

Part VI. The Santa Fe River

The Santa Fe River (Spanish for "Holy Faith") begins at Santa Fe Lake and Little Santa Fe Lake in NE Alachua County. Flowing for about 50 miles, it serves as the northern boundary for Alachua and Gilchrist Counties. Hernando DeSoto explored the river in 1539. According to A Canoeing and Kayaking Guide to the Streams of Florida (Carter & Pearce, 1993, p. 134), the river is too shallow, obstructed, or swampy for good paddling until it crosses State Road 241. From there one can paddle about 5 miles to O'Leno State Park.

Within the state park, the river goes underground to pass through the Cody Scarp (or escarpment), an ancient coast line that divides the Gulf Coast Lowlands from what is optimistically called Florida's "Northern Highlands" (SRWMD, n.d.). After flowing underground for three miles, the river rises again just north of High Springs. Under new definitions, this river rise is considered a spring, adding another substantial first magnitude spring to the currently recognized total of 33. Alapaha Rise and Holton Creek Rise are similar hydrologic occurrences.

From the River Rise to its conjunction with the Suwannee River, the Santa Fe may be paddled by even the novice canoer. Its width averages about 100 feet, and there are no major obstructions or shoals. In times of low water, rocks, fallen trees, and aquatic vegetation can pose a hazard to boat motors. The current is mild except in times of flood, and there are about a dozen public or fee-for-use boat ramps on the north and south banks. Water in the river can vary from clear to dark, but is generally clearer in the lower stretches due to the influx of spring water. The river water is dark in times of flood and after heavy rains.

Most boaters enter the river at the U.S. 41/441, U.S. 27, or SR 47 bridges or at Rum Island. The stretch from the U.S. 41/441 bridge to the Suwannee River is about 28 miles, with the ten-mile stretch from U.S. 27 to SR 47 being the most popular. In general, the river passes through forested lowland, with occasional floodplains and swampy areas. Banks are moderate and rise to about 15 feet in times of normal river flows. There are public parks on both sides of the river, and major campgrounds at Blue and Ginnie Springs in the upper section and at Sandy Point and Elly Ray's in the lower section.

Below the State Road 47 bridge, there is more development, and a couple of springs are in the back yards of houses along the river. Even so, there are still extended stretches that are in a natural state. Below Wilson Springs, there are a couple of dramatic bends in the river that include some choppy water and even shoals and rapids during times of low water. A major marker in the lower part of the Santa Fe is the confluence with the Ichetucknee River. Under normal conditions, there is a dramatic difference in the clarity of the two rivers, with the Ichetucknee being much clearer. During the historic drought of 1998-2001, the Santa Fe was much clearer than usual and sometimes nearly as transparent as the Ichetucknee.

Springs, siphons, and abundant wildlife are defining features of the Santa Fe. Sixty springs have been classified and measured below Worthington Springs, and another 8 named springs feed the Santa Fe from the Ichetucknee River. The springs range dramatically in size, appearance, flow, and potential for swimming and diving. In this short stretch, however, lie 8 first-magnitude, and 25 second-magnitude springs (Hornsby & Ceryak, 1998).

Most of the larger springs are clear and accessible to the canoer, snorkeler, or wader. Among the many that may be dived, the Devil's Complex Cave System at Ginnie Springs, a private campground, is an internationally known dive mecca. Fissures and shafts are common spring-vent types. The majority of the springs lie alongside the river or just off the river at the head of short runs. Some, including first magnitude springs, are in the river and more difficult to spot. A few others lie well off the river in runs that may or may not be paddled because of obstructions, shallow water, or because they are on private property. Water in these springs averages about 72 degrees year round.

Because of the unique combination of springs, interconnected springs, and siphons along the Santa Fe, it is likely that at least some of the water in the river sinks and rises several times in the course of its run to the Suwannee River. For the spring aficionado, the Santa Fe is superceded only by the Suwannee. However, springs are more clustered along the Santa Fe, and the river is more attractive and manageable for visitors in canoes or small boats.

Poe Springs County Park, Ginnie Springs, and Blue Springs all require a fee (currently \$4-\$10 per person) to make landfall. At Blue Springs, a fence actually blocks boat access to the main spring and some of the smaller springs on the property. That one spring excepted, however, one may enter spring runs and the springs themselves from the river as long as no landfall is made. At Lily Springs, polite visitors are welcomed by Ed the Hermit, who lives in a wood and palm-frond hut and is caretaker of the property surrounding the spring. Ed, a fixture at the spring since the mid-1980s, wears only a loincloth, and the owners of nearby Pickard Spring often wear less than that. There are canoe livery companies in High Springs to cater to people who wish to canoe the river. Outfitters include Adventure Outpost, phone (386) 454-0611, web site: <http://www.adventureoutpost.net>.

Most of the Florida's major siphons also lie along the Santa Fe. Like springs in reverse, siphons are locations where quantities of water flow directly from the surface back underground into the aquifer. The six identified siphons along the Santa Fe drain an estimated total of 337 million gallons of water each day (Hornsby & Ceryak, 1998). With siphon names like Big Awesome Suck and Little Awesome Suck, the siphons range from undramatic pools with gentle swirls to powerful—even dangerous—vortexes that drain as dramatically as a flushing toilet that is 15 feet across.

For precise GPS coordinates of the springs and siphons on the Santa Fe, obtain a copy of Springs of the Suwannee River Basin in Florida, which is published by the Suwannee River Water Management District, Department of Water Resources, 9225 County Road 49, Live Oak, FL 386-361-1001 or toll-free (in Florida) 800-226-1066.

Much of the land along the river is managed and protected by the Suwannee River Water Management District. Because of this protection, canoers will see an abundance of wildlife, particular in the upper sections. Turtles of all stripes bask on logs and often allow very close approach. All major types of heron and egret will be seen on most days, and owls, hawks, osprey, limkin, and ibis are also common. Alligators are less frequent, but have been seen by the authors even in areas that are used heavily for recreation. Otters, feral hogs, deer, beavers, raccoons, and armadillos may also be spotted in quiet spots, especially in the mornings and evenings.

In all, the Santa Fe is perhaps the best little stretch in the world for seeing springs. One can see over 30 springs in a one-day paddle.

On a related note, recent research had shed additional light on the underground flow of the Santa Fe River. Heck et al., reported on exploration of nearly 50,000 feet of previously unexplored cave passages that began in 1995. The outflow at the Santa Fe River rise is significantly larger than the amount that goes underground where the river sinks at O'Leno State Park. Divers and researchers found a series of sinkholes (11 so far) that feed the sub-surface river. The divers also removed an extensive amount of garbage from the sinkholes, including a Harley Davidson motorcycle (in Abstracts of . . . 2003, pp. 22-23).

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 Hornsby Spring
 COL428981
 Darby
 Columbia

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An Essay on the Santa Fe River Between U.S. 27 and S.R. 47

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 Allen Spring (or COL428982)
 Poe Springs
 COL930971
 Lily Springs
 COL101971
 Pickard Spring
 Jonathan Spring (or COL101972)
 COL101974 (at Rum Island)
 COL101975 (at Rum Island)
 Rum Island Spring
 GIL101971
 Naked Spring
 Johnson Spring
 Blue Spring
 Little Blue Spring
 Little Devil Spring
 Devil's Eye Spring
 Devil's Ear Spring
 July Spring
 Ginnie Spring
 Dogwood Spring
 Twin Spring
 Sawdust Spring
 Deer Spring
 Unnamed Spring
 COL1012972
 COL1012971
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 Little Awesome Siphon
 Siphon Creek Rise Spring (GIL1012973)
 Myrtle's Fissure
 GIL1012971
 GIL1012972
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 GIL928972
 COL928971
 Wilson Springs
 GIL99974
 Unnamed Spring
 Unnamed Possible Spring
 COL917971
 Sunbeam Spring
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 GIL99972
 GIL99971
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 GIL729972 (or GIL729973)
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 SUW107971
 GIL107971
 GIL729971

A. Santa Fe River, North of High Springs

Worthington Spring
 Union County

Summary of Features

Scale - 4th magnitude
 Scenery - fair
 How Pristine? - overgrown concrete structure around spring
 Swimming - no
 Protection - none
 Crowds - none
 Access - very good
 Facilities - none
 Safety - good
 Scuba - no
 Cost - free

Directions

From the junction of State Roads 121 and 18 in the town of Worthington Springs, drive south about 0.4 miles and turn right onto poorly maintained dirt road that leads down to the river before the bridge over the Santa Fe. Park at the bottom and look to the right for the remnants of the enclosure around the spring.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring is in a low and damp wooded area near the north bank of the river. The area is subject to flooding when the Santa Fe River is high. The spring is surrounded by the crumbling remains of a concrete pool enclosure that rises up to 20 feet from the ground. The pool was once filled with water from the spring that was enclosed by an adjacent 12-foot-square concrete wall at the east end of the pool. The enclosure is overgrown with foliage. The pool walls are crumbling, and the nearly imperceptible flow from the spring piddles through a hole in the wall into the river at the east end.

Use/Access

- There is no current use of the pool, which was already long-abandoned when visited by Rosenau et al. (1977, p. 391) in 1972. The ruin of the concrete swimming enclosure is all that remains of a hotel, recreation hall, and bathhouse.
- A marker at the turnoff from SR 121 has information and photographs of the old pool when the spring was the social centerpiece of the town that carries its name.

Personal Impressions

The spring is vaguely reminiscent of an overgrown Mayan ruin. There appear to be no plans to either restore the pool or tear down the crumbling structure that once enclosed it. It is not worth visiting for its physical beauty.

Nearby Springs

Santa Fe River Rise Spring

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Santa Fe River Rise Spring Columbia County

Summary of Features

Scale - 1st magnitude
 Scenery - very good
 How Pristine? - trails around spring, fairly pristine
 Swimming - fair
 Protection - excellent
 Crowds - none to small
 Access - can be difficult by water
 Facilities - none
 Safety - good
 Scuba - yes
 Cost - free

Directions

By land: Go north from High Springs on U.S. 27 about three miles. Cross the Santa Fe River and pass turnout to boat ramp. Look for entrance to River Rise State Preserve on the right in the next quarter mile. Use map in State Preserve to walk to river rise.

By water: From downtown High Springs drive about two miles north on U.S. 41/441 to bridge over the Santa Fe. The boat ramp to the river is on the NW side of the bridge. Put in and go two miles to river rise.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The Santa Fe River rises and forms a horseshoe approximately 200 feet in diameter. The large upwelling is visible in wide slicks on the surface. The water is tannin colored, and the depth of the vent cannot be determined visually. According to Hornsby & Ceryak (1998, p. 27), the pool is 61 feet deep. According to Scott et al., water flows up from beneath a limestone ledge at the NE side of the pool (2002, p. 51). Land around the spring is hardwood forest and contains several trails and some small cleared areas. Little aquatic vegetation is visible in the pool, except for duckweed. The run below the pool was thick with vegetation, making passage by canoe challenging.

Use/Access

The river rise may be accessed by either land or water, although the authors have not been to the site from the land. People appear to picnic on the banks above the river. The site has few visitors.

Local Springiana

The land between where the river sinks and rises is a natural bridge that has been used for millennia by animals and people. Because the area is in state hands, hunting for and removing artifacts is prohibited.

Personal Impressions

The authors, lacking any scientific standing or knowledge, do not consider this river upwelling to be a "true" spring, for its water is not clear and has not been filtered like that of other springs.

Nearby Springs

- Worthington Spring
- Treehouse Spring
- Hornsby Spring
- Darby Spring
- Columbia Spring
- COL428981

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Treehouse Spring Alachua County

Summary of Features

Scale - 1st magnitude
 Scenery - very good
 How Pristine? - completely pristine
 Swimming - fair
 Protection - excellent
 Crowds - none
 Access - good, boat only
 Facilities - none
 Safety - good
 Scuba - yes
 Cost - free

Directions

From downtown High Springs drive about two miles north on U.S. 41/441 to bridge over the Santa Fe. The boat ramp to the river is on the NW side of the bridge. Put in and go upriver about 2/3 mile. Look for a circular cove on the right, created by the spring.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The large first-magnitude spring, with an estimated flow of nearly 260 MGD, was not formally classified as a spring or measured until 1997 by Hornsby & Ceryak (1998, p. 20). It is, however, one of Florida's largest individual springs. Water flows up in wide slicks from a depth measured at 44 feet. The spring pool is oval and was about 150 by 200 feet in diameter on date of visit (April 2000), a time of drought. On this date, water in the Santa Fe River was quite clear, but the water in the spring was not clear enough to see the bottom or any limestone formations. The authors speculated the flow might be an additional portion of the Santa Fe River Rise a short distance upriver. The land surrounding the spring sloped upward about eight feet into low rolling hills of hardwood and floodplain forest.

Use/Access

- No apparent use. The water did not invite swimming. The Hornsby Spring run is 150-200 yards inland from the back of the spring run and easy to spot due to its long low natural bank.
- The land around the spring was not posted; according to Scott et al., the land around the spring is private property (2002, p. 54), although it appears to be in the river floodplain.

Personal Impressions

One of Florida's largest, this spring was not named until 2001.

Nearby Springs

- Santa Fe River Rise
- COL428981
- Hornsby Spring
- Darby Spring
- Columbia Spring

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Hornsby Spring

Alachua County

Summary of Features

Scale - 1st magnitude
 Scenery - fine
 How Pristine? - boardwalk and swim/recreation area around spring, float in water, land above spring is cleared and park- or campus-like
 Swimming - excellent
 Protection - excellent
 Crowds - can be heavy
 Access - private, access must be arranged
 Facilities - outstanding
 Safety - excellent
 Scuba - only with special permission
 Cost - varies

Directions

From downtown High Springs, drive about 1 mile on U.S. 41/441 to entrance to (and sign for) Camp Kulaqua on the right.

Follow dirt road about 1.5 miles to Camp Kulaqua grounds and the spring. There are signs in the Camp.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring pool is about 150 feet wide and 150 feet long before narrowing into a run that flows about 0.8 mile to join the Santa Fe River a short distance above the U.S. 41/441 bridge. The water is clear and blue and flows from under a long (50 feet) limestone ledge. The ledge is 15-20 feet deep, and a lifeguard at the spring said the bottom was more than 40 feet deep. The spring run can be paddled in times of normal to high water on the river, but can also be obstructed. The run flows through a bottom-land floodplain area with hardwoods. There are small springs in the run. Land above the spring rises perhaps 18 feet in a park-like setting with large hardwood trees and buildings associated with Camp Kulaqua. There are boardwalks and swimming facilities (dive board, lifeguard chair, large flotation device) at and in the spring.

Use/Access

- The spring is part of Camp Kulaqua, a church-owned facility used for summer camps, retreats, meetings, and conferences. It has full lodging, dining, and worship facilities as well as stables, trails, swimming, a zoo, and a small nature museum with displays and small animals in tanks. Visitors to the spring may be surprised to hear the roar of lions.
- The float in the pool is like that in Camp Indian Springs in Wakulla County - a long inflatable tube. Bathers jump onto the tube, crawl out to the end, and are then catapulted into the water by the next person who jumps onto the tube.
- The swim area has a lifeguard.

Personal Impressions

The spring is lovely, well maintained, and in a beautiful setting designed to restore the mind, body, and soul.

Local Springiana

- Bones from large Pleistocene-era animals have been found in the spring, including a mastodon bone imbedded with the head of a spear and dated to 12,000 years ago (Adventure Outpost, n.d.).
- The levels of pollutants and nutrients in the spring have risen significantly since the site was tested in 1972 (Scott et al., 2002, p. 25).

Nearby Springs

- Darby Spring
- Columbia Spring
- COL428981
- Treehouse Spring
- Santa Fe River Rise Spring

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Contact Information

Camp Kulaqua
High Springs, Fla.
386-454-1351

COL428981 Spring Columbia County

Summary of Features

Scale - 3rd magnitude to dry
Scenery - very good
How Pristine? - very pristine
Swimming - no
Protection - private
Crowds - none
Access - private
Scuba - no

Directions

From downtown High Springs, drive about two miles north on U.S. 41/441 to bridge over the Santa Fe. The boat ramp to the river is on the NW side of the bridge. Put in and go upriver about 1/2 mile. Look for a small (3-5 feet) opening in the bank on the left that is the mouth of the spring.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring lies just behind the 4-6 foot bank of the Santa Fe River. On date of visit (April 2000), a time of drought, the

spring contained water but was not flowing. The circular pool was 45 feet across and covered in duckweed. Hornsby & Ceryak (1998) describe the spring pool as "100 feet wide with a maximum depth of 15 feet and the run is approximately 15 feet long" (p. 35). They measured a flow of 1.54 MGD on April 28, 1998 (p. 35). In times of high water on the river, the spring would be flooded and would perhaps reverse.

Use/Access

No apparent use. The spring is on private property.

Personal Impressions

Except in times of high water (when dark water would prevent a good look at the spring anyway), the spring cannot be canoed or otherwise entered by boat.

Nearby Springs

- Darby Spring
- Columbia Spring
- Hornsby Spring
- Treehouse Spring
- Santa Fe River Rise Spring

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Darby Spring Alachua County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude

Scenery - fair

How Pristine? - exotics in water, dock adjacent to spring, cleared land and highway nearby

Swimming - no

Protection - unknown

Crowds - adjacent to private land

Access - very good

Facilities - none

Safety - unknown

Scuba - no

Cost - free

Directions

From downtown High Springs drive about two miles north on U.S. 41/441 to bridge over the Santa Fe. The boat ramp to the river is on the NW side of the bridge. Put in and go upriver about 100 yards to spring run on the right. Look for small dock.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring lies in a pool that is just above where the 0.8 mile run from Hornsby Spring joins the Santa Fe River. On date of visit (April 2000), the water was completely covered in exotic aquatic vegetation and clogged to the point that it could not be canoed. The vent from the spring, measured by Hornsby & Ceryak at 9.6 MGD from a vent ten feet deep (1998, p. 21), was not visible. Land rose up above the spring and was cleared and grassy.

