



Alliance Adventures

Spring 2015

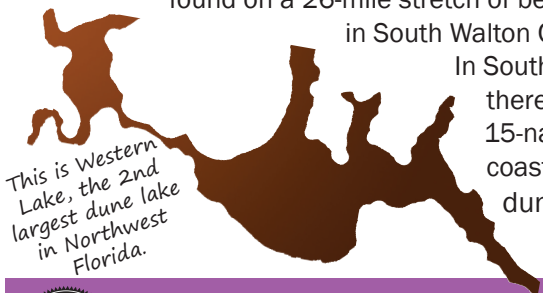
The Coastal Dune Lakes of Northwest Florida

Coastal Dune Lakes are just as they sound — lakes that are found in the dunes. Dune lakes are permanent bodies of water that are found within two miles of the coast. Those found in Northwest Florida are irregularly shaped, particularly shallow and contain brackish water.

When you look at the dune lakes, the first thing you might notice is the water's color. Water found in our dune lakes looks like a giant glass of sweet tea, and that is because the lake is stained much like a glass of tea. The pine needles and cypress needles that fall from trees in the uplands around the lakes release tannins. These tannins stain the water brown. So it is similar to the process when making sweet tea!

Dune Lakes are only found in a few places throughout the world, but what makes the lakes in Northwest Florida particularly interesting is their outfall. When a lake reaches flood level, its water breaks through the dunes and opens up to the Gulf of Mexico. So, if you see tea-colored water entering into the gulf, most likely you are seeing a dune lake's outfall.

Here in Northwest Florida, coastal dune lakes are found on a 26-mile stretch of beach in South Walton County. In South Walton, there are 15-named coastal dune lakes.



This is Western Lake, the 2nd largest dune lake in Northwest Florida.

Outfalls

Did you know that the coastal dune lakes occasionally connect to the Gulf of Mexico?



Seanmurphyphoto

When a lake reaches flood-level, its water cuts through the dunes to create a temporary channel between the lake and the Gulf. This part of the lake is known as the outfall. As you can see in the picture, the outfall empties lake water into the Gulf and an exchange of water occurs. Saltwater from the Gulf enters the lake while brackish water from the lakes enters the Gulf.

Many of the 15-named lakes sit inside state parks including Topsail Hill State Park, Deer Lake State Park, Grayton Beach State Park and Camp Helen State Park.



For more information about Dune Lakes and CBA, please visit our website at basinalliance.org.





Alliance Activities

Coastal Dune Lake Crossword

Dune Lakes	I	I	X	H	N	S	F	W	M	S	N	A	H	R	R	D
Eastern	R	G	U	L	B	M	I	X	E	A	S	T	E	R	N	U
Alligator	E	A	Z	I	B	N	L	K	Z	V	T	W	U	P	I	N
Fuller	E	L	S	T	I	W	L	C	S	C	C	E	A	K	D	E
Big Redfish	D	L	I	T	G	A	E	L	H	U	I	K	L	A	F	L
Little Redfish	S	E	R	L	R	T	B	S	E	A	H	L	L	P	Y	A
Campbell	T	N	R	E	E	S	P	T	T	W	N	D	I	A	N	K
Morris	X	C	O	R	D	R	M	O	K	E	O	H	G	D	E	E
Camp Creek	L	Z	M	E	F	E	A	L	P	L	R	P	A	R	C	S
Oyster	U	H	E	D	I	L	C	F	Z	V	P	N	T	A	K	L
Deer	H	L	T	F	S	L	A	A	O	Z	K	Q	O	P	E	T
Powell	W	H	C	I	H	U	X	Y	X	O	Z	F	R	E	A	Y
Draper	U	Y	G	S	T	F	S	L	D	H	E	Z	N	R	Q	C
Stallworth	X	S	M	H	J	T	H	T	R	O	W	L	L	A	T	S
Allen	B	S	K	K	E	B	D	K	E	E	R	C	P	M	A	C
Western	Q	I	A	R	X	C	K	O	Z	Y	W	L	U	U	O	A



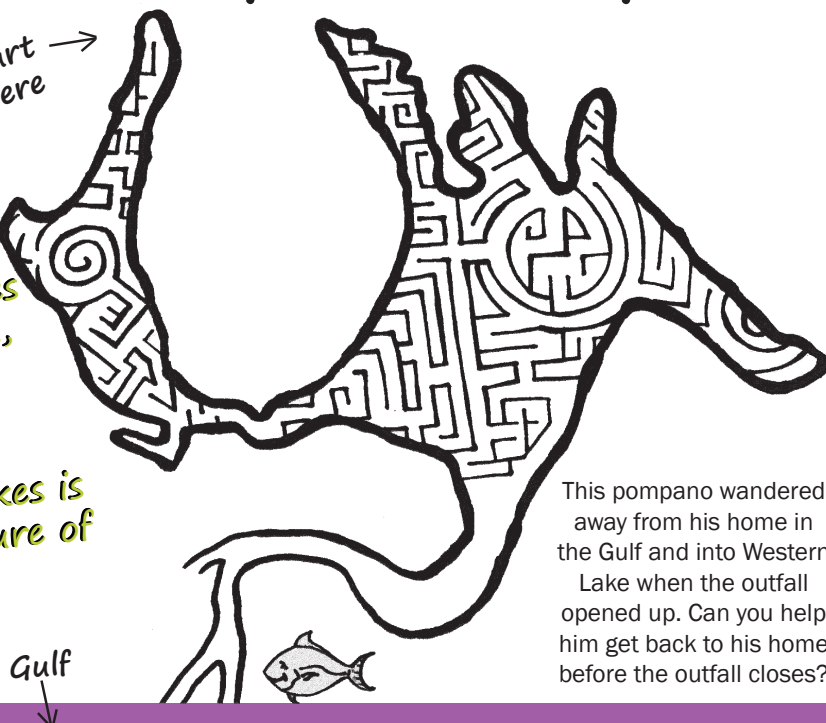
Help Mr. Pompano!

Did you know there
are 15-named
Coastal Dune Lakes
in South Walton?

You can also find dune lakes
in Australia, New Zealand,
Madagascar & Oregon!

The water in the dune lakes is
brackish, which is a mixture of
fresh and saltwater!

Start
Here →



This pompano wandered
away from his home in
the Gulf and into Western
Lake when the outfall
opened up. Can you help
him get back to his home
before the outfall closes?