

HISTORY

Indian Key is an 11-acre island accessible only by boat that played an integral role in early Florida history. Native Americans living in the Keys were the first to profit from raiding vessels wrecked on offshore reefs. For Spanish, Bahamian and American wreckers, the Straits of Florida continued to be lucrative in producing shipwrecks into the mid-19th century.

In 1831, Jacob Housman bought Indian Key and set out to build a wrecking business to compete with the wealthy monopoly in Key West. Housman's island empire included a store, hotel, dwellings, cisterns, warehouses and wharves. Known for his shady business practices, he constantly feuded with other salvagers. In 1836, in a bid to become independent from Key West, Housman had the Legislative Council establish Indian Key as the first county seat for Dade County. Housman's fortunes began to decline after losing numerous court battles, and he had to mortgage the island.

In 1838, Dr. Henry Perrine, a physician with an interest in tropical botany, moved to Indian Key with his family to await the end of the Second Seminole War. On August 7th 1840, Native Americans attacked the island. During the attack, the store was raided and most of the wooden structures were burned to the ground. Many residents were able to escape including Houseman, however Perrine was killed. Today, visitors can explore the remains of the homestead surrounded by the tropical plants that Perrine introduced to the island.



INDIAN KEY HISTORIC STATE PARK

Offshore Island
Islamorada, Florida 33036
305-664-2540

PARK GUIDELINES

Please remember these tips and guidelines, and enjoy your visit:

- Hours are 8 a.m. until sunset, 365 days a year.
- An entrance fee is required. Visitors can make payment at the self-service iron ranger located on the island. Price is \$2.50 per person.
- There are no bathroom facilities or trash cans on the island. Visitors should pack out trash from the island.
- The collection, destruction or disturbance of plants, animals or park property is prohibited.
- Pets are not permitted on the island.
- Snorkeling is popular on the east side of the island. A diver down flag is required. Snorkeling is not permitted within 100 feet of the dock.
- For information about joining the Friends of the Islamorada Areas State Parks Inc., call 305-664-2540.
- Florida's state parks are committed to providing equal access to all facilities and programs. Should you need assistance to enable your participation, please contact the ranger station at 305-664-2540.

FloridaStateParks.org

Follow us on social media
#FLStateParks



**FLORIDA
STATE PARKS**

...the Real FloridaSM

INDIAN KEY HISTORIC STATE PARK

A small island paradise alive with history

Indian Key Historic State Park



EXPERIENCES AND AMENITIES

Indian Key is located less than one mile from the north shore of Lower Matecumbe Key and is only accessible by boat. Some mainland marinas offer boat and kayak rentals as well as eco-tours with opportunities to snorkel around the island and out on the reef. Anglers can fish for a variety of species, from bonefish on the flats to tarpon in the channels.

Kayakers can float across the island's shallow grass flats and look for a variety of aquatic life, from dolphins and manatees to sharks and rays. The island is a year-round refuge for osprey, cormorants and egrets. During fall and spring migration, warblers and birds of prey utilize the island as a rest stop. Self-guided tours of the historic ruins are augmented by the island's network of nature trails and interpretive signage. The island's perimeter provides one of the few nearshore areas where snorkelers can view coral.

An observation tower, boat dock, shelter and trails are available on Indian Key. There are no restrooms, picnic facilities or trash receptacles. Visitors should plan to bring plenty of food and water with them, and pack out trash that is generated on the island.

Directions

Indian Key is located oceanside of U.S. 1 at Mile Marker 78.5. Access to the island is by boat, canoe or kayak.