Use/Access

The land around the pool is private and posted. A swinging bench is built into a small platform above the small dock near the spring.

Personal Impressions

The clogged spring was unappealing and a disappointment - the legacy of invasive exotics.

Nearby Springs

- COL428981
- Columbia Spring
- Hornsby Spring
- Treehouse Spring
- Santa Fe River Rise Spring

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park

- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Columbia Spring

Columbia County

Summary of Features

Scale - 1st magnitude
 Scenery - fine to excellent
 How Pristine? - very pristine, near highway
 Swimming - poor
 Protection - unknown/private
 Crowds - none
 Access - very good, water only
 Facilities - none
 Safety - very good
 Scuba - unknown
 Cost - free

Directions

From downtown High Springs drive about two miles north on U.S. 41/441 to bridge over the Santa Fe. The boat ramp to the river is on the NW side of the bridge. Put in and go downriver about 1/5 mile to the spring run on the right.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring forms a semi-circular pool over 150 feet wide with a run of nearly equal width that flows about 500 feet to the Santa Fe River. Water was flowing strongly from the spring on date of visit, forming a large boil area. The water was not very clear and may include non-filtered water from the main river as well as "spring" water. Limestone was visible on the bottom in the shallow areas, and some algae is evident. The land around the spring is low, swampy, and heavily forested. There is a house on land above the spring to the east.

According to Carter & Pearce (1985, p. 139) a large sink in the bed of the Santa Fe River just outside of the Columbia Spring run swallows part of the river. The water rises again a few hundred yards downstream.

Use/Access

- No landfall can be made on the private property surrounding the spring, but it is only a five-minute paddle from the U.S. 41/441 bridge and even less from the canoe livery at the bridge's SW end.
- In time of low water, paddling upriver can be difficult due to shoals and aquatic vegetation.
- During the 1920s and '30s, there was a hotel directly across the Santa Fe River from Columbia Spring on the Alachua County side (Hornsby & Ceryak, 1998, p. 26).

Personal Impressions

The authors suspect that, as with Treehouse Spring upriver, the water flowing from Columbia Spring contains water from the Santa Fe River and is, in effect, another river rise. Rosenau et al., 1977 reference testing of the water in this spring as showing it contained both river water and water directly from the Floridan aquifer (pp. 105-106).

Nearby Springs

- COL428981
- Darby Spring
- Hornsby Spring
- Treehouse Spring
- Santa Fe River Rise Spring

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

B. Santa Fe River, U.S. 27 to State Road 47

This stretch is perhaps the best ten-mile string of springs anywhere, with numerous large attractive and swim-able springs.

An Essay on the Santa Fe River Between U.S. 27 and S.R. 47

Arching over Gainesville and Alachua County like a bad toupee, the Santa Fe River flows from Santa Fe Lakes for 50 miles before joining the Suwannee River south of Branford. At one point, it dips underground for three miles before rising. Fed by the Ichetucknee River and 60 other springs, the Santa Fe widens, deepens, and becomes clearer as it goes. It passes through a variety of plant communities and is a rich and increasingly vital haven for wildlife.

There are three or four sections of the river that make excellent paddling, but one section stands heads above the rest. This liquid strip, 100 feet wide

and 10 miles long, is one of the most amazing and entertaining places in Florida. Canoeing is the best means of travel due to shoals, shallow water, and aquatic vegetation, but a small boat with a tilt motor would also work.

The put-in is at the U.S. 27 bridge near High Springs. There are canoe liveries in town if you don't have a canoe or don't want to take two cars. The springs begin immediately; there is one just upriver and opposite the boat ramp. Water boils up at the rate of about 50M gallons/day, but you'll miss it if you don't look carefully in the tannin-colored water. Heading downstream, there are occasional houses, and the banks range from 10-15 feet. Soon, however, the land levels out and swamp and flood-plain forest bracket the river. Large cypress, oak, maple, and many lowland hardwoods provide a tranquil and wild setting.

Turtles are everywhere. Cooters, stinkpots, chicken turtles, and sliders of all sizes bask in the sun and allow quiet approaches to within 10 feet. You could easily see 100 in a day. And waterfowl! On our last visit we spotted not only the usual suspects - great and little blues; great, reddish, snow, and cattle egrets; greenback and tri-color herons; bit also ibis, limkin, yellow- and black-crowned night herons, as well as predatory hawks, owls, and osprey. The increasingly rare limkin thrives on apple snails, which have disappeared from many sites in Florida. The suspected culprit is rising nitrate levels from fertilizer runoff. The snail eggs and limkin were still abundant on the Santa Fe in June 2002. The sharp-eyed observer will also see snakes curled in the trees and roots along the river.

After 30 minutes, the springs really get popping, and it seems like there is a pull-off at almost every riverbend. As the Tramps say in their immortal classic, "Disco Inferno," "satisfaction came in a chain reaction." The springs along here take two general forms - fissures and shafts. The more common fissures are cracks in the aquifer below the surface. The springs range in size from a few feet to monsters 60 feet deep and 100 feet long and issuing up to 400 million gallons a day. Most of the springs are swimmable, and we dipped into 10 of them on our last trip.

Poe Springs is unmistakable on the left about an hour downriver. It is a county park, and you cannot make landfall without paying a fee. However, you may walk up the clear run to the springhead. It is a wide funnel-shaped basin, and water flows powerfully from several crevasses about 20 below the surface. After Poe, the PG-rated springs are next. Lily and Pickard both have caretakers with somewhat indifferent attitudes about clothing.

Lily is in a little cove occupied by Ed the Hermit. Ed lives in a wood-and-grass hut on stilts, and wears only a loincloth. My daughter, who was 12 when she visited, noticed that it is a furry loincloth. Ed is somewhat wooly himself, but is very friendly despite his hand-painted sign saying unaccompanied children will be fed to the alligators. A half-dozen springs flow from beneath his dock - not a bad set-up. Pickard is 100 yards downriver, and its owners are fond of skinny-dipping. You've been warned.

There is a boatramp a little further downriver at Rum Island. It has several large and small springs as well as a boat ramp and picnic areas (and lots of fire ants). We startled a good-sized gator guarding one of the Rum Island springs, and it didn't have any clothing on, either.

My daughter's favorite spring was next. The Blue Springs Campground is a full-facility campground with four springs and a 100-yard boardwalk along its spring run to the river. Access is not permitted without paying, but we threaded our canoe under the boardwalk and up one of its runs to Naked Spring. This secluded and canopied spot offers a lovely swimming hole and two springs.

The Ginnie Springs group is next with its ten springs including the picturesque Devil's Eye, a 30-foot shaft leading to an underwater tunnel. Ginnie is a major dive spot featuring a camp store and full facilities. One can camp along the river as well as alongside several springs.

After Ginnie, traffic on the river ceases. In this last stretch, if you look carefully and are willing to paddle into side channels, you'll observe a rare phenomenon - springs in reverse. Called siphons, these are places where water flows out of the river and back into the aquifer. One siphon along the riverbank was draining the river dramatically, with a powerful whirlpool 25 feet across and a spinning clump of eel grass and hydrillathree feet across looking like a green tornado. The two best-known examples are "Big Awesome Suck" and "Little Awesome Suck," and the siphons drain up to 150 million gallons a day each from the river.

ALA930972 (U.S. 27 Ramp) Spring Alachua County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude
Scenery - good
How Pristine? - very pristine, near boat ramp and cleared areas
Swimming - fair, fine snorkeling
Protection - excellent
Crowds - can be crowded at nearby boat ramp
Access - fine, water only
Facilities - fair
Safety - very good
Scuba - yes
Cost - free

Directions

From downtown High Springs, drive northwest on U.S. 27/SR 20 about 2.5 miles to where the highway crosses the Santa Fe River. A launch ramp and parking area are just past the river on the right (north) side of the road. Launch upriver (to the left or north). The spring lies in the river about 150 feet from the boat ramp, near the north bank, about 15 feet from shore and nearly underneath the limbs of an oak tree.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address:
<http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring flows from a crack in the limestone that was about 12 feet deep on dates of visit in 2000. It creates a strong flow toward the middle of the river and forms a large slick. On dates of visit, the springflow was only slightly clearer than the surrounding river, and glare made it difficult to see the vent. When visited June 1, 2002, the water was green and stagnant looking, and there was no boil.

Use/Access

Swimming in the spring is possible and safe, but somewhat awkward because of a lack of nearby footholds and because the water is not very clear.

Personal Impressions

- It is likely that only a few of the thousands of people who put in at the boat ramp nearby know of the existence of this large, second-magnitude spring just feet away.

Nearby Springs

- Columbia Spring
- COL428981
- Allen Spring
- Poe Springs
- Darby Spring
- Hornsby Spring
- Santa Fe River Rise Spring
- ALA930971
- ALA930972

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

ALA930971 (Alcove and Log) Spring
Alachua County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude
Scenery - excellent
How Pristine? - completely pristine
Swimming - fair, good snorkeling
Protection - unknown
Crowds - none
Access - very good, boat only
Facilities - none
Safety - very good
Scuba - no
Cost - free

Quick Directions

About a half-mile downriver from the put-in at the U.S. 27 bridge over the Santa Fe River in an alcove on the left.

Full Directions

From downtown High Springs, drive northwest on U.S. 27/SR 20 about 2.5 miles to where the highway crosses the Santa Fe River. A launch ramp and parking area are just past the river on the right (north) side of the road. The spring is about half a mile downriver from the boatramp on the left. Look for a small island in the river on the right and a circular widening of the river on the left.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring is in the back left corner of the widening area a few feet from the main channel. When visited in 2000, it was framed by fallen trees that lay between it and the river. Water flows from a circular cavity 8-10 feet deep. A log lay across the vent, splitting its flow and causing slicks over an area perhaps 20 feet across. The water was very clear. Native and exotic vegetation surround the spring, including rotting mats of algae. The spring silted easily when explored and was slow to clear. On June 1, 2002, two flows were clearly visible, about 15 feet apart and each with a clear boil on the surface that was 2-5 feet in diameter.

Use/Access

The larger spring cavity can be skin-dived with relative ease, but is quick to cloud.

Personal Impressions

A lovely little spring that is a refreshing dip after canoeing for a while on a warm day.

Nearby Springs

- Columbia Spring
- COL428981
- Allen Spring
- Poe Springs
- Darby Spring
- Hornsby Spring

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Allen Spring (or COL428982)
Columbia County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude
 Scenery - fine
 How Pristine? - completely pristine
 Swimming - no
 Protection - unknown/private property
 Crowds - none
 Access - arduous to good
 Facilities - none
 Safety - good
 Scuba - no
 Cost - free

Quick Directions

About 1.5 miles below the put-in at the U.S. 27 bridge on the right in the NE end of a widening of the river.

Full Directions

From downtown High Springs, drive northwest on U.S. 27/SR 20 about 2.5 miles to where the highway crosses the Santa Fe River. A launch ramp and parking area are just past the river on the right (north) side of the road. After about a mile and a half from the 27 bridge, there are houses perched on the left bank, some with rock "retaining walls." In the middle of the river is an island, with trees and large rocks, long and narrow. On the right side of the river is what looks like a slough or tributary. Go into this opening, right across from the upriver edge of the island, and head upstream in the narrow channel on the right - this is the short run from Allen Spring.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

Allen is a narrow fissure paralleling the main river. The crevice in the rock drops to a depth of about 20 feet, and the pool was 15 feet wide on dates of visit in 2000, a time of low water. The water was clear, but the shallow rocky surface was covered with muck. As you stand on the edge of the crack, your feet may sink into mud. The spring and run are canopied, and the algae on the rocks appears almost fluorescent. Land around the spring is thick floodplain hardwood forest. On date of visit in June 2002, the entire area around Allen was choked with exotic water lettuce that effectively blocked access by canoe.

Use/Access

On private property, the spring is difficult to enter in times of low water and the canoe must be dragged in. Access is easier in higher water. The surrounding area is low and mucky.

Personal Impressions

A narrow fissure spring common along this stretch of the Santa Fe, Allen is very natural and unspoiled, although not as large or attractive as some others downriver.

Nearby Springs

Columbia Spring, COL428981, Poe Springs, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, ALA930971, COL930971

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park

- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Poe Spring Alachua County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude

Scenery - fine

How Pristine? - retaining wall, beach area, walkway along spring and run, developed swim/recreation area

Swimming - outstanding

Protection - excellent

Crowds - heavy on warm weekends

Access - Fine, land or water

Facilities - Excellent

Safety - Fine

Scuba - yes

Cost - \$4 per person to swim

Directions

By Land: From High Springs, drive south on US 41/27 about one mile. Turn west (right) onto State Road 340 (Poe Springs Road) and proceed about 2.5 miles to entrance to Poe Springs County Park. Follow signs to the spring, which is a ¼ mile walk from the parking area.

By Water: From downtown High Springs, drive northwest on U.S. 27/SR 20 about 2.5 miles to where the highway crosses the Santa Fe River. A launch ramp and parking area are just past the river on the right (north) side of the road. Canoe about 1.75 miles downstream to Poe Springs County Park on the left. Look for picnic enclosures and a sign for the park. Alternatively, put in at the boat ramp in Poe Spring County Park and go upriver about 1/3 mile to the spring.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

Flow from at least three vents creates a circular pool that is about 80 feet in diameter, and about 18 feet deep at the deepest (and most powerful) vent. Water flows from limestone openings. The main opening is several feet across and large enough to admit a diver. The pool bottom is sandy, and water is very clear with a tint that varies from blue to green depending on conditions. The flow creates a shallow run (2-4 feet deep) that flows about 200 feet and which is about 40 feet wide. A

retaining wall has been constructed on the north end of the spring, with an artificial beach and concrete steps leading to the water. The south end of the spring is swampy forest.

Rosenau et al., 1977 note there are several seeps and small springs in the vicinity of Poe (p. 63). One such spring is located 250 feet downstream of where the Poe Spring run enters the Santa Fe River, also on the south bank of the Santa Fe. The spring is adjacent to the bank and consists of three small flows from openings in small (1-2 feet in diameter) limestone boulders at a depth of about 18 inches. Each vent creates a small slick, and the three vents are in an area perhaps 6 feet in diameter. The water is clear, but the bottom and limestone are covered in dark algae and other plant growth, and the openings were not visible. The springs were about 10 feet from the bank, which rises a few feet in an area of hardwood forest. Wes Skiles told JF that there is another small spring just in from the riverbank below the mouth of the Poe run. This spring flows back away from the river and empties into the run.

Use/Access

- Poe is only a couple of hundred yards downriver from Allen Spring.
- The spring is good for wading.
- The spring area has picnic facilities.
- Signs on the bank, directed at canoeists and boaters, say "\$4 Entry Fee," so be prepared to pay if you set foot ashore.
- A rope blocks across the mouth of the spring run blocks access to the spring.
- The park has pay areas, a concession stand, ample parking, ball fields, meeting facilities, a dock, and a boat ramp.

Local Springiana

According to Rosenau et al. (1977), Poe Springs was developed as a commercial swim and picnic area in the 1940s. There is no evidence of the earlier retaining walls, bathhouses, or other structures on the site.

Personal Impressions

When JF first visited Poe in 1996, he was struck by the "deadness" of the site. Whereas most springs are teeming with flora and fauna, Poe had no fish and its bottom was choked with dead, black, rotting roots and other vegetative debris and detritus. Most of this material was gone when the spring was visited again in April and July, 2000, but there was little evidence of flora or fauna in the water.

Nearby Springs

- Columbia Spring, COL428981, Allen Spring, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, Santa Fe Spring, ALA930971, COL930971, Lily

Springs, Pickard Spring, COL101971, Jonathan Spring, Rum Island Springs, Blue Springs, Little Blue Springs, Naked Spring, Johnson Spring

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Contact Information

Poe Springs County Park
28800 NW 182nd Avenue
High Springs, Fla.
904-454-1992

COL930971 (*Twisting ¼-mile Run*) Spring Columbia County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude
Scenery - Fine-excellent
How Pristine? - completely pristine
Swimming - no
Protection - unknown - private
Crowds - none
Access - none/private

Directions

Lying between Poe and Lily Springs on the Columbia (north) side of the Santa Fe River. The spring is about 1/3 mile below the boat ramp at Poe Springs and about 300 yards upriver of Lily Springs. It is also about half a mile upriver from the boat ramp at Rum Island.

Directions to ramp at Poe Springs: From High Springs, drive south on US 41/27 about one mile. Turn west (right) onto State Road 340 (Poe Springs Road) and proceed about 2.5 miles to entrance to Poe Springs County Park.

Directions to ramp at Rum Island: From High Springs, drive NW on US 27/SR20 about four miles. Turn left (west) onto State Road 138 and drive about two miles to turnoff to the left (south) at sign for Rum Island. Follow dirt road about 1.5 miles to river and ramp.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring lies at the head of a ¼ mile run that empties into the Santa Fe River. At the mouth of the run, the spring flow is in the opposite direction of the river. The run is narrow (10-15 feet), shallow, contains many turns, and is obstructed by fallen tree trunks and cypress knees. The land about the run and spring is private property, and the spring itself was not visited. Boaters who passed by the authors at the mouth of the run in 2001 said they has seen the spring and that if was a small-to-medium-sized pool with blue water.

Use/Access

- Because it is on private property, the spring is not accessible.
- Two boaters fishing at the mouth of the run described the spring as being "small," and not as large as nearby Lily, Pickard, or Poe Springs.

Personal Impressions

It is always frustrating to be so close to a spring and not be able to reach it. One is consoled, however, by the profusion of accessible springs nearby.

Nearby Springs

- Columbia Spring, COL428981, Allen Spring, Poe Springs, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, ALA930971, Lily Springs, Pickard Spring, COL101971, Jonathan Spring, Rum Island Springs, GIL101971, Gilchrist Blue Springs, Little Blue Springs, Naked Spring, Johnson Spring, Ginnie Springs Group

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Lily Springs Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude
 Scenery - fine
 How Pristine? - hut, small docks, small beach, camp area around spring and run
 Swimming - fair-good
 Protection - fine
 Crowds - small
 Access - very good, boat only
 Facilities - fair
 Safety - very good
 Scuba - no
 Cost - free

Directions

¼ mile downstream from Poe Springs and ½ mile upstream of Rum Island Springs on the Gilchrist (south) side of the river. A large sign on a tree at the mouth of the spring run says, "Lily Springs."

