

## HISTORY AND NATURE

Given its immense scale and scenic beauty, Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park has a grandeur all its own. In many areas, prairie stretches to the horizon, uninterrupted by signs of civilization. Kissimmee Prairie was once a working cattle ranch, part of Florida's historic cow hunter tradition. Crackers – cattlemen who made a cracking sound with their whips – drove herds to train depots or to the coasts then returned to their homes. During World War II, the U.S. military conducted training missions on the site.

The 54,000-acre preserve is part of the Everglades headwaters and protects the largest remaining tract of Florida dry prairie. Growing-season fire and a wet season keep the prairie healthy by maintaining knee-high vegetation.

Sweeping vistas of grasses, flowers and saw palmettos are coupled with an amazing array of wildlife and natural communities. With the arrival of each season, different colors of wildflowers explode onto the scene.

A spectacular birding and wildlife watching experience awaits park visitors. Over 150 bird species have been sighted, including burrowing owls and crested caracara. Butterfly viewing is superb, with more than 85 recorded species. Internationally recognized for its lack of light pollution, the prairie's night sky is inky black — campers can spot the Milky Way without using telescopes or binoculars.



## KISSIMMEE PRAIRIE PRESERVE STATE PARK

33104 N.W. 192 Avenue  
Okeechobee, Florida 34972  
863-462-5360

### PARK GUIDELINES

- Ranger station hours are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Sunday and state holidays.
- An entrance fee is required. Additional user fees may apply.
- Speed limit is 25 miles per hour.
- All plants, animals and property are protected. Collection, destruction or disturbance is prohibited.
- Pets are permitted in designated areas only. Pets must be kept on a hand-held leash no longer than six feet and be well-behaved at all times.
- Fires are allowed in designated areas only.

### MORE INFORMATION

- Become a volunteer. Inquire at the preserve office or online at [www.floridastateparks.org/volunteers/](http://www.floridastateparks.org/volunteers/).
- For camping information, contact Reserve America at 800-326-3521 or visit [ReserveAmerica.com](http://ReserveAmerica.com).
- Florida State Parks are committed to providing every visitor with equal access to all facilities and programs. Should you need assistance to enable your participation, please contact the preserve office at 863-462-5360.

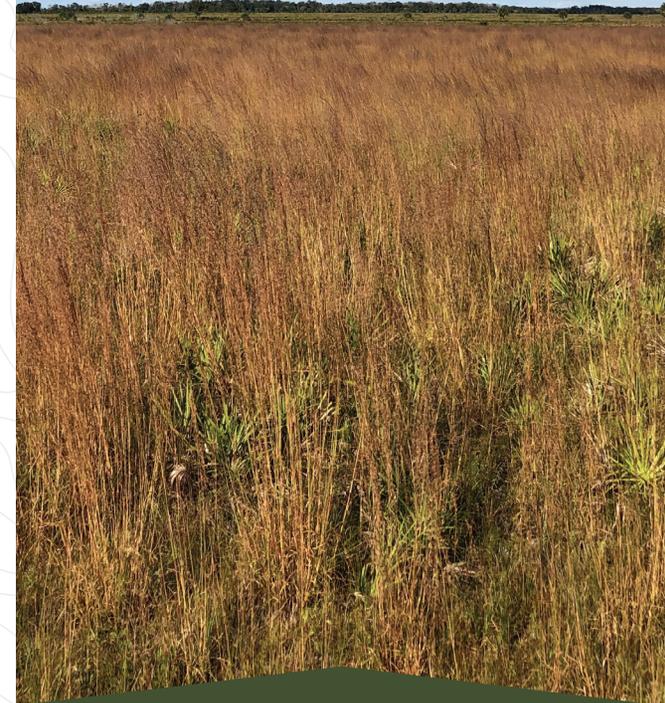
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## KISSIMMEE PRAIRIE PRESERVE STATE PARK

*Largest remaining expanse  
of Florida dry prairie*



**FLORIDA  
STATE PARKS**

*...the Real Florida<sup>SM</sup>*

## EXPERIENCES AND AMENITIES

Visitors can find a deep connection to natural Florida at Kissimmee Prairie Preserve. More than 100 miles of **multi-use trails** beckon **bicyclers, hikers** and **horseback riders**. The trails roam through dry prairie, wetlands and cool, shady hammocks, offering views of the grasslands and its abundant wildlife.

Look for wildflowers and white-tailed deer along the trails, and scan the skies for a bald eagle or swallow-tailed kite. The park's varied habitats offer a full day of **bird-watching**. The prairie also serves as a haven for migrating and resident butterflies.

Another memorable way to explore the stretch of wild prairie is from an elevated seat on a ranger-led **buggy tour**. The tours of remote prairie backcountry run November through March.

Four different camping choices are available. The **family campground** offers a full-service **restroom** with **hot showers**. The **equestrian campground** with **hot showers** has **paddocks** available. The **primitive camping area** offers a wilderness camping experience. The campsites are accessible only by foot, bicycle or horseback. The **astronomy campground** offers a camping experience free from the intrusion of campfires and bright lights.

Kissimmee Prairie's remote setting makes it a premier location for **stargazing**. On new-moon nights campers can relax under luminescent stars. Full moons illuminate the landscape, allowing campers to walk without a flashlight and explore the nighttime wonderland.



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