

History & Nature

First opening in 1931, this park is one of the earliest examples of grass-roots public support for environmental preservation. Local citizens, with the financial assistance of the Margaret Shippen Roebling family, acquired the property and constructed trails and basic facilities in 1930. In 1934, a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp began working on a botanical garden project on land adjacent to Highlands Hammock Park.

When Florida's state park system was established in 1935, Highlands Hammock became one of the first parks. In 1941, the park and gardens merged as the CCC camp closed due to impending war. During those years, the CCC had planted thousands of plants, constructed roadways, dams, bridges and buildings. Although the gardens never became a reality, the park's natural beauty endures.

Palm trees and massive live oaks, heavy with bromeliads and Spanish moss, characterize the hammock. One oak, measuring 36 feet around, is 1,000 years old. Minimal light filters down to the forest floor, covered with ferns, shrubs and small palms. White-tailed deer, raccoons and bobcats may be glimpsed in the shadows. A cypress swamp borders a blackwater stream in the lowest elevations. A stroll across the elevated boardwalk along the Cypress Swamp Trail offers views of ibis, anhingas, herons, alligators and turtles. Pine forests, marshes and globally imperiled scrub vegetation surround the hammock.



Florida State Parks

Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Recreation and Parks

Highlands Hammock State Park

5931 Hammock Road
Sebring, FL 33872
(863) 386-6094

FloridaStateParks.org

Park Guidelines

- Hours are 8 a.m. until sunset, 365 days a year.
- An entrance fee is required.
- All plants, animals and park property are protected.
- Pets are permitted in the park. Pets must be kept on a leash no longer than 6 feet and well behaved at all times.
- Fires are allowed in designated areas only.
- Fireworks and hunting are prohibited.
- Please be aware of through traffic on the county road and practice safety at all times.
- Become a volunteer. Inquire at the ranger station.
- For information about joining Friends of Highlands Hammock State Park, call (863) 386-6094.
- 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.

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Southwest
Florida

**Highlands Hammock
State Park**

One of Florida's first state parks



Photo by Darrel Smith

...the Real FloridaSM



National Gold Medal Winner

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

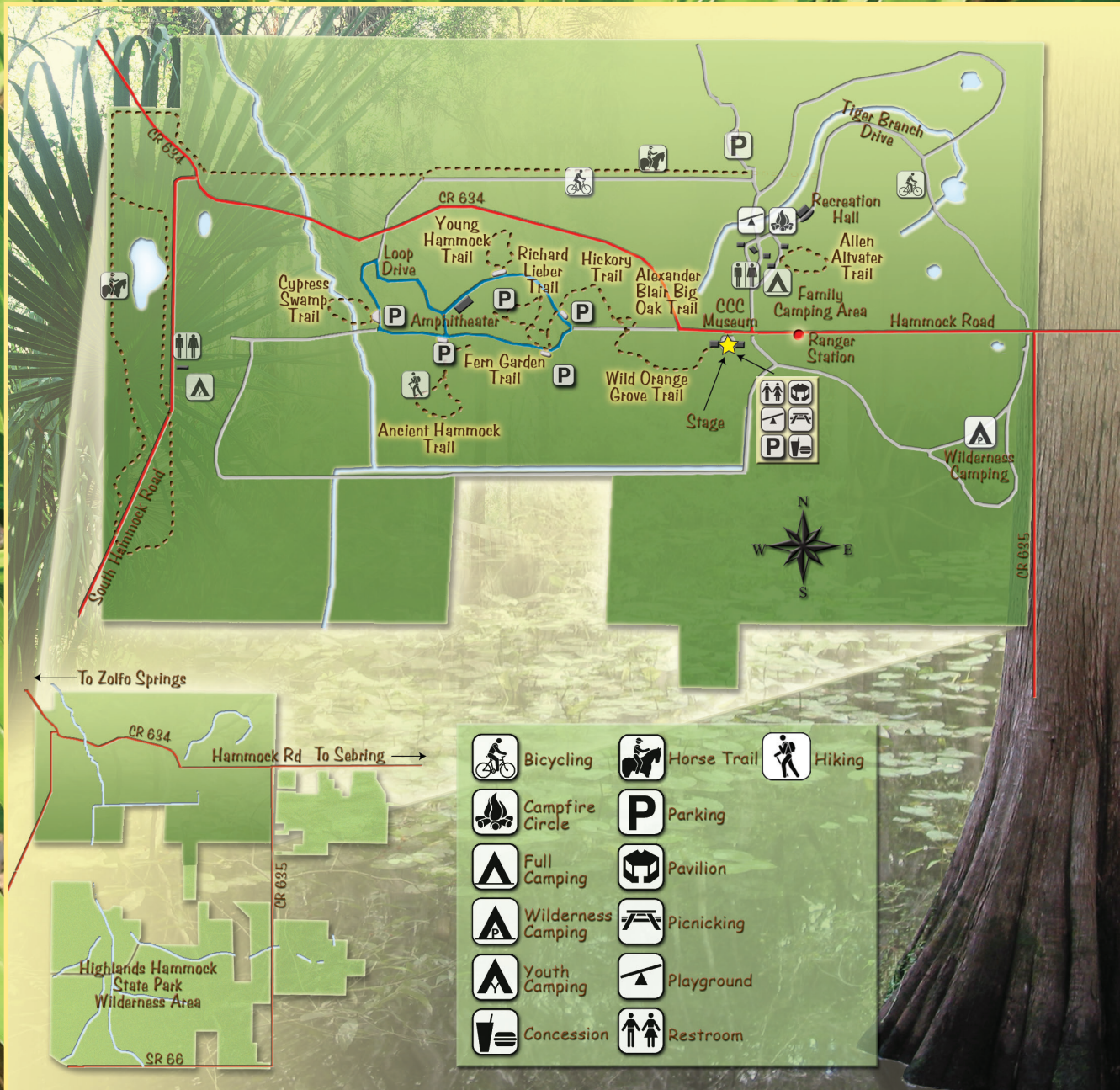
Real Fun in ...the Real FloridaSM

Encompassing more than 9,000 acres, this park is known for its beautiful old-growth hammock, cypress swamps, the Civilian Conservation Corps Museum and an abundance of wildlife. Nine different nature trails take visitors through lush, jungle-like foliage and deep into the heart of one of the oldest state parks in Florida.

Natural fun is waiting for visitors at Highlands Hammock. A large **picnic area** with convenient facilities, 159 **campsites** (most with water and electric, some for wilderness, youth and equestrian use), **horse trails** and **playgrounds** make this park ideal for family gatherings. In the winter months, enjoy special programs like walks, slide shows and evening tours.

Visitors can ride the **tram** for a one-hour tour, learn about park history and natural communities while traveling through remote areas and along the historic "South Canal." Take photos of alligators and other **wildlife**. **Hikers** can enjoy one of the leisurely half-mile trails or bike the 3.1-mile Loop Drive. Bicycle rentals and **bicycle trail** maps are available at the ranger station. The bike trails link to the county's multi-use path and several miles of paved routes through Sebring, including one around Lake Jackson.

Early park history can be experienced at Florida's Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Museum. Housed in a CCC-built structure, the **museum** offers a glimpse of life in the CCC camps. Visitors can hear a "Fireside Chat" with President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, try on a CCC jacket and **view** early films and photos of park construction. Food, beverages, snacks and some camp supplies are available in another historic CCC building.



Directions From

U.S. Highway 27, turn west onto County Road 634 (Hammock Road) and travel four miles to park entrance.