Directions to ramp at Poe Springs: From High Springs, drive south on US 41/27 about one mile. Turn west (right) onto State Road 340 (Poe Springs Road) and proceed about 2.5 miles to entrance to Poe Springs County Park.

Directions to ramp at Rum Island: From High Springs, drive NW on US 27/SR20 about four miles. Turn left (west) onto State Road 138 and drive about two miles to turnoff to the left (south) at sign for Rum Island. Follow dirt road about 1.5 miles to river and ramp.

SFor maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

Lily is a compact spring complex of 5-7 springs, depending on how they are counted. The springs lie at the head of a winding and canopied 175-foot run that is 20-30 feet wide and 3-8 feet deep. The spring pool is oval and about 100 by 50 feet. The springs lie throughout the pool. One is under a cypress tree on the SE end of the pool, forming a fissure beneath the south bank with several vents. Several of the vents are likely connected to a single flow source due to their proximity to each other. Another limestone opening is just in front of the private wooden dock in the center of the pool. Two more vents are beyond the dock in the basin, including one near a small shore area at the west end of the pool. In times of normal water levels, depths in the pool range from 4'-10'. Banks about the pool are a few feet above the water. The water is clear, and boils are evident. Fish, crawfish, and turtles are evident in the spring and spring pool. The water over the vents can be blue or green depending on conditions.

Use/Access

- The spring may be accessed freely from the river, and the area forms an attractive swimming hole.
- The land around the pool is privately owned and is used as a primitive camping area. The run forms a peninsula between the spring and the river on the north side, and on this peninsula is a hut on stilts occupied by the caretaker of the property. With permission, visitors may beach canoes, camp, and have a look at the hut.
- It is possible to swim through a short tunnel along the vent by the south bank of the spring pool.

Local Springiana

Lily is home to Ed the Hermit. Since 1984, he has served as caretaker of the spring. He built the wood and palmetto hut, which has 200 square feet of interior space, by hand. He lives in the hut year round, covered only in a loincloth and heavy beard. The hut has no electricity or running water.

Ed responds to courteous visitors in kind, engaging in conversation and inviting them to dive from his dock and inspect his abode. Signs tacked onto trees in the run, including "Man is the most dangerous animal," and "Unattended children will be fed to alligators," suggest an interest in conservation and add to the ambiance of the place.

Ed's hut sits on stilts about 6 feet or so above the ground, facing toward the spring. The sides and roof are thatched with palm fronds. In front is a porch from which Ed can survey his spring and the canoeists who paddle in. Ed relates that the spring area was trashed when he moved in, but he has transformed it into something out of *Swiss Family Robinson*.

In a 1999 visit, RB observed a pile of large animal bones by a tree near the porch. A nearby skull looked too big to be human and was perhaps from a gorilla or other large ape. The polite visitor does not ask too many questions.

Personal Impressions

RB felt somewhat envious of Ed and his little paradise. It also occurred to RB that in spite of Ed's being a "hermit," he might actually talk to more people than most of us.

Nearby Springs

- Columbia Spring, COL428981, Allen Spring, Poe Springs, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, ALA930971, COL930971, Pickard Spring, COL101971, Jonathan Spring, Rum Island Springs, GIL101971, Gilchrist Blue Springs, Little Blue Springs, Naked Spring, Johnson Spring, Ginnie Springs Group

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Pickard Spring Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude
 Scenery - very good
 How Pristine? - dock around spring
 Swimming - private
 Protection - unknown, private
 Access - boat only
 Facilities - none

Quick Directions

Almost immediately after Lily Springs and on the same bank.

Full Directions

0.8 miles downstream from Poe Springs and 0.4 mile upstream of Rum Island Springs on the Gilchrist (south) side of the river. A sign on a tree at the mouth of the spring says, "Pickard Spring."

Directions to ramp at Poe Springs: From High Springs, drive south on US 41/27 about one mile. Turn west (right) onto State Road 340 (Poe Springs Road) and proceed about 2.5 miles to entrance to Poe Springs County Park.

Directions to ramp at Rum Island: From High Springs, drive NW on US 27/SR20 about four miles. Turn left (west) onto State Road 138 and drive about two miles to turnoff to the left (south) at sign for Rum Island. Follow dirt road about 1.5 miles to river and ramp.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring pool abuts the river, but is separated from it by a line of cypress trees and a boardwalk and dock extending from the north bank to the pool. The pool is roughly circular and about 50 feet in diameter. There are two flow areas. The larger is a limestone opening several feet across at a depth of about 10 feet near the center of the pool and underneath a cypress tree outfitted with a rope swing and dive platform. The other vent is similar but smaller and is in the back end of the pool. It is also about 10 feet deep, and both springs create visible boils on the surface. A deck and boardwalk leads from the spring back through the floodplain and to a house.

Use/Access

- Pickard is no more than 100 yards downriver from Lily.
- Because the spring pool is right on the river, it is easy to spot and to enter in a canoe. However, the cypress trees encircling the spring and the private dock form a narrow opening to the pool. When the private owners are using the small spring pool, paddling a canoe into the spring would likely cause a collision with the swimmers and is therefore not advisable.
- Climbing onto the dock or using the rope swing are not advised. However, Rum Island is just a few minutes downriver and has a large spring basin for swimming as well as a rope swing.
- Although the dock and land around the spring are posted, there should be no problem in canoeing into the spring to see it or swim in it when it is not occupied. Respect the signs and stay off the dock and land.

Local Springiana

Although the pool is clearly visible from the river in an area of regular recreational traffic, the owners were skinny-dipping during a visit by RB in 1999. When RB approached the spring and asked if he could photograph it, the wife asked if RB would like her to pull herself up on the rope swing so he could get what she prosaically termed a "butt shot." RB declined the offer. JF would not have declined it.

Personal Impressions

Another very nice little spring that would be fun to explore and snorkel.

Nearby Springs

- Columbia Spring, COL428981, Allen Spring, Poe Springs, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, ALA930971, COL930971, Lily Springs, COL101971, Jonathan Spring, Rum Island Springs, GIL101971, Gilchrist Blue Springs, Little Blue Springs, Naked Spring, Johnson Spring, Ginnie Springs group

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

COL101971 Spring Columbia County

Summary of Features

Scale - 3rd magnitude
 Scenery - good
 How Pristine? - fairly pristine, house and walkway nearby
 Swimming - no
 Protection - unknown-private
 Crowds - none
 Access - none-private

Quick Directions

A few minutes' paddle between Pickard Spring and Jonathan Spring on the Columbia County (north) side of the river.

Full Directions

The spring is about 1 mile below Poe Springs and 0.4 mile upriver from Rum Island on the north bank.

Directions to ramp at Poe Springs: From High Springs, drive south on US 41/27 about one mile. Turn west (right) onto State Road 340 (Poe Springs Road) and proceed about 2.5 miles to entrance to Poe Springs County Park.

Directions to ramp at Rum Island: From High Springs, drive NW on US 27/SR20 about four miles. Turn left (west) onto State Road 138 and drive about two miles to turnoff to the left (south) at sign for Rum Island. Follow dirt road about 1.5 miles to river and ramp.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring appears to be about 75 feet from the river in a depression between the river and a large, modern house. The spring forms a small creek that is 2-3 feet wide and a few inches deep. The creek flows under a footbridge and into the river 8 feet downriver from a large, leaning cypress tree that is posted with a "No Trespassing" sign. The water is clear. The spring was not visited. In 2002, the small creek/run from the spring appeared to have been blocked with cut timber.

Use/Access

No access. The spring is on private property.

Personal Impressions

Just a piddle really (average discharge is about 2.5 CFS according to Hornsby & Ceryak, 1998, p. 34), but the authors are always disappointed at getting so close to a spring without being able to see it.

Nearby Springs

- Columbia Spring, COL428981, Allen Spring, Poe Springs, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, ALA930971, Lily Springs, Pickard Springs, Jonathan Spring, Rum Island Springs, GIL101971, Gilchrist Blue Springs, Little Blue Springs, Naked Spring, Johnson Spring, Ginnie Springs group

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Jonathan Spring (or COL101972) Columbia County

Summary of Features

Scale - large 3rd magnitude/small second magnitude
 Scenery - excellent
 How Pristine? - pristine
 Swimming - good snorkeling and wading
 Protection - fine
 Crowds - none
 Access - very good, boat and trail
 Facilities - very good nearby
 Safety - very good
 Scuba - no
 Cost - free

Directions

At eastern end of Rum Island County Park. From High Springs, drive NW on US 27/SR20 about four miles. Turn left (west) onto State Road 138 and drive about two miles to turnoff to the left (south) at sign for Rum Island. Follow dirt road about 1.5 miles to river. Either take path east along river to the spring (about 1/4 mile) or put in at boat ramp and paddle upriver about 1/4 mile to spring.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring is a circular pool about 15 feet in diameter that flows about 25 feet into the river. Land rises up on all sides of the spring, and the mouth of its short run is framed by large trees that lean over it from both sides. Water is clear and flows from a limestone opening 3-4 feet deep in the northeast corner. The pool is blue.

Use/Access

- Easy to reach by canoe or foot, this spring is little-visited by the many people who use Rum Island County Park as a swimming hole, hangout, and boat-launching facility.

Personal Impressions

Jonathan is very attractive in times of normal and low water and would make good snorkeling.

Nearby Springs

- Columbia Spring, COL428981, Allen Spring, Poe Springs, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, ALA930971, Lily Springs, Pickard Springs, COL101971, Rum Island Springs, GIL101971, Gilchrist Blue Springs, Little Blue Springs, Naked Spring, Johnson Spring, Ginnie Springs group

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

COL101974 Spring

Columbia County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd

Scenery - very good

How Pristine? - near path, boat ramp, contains exotics, otherwise pristine

Swimming - no

Protection - fine

Crowds - few

Access - good

Facilities - good

Safety - fair to poor

Scuba - no

Cost - free

Quick Directions

South and east of the parking area at Rum Island County Park. From High Springs, drive NW on US 27/SR20 about four miles. Turn left (west) onto State Road 138 and drive about two miles to turnoff to the left (south) at sign for Rum Island. Follow dirt road about 1.5 miles to river. The spring is across from the east end of Rum Island.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring forms a circular pool with outlets on the west and south sides. Land circles around the spring pool, which is about 75 feet wide. The main pool could not be entered because it was filled with a fallen tree and exotic vegetation - elodea or hydrilla or both. At the southwest end of the pool is a small vent (2-3 feet in diameter) with a clear flow. There is a mild boil over the vent. On dates of visit in 2000, there was a plank footbridge next to the vent that provided a view. The opening appeared to be about 6 feet deep. The area around the spring, which opens directly into the river at the east end of Rum Island can be swampy, full of poison ivy, and infested with fire ants.

On a visit in June 2002, the main pool was mostly clear and appeared to have another flow point in the center of the pool. No boil was visible, however, and canoe access to the spring was still blocked by the fallen tree.

Use/Access

The site may be reached by land or water. Canoe access can be difficult due to exotic plants that choke the entrance. Land access can be hindered by water when the river is high, and plagued by fire ants in times of low water. There is no

apparent human use of the site. A pile of 10-15 apple snail shells suggested a limkin had eaten there.

Local Springiana

The authors startled a 5-foot gator at the south entrance of the spring pool near the vent on a visit in 2000. They did not see the gator until they nearly canoed into it. It lurched and hissed, and the authors backed off (after taking a photograph). In June 2002, JF again startled a gator--probably the same one--about 200 feet away in the duckweed and hydrilla fringing Rum Island.

Personal Impressions

Hundreds of people go right by this little spring each day without knowing it is there. It is worth seeing to say you have seen it, but watch out for dangerous flora and fauna. There might be another vent in the main pool that could be visible in the winter when the plants die back.

Nearby Springs

- Columbia Spring, COL428981, Allen Spring, Poe Springs, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, ALA930971, Lily Springs, Pickard Springs, COL101971, Rum Island Springs, GIL101971, Gilchrist Blue Springs, Little Blue Springs, Naked Spring, Johnson Spring, Ginie Springs group

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

COL101975 Spring

Columbia County

Summary of Features

Scale - 4th magnitude

Scenery - very good

How Pristine? - near boat ramp and parking area, contains exotics, otherwise fairly pristine

Swimming - no

Protection - fine

Crowds - few

Access - very good - water only

Facilities - good

Safety - good

Scuba - no

Cost - free

Directions

Located along the bank (*where exactly?*) at Rum Island County Park. From High Springs, drive NW on US 27/SR20 about four miles. Turn left (west) onto State Road 138 and drive about two miles to turnoff to the left (south) at sign for Rum Island. Follow dirt road about 1.5 miles to river.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address:
<http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring forms a small (three feet in diameter) circular vent along the bank (which bank? By the island?) of the river on the Columbia County side. The water is clear and has a bluish tint. The maximum depth is 6 feet and there is a noticeable boil on the surface (Hornsby & Ceryak, 1998, p. 36).

Use/Access

Accessible by boat only from the Rum Island boat ramp. Because the spring is small and surrounded by thick vegetation, there is no apparent use.

Personal Impressions

The authors have not yet located this spring and rely on Hornsby & Ceryak for the description. JF searched the entire perimeter of Rum Island in 2002 and again could not find it.

Nearby Springs

- Columbia Spring, COL428981, Allen Spring, Poe Springs, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, ALA930971, Lily Springs, Pickard Springs, COL101971, Rum Island Springs, GIL101971, Gilchrist Blue Springs, Little Blue Springs, Naked Spring, Johnson Spring, Ginie Springs group

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve

- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Rum Island Spring

Columbia County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude
 Scenery - fine
 How Pristine? - swim/recreation area, erosion, near parking area, exotics in water
 Swimming - very good
 Protection - good
 Crowds - heavy on warm weekends
 Access - excellent
 Facilities - good
 Safety - good
 Scuba - yes
 Cost - free

Directions

Located along the bank (where exactly) at Rum Island County Park. From High Springs, drive NW on US 27/SR20 about four miles. Turn left (west) onto State Road 138 and drive about two miles to turnoff to the left (south) at sign for Rum Island. Follow dirt road about 1.5 miles to river. The spring is in a large pool to the right (west) of the parking area.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The eponymous spring at Rum Island is a single fissure in the SW portion of the 200-foot-diameter pool that it forms NW of Rum Island. The water is clear and greenish in tint, and in the deeper sections is heavily infested with hydrilla. On dates of visit in 1999 and 2000, the entire area around the vent, which is about 7 feet deep, was covered with exotic vegetation. In 2002, the area between the spring and the shore had been cleared, but the vent was still surrounded by hydrilla.

Water flows strongly from a curved flying saucer-shaped cavern entrance that is about 10 feet long and 3-4 feet high in the center. There is a 3-foot bank around the pool that is heavily eroded by recreational use. The water gets more shallow as it approaches the bank. The large pool opens directly into the Santa Fe River.

Use/Access

- The park itself has picnic tables and a boat ramp and is very popular on weekends.
- A large rope swing is a short distance upriver from Rum Island Spring, with both free-standing and tree-mounted platforms.
- Swimmers and waders in the spring stir up the water and reduce visibility.
- People occasionally remove hydrilla from the spring basin.

Local Springiana

The island's name is supposedly derived from moonshine and bootlegging operations that was located on the island in the early 1900s. A current sign on the site ironically warns, "Rum Island ❖ No Alcohol Allowed." RB was told that undercover police stake out the grounds and cite people with open containers.

Personal Impressions

The spring is a major feature of this popular park, and is a local swimmin' hole of long standing. The banks are badly eroded, however, and the site would greatly benefit from having a boardwalk around the edge and steps into the spring pool. A sign on the dirt road leading to Rum Island advertising "Nubian Goats 4 Sale" is a nice feature.

Nearby Springs

- Columbia Spring, COL428981, Allen Spring, Poe Springs, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, ALA930971, Lily Springs, Pickard Springs, COL101971, other Rum Island Springs, GIL101971, Gilchrist Blue Springs, Little Blue Springs, Naked Spring, Johnson Spring, Ginnie Springs group

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

GIL101971 Spring

Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 3rd Magnitude

Scenery - excellent
 How Pristine? - completely pristine
 Swimming - no
 Protection - unknown
 Crowds - none
 Access - arduous
 Facilities - none
 Safety - fair to good
 Scuba - no
 Cost - free

Directions

Located at the head of a run of unknown distance that empties into the Santa Fe River across from Rum Island. From High Springs, drive NW on US 27/SR20 about four miles. Turn left (west) onto State Road 138 and drive about two miles to turnoff to the left (south) at sign for Rum Island. Follow dirt road about 1.5 miles to river. Put boat into the river and circle around Rum Island and look for two inlets at the eastern (upriver) end of the island.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The authors paddled partway into the run for this spring, but after going approximately 100 yards were forced to turn back because of gathering darkness and obstructions in the run. The run continued back SE out of sight. Exiting the run, the authors saw another run entering the river and speculated that both runs emanated from the same spring. The run was clear, about 25 feet wide, and a few feet deep.

Use/Access

Access only by small boat. Although the Rum Island area a few yards away was very crowded and congested, these two runs had no traffic on date of visit (Summer, 2000). Hornsby & Ceryak identify the spring and measure its flow and parameters (1998, p. 51) but neither describe the vent nor have a photograph of the spring itself, suggesting they did not reach the spring.

