



DATE AND TIME: Thursday, December 5, 8:00am meeting time at Stone Creek. Our tour begins at 9:30 at the Ashton Biological Preserve and will run about 2 hours.

RSVP REQUIRED: Please RSVP to Tanya at 540-538-3987 (text or call)

DESCRIPTION: We'll be taking a very interesting tour of the Ashton Biological Preserve, a protected upland habitat. We'll see their conservation, captive breeding and rehabilitation facilities and visit the animals that they are rehabilitating, including gopher tortoises, critically endangered radiated tortoises and a variety of snakes. We'll be allowed in the tortoise habitats where we can get up close to them.

The preserve asks that we **please do not wear bug spray since we will be handling animals. Please wear closed-toed shoes, pants and bring a water bottle. (We did a trip to Ashton last May and it was not buggy at all.)**

Maximum group size is 20 people. \$20 cash donation per person. If we have more than 20 people interested in visiting we may be able to schedule a 2nd trip on another day. If you RSVP for this trip and are unable to make it please let Tanya know right away so that she can invite somebody else from her waiting list. Since Ashton is not open to the public for drop-in visits, this is a great opportunity to see this special place.

Carpooling is recommended. The last 6 miles into the preserve is a sandy road. Four-wheel drive and all-wheel drive cars are normally fine but you probably don't want to be driving a sportscar on this road. If you have any hesitation about using your own car, you are welcome to carpool.

LUNCH: Optional lunch after the trip. Possibly at Sister's Place in Williston. Details TBD.

MEETING PLACE: Please meet at the pickleball court parking area between 8:00 and 8:10am.

ITEMS TO BRING: Please bring plenty of water. Wear closed-toed shoes and pants. Your shoes should be appropriate for walking on uneven dirt and sandy terrain. **No bug spray allowed.**

FEE: \$20 per person, please bring cash. Extra donations to the preserve are always welcome.

PETS: Sorry, pets are **not** allowed on this trip.

WEBSITE: www.ashtonbiodiversity.com

See your doctor before swapping the TV remote control for hiking boots, bikes and kayaks. Then pick a hike, ride or other trip within your comfort zone and begin your adventure. Participants are personally responsible for all their decisions and risks associated with their participation in any Outdoor Adventure Club activity.

Ashton Biodiversity Research & Preservation Institute, Inc. (ABRPI) is a non-profit 501c3 corporation headquartered at Ashton Biological Preserve. We are located between Archer and Newberry, Florida on the northern edge of the ancient Brooksville Ridge.

Founded in 1996 to preserve critical uplands habitat for the future, ABRPI is named after its founders, Ray and Pat Ashton. We are a private, non-profit conservation area and research facility located in North-central Florida on approximately 100 acres of upland habitat.

Although we conduct research on many types of wildlife native to the region, we specialize in tortoise care. We are a major captive breeding facility for the critically endangered radiated tortoise (*Astrochelys radiata*). We are also actively involved in conservation of the gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*), native to Florida.

Ashton Biological Preserve sits along the northern end of Brooksville Ridge, an area of rolling hills with xeric upland habitats, wooded hammocks, and sandhill habitat. The latter is particularly important for conservation because sandhill habitat has declined in Florida by about 88% since the arrival of Europeans in the Americas. In addition to uplands, the Preserve's low areas contain wetlands and sinkholes. The Floridian aquifer runs beneath the Brooksville Ridge, creating a variety of springs in the area. Ashton Biological Preserve has permanent and ephemeral water sources on property.

Because so much of it is undisturbed, Ashton Biological Preserve is home to breeding populations of gopher frogs (*Lithobates capito*), Eastern narrowmouth toads (*Gastrophryne carolinensis*), and pinewoods treefrogs (*Hyla femoralis*), as well as many other amphibian species. Breeding Eastern indigo snakes (*Drymarchon couperi*) are present, as well as large populations of Eastern diamondback rattlesnakes (*Crotalus adamanteus*) and pygmy rattlesnakes (*Sistrurus miliarius*). We are also home to mammals such as bobcats (*Lynx rufus*) and coyotes (*Canis latrans*).

