



A Paddlers Wilderness Paradise

"Way Down Upon the Suwannee River"

By Tom Liebert

Hidden deep in the Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge at the foot of the Suwannee River and Gulf of Mexico, one can easily miss the confluence of the Dan May Creek and Dan May Island. On this beautiful and privately owned island sits an almost century old lodge that has been authentically restored. This architectural treasure is built from old growth cypress, heart pine timbers and planks. The "dog trot" breeze way runs through the center of the lodge and opens onto an inviting screened sleeping porch overlooking the Dan May Creek and launch.

Dan May Lodge was originally built as a hunting lodge and weekend retreat for executives of the Putman Lumber Company. Today, the Dan May Lodge is quickly becoming the center piece for paddlers seeking a unique getaway, miles from even small towns and rural development. The island and lodge are accessible by paddle or power boat only.



This complex River Delta estuarine system is one of the largest undeveloped river basins in the United States. The wetlands, swamps and numerous creeks leading into the Lower Suwannee River and Gulf of Mexico support natural fisheries and rookeries with wildlife habitats unsurpassed by any in the Southeastern United States. The Dan May Island is 6 miles south of the Town of Suwannee and approximately 8 miles north of the historical and quaint fishing village of

Cedar Key Florida. This area is a paddling paradise, as well as a Birder's dream and wildlife photographers are quickly transported back in time in the natural settings throughout these hidden coastlines.



Did I forget to mention kayak fishing from Dan May Lodge? Need I really say more? Okay! Just imagine blackening or grilling your catch of the day, perhaps a Redfish or Trout, over an open fire. You may even enjoy a cool, relaxing shower before joining your friends on the large open porch of Dan May Lodge overlooking the creek. Today's stories are

now being shared for the first time as the sun drifts down over the River and Creeks. Watch as the wild hogs appear for their evening foraging around the perimeters of the Lodge. Maybe you will begin to contemplate tomorrow's adventures or simply enjoy the night sounds with crickets and an occasional Owl as you watch the fireflies flickering in the dark.

By now, you are probably so content you can slip into your comfortable bedroll or sleeping bag on a feather light airbed on the screened breezeway, counting fireflies under the cabbage palms as the night sounds become music to your ears.



Kayak Tom can be found most days in Cedar Key, FL at *Kayak Cedar Keys* on his dock at the City Beach and Park.



ADVENTURE LINKS TO DAN MAY ISLAND

- Dan May Lodge Inquiries & Reservations: <mailto:caymanson@yahoo.com>
- Dan May Island website with photo gallery: <http://www.danmayisland.com>
- Kayak Rentals: KayakCedarKeys@aol.com
352-543-9447 Special Pricing for Wilderness Trips & Guide Service
- Wilderness Guide: <http://www.kayakcedarkeys.com/wilderness.php>
- Area Information: <http://www.cedarkeyguide.com>