Nearby Springs

- Columbia Spring, COL428981, Allen Spring, Poe Springs, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, ALA930971, Lily Springs, Pickard Springs, COL101971, Rum Island Springs, Gilchrist Blue Springs, Little Blue Springs, Naked Spring, Johnson Spring, Ginnie Springs group

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Naked Springs

Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude
 Scenery - excellent
 How Pristine? - dock at spring, exotics in water, otherwise fairly pristine
 Swimming - excellent
 Protection - very good/private
 Crowds - heavy on warm weekends
 Access - fine
 Facilities - excellent
 Safety - fine
 Scuba - no
 Cost - \$5 per person by land

Directions

By land: From High Springs, drive south on U.S. 27/41 about 1 mile. Turn west (right) onto State Road 340 (Poe Springs Road) and drive about five miles to entrance to Blue Springs Campground turnoff (look for sign). Follow another two miles to Blue Springs. From parking area, walk east along dirt path/road to Naked Spring.

By boat, putting in at Rum Island: Blue Springs is just downriver of the boat ramp at Rum Island on the opposite bank. From High Springs, drive NW on US 27/SR20 about four miles. Turn left (west) onto State Road 138 and drive about two miles to turnoff to the left (south) at sign for Rum Island. Follow dirt road about 1.5 miles to river. Put boat into the river. Just around the first bend downriver is the platform at the end of the Blue Springs run/Campground boardwalk. Paddle into Blue Springs run at the boardwalk platform, then under the boardwalk to the left where the Naked Spring run joins the

Blue Springs run.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The springs lie in a low, swampy area. The main spring pool is oval and about 45 by 70 feet in diameter. Water issues from a limestone fissure on the west side of the pool, near a dock/platform that has been constructed to provide access to the spring. Water was very clear on dates of visit (summer 2000 and June 2002), and there was a slick on the surface from the upwelling water. Water over the vent was a deep blue. The bottom of the spring was covered in exotic aquatic vegetation everywhere but at the vent, which appeared to be 12-15 feet deep and surrounded by limestone.

The second spring is about 40 feet from the main pool and forms a circular basin about 25 feet across. The water is clear, but the bottom is covered in plants and algae and the vent is not as clear. There was a mild bould on the surface when visited June 1, 2002, and the bottom appeared to be about 15 feet deep. Fallen logs hampered access by canoe; the site can also be reached by land from the nearby dirt road.

The springs are canopied by hardwood, floodplain forest. The spring run--about 3 feet deep--flows west from the springs approximately 300 feet to where it joins the run from Blue Springs under the Blue Springs Campground boardwalk.

Use/Access

- The spring is located in the Blue Springs Campground, which has camping facilities, picnic areas, restrooms, swimming, a camp store, and related facilities.
- The authors have visited the spring from the land and also directly from the Santa Fe River by squeezing their canoe under the boardwalk and into the Naked Spring run. While it is legal to enter the spring in this way (as long as no landfall is made), the campground owners would probably not welcome such entry.
- While most of the visitors at Blue Springs Campground swim in the Blue Springs pool, the Naked springs pool is also used and can fill quickly because of its relatively small size.
- The floating dock at the spring makes for an excellent dive and swim platform.

Local Springiana

The spring supposedly derived its name from earlier days when it was a popular site for skinny-dipping.

Personal Impressions

Despite the exotic vegetation, Naked Spring is retains a lot of clear water for swimming and is an excellent swimming hole. Of the many springs on the Santa Fe, Naked was the favorite of JF's daughter for its natural beauty, relative seclusion, clear blue water, and cold temperature. It's temperature is almost certainly the same as that of the other springs on the river, but felt colder due to the shady canopy.

Nearby Springs

- Poe Springs, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, ALA930971, Lily Springs, Pickard Springs, COL101971, Rum Island Springs, Gilchrist Blue Springs, Little Blue Springs, Johnson Spring, Ginnie Springs group, Sawdust Spring, COL1012972, COL1012971, Siphon Creek Rise Spring, Myrtle's Fissure, GIL1012971, GIL1012972, 47 Boatramp Spring (or GIL1012974)

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Contact Information

Blue Springs Park and Campground
High Springs, Fla.
386-454-1369

Johnson Spring
Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude (estimated)
Scenery - excellent
How Pristine? - exotics in water, otherwise fairly pristine
Swimming - no
Protection - very good/private
Crowds - none
Access - only to view
Facilities - excellent nearby
Safety - very good
Scuba - no
Cost - \$5

Directions

From High Springs, drive south on U.S. 27/41 about 1 mile. Turn west (right) onto State Road 340 (Poe Springs Road) and drive about five miles to entrance to Blue Springs Campground turnoff (look for sign). Follow another two miles to Blue Springs. From parking area, walk east along dirt path/road to Johnson Spring, a short distance beyond Naked Spring.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring pool is a low, swampy area of floodplain forest. Viewed from the edge of the spring, a blue area could be seen indicating the vent. The spring pool was somewhat indeterminate and difficult to distinguish from the surrounding swamp. It appeared to be egg-shaped and approximately 20 feet wide and about 60 feet long. The spring creates a run that, according to Rosenau et al. (1977, p. 120) flows directly into the Santa Fe River above the run from Blue Springs. The authors have not seen this run from the river and have only viewed the spring from the land.

Use/Access

- When last visited (1997), the spring had no apparent use. The adjacent landowners may have developed it as they have done with nearby Naked Spring.
- The spring is located in the Blue Springs Campground, which has camping facilities, picnic areas, restrooms, swimming, a camp store, and related facilities.

Personal Impressions

The spring photo is somewhat blurry because JF was given only five minutes by the campground owner to view and photograph Little Blue, Johnson, and Naked Springs without having to pay. Johnson was the last spring he saw, and he was out of breath from running and could not hold the camera steady.

Nearby Springs

- Poe Springs, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, ALA930971, Lily Springs, Pickard Springs, COL101971, Rum Island Springs, Gilchrist Blue Springs, Little Blue Springs, Naked Spring, Ginnie Springs group, Sawdust Spring, COL1012972, COL1012971, Siphon Creek Rise Spring, Myrtle's Fissure, GIL1012971, GIL1012972, 47 Boatramp Spring (or GIL1012974)

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Contact Information

Blue Springs Park and Campground
High Springs, Fla.
386-454-1369

Gilchrist Blue Spring

Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 1st magnitude

Scenery - fine

How Pristine? - developed swim/recreation/camp/beach area with platform, walkway, exotics in water, low retaining wall to prevent beach erosion

Swimming - fine to excellent

Protection - very good/private

Crowds - very heavy on warm weekends

Access - excellent

Facilities - excellent

Safety - very good

Scuba - no

Cost - \$5 per person

Directions

From High Springs, drive south on U.S. 27/41 about 1 mile. Turn west (right) onto State Road 340 (Poe Springs Road) and drive about five miles to entrance to Blue Springs Campground turnoff (look for sign). Follow another two miles to Blue Springs.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring forms a circular pool that is about 125 feet in diameter. Water issues from limestone boulders at a depth of about 23 feet in the western end of the pool. Water is very clear and blue, and fish congregate under the dive town in the deeper water. A diving platform on the west side juts out over the springhead. The cave entrance is visible from the

platform. Another smaller cave is just to the left as one stands on the platform looking out over the water. Elodea or hydrilla are present in the basin, but appeared to be clear out periodically. Exotic vegetation also lines the quarter-mile spring run to the river. The middle of the run is clear, revealing a sandy bottom at a depth of about 5 feet. A wooden walkway/boardwalk parallels the run on the east side all the way to the mouth of the run at the Santa Fe River. From the end of the boardwalk, Rum Island may be seen a short distance upriver on the opposite bank. A low retaining wall has been constructed along most of the beach to prevent erosion along the shoreline.

Use/Access

- The spring is located in the Blue Springs Campground, which has camping facilities, picnic areas, restrooms, swimming, a camp store, and related facilities.
- The spring is very popular with swimmers on warm weekends. Jumping off the platform (which is about 10 feet over the water, swimmers stir up the water, create erosion, and scare away the fish over the vent.

Personal Impressions

Blue Springs is a lovely site and full-service campground with swimming both at Blue Spring and at nearby Naked Spring. However, it can be overrun on warm weekends, and visiting at other times is recommended.

Nearby Springs

- Poe Springs, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, ALA930971, Lily Springs, Pickard Springs, COL101971, Rum Island Springs, Little Blue Springs, Naked Spring, Johnson Spring, Ginnie Springs group, Sawdust Spring, COL1012972, COL1012971, Siphon Creek Rise Spring, Myrtle's Fissure, GIL1012971, GIL1012972, 47 Boatramp Spring (or GIL1012974)

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Contact Information

Blue Springs Park and Campground
High Springs, Fla.
386-454-1369

Little Blue Spring Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 3rd magnitude (estimated)
Scenery - fine
How Pristine? - near cleared area, small observation platform at edge of spring
Swimming - no
Protection - very good/private
Crowds - none
Access - excellent
Facilities - excellent
Safety - very good
Scuba - no
Cost - \$5 per person

Directions

From High Springs, drive south on U.S. 27/41 about 1 mile. Turn west (right) onto State Road 340 (Poe Springs Road) and drive about five miles to entrance to Blue Springs Campground turnoff (look for sign). Follow another two miles to Blue Springs. Little Blue Spring is to the left of Blue Spring, in the trees below the parking area.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring lies just below a cleared area a few yards from the larger Blue Spring. The pool is about 15 feet in diameter and is deep blue over the vent, which is visible from a log at the edge of the pool. The depth of the spring appears to be about 8 feet, and the water is very clear. The spring creates a run that flows northeasterly about 200 feet to join the Blue Spring run just below where it is blocked by a fence. Except for the cleared grassy area to the south of the spring, Little Blue is surrounded by dense forest floodplain. This description is based on a brief view of the spring, and no systematic measurements were made.

Use/Access

When visited by the authors (1997), there was no apparent use of the spring.

Personal Impressions

A very attractive little spring that is overlooked by most of the visitors to Blue Springs, only yards away.

Nearby Springs

- Poe Springs, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, ALA930971, Lily Springs, Pickard Springs, COL101971, Rum Island Springs, Gilchrist Blue Spring, Naked Spring, Johnson Spring, Ginnie Springs group, Sawdust Spring, COL1012972, COL1012971, Siphon Creek Rise Spring, Myrtle's Fissure, GIL1012971, GIL1012972, 47 Boatramp Spring (or GIL1012974)

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Contact Information

Blue Springs Park and Campground
High Springs, Fla.
386-454-1369

Little Devil Spring

Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 3rd magnitude

Scenery - fine

How Pristine? - steps to water, land cleared around spring, developed camp/swim/dive/recreation area, some exotics, otherwise fairly pristine

Swimming - excellent, outstanding snorkeling

Protection - fine

Crowds - heavy on warm weekends

Access - excellent

Facilities - excellent

Safety - very good

Scuba - yes

Cost - \$8 to swim

Directions

Part of the Ginnie Springs complex. From High Springs, drive south on U.S. 27/41 about 1 mile. Turn west (right) onto State Road 340 (Poe Springs Road) and drive about 6.5 miles and then turn right onto graded road at sign for Ginnie Springs. Follow another mile to the entrance.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

Little Devil is a 45-foot deep fissure in the limestone that is parallel to its 150-foot run to the Santa Fe River. The pool is finger-shaped and approximately 18 feet wide. The fissure is about 40 feet long and narrows as it drops. The limestone is mostly bare, with some algae and plants on the rocks. Hydrilla is present in the run, which widens as it nears the Santa Fe River and passes over Devil's Eye Spring. The run is about 300 feet in length. A thin line of hardwood trees lines the run. Water in the spring is clear and can be blue or green depending on lighting and other conditions. The interconnected cavern systems associated with this and other springs at Ginnie Springs have been mapped for 33,000 feet. Over 30,000 divers visit the Ginnie Springs complex each year. Water in the spring is around 72 degrees. Studies show that the springs are fed by two watersheds that encompass 300 square miles (Rauch, 2003).

Use/Access

- The spring is very popular with both scuba divers and snorkelers and is crowded on warm weekends. Wooden steps are built alongside the spring for the convenience of scuba divers.
- On busy days, the water at the spring can become churned and somewhat milky, reducing visibility.
- Ginnie Springs is a full-facility recreation/dive site, with camping areas, a store, compressors for air tanks, scuba lessons, tubing, picnic areas, bathrooms, and other concessions. The complex is the most popular freshwater diving location in the world.
- Little Devil is the first of four major and attractive springs that lie in almost a straight line going from the south to the north side of the river. The other springs are Devil's Eye (near mouth of the Little Devil run), Devil's Ear (in the river on the south side), and July spring (in a large alcove on the north side of the river). This happy alignment reminds JF of The constellations in Orion's belt.
- It is best to visit anytime but on a warm summer weekend, when the spring will be very crowded and have reduced visibility due to too many swimmers and divers in the water.

Personal Impressions

A wonderful and very attractive spring that begs to be explored. With its long v-shape and exposed limestone near the surface, Little Devil may be explored even by the novice snorkeler.

Nearby Springs

- Poe Springs, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, ALA930971, Lily Springs, Pickard Springs, COL101971, Rum Island Springs, Gilchrist Blue Spring, Naked Spring, Johnson Spring, Ginnie Springs group, Sawdust Spring, COL1012972, COL1012971, Siphon Creek Rise Spring, Myrtle's Fissure, GIL1012971, GIL1012972, 47 Boatramp Spring (or GIL1012974)

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Contact Information

Ginnie Springs Outdoors, LLC
 7300 NE Ginnie Springs Road
 High Springs, FL 32643
 386-454-7188

Devil's Eye Spring

Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude

Scenery - excellent

How Pristine? - steps to water, land cleared around spring, developed camp/swim/dive/recreation area, otherwise fairly pristine

Swimming - excellent, outstanding snorkeling

Protection - very good

Crowds - heavy on warm weekends

Access - excellent

Facilities - excellent

Safety - very good

Scuba - yes

Cost - \$10 to swim

Directions

Part of the Ginnie Springs complex. From High Springs, drive south on U.S. 27/41 about 1 mile. Turn west (right) onto State Road 340 (Poe Springs Road), drive about 6.5 miles, and then turn right onto graded road at sign for Ginnie Springs. Follow another mile to the entrance.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

Devil's Eye Spring is a dramatic cylindrical limestone shaft that lies in a large clear pool in the lower end of the Little Devil Spring run about 50 feet from the Santa Fe River. It is marked by a tethered red ball. The shaft is about 18 feet across and about 20 feet deep. At the bottom of the shaft on the west side is a cavern entrance that, according to DeLoach (1997, p. 86) leads to a depth of 65 feet and exits out of nearby Devil's Ear Spring. About 10 feet down on the east side is a natural limestone seat. Water in the spring is very clear and can be a deep, even glowing, blue. Under other conditions, the water can be greenish, and the spring is subject to flooding by the Santa Fe River when the river is high. The full run is about 300 feet in length. The interconnected cavern systems associated with this and other springs at Ginnie Springs have been mapped for 33,000 feet. Over 30,000 divers visit the Ginnie Springs complex each year. Water in the spring is around 72 degrees. Studies show that the springs are fed by two watersheds that encompass 300 square miles (Rauch, 2003).

Use/Access

- Ginnie Springs is a full-facility recreation/dive site, with camping areas, a store, compressors for air tanks, scuba lessons, tubing, picnic areas, bathrooms, and other concessions. The complex is the most popular freshwater diving location in the world.
- It is best to visit anytime but on a warm summer weekend, when the spring will be very crowded and have reduced visibility due to too many swimmers and divers in the water.
- Devil's Eye is the second of four major and attractive springs that lie in almost a straight line going from the south to the north side of the river. The other springs are Little Devil (at the southern end), Devil's Ear (in the river on the south side), and July spring (in a large alcove on the north side of the river). This happy alignment reminds JF of the constellations in Orion's belt.

Personal Impressions

One of the authors' all-time favorite springs. Devil's Eye is the most dramatic of several cylindrical springs along the Santa Fe River. Most of the other springs in this area fissures, and none of the cylindrical vents compares to Devil's Eye. On clear and quiet days, the clarity of the water in this spring can be absolute.

Nearby Springs

- Poe Springs, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, ALA930971, Lily Springs, Pickard Springs, COL101971, Rum Island Springs, Gilchrist Blue Spring, Naked Spring, Johnson Spring, Ginnie Springs group, Sawdust Spring, COL1012972, COL1012971, Siphon Creek Rise Spring, Myrtle's Fissure, GIL1012971, GIL1012972, 47 Boatramp Spring (or GIL1012974)

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park

- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Contact Information

Ginnie Springs Outdoors, LLC
7300 NE Ginnie Springs Road
High Springs, FL 32643
386-454-7188

Devil's Ear Spring

Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 1st magnitude
Scenery - good to excellent
How Pristine? - adjacent to developed camp/swim/dive/recreation area, some exotics, otherwise fairly pristine
Swimming - fair to very good, excellent snorkeling
Protection - very good
Crowds - moderate on warm weekends
Access - good
Facilities - excellent
Safety - good
Scuba - yes
Cost - \$10 to swim

Directions

Part of the Ginnie Springs complex. From High Springs, drive south on U.S. 27/41 about 1 mile. Turn west (right) onto State Road 340 (Poe Springs Road) and drive about 6.5 miles and then turn right onto graded road at sign for Ginnie Springs. Follow another mile to the entrance.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring lies in the bed of the Santa Fe River just beyond the mouth of the Little Devil/Devil's Eye Springs run and is marked by a tethered red ball. As with Devil's Eye Spring nearby, Devil's Ear is a large and dramatic limestone shaft. The spring creates a pronounced boil. There is not really a spring pool, as the spring is in the river itself where the Devil's run meets the river. The spring opening is perhaps ten feet deep and wide enough for divers to descend into a chimney-like cave system that is connected back to Devil's Eye Spring 100 feet away. The bottom is about 30 feet deep.

Water flowing from the spring is clear and creates a prominent boil on the surface. The tea-colored water of the Santa Fe River sometimes obscures the clear spring water. When the river is clear, however, visibility is very good. The interconnected cavern systems associated with this and other springs at Ginnie Springs have been mapped for 33,000 feet. Over 30,000 divers visit the Ginnie Springs complex each year. Water in the spring is around 72 degrees. Studies show that the springs are fed by two watersheds that encompass 300 square miles (Rauch, 2003).

