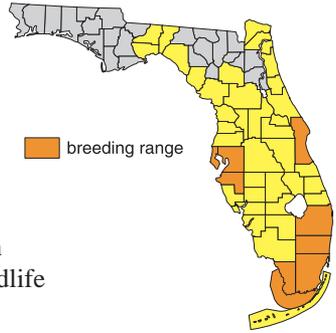


## ROSEATE SPOONBILL

*Ajaia ajaja*

**Order:** Ciconiiformes  
**Family:** Threskiornithidae  
**FNAI Ranks:** G5/S2  
**U.S. Status:** None  
**FL Status:** Species of Special Concern  
U.S. Migratory Bird Treaty Act and state Wildlife  
Code prohibit take of birds, nests, or eggs.



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**Description:** Their bright pink bodies, contrasting white necks, and flat, spoon-like bills unequivocally identify the adults of this species from other long-legged wading birds; immature birds are whitish, acquiring the pink coloration as they mature.

**Similar Species:** No other Florida species is similar. The roseate spoonbill is the only spoonbill native to the Western Hemisphere and is the only pink bird that breeds in Florida.

## ROSEATE SPOONBILL

*Ajaia ajaja*

**Habitat:** Primarily nests in mixed-species colonies on coastal mangrove islands or in Brazilian pepper on man-made dredge spoil islands near suitable foraging habitat. Occasionally nests in willow heads at freshwater sites. Forages in shallow water of variable salinity, including marine tidal flats and ponds, coastal marshes, mangrove-dominated inlets and pools, and freshwater sloughs and marshes.

**Seasonal Occurrence:** Mostly resident, locally, along the coasts from Tampa Bay and Merritt Island south; juvenile birds especially may disperse northward along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts and into the interior of the peninsula. Summer population along southwest coast of Florida may be augmented by migrants from Cuba. Nesting occurs primarily November - March in Florida Bay and March - July in peninsular Florida.

**Florida Distribution:** Nests locally from Tampa Bay on the Gulf coast and Brevard County on the Atlantic coast, south to northern Florida Bay, and at some interior sites. The majority of the breeding population occurs in Florida Bay. The non-breeding range extends north along both coasts and the interior of the peninsula.

**Range-wide Distribution:** Breeds locally along the coasts of central and south Florida, Louisiana, and Texas, Cuba, Hispaniola, the Bahamas, both coasts of Central America, and coastal and inland sites from northern South America south to central Argentina. Rare in the Lesser Antilles. Post-breeding dispersal to southeast Georgia and Gulf states, including Alabama and Mississippi.

**Conservation Status:** Most of the known breeding sites occur within federally owned national parks and wildlife refuges and National Audubon Society sanctuaries. Vulnerable to human disturbance at nesting colonies, even in protected areas, and to alteration of unprotected foraging sites.

**Protection and Management:** No-access buffer zones of 330 ft. (100 m) are recommended around nesting colonies to lessen disturbance, primarily by boat traffic. It is essential to monitor water quality and manage hydrological patterns in ways that consider the needs of wading birds and other wildlife.

**Selected References:** Poole and Gill (eds.) 2000, Robertson and Woolfenden 1992, Rodgers and Smith 1995, Rodgers et al. (eds.) 1996, Runde et al. 1991, Stevenson and Anderson 1994.