

History & Nature

This land was acquired to buffer Estero Bay from encroaching development in the watershed. The preservation and protection of Estero Bay's water quality is a primary focus in managing the preserve.

Introduced plants are a continuous problem in the preserve. The control and removal of Brazilian pepper, Australian pine, melaleuca trees and other invasive exotic plants are high priorities. Plans have been made to restore disturbed natural communities.

A diverse group of plant and animal species are found in the park. A tidal swamp dominated by red, black and white mangroves is the largest natural community in the park. The trees form a dense fringe along Estero Bay and its tributaries. Mangrove trees provide habitat for fish and birds. Decaying leaf litter from the trees provides nutrients to small fish and other marine organisms.

Tidal marshes with low-growing succulent plants and wet flatwoods with a mixture of slash pines, cabbage palms and grasses provide habitat for many animals. The scrub and scrubby flatwoods communities within the park add greatly to the scenic and biological diversity.



Florida State Parks

Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Recreation and Parks

Estero Bay Preserve State Park

3800 Corkscrew Road
Estero, FL 33928
(239) 992-0311

FloridaStateParks.org

Park Guidelines

- Hours are sunrise until sunset, 365 days a year.
- All plants, animals and park property are protected.
- The collection, destruction or disturbance of plants, animals or park property is prohibited.
- Pets are permitted in designated areas only. They must be kept on a hand-held leash no longer than 6 feet and well behaved at all times.
- Fishing and boating are allowed in designated areas only. A Florida fishing license may be required.
- Fireworks, alcohol and hunting are prohibited.
- Become a volunteer, call (239) 992-0311 for more information.
- 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.

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Estero Bay Preserve State Park

Home of wetlands and wildlands



Photos: Steve Giguere

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Estero Bay Preserve State Park encompasses over 10,000 acres of land bordering the Estero Bay. The northern and eastern edges of the Estero Bay shoreline are fringed with more than 15 miles of mangrove trees. Hiking trails and paddling trails are available for visitors to enjoy.

Visitors can access the park at two widely-separated locations: the Estero River Scrub site near the Estero River or the Winkler Point site further north. At both sites **hiking trails** lead to the interior. Suburban sights and sounds will fade as you hike into the woods. Be sure to bring your camera, drinking water, bug spray and suntan lotion. Be advised that some trails are seasonally wet.

The Winkler Point trail features wide coastal marshes. Visitors may see ospreys and bald eagles soaring overhead. The **observation decks** along the trail are a good place to view waterfowl and wading birds. The Estero River Scrub has four trails with a combined length of about ten miles. Gopher tortoises, warblers, wrens and woodpeckers are commonly seen. Visitors hiking to the river can stop to rest at one of the **benches** located along the bank.

Watercraft can reach Estero Bay from launch sites at other nearby parks: Koreshan State Historic Site in Estero (239) 992-0311, just three miles away; and Lovers Key State Park (239) 463-4588, located just south of Ft Myers, about 15 miles away.

Visit www.GreatCalusaBlueway.com for information about the **paddling trail** in Estero Bay and Estero River.



Directions

To Estero River Scrub: I-75 to Corkscrew Road exit 123. West on Corkscrew Road to U.S. 41, turn north onto U.S. 41. Turn west onto Broadway. Public access point is on the north side of the road next to the FPL substation.

To Winkler Point: I-75 to Daniels Road exit 131 and go west. Turn south onto Six Mile Cypress Parkway. Turn south onto Summerlin Road. Turn south onto Winkler Road. Public access point is at the end.