Use/Access

- Ginnie Springs is a full-facility recreation/dive site, with camping areas, a store, compressors for air tanks, scuba lessons, tubing, picnic areas, bathrooms, and other concessions. Because the spring is out in the river and requires more effort to reach, it is visited primarily by scuba divers and more determined snorkelers. For this same reason, swimmers and snorkelers need to be mindful of tubers and canoes plying the river. The complex is the most popular freshwater diving location in the world.
- A curious and interesting visual effect may be observed from underwater at Devil's Ear Spring. The clear water of the spring is often topped over by the darker water of the river. The sight of this clash of clear and dark water is striking and more evident when someone passes above the viewer in the darker water.
- Devil's Ear is the third of four major and attractive springs that lie in almost a straight line going from the south to the north side of the river. The other springs are Little Devil (at the southern end), Devil's Eye (near mouth of the Little Devil run), and July spring (in a large alcove on the north side of the river). This happy alignment reminds JF of the constellations in Orion's belt.

Nearby Springs

- Poe Springs, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, ALA930971, Lily Springs, Pickard Springs, COL101971, Rum Island Springs, Gilchrist Blue Spring, Naked Spring, Johnson Spring, Ginnie Springs group, Sawdust Spring, COL1012972, COL1012971, Siphon Creek Rise Spring, Myrtle's Fissure, GIL1012971, GIL1012972, 47 Boatramp Spring (or GIL1012974)

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Contact Information

Ginnie Springs Outdoors, LLC
 7300 NE Ginnie Springs Road
 High Springs, FL 32643
 386-454-7188

July Spring
 Columbia County

Summary of Features

Scale - 1st magnitude
 Scenery - excellent
 How Pristine? - adjacent to developed camp/swim/dive/recreation area, exotic plants in water, float marking site, otherwise fairly pristine
 Swimming - good
 Protection - unknown/private, no landfall allowed
 Crowds - can be heavy on warm weekends
 Access - very good, boat or swimming only
 Facilities - excellent at Ginnie Springs nearby
 Safety - good
 Scuba - yes
 Cost - \$10 to enter water at Ginnie Springs

Directions

Accessible from the Ginnie Springs complex. From High Springs, drive south on U.S. 27/41 about 1 mile. Turn west (right) onto State Road 340 (Poe Springs Road) and drive about 6.5 miles and then turn right onto graded road at sign for Ginnie Springs. Follow another mile to the entrance. July Spring is directly across the river from the three Devils springs at the upstream end of the Ginnie Springs complex.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring creates a semicircular cove at the edge of the Santa Fe River. The alcove is approximately 85 feet across and opens directly into the river. A small sign on a tree on the bank identifies the spring. The area around the spring is infested with elodea. The spring is a 40-foot long fissure that parallels the river and forms several vents and boils on the surface. The water is clear and varies from blue to greenish depending on conditions. The vents appear to be 6-10 feet deep and are narrow openings in the limestone. The land around the spring is dense floodplain forest with a bank of about three feet. The interconnected cavern systems associated with this and other springs at Ginnie Springs have been mapped for 33,000 feet. Over 30,000 divers visit the Ginnie Springs complex each year. Water in the spring is around 72 degrees. Studies show that the springs are fed by two watersheds that encompass 300 square miles (Rauch, 2003).

Use/Access

- Nearby Ginnie Springs is a full-facility recreation/dive site, with camping areas, a store, compressors for air tanks, scuba lessons, tubing, picnic areas, bathrooms, and other concessions. The complex is the most popular freshwater diving location in the world.
- It is best to visit anytime but on a warm summer weekend, when the spring will be crowded and have reduced visibility due to too many swimmers in the water.
- On dates of visits in 1999 and 2000, only the vents were free of exotic vegetation.
- Signs on the trees say "Private Property" & "Keep Off!"
- Many people swim across the river to July Spring, or rent canoes at Ginnie Spring and canoe the short distance upriver. If you swim across, watch for boaters and account for the current in the Santa Fe River.
- July is the fourth of four major and attractive springs that lie in almost a straight line going from the south to the north side of the river. The other springs are Little Devil (at the southern end), Devil's Eye (near mouth of the Little Devil run), and Devil's Ear (on the south side of the river). This happy alignment reminds JF of the constellations in Orion's belt.
- Because it is not part of the Ginnie Springs complex, July is not regularly cleared of exotic vegetation and is not as accessible as the Devils springs or Ginnie Spring.

Personal Impressions

Almost anywhere else, July Spring would be considered a beautiful spring and a great place to swim and snorkel. However, with so many spectacular spring neighbors, July winds up being an ugly stepchild by comparison.

Nearby Springs

- Poe Springs, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, ALA930971, Lily Springs, Pickard Springs, COL101971, Rum Island Springs, Gilchrist Blue Spring, Naked Spring, Johnson Spring, Ginnie Springs group, Sawdust Spring, COL1012972, COL1012971, Siphon Creek Rise Spring, Myrtle's Fissure, GIL1012971, GIL1012972, 47 Boatramp Spring (or GIL1012974)

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve

- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Ginnie Spring Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude
 Scenery - excellent
 How Pristine? - land cleared around spring, steps to water, some erosion, developed swim/dive/recreation/camp area, some exotics in water
 Swimming - excellent, outstanding snorkeling
 Protection - very good
 Crowds - overrun on warm weekends
 Access - excellent
 Facilities - excellent
 Safety - very good
 Scuba - yes
 Cost - \$10 to swim

Directions

Part of the Ginnie Springs complex. From High Springs, drive south on U.S. 27/41 about 1 mile. Turn west (right) onto State Road 340 (Poe Springs Road) and drive about 6.5 miles and then turn right onto graded road at sign for Ginnie Springs. Follow another mile to the entrance.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring lies in a circular pool that is 125 feet in diameter and slopes down from the bank to a depth of about 18 feet. The bottom is sandy with numerous limestone outcrops/boulders. Beneath a limestone shelf is a large cavern entrance perhaps 30 feet wide and from three to six feet high. The entrance opens to a large chamber and leads to underwater passages that have been measured to 1,100 feet.

Water in the spring is very clear and visibility is excellent most of the time. The water varies in color from blue to green (see photos). The spring forms a run that tapers from the wide pool to perhaps 50 feet in width and flows about 200 feet to the Santa Fe River at the upper end of the Ginnie Springs complex. In the run, bubbles from scuba divers may be observed rising through small holes in the limestone. Land around the spring is mostly cleared hardwood forest, and steps have been constructing from the bank into the spring to prevent erosion. The interconnected cavern systems associated with this and other springs at Ginnie Springs have been mapped for 33,000 feet. Over 30,000 divers visit the Ginnie Springs complex each year. Water in the spring is around 72 degrees. Studies show that the springs are fed by two watersheds that encompass 300 square miles (Rauch, 2003).

Use/Access

- Ginnie Springs is a full-facility recreation/dive site, with camping areas, a store, compressors for air tanks, scuba lessons, tubing, picnic areas, bathrooms, and other concessions. The complex is the most popular freshwater diving location in the world.
- It is best to visit anytime but on a warm summer weekend, when the spring will be very crowded and have reduced visibility due to too many swimmers and divers in the water.
- In the late 1990s, a friend of JF was camping at the Ginnie and saw an employee spraying for mosquitoes. When asked how frequently the spraying occurred, the employee said the area was sprayed every day.

Local Springiana

- The spring is supposedly named for a woman who washed her laundry at the site many years ago.
- Danone International draws approximately 1 million gallons of water a day from Ginnie and Dogwood Springs for bottled spring water.
- The level of nitrate in Ginnie Springs is rising in the spring water, and the owners purchased approximately 1,000 acres of land in the spring's recharge basin to help protect the resource (Hartnett, 2000).

Personal Impressions

- Equally popular with swimmers, tubers, and scuba divers, Ginnie Spring is one of Florida's great springs.

Nearby Springs

- Poe Springs, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, ALA930971, Lily Springs, Pickard Springs, COL101971, Rum Island Springs, Gilchrist Blue Spring, Naked Spring, Johnson Spring, Ginnie Springs group, Sawdust Spring, COL1012972, COL1012971, Siphon Creek Rise Spring, Myrtle's Fissure, GIL1012971, GIL1012972, 47 Boatramp Spring (or GIL1012974)

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Contact Information

Ginnie Springs Outdoors, LLC
 7300 NE Ginnie Springs Road
 High Springs, FL 32643
 386-454-7188

Dogwood Spring

Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude

Scenery - fine

How Pristine? - land partly cleared around spring, steps to water, developed camping/swimming/recreation area

Swimming - good

Protection - very good

Crowds - heavy on warm weekends

Access - excellent

Facilities - excellent

Safety - fine

Scuba - no

Cost - \$10 to swim

Directions

Part of the Ginnie Springs complex. From High Springs, drive south on U.S. 27/41 about 1 mile. Turn west (right) onto State Road 340 (Poe Springs Road) and drive about 6.5 miles and then turn right onto graded road at sign for Ginnie Springs. Follow another mile to the entrance.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring is circular and approximately 30 feet in diameter. Water flows the center of the pool from limestone openings. There is a visible boil or slick on the surface. Water in the spring is very clear except when the Santa Fe River is high, and the depth at the vent is about 10 feet. Water flows from an opening in the limestone that is perhaps 6 feet wide. Under sunny conditions, the spring is a very bright blue. Water from the spring forms a run that is about 12 feet wide, 3-5 feet deep, and 250 feet to the Santa Fe River in the middle of the Ginnie Springs complex. There is some hydrilla in the run. While the vent at this spring is too small to admit divers, the interconnected cavern systems associated with this and other springs at Ginnie Springs have been mapped for 33,000 feet. Over 30,000 divers visit the Ginnie Springs complex each year. Water in the spring is around 72 degrees. Studies show that the springs are fed by two watersheds that encompass 300 square miles (Rauch, 2003).

Use/Access

- The spring is in the camping area at Ginnie Springs, next to a dirt road and a covered pavilion used for picnicking.
- A wooden platform has been constructed on one side of the spring to provide a view and access for swimmers and snorkelers.
- Ginnie Springs is a full-facility recreation/dive site, with camping areas, a store, compressors for air tanks, scuba lessons, tubing, picnic areas, bathrooms, and other concessions. The complex is the most popular freshwater diving location in the world.
- Canoers can paddle from the Santa Fe River up the run to the spring.
- The lucky (and early) camper can pitch a tent right next to this spring.

Local Springiana

Water from Dogwood Spring and nearby Ginnie Spring is tapped and bottled for sale. The pipe is not readily visible from the surface. JF was told that 1 mgd is drawn from this spring and nearby Ginnie. The owners of Ginnie Springs supposedly receive \$0.01 per gallon taken from the spring, which would total \$3.65 million per year if water were drawn every day.

Personal Impressions

Although small in comparison to the other springs at Ginnie, Dogwood is very beautiful. Unlike the Devils' Springs and Ginnie, one can stand very close to the vent and have a clear view of Dogwood. The temptation to jump in is powerful.

Nearby Springs

- Poe Springs, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, ALA930971, Lily Springs, Pickard Springs, COL101971, Rum Island Springs, Gilchrist Blue Spring, Naked Spring, Johnson Spring, Ginnie Springs group, Sawdust Spring, COL1012972, COL1012971, Siphon Creek Rise Spring, Myrtle's Fissure, GIL1012971, GIL1012972, 47 Boatramp Spring (or GIL1012974)

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Contact Information

Ginnie Springs Outdoors, LLC

7300 NE Ginnie Springs Road
High Springs, FL 32643
386-454-7188

Twin Spring Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude
Scenery - good
How Pristine? - land cleared around spring, steps to water, erosion, developed camping/swimming/recreation area, high-traffic tubing exit spot
Swimming - fair-good
Protection - good
Crowds - heavy on warm weekends
Access - excellent
Facilities - excellent
Safety - very good
Scuba - no
Cost - \$10 to swim

Directions

Part of the Ginnie Springs complex. From High Springs, drive south on U.S. 27/41 about 1 mile. Turn west (right) onto State Road 340 (Poe Springs Road) and drive about 6.5 miles and then turn right onto graded road at sign for Ginnie Springs. Follow another mile to the entrance.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

Twin Spring lies at the head of a 200-foot run that flows into the Santa Fe River at the lower end of the Ginnie Springs complex. The pool is rectangular and about 30 feet across. Depths in the pool and run are from 3-10 feet, and water issues from a large limestone fissure. There is hydrilla in the spring run. Water in the spring is clear and blue except in times of high water and when tubers and swimmers stir the bottom. There is erosion on the bank due to heavy human traffic, and a platform has been constructed for tubers to exit from the spring. The interconnected cavern systems associated with this and other springs at Ginnie Springs have been mapped for 33,000 feet. Over 30,000 divers visit the Ginnie Springs complex each year. Water in the spring is around 72 degrees. Studies show that the springs are fed by two watersheds that encompass 300 square miles (Rauch, 2003).

Use/Access

- The spring serves as the take-out point for tubers at the Ginnie Springs complex, and is used heavily on warm weekends for this purpose and by swimmers who leap into the pool from the banks, rope swings, and, in the past, stacked picnic tables.
- Ginnie Springs is a full-facility recreation/dive site, with camping areas, a store, compressors for air tanks, scuba lessons, tubing, picnic areas, bathrooms, and other concessions. The complex is the most popular freshwater diving location in the world.
- A wooden step platform leads from the bank into the spring pool.

Personal Impressions

An attractive and good-sized spring, but little appreciated amidst its glittering neighbors.

Nearby Springs

- Poe Springs, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, ALA930971, Lily Springs, Pickard Springs, COL101971, Rum Island Springs, Gilchrist Blue Spring, Naked Spring, Johnson Spring, Ginnie Springs group, Sawdust Spring, COL1012972, COL1012971, Siphon Creek Rise Spring, Myrtle's Fissure, GIL1012971, GIL1012972, 47 Boatramp Spring (or GIL1012974)

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Contact Information

Ginnie Springs Outdoors, LLC
7300 NE Ginnie Springs Road
High Springs, FL 32643
386-454-7188

Sawdust Spring Columbia County

Summary of Features

Scale - 3rd magnitude
 Scenery - fine
 How Pristine? - very pristine
 Swimming - poor to fair
 Protection - unknown/private
 Crowds - very small
 Access - private land/boat access only
 Facilities - none; excellent across river at Ginnie Springs
 Safety - good
 Scuba - no
 Cost - free

Directions

At the downstream end and across the river from the Ginnie Springs complex. From High Springs, drive south on U.S. 27/41 about 1 mile. Turn west (right) onto State Road 340 (Poe Springs Road) and drive about 6.5 miles and then turn right onto graded road at sign for Ginnie Springs. Follow another mile to the entrance. The spring is across the river from and between Twin Spring and Deer Spring.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring is in a low area about 100 feet from the Santa Fe River. The spring and its run are 40-50 feet wide, a few feet deep, and the run is partially blocked by logs and aquatic vegetation. The spring pool is circular, and a strong boil is present above an opening in the limestone. Water in the spring is clear and blue.

Use/Access

- Land around the spring is private property and is posted. There is no apparent use except for the occasional canoeist.
- One might swim in the spring over the vent, but the rest of the area is covered with vegetation and not appealing to the swimmer.
- Nearby Ginnie Springs is a full-facility recreation/dive site, with camping areas, a store, compressors for air tanks, scuba lessons, tubing, picnic areas, bathrooms, and other concessions.

Personal Impressions

The authors have always visited Sawdust after having their fill of the more accessible spring at Ginnie and further upriver, and so were never particularly interested in snorkeling or swimming in Sawdust. Under other conditions, however, it would be a very appealing little spring to explore. Although a 3rd-magnitude spring, Sawdust has a strong flow and is nearly a second-magnitude site.

Nearby Springs

- Poe Springs, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, ALA930971, Lily Springs, Pickard Springs, COL101971, Rum Island Springs, Gilchrist Blue Spring, Naked Spring, Johnson Spring, Ginnie Springs group, COL1012972, COL1012971, Siphon Creek Rise Spring, Myrtle's Fissure, GIL1012971, GIL1012972, 47 Boatramp Spring (or GIL1012974)

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Deer Spring Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 3rd magnitude
 Scenery - fair-good
 How Pristine? - land cleared around spring, road near spring, exotics in water, posts around spring
 Swimming - no
 Protection - good
 Crowds - small
 Access - excellent
 Facilities - excellent
 Safety - very good
 Scuba - no
 Cost - \$10 to enter springs area

Directions

Part of the Ginnie Springs complex. From High Springs, drive south on U.S. 27/41 about 1 mile. Turn west (right) onto

State Road 340 (Poe Springs Road) and drive about 6.5 miles and then turn right onto graded road at sign for Ginnie Springs. Follow another mile to the entrance. Deer Spring is the most downstream (westerly) spring in the complex.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring forms an oval pool, perhaps 60 by 30 feet, and is 2-5 feet deep. The fringes of the pool are choked with vegetation, but the water is clear over the center area and the vent, where a mild slick and limestones are visible. The vent is in the back end of the pool and appears to be 5-6 feet deep. The spring forms a shallow and narrow run about 200 feet to the Santa Fe River. While the flow point(s) at this spring do not admit divers, the interconnected cavern systems associated with this and other springs at Ginnie Springs have been mapped for 33,000 feet. Over 30,000 divers visit the Ginnie Springs complex each year. Water in the spring is around 72 degrees. Studies show that the springs are fed by two watersheds that encompass 300 square miles (Rauch, 2003).

Use/Access

- The spring has not been developed for recreation like the other springs. At the same time, it is not cleared of exotic vegetation and so has little attraction. It is part of the Ginnie Springs complex, the most popular freshwater dive location in the world.
- A dirt road passes next to the spring, and it may also be reached by pathway.

Personal Impressions

Worth a look and that's about it; Deer does not have the visual or recreational appeal of the other springs in the Ginnie Springs complex.