← from Elan Spa at Del Webb Stone Creek, 6101 SW ...
to Ashton Biological Preserve, Archer, FL 32618

1 hr 5 min (46.5 miles)

via US Hwy 27 N

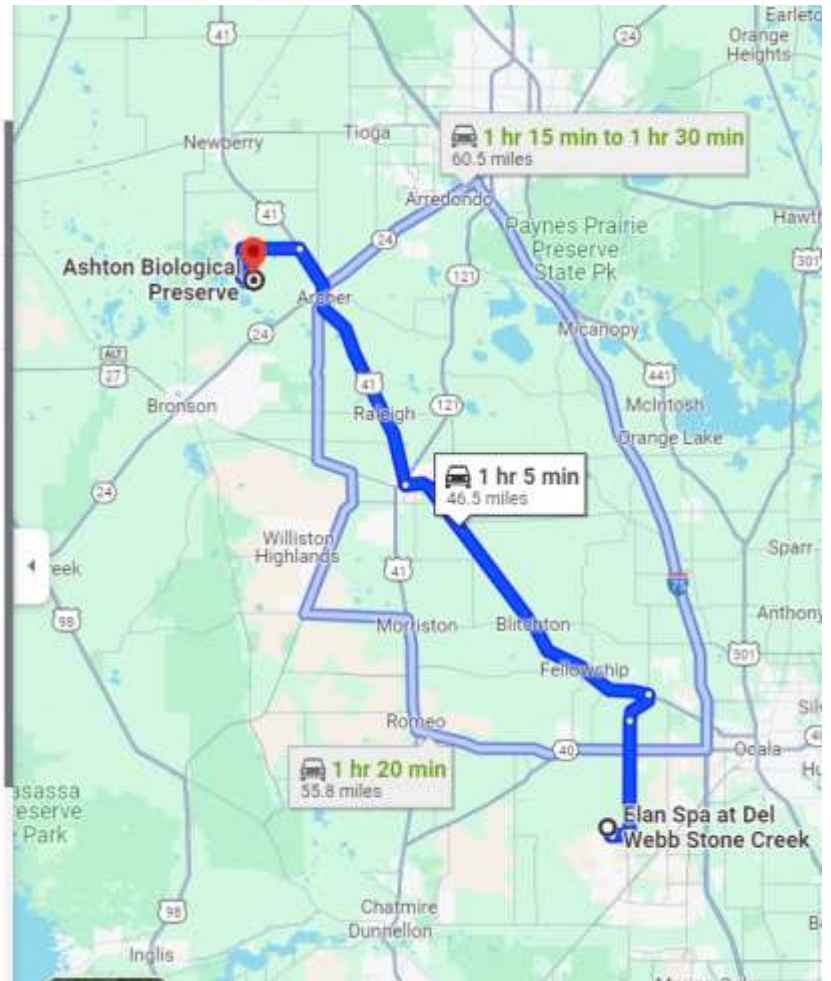


Add to Calendar

Elan Spa at Del Webb Stone Creek

6101 SW 89th Ct Rd, Ocala, FL 34481

- > Take SW 80th Ave and NW 70th Ave to US Hwy 27 N
17 min (9.3 mi)
- ∨ Follow US Hwy 27 N to SW 95 Ave in Alachua County
35 min (31.8 mi)
- ↶ Turn left onto US Hwy 27 N
17.9 mi
- ↷ Turn right onto US-41 N/N Main St/US Hwy 27 N
Continue to follow US-41 N/US Hwy 27 N
13.9 mi



- ↶ Turn left onto SW 95 Ave
3.0 mi
- ↷ SW 95 Ave turns slightly left and becomes SW 234th St
1.5 mi
- ↶ SW 234th St turns left and becomes SW 119th Ave
0.2 mi
- ↷ Turn right onto SW 230 St
0.3 mi
- ↷ Slight left
Destination will be on the left
0.4 mi

Ashton Biological Preserve

Archer, FL 32618