

## HISTORY AND NATURE

Named by the Seminole Indians, Weeki Wachee means "little spring" or "winding river." More than 117 million gallons of water flow from the subterranean caverns daily. The spring's basin is 100 feet wide with limestone sides. Sixteen to 20 feet below the surface, the current runs a strong five miles per hour, posing a challenge for the mermaids to stay in one place.

In 1946, Newton Perry purchased Weeki Wachee. He hired and trained the 'mermaids' to perform synchronized ballet moves underwater using hidden air hoses. An 18-seat theater which opened in 1947, was built into the limestone, six feet below the spring's surface, allowing viewers to see the natural beauty of the ancient spring. Weeki Wachee's heyday began in 1959, when the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) purchased the springs. ABC built the current theater and developed themes for the shows, with elaborate props, music and story lines. In the 1960s, girls came from as far away as Tokyo for tryouts to become a mermaid. They performed eight shows per day to sold-out crowds, entertaining nearly half a million people annually.

Buccanner Bay, Florida's only spring-fed water park, opened in 1982. In 1997, the Legendary Sirens returned to perform in the Mermaids of Yesteryear shows, which play to standing room only crowds. The city of Weeki Wachee incorporated in 1966. With a population of nine, it is still one of the nation's smallest cities. The mayor of Weeki Wachee is a former mermaid. Weeki Wachee Springs became a state park on November 1, 2008.



## WEEKI WACHEE SPRINGS STATE PARK

6131 Commercial Way  
Spring Hill, FL 34606  
352- 592-5656

### PARK GUIDELINES

- Hours are 9:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., 365 days a year.
- Admission is \$13 for adults and \$8 for kids ages 6-12. Kids 5 and under are free.
- The water slides at the Weeki Wachee Springs State Park's Water Park operate on a seasonal basis. The slides are generally open weekends from April to early June, daily from June-August and weekends through September. To verify operating hours for the water slides, contact the park in advance
- Pets are not permitted. Service animals are welcome in all areas of Florida's state parks.
- To become a volunteer, inquire at Guest Relations.
- Florida state parks are committed to providing all visitors equal access to facilities and programs. If you need assistance to enable your participation, please contact Guest Relations.



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# WEEKI WACHEE SPRINGS STATE PARK

*The city of mermaids*



## FLORIDA STATE PARKS

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## EXPERIENCES AND AMENITIES

As one of Florida's original roadside attractions, the mermaids of Weeki Wachee Springs have entertained visitors since 1947. The famous springhead is a first magnitude spring supplying the 12-mile Weeki Wachee River. Whether your adventure begins on a **River Boat Cruise**, or in a **kayak**, you are bound to see West Indian manatees, alligators, otters or a variety of fish, snakes and birds.

The nearly 1,000-acre park features a 400-seat **submerged theater** for watching the live mermaid show. Wildlife shows also occur at the Riverside Theater. A river boat cruise offers a tranquil view of the Weeki Wachee River. Discover Florida's natural wildlife and various points of interest along the way. For one of the best views of the river and its wildlife, consider kayaking for a peaceful, yet exciting journey. Kayaks are available for rent.

Buccaneer Bay at Weeki Wachee offers a fun-filled, flume ride for thrill seekers of all ages. **Swim** in the crystal-clear spring waters of Weeki Wachee Springs. A white sandy beach area and covered **picnic pavilions** with tables provide a relaxing day for your entire family. Buccaneer Bay is seasonal. Please call the park for days of operation. There are several **concession** areas throughout the park for purchasing food, drinks and memorabilia.



# Weeki Wachee Springs State Park