Nearby Springs

- Poe Springs, Darby Spring, Hornsby Spring, ALA930971, Lily Springs, Pickard Springs, COL101971, Rum Island Springs, Gilchrist Blue Spring, Naked Spring, Johnson Spring, Ginnie Springs group, Sawdust Spring, COL1012972, COL1012971, Siphon Creek Rise Spring, Myrtle's Fissure, GIL1012971, GIL1012972, 47 Boatramp Spring (or GIL1012974)

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park

COL1012971 Spring Columbia County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude
 Scenery - excellent
 How Pristine? - completely pristine
 Swimming - unknown
 Protection - unknown/private
 Crowds - none
 Access - good/canoe only
 Facilities - none
 Safety - unknown
 Scuba - unknown
 Cost - free

Directions

From Ft. White, drive south on State Road 47 about five miles to the bridge over the Santa Fe River. The spring is approximately 2/3 mile upriver from the boat ramp, on the northeast side. The spring is about 0.3 miles upstream of Myrtle's Fissure. Look for a small opening in the bank on the right, and a larger opening about 60 feet further downstream. Both entrances lead to the spring.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring is oval and flows from a limestone opening - probably a fissure - at the bottom of a limestone bank that is perpendicular to the river. The area over the fissure is about 20 feet long and 6 feet wide. The spring forms a pool that, on dates of visit in 2000, had exposed limestone at the surface on the downstream side and narrow (4-5 feet) channel/run of about 45 feet. This channel/run emptied into a circular pool about 40 feet in diameter on the bank of the Santa Fe River. The spring and pool form a small peninsula.

Cypress and other trees surround the spring, which is only a few feet from the river on the other side of the bank. Limestone banks rise inland from the spring, and there is a boat ramp leading into the large circular pool just downriver of the spring and connected to the spring run. In times of normal or high water, there appears to be a small channel running north or inland from the spring; this channel dries up in times of drought and low water.

Use/Access

Land around the spring is private and posted, so access is by boat only.

Nearby Springs

- Ginnie Springs group, Sawdust Spring, COL1012972, COL1012971, GIL1012973, Myrtle's Fissure, GIL1012971, GIL1012972, 47 Boatramp Spring (or GIL1012974)

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

COL1012972 Spring Columbia County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude
 Scenery - excellent
 How Pristine? - completely pristine
 Swimming - poor
 Protection - unknown/private
 Crowds - none
 Access - water only
 Facilities - none
 Safety - very good
 Scuba - yes
 Cost - free

Directions

From Ft. White, drive south on State Road 47 about five miles to the bridge over the Santa Fe River. Approximately ½ mile upriver from the boat ramp, on the northeast side. The spring is a few minutes downstream of COL1012971 and about 2 minutes' paddle upstream of Myrtle's Fissure. The spring is also directly across from the head of a small island and GIL1012973, a large first-magnitude spring in the riverbed at the head of the island.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring is a narrow fissure, akin to several other such springs along the Santa Fe River (e.g., Myrtle's Fissure, Little Devil, Allen). The spring is perhaps 60 feet long and 6 feet across at the top of the limestone opening, which is against the limestone bank. Water in the spring was clear and dark blue at dusk on date of visit (summer 2000), and a boil was visible. Hornsby & Ceryak describe the fissure as 70 feet long and 47 feet deep (1998, p. 31). The spring pool is triangular, with the fissure perpendicular to the river and forming a 200-foot run that is parallel to the river and flowing in the same direction. The run is 10-20 feet wide and several feet deep. The land around the spring is thick, mature, floodplain forest.

Use/Access

- Land around the spring is privately owned; access is only by canoe and no landfall can be made.
- Swimming, diving, and snorkeling are possible at the spring.

Personal Impressions

The spring is very attractive and in an undisturbed setting. The run can be missed easily by boats traveling downriver but is easier to spot when going upriver.

Nearby Springs

Ginnie Springs group, Sawdust Spring, COL1012971, GIL1012973, Myrtle's Fissure, GIL1012971, GIL1012972, 47 Boatramp Spring (or GIL1012974)

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

GIL1012971 Spring

Columbia County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude
 Scenery - excellent
 How Pristine? - completely pristine
 Swimming - poor
 Protection - excellent
 Crowds - none
 Access - water only
 Facilities - none
 Safety - very good
 Scuba - unknown
 Cost - free

Directions

From Ft. White, drive south on State Road 47 about five miles to the bridge over the Santa Fe River. Approximately ½ mile upriver from the boat ramp, on the SW side. The spring is almost immediately upstream of GIL1012972 and GIL1012973 and about 2 minutes' paddle upstream of Myrtle's Fissure.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring forms a circular pool that was about 100 feet in diameter on dates of visit in fall 2000. The water was clear and dark, but the general depth appeared to be about 6 feet. The bottom was dark, but the pool sloped off to deeper water in the SW end. No boil was visible on dates of visit, but the run was clearly flowing into the Santa Fe River, indicating a spring. At the mouth of the run to the Santa Fe River is a limestone ledge at a depth of about 6 feet that is visible when the water is clear.

Hornsby & Ceryak state the depth of the vent as 26 feet (1998, p. 46). The east end of the spring had a dry creek bed that apparently flows into the spring. The spring has a run that is about 35 feet wide and 50 feet long. The land around the spring is thick, floodplain forest, and a barred owl was heard and observed on both dates of visit in 2000.

Use/Access

- Land around the spring is owned by the Suwannee River Water Management District, and access is only by canoe.
- Swimming, diving, and snorkeling are possible at the spring, but not terribly appealing.

Personal Impressions

The spring is attractive and in an undisturbed setting.

Nearby Springs

- Ginnie Springs group, Sawdust Spring, COL1012971, GIL1012973, Myrtle's Fissure, GIL1012972, 47 Boatramp Spring (or GIL1012974)

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Contact Information

Suwannee River Water Management District
 9225 CR49
 Live Oak, FL 32060
 800-226-1066

GIL1012972 Spring Columbia County

Summary of Features

Scale - 4th magnitude
 Scenery - fine
 How Pristine? - completely pristine
 Swimming - no
 Protection - unknown/private
 Crowds - none
 Access - water only
 Facilities - none
 Safety - very good
 Scuba - no
 Cost - free

Directions

From Ft. White, drive south on State Road 47 about five miles to the bridge over the Santa Fe River. Approximately ½ mile upriver from the boat ramp, on the SW side. The spring is just a few feet upstream of GIL1012973 and directly across the river from COL1012972.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring forms a tiny alcove on the riverbank. The spring pool is C-shaped, open to the river, and about 12 feet in diameter. Water flows from a limestone opening against the riverbank, and a clear flow is visible. The spring was about 3 feet deep at the vent, the deepest point on dates of visit in 2000 and 2001.

Use/Access

Land around the spring is owned by the Suwannee River Water Management District; access is only by canoe.

Personal Impressions

A very cute little spring that is easy to miss because it is so small. It lies between GIL1012973 and GIL1012972.

Nearby Springs

Ginnie Springs group, Sawdust Spring, COL1012971, GIL1012973, Myrtle's Fissure, GIL1012971, 47 Boatramp Spring (or GIL1012974)

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Contact Information

Suwannee River Water Management District
9225 CR49
Live Oak, FL 32060
800-226-1066

GIL1012973 Spring
Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 1st magnitude
Scenery - fine
How Pristine? - completely pristine
Swimming - fair-good
Protection - excellent
Crowds - none
Access - good/boat only
Facilities - none
Safety - good
Scuba - yes
Cost - free

Directions

From Ft. White, drive south on State Road 47 about five miles to the bridge over the Santa Fe River. From the boat ramp, paddle upstream ½ mile. A channel on the right (south) side just before Myrtle's Fissure is one end of an island about 100 yards long. The spring is at the other, upriver end (mouth) of the island where the channel around the island meets the river. The spring is a few feet from the limestone bank where the river and channel meet.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring has a powerful flow and two large boils on the surface. A limestone shelf and ledge is visible, and water is flowing out from beneath it. The water was fairly clear, but the authors viewed the spring on the evenings of visit (Sept. and Dec. 2000) and the low light did not allow them to see the bottom or the vent. Land around the river is dense forest.

Use/Access

- The spring is in the river, so access is by boat only. Land on this side of the river is protected by the Suwannee River Water Management District.
- Swimming, snorkeling, and diving could be done at this spring.

Local Springiana

This nondescript and easy-to-miss spring is, along with the Santa Fe River Rise, the largest spring on the Santa Fe River, its flow is 370 cfs or 240 mgd.

Nearby Springs

Ginnie Springs group, Sawdust Spring, COL1012972, COL1012971, Myrtle's Fissure, GIL1012971, GIL1012972, 47 Boatramp Spring (or GIL1012974)

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

Contact Information

Suwannee River Water Management District
9225 CR49
Live Oak, FL 32060
800-226-1066

Big Awesome Siphon/Suck Columbia County

Summary of Features

Scale - 1st magnitude in reverse
Scenery - excellent
How Pristine? - completely pristine
Swimming - no!
Protection - unknown
Crowds - none
Access - good/canoe only
Facilities - none
Safety - potentially dangerous vortex
Scuba - unknown
Cost - free

Directions

From Ft. White, drive south on State Road 47 about five miles to the bridge over the Santa Fe River. The spring is approximately 1 mile upriver from the boat ramp, on the northeast side. The spring is about 0.5 miles upstream of Myrtle's Fissure. Look for swirling vegetation adjacent to the bank.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address:
<http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Siphon Description

The siphon is circular and 5-6 feet in diameter adjacent to the bank. Water swirls swiftly and powerfully from the Santa Fe River and down into the aquifer. A large clump of eel grass was spinning continuously in the center of the siphon. The eel grass was formed by centrifugal force into the shape of a cone or tornado, with a diameter of over two feet at the top/surface, and tapering as it extended underwater. This large clump was spinning at the rate of 1-2 revolutions per second. The surface of the siphon and edge of the Santa Fe River were about 18 inches below the adjacent floodplain hardwood forest on date of visit in 2002.

Another, much smaller siphon (Little Awesome), is a few yards downstream on the same bank.

Use/Access

- Access is by boat only. Ownership of the adjacent land could not be determined.
- The rate and amount of siphoning at the this site were considerable, and the authors were cautious in approaching the edge, lest they slip and be pulled in.

Nearby Springs

Ginnie Springs group, Sawdust Spring, COL1012972, COL1012971, GIL1012973, Myrtle's Fissure, GIL1012971, GIL1012972, 47 Boatramp Spring (or GIL1012974), Little Awesome Siphon/Suck

Other Nearby Natural Features

Ichetucknee Springs State Park
O'Leno State Park
San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
River Rise State Preserve
Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

**Little Awesome Siphon/Suck
Columbia County**

Summary of Features

Scale - 3rd or 4th magnitude in reverse, estimated
 Scenery - excellent
 How Pristine? - completely pristine
 Swimming - no
 Protection - unknown
 Crowds - none
 Access - good/canoe only
 Facilities - none
 Safety - fine
 Scuba - no
 Cost - free

Directions

From Ft. White, drive south on State Road 47 about five miles to the bridge over the Santa Fe River. The spring is approximately 1 mile upriver from the boat ramp, on the northeast side. The spring is about 0.5 miles upstream of Myrtle's Fissure. Look and listen for a small siphon at the edge of the bank.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Siphon Description

The siphon is a small opening along the bank of the Santa Fe, less than a foot in diameter. Water siphons in the hole from the Santa Fe River and down into the aquifer, looking and sounding like a drain in action. The surface of the siphon and edge of the Santa Fe River were about 6 inches below the adjacent floodplain hardwood forest on date of visit in 2002.

Another, much larger siphon (Big Awesome), is a few yards upstream on the same bank.

Use/Access

- Access is by boat only. Ownership of the adjacent land could not be determined.

Nearby Springs

Ginnie Springs group, Sawdust Spring, COL1012972, COL1012971, GIL1012973, Myrtle's Fissure, GIL1012971, GIL1012972, 47 Boatramp Spring (or GIL1012974), Big Awesome Siphon/Suck

Other Nearby Natural Features

Ichetucknee Springs State Park
 O'Leno State Park
 San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
 Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
 River Rise State Preserve
 Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

**Myrtle's Fissure Spring (AKA the Black Crack)
Columbia County**

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude
 Scenery - excellent
 How Pristine? - very pristine
 Swimming - poor-good
 Protection - unknown/private
 Crowds - can be heavy on warm weekends
 Access - adjacent land is private/boat only
 Facilities - none
 Safety - very good
 Scuba - yes
 Cost - free

Directions

From Ft. White, drive south on State Road 47 about five miles to the bridge over the Santa Fe River. The spring is about 1/3 mile upriver from the boat ramp on the north side.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather

conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

Visible from the river, Myrtle's Fissure is about 120 feet from the Santa Fe and creates a shallow run that flows across rough and somewhat jagged limestone. Boulders lie in the run and along its edges. The spring is a long (about 75 feet) fissure that is only about 4 feet wide at its widest point and tapered at the ends. The fissure is against the bank, parallel to the river, and is widest and deepest near the downstream end. According to DeLoach (1997, p. 93) the fissure is at least 60 feet deep. Water flowing from the fissure is clear, but appears dark in the crack itself. Land around the spring is dense floodplain forest. When visited in June 2002, the water was clearer and a limestone wall was visible descending from the surface more than 20 feet.

Use/Access

- Land around the spring is private property, and visitors need to stay in the water.
- The rocky run can be too shallow to canoe in times of low water, requiring visitors to walk up the run to the fissure. The bottom is sharp, so wear something to protect your feet.

Personal Impressions

- With its powerful and sometimes noisy run, dark waters, and edges extending beyond your line of vision, Myrtle's Fissure is visually striking. Robert Frost's description of a snowbound forest also seem appropriate for this spring, which has waters that are 'lovely, dark, and deep.'
- The authors were startled by a 3-4 foot orange snake on one visit in 2000.

Nearby Springs

Ginnie Springs group, Sawdust Spring, COL1012972, COL1012971, GIL1012973, GIL1012971, GIL1012972, 47 Boatramp Spring (or GIL1012974)

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

C. Santa Fe River, State Road 47 to the Suwannee River

This final 16-mile portion of the Santa Fe River has more development than the upper sections, and more motorboat traffic, especially in the last half after the river is joined by the clear-flowing Ichetucknee River. Nonetheless, it offers several long stretches of undeveloped forest and swamp bordering the river. Banks along this portion are generally low, but there are occasional areas of higher banks and exposed limestone.

River water clarity is variable, but tends to get less clear as one goes downriver. The water was very clear when visited in time of historic drought (January 2001) - visibility up to 30 feet. Floodplain hardwoods, shrubs, and cypress trees flank the river, interspersed with houses ranging from rotting trailers and one-story cinderblocks to million-dollar mansions on concrete stilts. The greater development results in less wildlife along the river, but the authors saw one fallen tree with at least 30 turtles sunning themselves.

The river gradually widens as it is fed by more springs, Cow Creek, and the Ichetucknee. By the point of its juncture with the Suwannee, it is several hundred feet across. This stretch includes 2-3 areas of shoals in dramatic turns in the river. In times of low water, the shoals create rapids of Class 1-2 magnitude. Approximately 25 springs can be found along this final segment of the Santa Fe River. The springs range from 2nd to 4th magnitude, and some do not flow in times of drought.

For the most part, these springs are undeveloped and not dramatic. Several are surrounded by private property and are, in effect, backyard swimming pools for landowners with no unauthorized access. Several are in swampy areas and hard to see or reach, and others are along the banks of the river and easy to spot. Of this group, Sunbeam, Betty, GIL99972, and Campground Springs are perhaps the most attractive. Another, uncataloged spring just below Wilson Spring was very appealing.

47 Boatramp Spring (GIL1012974) Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude
 Scenery - fair
 How Pristine? - adjacent to boat ramp and highway bridge
 Swimming - fair-good
 Protection - fair
 Crowds - heavy on warm weekends
 Access - excellent
 Facilities - good

Safety - good to fair
Scuba - yes
Cost - free

Directions

From Ft. White, drive south on State Road 47 about five miles to the bridge over the Santa Fe River. The spring is just a few feet downstream of the apron of the boat ramp on the SE side of the bridge.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring lies in the river and flows from one or more limestone openings that are 10-15 feet deep at times of low-normal river heights. The flow creates visible, overlapping boils on the surface. Water flowing from the spring is clear, but the apparent clarity at the surface is affected by the clarity of the Santa Fe River.

Use/Access

Used for wading, some swimming, and rinsing off. Most users of the boat ramp a few feet away do not notice the spring is there.

Personal Impressions

The convenience of this spring cannot be surpassed. One may literally stand on the edge of the boat ramp and jump into the spring boil. It is an excellent place and way to clean off at the end of a long paddle, or to cool off at the beginning of one.

Nearby Springs

Ginnie Springs group, Sawdust Spring, COL1012972, COL1012971, GIL1012973, GIL1012971, GIL1012972, Myrtle's Fissure Spring

Other Nearby Natural Features

- Ichetucknee Springs State Park
- O'Leno State Park
- San Felasco Hammock State Preserve
- Devil's Millhopper State Geologic Site
- River Rise State Preserve
- Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park

GIL928971
Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 3rd magnitude
Scenery - good-very good
How Pristine? - houses nearby
Swimming - no
Protection - unknown-private
Crowds - none
Access - none, may be viewed from a distance by boat
Facilities - none
Safety - unknown
Scuba - no

Quick Directions

About 15 minutes downriver from the put-in at the Highway 47 bridge on the south side of the Santa Fe River.

Full Directions

From Fort White, drive south on State Road 47 about five miles to bridge over the Santa Fe River and put in at boat ramp (going downstream). After about 15 minutes, look for a creek mouth on left and then another just before the river narrows, deepens, and makes a left turn around some houses and exposed limestone. There is another creek mouth on the left after the turn. These mouths appear to lead to the spring.

