History & Nature

From floodplain marshes to flatwoods and shady hammocks, the park has 12 distinct natural communities that hold over 30 listed species of flora and fauna. The park's botanical bounty includes delicate mosses, butterfly orchids, sawgrass, cutthroat grass, fetterbush and gallberry with expansive, colorful fields of lotus and pickerelweed that stretch towards the sun.

The pine and scrubby flatwoods found in the park are host to: long leaf pines, scrub oaks, Florida scrub jays, Sherman fox squirrels, gopher tortoises, white-tailed deer, turkeys, bobcats and the grey fox. In fact, Lake Kissimmee State Park hosts over two hundred species of birds, making it one of the best birding areas in central Florida. Some of the more notable species are the bald eagle, snail kite, sandhill crane and crested caracara.

Europeans arrived in Florida in the 1500s, but their presence was not felt until the 1800's. During the Third Seminole War, Fort Gardiner was built nearby as a temporary fortification; after the war the area was widely used for timber and turpentine operations.

During the Civil War the area was used for raising cattle that were shipped to the Confederate Army or traded with Cuba for supplies. After the war, cattle became the main industry and this continues to the present day.

In 1969, the state of Florida purchased 5,030 acres of land from the William Zipperer estate for use as a state park. Lake Kissimmee State Park was opened to the public in August 1977. An additional 900 acres was purchased in 1997 and added to the park's western boundary.

Florida State Parks Florida Department of Environmental Protection Division of Recreation and Parks

> Lake Kissimmee State Park 14248 Camp Mack Road Lake Wales, Florida 33898 (863) 696-1112

FloridaStateParks.org

Park Guidelines

- Hours are 7 a.m. until sunset, 365 days a year.
- An entrance fee is required.
- All plants, animals and park property are protected. Collection, destruction or disturbance is prohibited.
- Pets are permitted in designated areas only. Pets must be kept on a leash no longer than 6 feet and well behaved at all times.
- Fishing, boating, camping and fires are allowed in designated areas only. A Florida fishing license may be required.
- Fireworks and hunting are prohibited in all Florida state parks.
- Become a volunteer. Inquire at the ranger station.
- For camping information, contact Reserve America at (800) 326-3521 or (866) I CAMP FL or TDD (888) 433-0287 or visit ReserveAmerica.com.
- 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.

Large Print

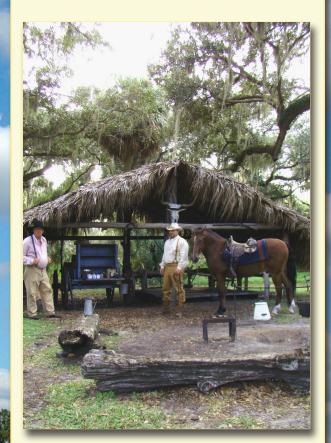
Alternate format available upon request at any Florida state park.





Lake Kissimmee State Park

Where Florida's Heritage Comes Alive



... the Real Florida



National Gold Medal Winner Florida State Parks - "America's First Three-Time Winner"

Real Fun in ... the Real Florida

Lake Kissimmee State Park has something for every visitor including access to Florida's third largest lake, shaded camping and picnic facilities; excellent wildlife viewing opportunities; beautiful nature trails for hiking, biking and horseback riding; and a genuine 1876 "Cow Camp."

Florida's cowboy heritage comes alive with living history demonstrations of the early Florida "cow hunters" in an 1876-era cow camp, open 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., holidays and every Saturday and Sunday from October 1 to May 1.

The pine and scrubby flatwoods found in the park host: long leaf pines, scrub oaks, Florida scrub jay's, Sherman fox squirrels, gopher tortoises, white-tailed deer, bald eagles, sandhill cranes, turkeys, bobcats and the grey fox. Visitors can enjoy boating, canoeing, kayaking and fishing in the upper Kissimmee chain of lakes. Tour the waterways within the park and/or along the shores of Lake Kissimmee, Lake Rosalie and Tiger Lake. View some of the incredible birds and wildlife inhabiting the area known as the "headwaters" to the Everglades. Park visitors can hike more than 13 miles of trails and observe or study the abundant plant and animal life found within the parks boundary. Over six miles of trails are currently open to equestrians on Buster Island. A large, shaded picnic area with pavilions, bathrooms and playground can be found in the main use area near the boat ramp. The park has sixty campsites, as well as two primitive campsites for backpackers and a youth camping area that can accommodate up to 50 people.

An **observation tower** is located in the picnic area and provides views of Lake Kissimmee and its marsh lands.

Directions ENTRANCE STATION The Park is 15 miles east of Lake Wales, take SR60 to Boy Scout Rd then to Camp Mack Rd. take a right and the park is 5 miles on the right. AKE KI LAKE ROSALIE COM BUSTER INSET 1 H. BOATING CANOING Ř Å BIKING PICNICKING X HIKING PAVILION CAMPING PLAYGROUND GROUP CAMPING WILDLIFE VIEWING PRIMITIVE CAMPING P PARKING RESTROOMS HORSEBACK RIDING FISHING F BOAT RAMP