-protective clothing and sunscreen is strongly recommended.

# GOLFING at Bobby Jones Golf Club

Offered on Monday, May 18 and Thursday, May 21



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## Excursion Location:

Bobby Jones Golf Club  
1000 Circus Blvd., Sarasota, FL 34232

**Time:** Monday, May 18: 2:00 p.m. tee time  
Thursday, May 21: 8:30 a.m. tee time

**Cost:** \$60 per golfer  
Golf cart and range balls included

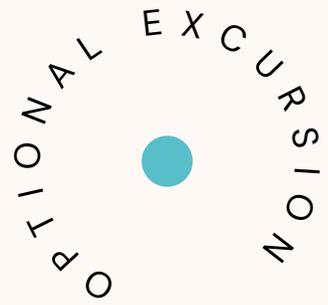
## Other Information:

- Indicate your intent to sign up for this excursion in the conference registration form.
- Four golfers per tee time.
- Bobby Jones Golf Club is public, with an 18-hole and 9-hole course.
- Rental clubs are available for \$45
  - Mens and womens
  - Right-handed and left-handed
- For more information about the course, visit [bobbyjonesgolfclub.com](http://bobbyjonesgolfclub.com)

# GOLFING at Riverwood Golf Club

Offered on Monday, May 18 and Thursday, May 21

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## Excursion Location:

4100 Riverwood Dr.  
Port Charlotte, FL 33953

**Time:** 9:08 a.m. and 9:16 a.m. tee times

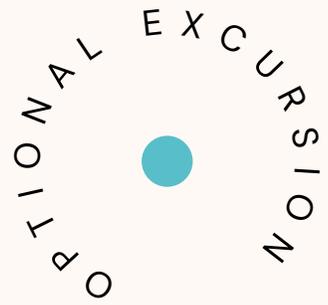
**Cost:** \$60+tax per golfer  
Cart fee and practice range included

## Other Information:

- Call 941-764-6661 to make your reservation.  
Mention NACPRO Conference and specify your date and tee time.
- **Offer expires April 1, 2026.**
- Two foursomes per tee time.
- Nationally recognized 18-hole championship golf course and recognized as the "Best Place to Play" in Charlotte County and all of Southwest Florida.
- For more information, visit: [www.riverwoodgc.com](http://www.riverwoodgc.com)

# SWAMP BUGGY ECO-TOURS on Babcock Ranch

Offered on Monday, May 18 and Thursday, May 21



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## Excursion Location:

Babcock Ranch  
8502 FL-31  
Punta Gorda, FL 33982

**Tour Times:** First tour is at 9:00 a.m. and the last tour is at 2:00 p.m. Tours are approximately 90 minutes.

**Cost:** \$24 per person

## Other Information:

- To book your Swamp Buggy Eco-Tour click link below:  
[Swamp Buggy Eco-Tour | Babcock Ranch](#)
- “Old Florida” eco-tour through a working cattle ranch and four ecosystems, including the Telegraph Cypress Swamp.
- Wildlife sightings can include alligators, deer, birds, wild hogs, turkeys, and the historic Cracker Cattle.
- Expert guides are knowledgeable and passionate about the history, wildlife, and various ecosystems you will see and will enhance your experience with their commentaries.

# BIRDWATCHING

## with Sarasota Audubon Society

Offered on Thursday, May 21

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### **Excursion Location:**

Celery Fields Regional Stormwater Facility  
6799 Palmer Blvd., Sarasota, FL 34240

**Time:** 8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

**Cost:** Free

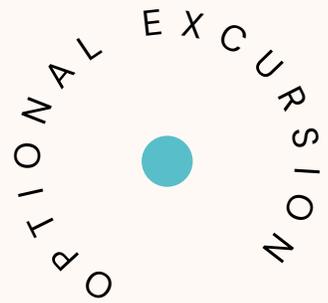
### **Other Information:**

- Indicate your intent to sign up for this excursion in the conference registration form.
- Enjoy a short presentation on the history and management of the Celery Fields Regional Stormwater Facility followed by a guided bird walk.
- Celery Fields is on the Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail and is a premier birding hotspot.
- Space is limited to 15 participants.
- Participants must be able to walk at least two miles across uneven surfaces for up to two hours in all types of weather conditions.
- Wearing closed-toe shoes, sun-protective clothing and sunscreen is strongly recommended.
- Binoculars can be provided upon request.

# TRAP AND SKEET at the Knight Trail Park Shooting Range

Offered on Thursday, May 21

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## Excursion Location:

Knight Trail Park

Sarasota Trap, Skeet and Sporting Clays Club

7730 Target Trl., Nokomis, FL 34275

**Time:** Registration: 8:00 a.m.

Start: 9:00 a.m.

**Estimated Cost:** \$42.50+tax per person

Includes:

- 50 Targets
- 2 Boxes Ammo
- Cart Rental
- Gun Rental

## Other Information:

- Indicate your intent to sign up for this excursion in the conference registration form.
- For more information, visit [sarasotatrapskeetandclays.com](http://sarasotatrapskeetandclays.com)

# PEACE RIVER BOTANICAL & SCULPTURE GARDENS



Available on Monday, May 18 and Thursday, May 21

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## **Excursion Location:**

5827 Riverside Dr.  
Punta Gorda, FL 33982

**Tour Times:** 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

**Cost:** \$21 per person

## **Other Information:**

- No reservation required.
- Recently named the #1 "Hidden Gem" in all America by Tripadvisor and a major attraction in Punta Gorda/Englewood Beach.
- Florida's natural landscape with more than 4500 plants, trees, and bamboos to become one of the largest botanical and sculpture gardens in Florida.
- Enjoy a shady walk down mangrove paths to the Peace River or cross the bridge to the island for a picturesque view of the wetlands around Hunter's Creek.
- For more information, visit:  
<https://www.peacrivergardens.org/>