Note: these tiny runs are not to be confused with the mouth of Cow Creek, which empties into the Santa Fe River above these runs and nearer the boat ramp at the State Road 47 bridge. Traveling downriver from the bridge, one would encounter Cow Creek first, on the left, as a much fuller run that flows south for several miles.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring is on private property, and its runs were virtually dry and not navigable the date of the authors' visit (Jan. 2001), a time of historic drought. Viewed from a distance, the spring appears to form a circular pool and three runs. The runs

create a sort of semicircular island of several acres. The land around the spring is rolling and covered in thick floodplain forest including cypress trees and cypress knees. There is 2-3 story house on the island overlooking the spring pool. A small bridge connects the house to the mainland, crossing the upstream run from the spring.

The upstream (most eastern) run had some water for about 75 feet, but no flow. The mouth of the middle run is rocky and had some mucky pools but no flow on date of visit. The third run downstream is about 100 yards long. The downstream run was flowing, with water tinkling over rocks and tree roots into the Santa Fe River. The water was clear and only a few inches deep. The runs create channels that are several feet below the surrounding land.

Use/Access

The spring is on private property and not accessible.

Personal Impressions

The authors were confused trying to figure out whether the runs were from different springs or same one, where they led, and if they were indeed all from GIL928971. The western, downstream run was the only one flowing. It is not clear whether one could canoe up the lower run to the spring pool (in times of normal or high water), and/or if doing so would constitute trespassing.

Nearby Springs

47 Boatramp Spring, Cedar Spring, GIL928972, COL928971, Wilson Spring

Other Nearby Natural Features

Ichetucknee Springs State Park
O'Leno State Park
River Rise State Preserve

Cedar Spring Columbia County

Summary of Features

Scale - 3rd magnitude (est.)
Scenery - fair-good
How Pristine? - in housing development, semi-cleared, but fairly pristine
Swimming - no
Protection - unknown
Crowds - none
Access - private
Facilities - none
Scuba - no

Quick Directions

Shortly past GIL928971 on north side of Santa Fe River on lot past house with pontoon boat.

Full Directions

From Fort White, drive south on State Road 47 about five miles to bridge over the Santa Fe River and put in at boat ramp (going downstream). After about 20 minutes, or shortly after passing the downstream run of GIL928971, look on north (right) side of the river for a house with a pontoon boat. The spring is about 150 feet inland from the river between two houses and below several other houses set further inland.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring is in a low floodplain area between houses in a riverside development. It is about 150 feet north of the river and forms a circular pool. This pool was only 9 feet in diameter on date of visit in January 2001 and was murky and not flowing. The owner of the adjacent property told the authors that the spring did flow under normal conditions and that the water was clear under those conditions. The depth of the pool could not be determined.

The area around the spring was partially cleared, but there were cypress trees and other hardwoods on the site. The spring run is about 100 yards long, parallel to the river, and passes under a footbridge behind 1-2 houses before joining the Santa Fe River. It appeared that the run would normally be a few inches to one foot deep.

Use/Access

The spring and run are on private property. The authors were invited by a landowner to see the spring. He said the development above the spring was named after the spring. The landowner said there was no general use of the spring, as it was too small for swimming and did not attract large enough fish for fishing.

Local Springiana

The authors cannot find reference to this spring in any published document. In their book, *A Canoeing and Kayaking Guide to the Streams of Florida*. Volume 1, North Central Peninsula and Panhandle, Carter & Pearce identify a spring

they call Northbank as being 'about one-half mile downstream from State Road 47 on the right bank' (p. 141). Hugging the right bank and looking very carefully, the authors did not see this spring. Cedar Spring is well more than ½ mile from the put-in at the 47 bridge. Cedar Spring is also not on the bank but rather well inland. In Springs of Florida, Rosenau et al. also identify a Northbank Spring and declare it is 'about 1 mile downstream from State Hwy 47' (p. 106) - about the site of Cedar Spring. Rosenau et al. also note that Northbank has 'numerous small vents' which JF and RB did not see. Northbank and Cedar Springs may be the same spring.

Personal Impressions

In a severe drought, there was not much to see of this spring. However, it was interesting to find a spring that does not appear to have been identified officially. In periods of normal water levels, the spring would likely be very attractive if perhaps mucky.

Nearby Springs

47 Boatramp Spring, GIL928971, GIL928972, COL928971, Wilson Spring

Other Nearby Natural Features

Ichetucknee Springs State Park
O'Leno State Park
River Rise State Preserve

GIL928972 Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 4th magnitude
Scenery - fine
How Pristine? - completely pristine
Swimming - no
Protection - unknown, private
Crowds - none
Access - good, boat and then overland
Facilities - none
Scuba - no
Cost - free

Quick Directions

Shortly past Cedar Spring on the south side of Santa Fe River.

Full Directions

From Fort White, drive south on State Road 47 about five miles to bridge over the Santa Fe River and put in at boat ramp (going downstream). After 25 minutes, or shortly after passing the downstream run of GIL928971 and Cedar Spring, look on the south (left) side of the river for a narrow spring run that curls into the river from the west. Look for a 4-5 foot bank on the upriver side of the mouth of the run, and a lower bank on the downriver side.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The presumed site of the springhead is inland from the river about 50 yards in an area of deep floodplain forest. On date of visit in January 2001, a time of historic drought, the spring and run were dry. The most likely site of the springhead is in the photograph below. However, there was evidence of water flow behind this site, and the springhead might be further inland. The likely spring area is a depression set about 10 feet below the surrounding land and covered with tree branches, cypress knees, and roots. The run winds about 75 yards to the river. The run was completely covered in leaves, identical to the surrounding high ground, suggesting the spring had been dry for several months at least.

Use/Access

None. The run is narrow and would likely not be navigable even in times of normal water levels. The area was not posted.

Personal Impressions

The spring is in a completely natural and undisturbed setting, something that can be said for only a small percentage of Florida springs.

Nearby Springs

47 Boatramp Spring, GIL928971, Cedar Spring, COL928971, Wilson Spring

Other Nearby Natural Features

Ichetucknee Springs State Park
O'Leno State Park
River Rise State Preserve

COL928971
Columbia County

Summary of Features

Scale - 3rd
 Scenery - fine
 How Pristine? - very unspoiled
 Swimming - no
 Protection - unknown
 Crowds - none
 Access - very good, boat only
 Facilities - none
 Safety - very good
 Scuba - no
 Cost - free

Quick Directions

A little more than 2 miles below State Road 47 bridge on north bank of Santa Fe River.

Full Directions

From Fort White, drive south on State Road 47 about five miles to bridge over the Santa Fe River and put in at boat ramp (going downstream). After 2+ miles, look for semicircular spring pool on the bank on the right side, immediately after a swampy area on the right with thick shrubs.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring forms a small semicircular pool or alcove at the edge of the river. On date of visit (January 2001), a time of historic drought, the pool was about 15 feet wide and 2 feet deep. There was a mild but clearly visible boil near the center of the pool, and water flowed from small openings in the bottom. Water in the pool is fairly clear and greenish. The land around the pool is thick floodplain forest, with a swampy area to the immediate east upriver of the spring.

Use/Access

- The spring could be used for wading or sitting in the water. It is too shallow for swimming.
- A tree at the downstream edge of the pool provides a nice perch for viewing and photographing.

Personal Impressions

A cute little spring.
 Nearby Springs
 GIL928971, Cedar Spring, GIL928972, Wilson Spring

Other Nearby Natural Features

Ichetucknee Springs State Park
 O'Leno State Park
 River Rise State Preserve

Wilson Spring
Columbia County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude
 Scenery - poor-fair
 How Pristine? - in developed area, choked with exotics
 Swimming - fair
 Protection - unknown
 Crowds - can be heavy on warm weekends
 Access - very good, boat or car; must canoe into spring
 Facilities - fair
 Safety - good
 Scuba - yes
 Cost - free

Directions

From U.S. 27 in Ft. White, take Wilson Springs Road west about 4 miles to the spring and boat ramp on the Santa Fe River. The spring is also about 3 miles downriver from the boat ramp where State Road 47 crosses the Santa Fe River.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather

conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address:
<http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring is in a residential area and is at the head of a run of about 100 yards. The spring forms a circular pool about 75 feet in diameter and 10-12 feet deep. Water in the pool is clear but fairly dark. There is a strong boil in the NW corner of the pool. The pool and run are filled with exotic vegetation as well as duckweed. Algae is present in the pool and run. The run is about 40 feet wide and 1-3 feet deep and has a strong current. There are low banks and some trees along the run and around the spring pool.

Use/Access

- Land around the pool is private property, so access is only by canoe. There are one house on the east side of the pool and run, and 6-7 houses above the run on the west side.
- The pool is used for swimming and diving. There is a rope swing and a sky-ride rigged to drop into the pool.
- There is a public boat ramp just below the mouth of the run.

Personal Impressions

The spring is marred and altered by the very heavy exotic vegetation in it and its run. The land and development around the spring are unattractive.

Nearby Springs

GIL928971, Cedar Spring, GIL928972, COL928971, GIL99974, Unnamed Spring

Other Nearby Natural Features

Ichetucknee Springs State Park
 O'Leno State Park
 River Rise State Preserve

GIL99974 Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 3rd magnitude
 Scenery - fine
 How Pristine? - very pristine
 Swimming - no
 Protection - unknown
 Crowds - none
 Access - very good, boat only
 Facilities - none
 Safety - very good
 Scuba - no
 Cost - free

Quick Directions

Almost immediately past boat ramp at Wilson Springs on the south side of the Santa Fe River.

Full Directions

From U.S. 27 in Ft. White, take Wilson Springs Road west about 4 miles to the spring and boat ramp on the Santa Fe River. Put in, cross to near the south side, and the look for the spring on the left.

*For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address:
<http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>*

Spring Description

Water flows from beneath and adjacent to a limestone ledge at the edge of the river. There was a slight boil on date of visit (January 2001). The water is clear and shallow. Land around the spring is floodplain forest and is not developed.

Use/Access

- No apparent use.
- The authors paddled past this spring, giving it no more than a glance because they thought it was further downstream. It was only in retrospect that they realized they had passed it and had not stopped to take a photograph.

Personal Impressions

The spring is easy to miss, so look carefully to the left just after passing Wilson Spring.

Nearby Springs

GIL928971, Cedar Spring, GIL928972, COL928971, Wilson Spring, Unnamed Spring

Other Nearby Natural Features

Ichetucknee Springs State Park
 O'Leno State Park

River Rise State Preserve

Unnamed Spring Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude (est.)
 Scenery - good-very good
 How Pristine? - dock just downstream of and above spring
 Swimming - fair-good
 Protection - unknown
 Crowds - none
 Access - very good, boat only
 Facilities - none
 Safety - good
 Scuba - yes
 Cost - free

Quick Directions

5-10 minutes' paddle below Wilson Spring on south side of the Santa Fe River under high bank just before a high dock.

Full Directions

From U.S. 27 in Ft. White, take Wilson Springs Road west about 4 miles to the spring and boat ramp on the Santa Fe River. Put in, cross to near the south side, and the look for the spring on the left after 5-10 minutes in an area of high banks.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address:
<http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring lies in the riverbed on the south side of the river and creates a semicircular alcove. There are high (15 feet) and steep limestone/sand banks above the river at this spot, and the spring forms a small alcove. There is a pronounced boil. The water was fairly clear, but the depth could not be determined except that it was greater than 12 feet. A few feet downstream of the spring at the top of the bank is an overhanging wooden dock/platform. There is a cleared area across from the spring, where small boys were playing on date of visit (January 2001).

Use/Access

- The dock above the spring suggests there is a house above it, but no structures can be seen from the river except the dock because of the steep banks. The site is not signposted, but the land is likely private property. One can get into the spring from a boat, however.
- The spring invites free-diving and scuba.

Local Springiana

The two boys playing across from the spring knew there was a spring at this site, but did not know a name for it.

Personal Impressions

This spring is not described in any literature the authors have found. It is a powerfully flowing spring - surely second magnitude. Weather conditions were too cold for diving on the date of visit, but the authors are determined to return.

Nearby Springs

GIL928971, Cedar Spring, GIL928972, COL928971, Wilson Spring, GIL 99974

Other Nearby Natural Features

Ichetucknee Springs State Park
 O'Leno State Park
 River Rise State Preserve

Unnamed Possible Spring Columbia County

Summary of Features

Scale - 3rd magnitude (est.)
 Scenery - poor
 How Pristine? - in back yard of house on river
 Swimming - unknown
 Protection - unknown
 Access - none, private

Directions

From U.S. 27 in Ft. White, take Wilson Springs Road west about 4 miles to the spring and boat ramp on the Santa Fe River on Santa Fe River. Go downriver on the Santa Fe 2-3 miles, past 2 sets of small shoals and a hairpin turn. The spring is on the north (right) side of the river in a neighborhood after the dramatic river turn. Also located about 20 minutes' paddle upriver from the Oasis Spring boat ramp. To get to the Oasis boat ramp: From Branford, drive east/south on U.S. 27 to junction with Highway 129/49. Turn south. Drive about 5 miles to Highway 138 and turn east. Drive 3.4 miles to NE 2nd Way. Follow 2nd Way for 2.6 miles to dirt road on right and the boat ramp.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The possible spring is about 100 feet from the river and forms an oval-shaped depression in the back yard of a red house on squared concrete pilings in a developed section of the Santa Fe River. On date of visit (January 2001), a time of historic drought, the pool was not flowing. However, there is a dry run of about 65 feet from the pool to the river, suggesting the site does flow and might therefore be a spring. The run cuts through natural bank along the river, which was about 8 feet above the river on date of visit. The run did not appear to be manmade and was not wide enough except for canoes. There was only a small puddle in the pool. The possible spring is in a cleared area behind a house along the river.

Use/Access

The possible spring is on private property and the land is posted. In times of normal water levels, the site is likely used for swimming - as a natural pool - by the landowners.

Personal Impressions

This spring is not described in any literature the authors have found. In their comprehensive spring compilation, Springs of the Suwannee River Basin in Florida (1998), Hornsby & Ceryak identify and catalogue another spring just 1-2 houses downriver from this site (COL917971, p. 33), but did not include this site. JF and RB did locate COL917971, and it was a different spring. The authors will take another look at this site in a time of normal river flow to see if it is flowing and therefore a spring.

Nearby Springs

COL928971, Wilson Spring, GIL 99974, COL917971, Sunbeam Spring, Oasis Spring

Other Nearby Natural Features

Ichetucknee Springs State Park

O'Leno State Park

River Rise State Preserve

COL917971
Columbia County

Summary of Features

Scale - 3rd magnitude

Scenery - fair

How Pristine? - in back yard of house on river, run altered and dammed

Swimming - yes

Protection - unknown

Access - no, private

Quick Directions

1-2 houses past the unnamed possible spring above, 20 minutes' paddle upriver on the Santa Fe from private boat ramp at Oasis Spring or 2-3 miles below boat ramp at Wilson Spring.

Full Directions

From U.S. 27 in Ft. White, take Wilson Springs Road west about 4 miles to the spring and boat ramp on the Santa Fe River. Go downriver on the Santa Fe 2-3 miles, past 2 sets of small shoals and a hairpin turn. The spring is on the north (right) side of the river in a neighborhood after the dramatic river turn and 1-2 houses after the unnamed possible spring described above. To get to the Oasis boat ramp: From Branford, drive east/south on U.S. 27 to junction with Highway 129/49. Turn south. Drive about 5 miles to Highway 138 and turn east. Drive 3.4 miles to NE 2nd Way. Follow 2nd Way for 2.6 miles to dirt road on right and the boat ramp.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring is just off the river (the center of the pool perhaps 75 feet from the river) and forms an oval pool that is about 35 by 45 feet in diameter. Water in the pool was clear and shallow, and a mild boil was visible. The water had a green tint on

date of visit (January 2001). No vent was visible, however, due to vegetation in the pool. The spring is set in a depression with banks rising around it on all sides and land sloping upward to a house on the north side. Much of the land around the spring has been cleared and is grassy.

The banks of the pool are shored with sandbags, and the mouth of the run is narrowed and partly dammed with sandbags and rocks. Water tumbles from the mouth of the pool into the river 25 feet away. On date of visit, the run was only a few inches deep.

Use/Access

- Private property - no access. The authors pulled their canoe to the dam and paddled no further.
- The site may be used for swimming and fishing by the landowners.

Nearby Springs

COL928971, Wilson Spring, GIL 99974, unnamed possible spring, Sunbeam Spring, Oasis Spring

Other Nearby Natural Features

Ichetucknee Springs State Park

O'Leno State Park

River Rise State Preserve

Sunbeam Spring Columbia County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude

Scenery - excellent

How Pristine? - development nearby; spring very pristine

Swimming - good wading and snorkeling

Protection - good

Crowds - boat traffic going by

Access - good; boat only

Facilities - none

Safety - good

Scuba - no

Cost - free

Quick Directions

Five minutes past the unnamed possible spring and COL917971 Spring on the Santa Fe River. 15-20 minute paddle upriver from private boat ramp at Oasis Spring near the middle of the river.

Full Directions

From U.S. 27 in Ft. White, take Wilson Springs Road west about 4 miles to the spring and boat ramp on the Santa Fe River. Go downriver on the Santa Fe 2-3 miles, past 2 sets of small shoals and a hairpin turn. The spring five minutes' paddle past COL917971 and lies in the riverbed a little toward the north (Columbia County) side. To get to the Oasis boat ramp: From Branford, drive east/south on U.S. 27 to junction with Highway 129/49. Turn south. Drive about 5 miles to Highway 138 and turn east. Drive 3.4 miles to NE 2nd Way. Follow 2nd Way for 2.6 miles to dirt road on right and the boat ramp.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring is in the riverbed and flows from two points in an up-jutting fissure/fracture that was exposed when the authors visited (January 2001) during a time of record drought. Water flows powerfully out of a crack in the limestone. On date of visit, more than 10 feet of the crack was exposed, and water flowed up and out against the current of the surrounding river. The crack angles downward to the riverbed, and water flowing from a second opening on the river bottom (about 18 feet upriver) creates another strong boil. Water in the spring is clear, and there was colorful algae growing on the limestone. The rocks were also covered with tiny (about 1 cm) periwinkle-like snails. Sunlight shafted into the exposed flowing vent, which is up to two feet wide and narrows as it goes down. The riverbed was about 6 feet deep on date of visit, and the bottom was visible.

