

JP HANDMADE

Adventure Notes

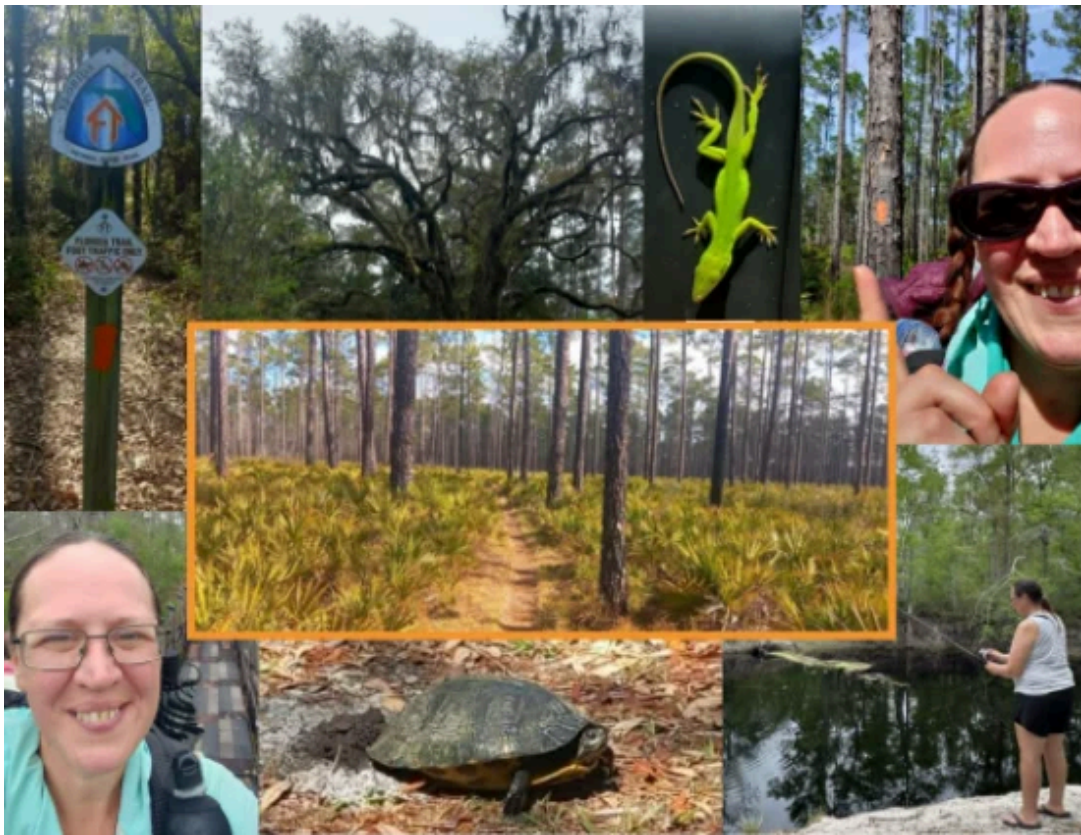
"Wear to share the adventure"

MONTHLY TRAIL DISPATCHES FROM PENGUIN



Issue 01- Florida Trail

I'm writing this one with sandy boots and a sunburn I definitely did not see coming in March. Let me tell you about the Panhandle.



THIS MONTH'S ADVENTURE - LOOKING BACK

350 Miles on the Florida Trail.

After just 4 days from starting my section I found myself in White Springs, the trail town host of Florida Fest — my intention for this section hike was for solitude, however when the trail gifts you a festival and I had time it was absolutely right to pull over and camp in the park a few days. Shoes off, hikers everywhere, and some genuinely great conversations, meeting new hikers and a few familiar faces from my time on the Appalachian Trail.

The Panhandle section of the Florida Trail is after the Northern region of the Florida Trail and runs from just east of Big Bend, Aucilla to Pensacola. In March this year I hiked about 350 miles of pine flats, long hot road walks, and small towns that show up for hikers in a way I wasn't expecting.

Churches, mostly. More than once I rolled into a tiny town with nothing planned, and a church would have a hiker box, a quiet patch of grass to camp on, an outdoor tap for water, and — more than once — a power outlet round the back for charging a phone. No fanfare, just open doors. On a trail with long, shadeless road walks in heat that was already climbing into the high 80s by mid-March, which is not what I'd packed my brain for.

The one section I couldn't walk was Eglin Air Force Base — about 100 miles of the trail and very scenic. New background-check requirements started in 2025, and at the time I was

hiking there was no clear route for international hikers like me to apply. So I moved up trail to complete the final 30 miles to Fort Pickens taking in Pensacola and Navarre Beach— you adapt, you reroute, you keep moving.

Hiking Eglin Military base as an international? - Eglin has now posted guidance on how and when to process your background check so you can apply for the required pass.

[Check the process here](#)

The bright spot was a few nights at a trail angel's place where I tried fishing for the very first time in my life. I caught 3 things: 2 sticks and my finger when the hook swung when casting!, I held the rod wrong for at least twenty minutes, and loved every second of it. That's the kind of detour you don't get if everything goes to plan.

I chose the Florida Trail for many reasons, the climate in March (definitely warmer than Georgia mountains!) elevation zero, loved flatland hiking, the location, (still on the east coast) made it easier logistically and to just be a hiker. It's funny when you strip back to basics opportunities fall in your path. I met the community engagement officer for the Florida trail as i was leaving the Florida Fest. The event was well organised and I can see it growing year on year. This meeting beside the Suwannee river led to a chat about my white blaze necklace and what it represented, now I am an entrepreneur so on went the business hat and I walked away with a plan to add the orange blaze that marks the FT to my collection.

The Florida Trail orange-blaze necklace launches this fall — keep an eye out.

Appalachian Trail Bundle Hiker set

Great to wear, great to share or gift

Three handmade resin pieces, one trail

- ◆ Appalachian Trail White Blaze Necklace
- ◆ Appalachian Trail Keychain (color randomly selected)
- ◆ Appalachian Trail Dangle earrings (color randomly selected)

Combined standard Price \$55

Bundle price \$45 (Saving \$10)

plus \$5.00 towards delivery

25 Sets available, get yours today!

Buy the Bundle today!

While you were hiking.....

 **Launching in the Fall:** The Florida Trail orange-blaze necklace and Keychains— same handmade resin style as the AT pieces, in FT orange. Not live yet, but it's coming.



Spotted on trail: A few of you are wearing your white-blaze pieces well beyond the AT these days — keep tagging me on your chosen social platform, I love seeing it.

BROWSE THE FULL COLLECTION

TRAIL COMMUNITY

A quiet thank-you to the small churches and trail angels along the panhandle section of the Florida trail who keep their doors and taps open to hikers supporting their hikes with nothing asked in return.

Florida Trail Association

Supporting and maintaining the Florida trail for all of us.

Florida Trail

White Springs Bed & Breakfast - 386-397-4252

Located at 16630 Spring street, White springs, Florida, a trail community and home of Florida Fest. Hiker-friendly, comfortable beds, warm welcome, easy walk to everything.

Share your Adventure

Submit a 300-400 trail story that can be considered for publication in a future newsletter issue, send to hello@jphandmade.com

Stock to share the Adventure!

Own a shop or lead a trail organisation? Sign up for Trade Notes - our quarterly dispatch for stockists.

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Until next time- Happy Trails

Penguin 18' 

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