

# WORDS ON THE WILDERNESS

A HISTORY OF PLACE NAMES IN  
SOUTH FLORIDA'S NATIONAL PARKS

by Larry Perez

*Every name has a story ...*

Read about the first map-makers who explored Florida, the Seminole Wars, the pioneering early homesteaders, and the ambitious developers in the area's heyday. And, learn about the environmentalists who saved rare wilderness for us and our descendents. Or, puzzle about the few names that seem to have no obvious explanation at all.

Author Larry Perez grew up in Southern Florida and has worked for park services so he is well-equipped to delve into the fascinating history behind the names of rivers, keys, bays, sloughs, prairies, ship wrecks, and other features in Big Cypress, Biscayne, Dry Tortugas, and Everglades national parks.

*This is a book to dip into ... to use as a reference ... to read from cover to cover. There are numerous photos and over 400 citations to back up the author's assertions but his chatty, breezy style makes it a delight.*

“Words on the Wilderness; A History of Place Names in South Florida’s National Parks” by Larry Perez  
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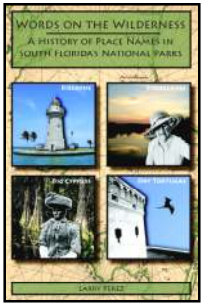
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### GEOGRAPHIC FEATURES

#### **Adams Key**

Regarding this particular moniker, there are only two facts known for certain. The first is that this island was given its current name in 1854 by the United States Coastal Survey. The second is that the officer that christened this island was Sub-Assistant I. H. Adams. Though not clear whom he intend<sup>l</sup>ed to honor with this designation, one might assume the officer seized the opportunity to immortalize himself.

#### **Ajax Reef**

Originally built in 1826, the vessel *Ajax* had only been in service a decade before she met her demise on this shallow reef. While en route from New York to Mobile with a load of cargo, the 133-foot vessel ran aground here on November 14, 1836.

#### **Alicia Wreck**

Carrying a cargo of furniture and trade goods, the Spanish freighter *Alicia* ran aground on Long Reef on April 21, 1905. Salvage attempts were unsuccessful, and the reef remains the final resting ground for this impressive ship. The vessel was built in Glasgow in 1883 and measured a full 345 feet in length.



#### **Anniversary Reef**

Biscayne National Park celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary in 1993. During that year, a variety of events were planned to mark the occasion. For one such event, a delegation of VIPs and dignitaries was invited to join park staff on a guided snorkeling tour.



Park Science Coordinator Richard Curry (third from right in photo) suggested taking the group to a little-known and unnamed reef nearby. The pristine site was a hit among the guests and the area has been known as “Anniversary Reef” ever since!