Use/Access

- When the fissure is exposed, one may walk on it and have a birds-eye view of the vent and its powerful flow.
- The authors waded around the site, which would also be excellent for snorkeling, even in normal river height conditions. A dive flag would be useful to warn approaching motorboats.

Personal Impressions

Sunbeam is a spectacular sight in times of low river water, and appealing and attractive under all but flood conditions. The upfolded fracture creates a dramatic and rare flow spectacle under dry conditions. The authors cannot think of another spring that offers such a prospect in the middle of a river. The closest approximation is Little River Spring in time of extreme drought, when the visitor can also stand on the limestone

directly over the site of the flow and look down into the mouth of the cavern.

Other Nearby Springs

COL928971, Wilson Spring, GIL 99974, unnamed possible spring, COL917971, Oasis Spring

Other Nearby Natural Features

Ichetucknee Springs State Park
O'Leno State Park
River Rise State Preserve

Oasis Spring Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 3rd magnitude
Scenery - fair-good
How Pristine? - dredging behind spring, boat ramp next to spring, land cleared, erosion
Swimming - good
Protection - unknown
Crowds - some on warm weekends
Access - good, boat and by land with authorization
Facilities - private dock adjacent to spring
Safety - very good
Scuba - no
Cost - free

Quick Directions

At Oasis boat ramp, or 3 miles below Wilson Springs boat ramp on the south side of the Santa Fe River.

Full Directions

From Branford, drive east/south on U.S. 27 to junction with Highway 129/49. Turn south. Drive about 5 miles to Highway 138 and turn east. Drive 3.4 miles to NE 2nd Way. Follow 2nd Way for 2.6 miles to dirt road on right and the boat ramp. Oasis Spring is just upriver of the ramp.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring pool is on the riverbank and is a semicircle about 40 feet in diameter. Water in the spring was clear and greenish, and there was some algae in the spring. Water flows from a limestone opening and a mild boil was present. On date of visit (January 2001), a time of historic drought, the water was very low and exposed limestone extended out of the water at the back end of the pool. Water in the spring was 3-6 feet deep.

A channel, which may be manmade, loops behind the spring, forms a small island, and reenters the river upstream. On date of visit, there was no flow of spring water back into this channel due to low river levels.

Use/Access

The site appears to be used for swimming and hanging out. Under normal rain conditions, it would be deeper and more conducive to swimming and snorkeling.

Personal Impressions

Not a bad little spring, despite the unattractive manmade 'improvements' around it. The authors would like to return when the water is higher and snorkel at the site.

Nearby Springs

COL928971, Wilson Spring, GIL 99974, unnamed possible spring, COL917971, Sunbeam Spring

Other Nearby Natural Features

Ichetucknee Springs State Park
O'Leno State Park
River Rise State Preserve

SUW917971 Suwannee County

Summary of Features

Scale - 3rd magnitude
Scenery - fine-excellent

How Pristine? - house above spring, otherwise very natural
 Swimming - no
 Protection - unknown
 Crowds - none
 Access - very good, boat only
 Facilities - none
 Safety - very good
 Scuba - no
 Cost - free

Quick Directions

On the north side of the Santa Fe River 150 feet below where it is joined by the Ichetucknee River.

Full Directions

From Branford, drive east/south on U.S. 27 to junction with Highway 129/49. Turn south. Drive about 5 miles to Highway 138 and turn east. Drive 3.4 miles to NE 2nd Way. Follow 2nd Way for 2.6 miles to dirt road on right and the boat ramp on the Santa Fe River. Paddle four miles to where Ichetucknee River joins the Santa Fe. The spring is 150 past the confluence on the right (north) side.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring forms a small pool on the riverbank in an area of floodplain forest. On date of visit (January 2001), a time of historic drought, the spring was not flowing but did contain water. The water was dark and the pool was about 10 feet in diameter and mostly covered in water lettuce. The spring's dry run was just a few feet to the river.

Use/Access

- No apparent use except by flora and fauna - the spring is tiny and forms a small shallow pool.
- There is a large house visible above the spring, which has a view of both the Santa Fe and Ichetucknee rivers.

Personal Impressions

The spring was very nondescript on the date of visit, and the authors would likely have overlooked it had they not known its exact location.

Nearby Springs

GIL99972

Other Nearby Natural Features

Ichetucknee Springs State Park
 O'Leno State Park
 River Rise State Preserve

GIL99972 Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 3rd magnitude
 Scenery - fine
 How Pristine? - house above spring, undergrowth cleared above spring
 Swimming - good, fine snorkeling
 Protection - unknown
 Access - adjacent land is private; make no landfall
 Facilities - none
 Safety - unknown
 Scuba - no
 Cost - free

Quick Directions

On the Santa Fe River about ¼ mile below where it is joined by the Ichetucknee River on the south side.

Full Directions

From Branford, drive east/south on U.S. 27 to junction with Highway 129/49. Turn south. Drive about 5 miles to Highway 138 and turn east. Drive 3.4 miles to NE 2nd Way. Follow 2nd Way for 2.6 miles to dirt road on right and the boat ramp on the Santa Fe River. Paddle four miles to where Ichetucknee River joins the Santa Fe. The spring is about ¼ mile below the confluence on the left (south) side at the back yard of a house.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring is adjacent to the riverbank and forms a small pool of irregular shape and two sections amid exposed

limestone. On date of visit, a time of historic drought (January 2001), the pool was much reduced and only about 12 by 20 feet in diameter. Water flows from an eight-foot-deep limestone opening in the back (SW) end of the pool. The water was very clear and blue on the date of visit.

Land around the pool has been partially cleared and serves as the yard for the owners of a house on the property. There is a mature cypress tree in the center of the spring on the east side; its diameter is 3-4 feet.

Use/Access

- The land around the spring is private property and is posted.
- Another sign says 'Beware of Dog.' A dog on the property barked at the authors but must have been tied or fenced as it did not show itself.
- One can canoe into the lower portion of the spring in times of normal river heights.

Personal Impressions

The spring is very lovely and appealing. The authors wanted to take a dip but feared being yelled at (or worse) for trespassing. Presumably, however, one can go into the spring without trespassing as long as no landfall is made.

Nearby Springs

SUW917971

Other Nearby Natural Features

Ichetucknee Springs State Park
O'Leno State Park
River Rise State Preserve

Betty Spring Suwannee County

Summary of Features

Scale - 3rd magnitude
Scenery - very good
How Pristine? - land cleared above/around spring, near site of old bridge, some erosion
Swimming - good wading and snorkeling
Protection - unknown
Crowds - small
Access - good, boat only and no landfall allowed
Facilities - none
Safety - good
Scuba - no
Cost - free

Directions

From Branford, drive east/south on U.S. 27 about 4 miles to junction with U.S. 129. Drive south on U.S. 129 and go 3 miles to bridge over the Santa Fe River. Put in at boat ramp at county park at the bridge and go upriver about 2 miles to the spring on the left (north) side, just past site of old bridge across the river.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address:
<http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

Betty Spring forms an oval pool on the north bank of the Santa Fe River. The pool was about 15 feet long, 10 feet wide, and three feet deep on date of visit (January 2001). Water in the spring was clear and blue and flowed from a small limestone opening near the mouth of the pool. There was a slight boil visible. On date of visit, water in the spring pool was appreciably warmer than the immediately adjacent water in the Santa Fe River. Limestone rose up about two feet around the edge of the pool; this limestone would be submerged under normal river heights. There is a dead cypress tree on the upriver side of the spring at the edge of the bank.

Use/Access

- The land around the spring is private and posted, so it may only be visited from the water and no landfall can be made.
- The spring may be used for wading, swimming, and snorkeling. Its small size, however, means that only a few people can be in it at a time.

Local Springiana

Based on materials along the banks just below the spring, there appeared to be a bridge that cross the river at this site many years ago.

Personal Impressions

Betty is a cute little spring and very inviting for swimming after paddling a while on the river. Under the weaker sunlight of winter, and toward the end of the day, springs tend to be less refractive and not as blue. Betty, however, was quite blue even given such conditions and would likely glow under a summer sun.

Nearby Springs

- GIL729972
- GIL729973
- Campground Spring
- Trail Spring
- SUW107971
- GIL107971
- GIL729971

Other Nearby Natural Features

Ichetucknee Springs State Park
O'Leno State Park
River Rise State Preserve

GIL729972? (or possibly) GIL 729973
Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 4th magnitude
Scenery - fair
How Pristine? - land cleared above spring
Swimming - no
Protection - unknown
Crowds - none
Facilities - none
Safety - good
Scuba - no
Cost - free

Directions

Several miles below boat ramp at Oasis Spring on south side. From Branford, drive east/south on U.S. 27 to junction with Highway 129/49. Turn south. Drive about 5 miles to Highway 138 and turn east. Drive 3.4 miles to NE 2nd Way. Follow 2nd Way for 2.6 miles to dirt road on right and the boat ramp on the Santa Fe River. Paddle downstream 5-6 miles (?) miles and look for small mouth of run on the south (left) side.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The presumed spring was dry on date of visit in January 2001, a period of historic drought. A depression was located at the back of a 250-foot dry run that might be the spring pool. The dry pool was oval and about 50 by 100 feet in diameter. Land above the site is cleared, but below the spring is floodplain forest.

Use/Access

Unknown.

Personal Impressions

The authors had difficulty locating several springs in this stretch of the Santa Fe that are described and photographed in the 1998 publication, *Springs of the Suwannee River Basin in Florida* (Hornsby & Ceryak, pp. 49-53). They wondered if all the springs in this section - all of which are small - were dry. Based on the description in Hornsby & Ceryak, the most likely match for this site is GIL729972 (p. 52).

Nearby Springs

- Betty Spring
- Campground Spring
- Trail/Pleasant Grove Spring
- SUW107971

Other Nearby Natural Features

Ichetucknee Springs State Park
O'Leno State Park
River Rise State Preserve

Campground Spring
Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude
Scenery - very good
How Pristine? - land partially cleared above pool for campground
Swimming - fair-good

Protection - unknown
 Crowds - unknown
 Access - excellent, from water or land
 Facilities - excellent at adjacent campground
 Safety - good
 Scuba - yes
 Cost - fee to launch boat or camp at site, free if approached by boat from different boat ramp

Directions

From Branford, drive east/south on U.S. 27 about 4 miles to junction with U.S. 129. Drive south on U.S. 129 for about 4 miles, and turn right (west) at sign for Elly Ray's Campground on graded road about one mile below the bridge over the Santa Fe River. Follow to campground and river, and the spring is about 150 feet upriver on the right.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring is adjacent to the river and forms a semicircular pool that is 75 feet across and framed/canopied on three sides by 8 or so large cypress trees. On date of visit, which was also late in the day and with low sunlight (January 2001), the water in the spring was dark and the depth could not be determined. According to Hornsby & Ceryak (1998, p. 45), the spring has a maximum depth of 23 feet. No boil was visible.

Use/Access

- The land behind the spring is used as a campground, and there is a boat launch nearby.
- Canoers and boaters cannot make unauthorized landfall; the site is posted. One can put in at the boat ramp, swim at the spring, or camp for a fee.
- There was a trail to the spring, but the authors could not tell if the spring was used for swimming/snorkeling/diving or just for sightseeing.

Personal Impressions

The evenly spaced cypress trees along the edge of the spring create an attractive sight. The authors plan to return to the spring in the summer and visit under conditions that are more conducive to swimming and snorkeling.

Nearby Springs

- GIL729972
- GIL729973
- Betty Spring
- Trail Spring
- SUW107971
- GIL107971
- GIL729971

Other Nearby Natural Features

Ichetucknee Springs State Park
 O'Leno State Park
 River Rise State Preserve

Trail (or Pleasant Grove) Spring Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 3rd magnitude
 Scenery - poor
 How Pristine? - platform around spring, exotic plants in water, buildings above spring
 Swimming - poor-good, depending on amount of plants in spring
 Protection - unknown
 Crowds - can be busy on warm days
 Access - very good, land or water
 Facilities - excellent in adjacent campground
 Safety - very good
 Scuba - no
 Cost - fee to launch boat or camp at site, free if approached by boat from different boat ramp

Directions

From Branford, drive east/south on U.S. 27 about 4 miles to junction with U.S. 129. Drive south on U.S. 129 for about 4 miles, and turn right (west) at sign for Elly Ray's Campground on graded road about one mile below the bridge over the Santa Fe River. Follow to campground and river, and the spring is a few feet downriver from the boat ramp next to a dock.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring is at the edge of the river and forms a semicircular pool 35 feet across. Water flows from a limestone opening

in the back, downriver end of the pool from a depth of about 10 feet. The water was clear, and the limestone opening was visible from the surface; the rest of the pool was full of aquatic vegetation. The spring is framed by a wooden deck on three sides. Land slopes upward from the pool to several buildings that are part of a campground.

Use/Access

- The spring is located in a campground and is used for swimming. People jump from the wooden platform into the water.
- Canoers and boaters cannot make unauthorized landfall; the site is posted. One can put in at the boat ramp, swim at the spring, or camp for a fee.

Personal Impressions

The spring was not attractive on date of visit, as it was full of exotic plants. The setting is no longer natural.

Nearby Springs

- GIL729972
- GIL729973
- Campground Spring
- Betty Spring
- SUW107971
- GIL107971
- GIL729971

Other Nearby Natural Features

Ichetucknee Springs State Park
O'Leno State Park
River Rise State Preserve

SUW107971 Suwannee County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude
Scenery - fine
How Pristine? - some trash near spring, otherwise very pristine
Swimming - poor-fair
Protection - unknown
Crowds - none
Access - very good, boat only
Facilities - none
Safety - good
Scuba - unknown
Cost - free

Directions

From Branford, drive east/south on U.S. 27 about 4 miles to junction with U.S. 129. Drive south on U.S. 129 for about 5 miles, and turn right (west), immediately after passing the turn for State Road 138 (which is on the left/east). Drive on graded dirt road and then turn right/west on NW 39 Avenue to the Wanamake boat ramp on the Santa Fe River. (Note: the Santa Fe River is only about ¼ mile from the Suwannee River at this boat ramp.) Put in and go upriver about 2/3 to ¾ mile and look for spring on the left/west side. The spring is a short distance upriver from a swampy area on the north side characterized by very large cypress trees with wide trunks that taper dramatically and are reminiscent of Indian teepees.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring forms a semicircular pool at the edge of the river. The pool was about 50 feet wide on date of visit, and visibility in the water under winter and evening conditions (January 2001) was only about one foot. The pool is canopied by cypress and hardwoods, and the low area around the spring is thick floodplain forest. No flow was visible.

Use/Access

- It appears that people occasionally camp or picnic at this site, as there was garbage on the land near the spring. The spring may also be used for swimming, but is in a low and muddy area and is not appealing for that purpose.
- Besides being accessible from the Wanamake boat ramp described above, the spring is also just a few minutes' paddle downstream of the boat ramp near Campground and Trail Springs.

Personal Impressions

The spring is not dramatic in appearance and can be easy to miss, especially when there is no visible flow. Look for the telltale circular pool. The site would likely be clearer on a sunny summer day.

Nearby Springs

- GIL729972
- GIL729973
- Campground Spring
- Trail Spring

- Betty Spring
- GIL107971
- GIL729971

Other Nearby Natural Features

Ichetucknee Springs State Park
O'Leno State Park
River Rise State Preserve

GIL107971
Gilchrist County

Summary of Features

Scale - 2nd magnitude
Scenery - fine
How Pristine? - completely pristine
Swimming - poor-fair
Protection - unknown
Crowds - none
Access - very good, boat only
Facilities - none
Safety - very good
Scuba - unknown
Cost - free

Directions

From Branford, drive east/south on U.S. 27 about 4 miles to junction with U.S. 129. Drive south on U.S. 129 for about 5 miles, and turn right (west), immediately after passing the turn for State Road 138 (which is on the left/east). Drive on graded dirt road and then turn right/west on NW 39 Avenue to the Wanamake boat ramp on the Santa Fe River. (Note: the Santa Fe River is only about ¼ mile from the Suwannee River at this boat ramp.) Put in and go upriver about ½ mile and look for spring on the right/east side.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The spring forms a large pool at the edge of the river and is about 75 feet across and semicircular. A small creek flows either from or into the back of the pool. On date and time of visit (January 2001, just before sunset), the water was not clear and no flow was visible. The land around the spring is low and is floodplain forest. Hardwood trees line the edge of the spring, including a large and spreading tree on the downriver (south) side. A great blue heron was fishing in the creek/backwater behind the spring.

Use/Access

There is no apparent use at this very pristine site.

Personal Impressions

In trying to photograph this spring from a point of altitude, JF slipped and fell out of a tree, the idiot, and limped for the next three weeks. So I hope you like the photo!

Nearby Springs

- GIL729972
- GIL729973
- Campground Spring
- Trail Spring
- SUW107971
- Betty Spring
- GIL729971

Other Nearby Natural Features

Ichetucknee Springs State Park
O'Leno State Park
River Rise State Preserve

GIL729971
Gilchrist County

Directions

Near to GIL107971 above.

For maps, latitude/longitude data, driving directions, satellite imagery, and topographic representations as well as weather conditions at this spring, go to Greg Johnson's informative "Florida Springs Database" web site at the following address: <http://www.ThisWaytothe.Net/springs/floridasprings.htm#Florida>

Spring Description

The authors somehow managed to miss this spring, which is described by Hornsby & Ceryak (1998) as being in the bed of the Santa Fe River and 250 feet across. It has a 100-foot run and a maximum depth of 22 feet. Its precise location is Lat.-29.53'21" and Long.-82.52'29" (p. 44).

Personal Impressions

How did we miss this huge spring?

Nearby Springs

- GIL729972
- GIL729973
- Campground Spring
- Trail Spring
- SUW107971
- GIL107971
- Betty Spring

Other Nearby Natural Features

Ichetucknee Springs State Park
O'Leno State Park
River Rise State Preserve

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