

**Southwest Florida**

# **Collier-Seminole State Park**

*Where the majestic royal palms grow*

## **Real Fun in the Real Florida**

The 7,271-acre Collier-Seminole State Park lies partly within the great mangrove swamp of southern Florida, one of the largest mangrove swamps in the world. A wide variety of wildlife, including several imperiled species, inhabits this unusual blend of temperate and tropical native plant communities.

Collier-Seminole State Park features vegetation and wildlife typical of Florida's Everglades. Although rare elsewhere, the park covers one of three original stands of royal palm trees in Florida, coexisting with large areas of mangrove swamp. The park is the site of a National Historic Mechanical Engineering Landmark, the last existing Bay City Walking Dredge. Built in 1924, it was used to build the Tamiami Trail Highway (U.S. 41) through the Everglades and Big Cypress Swamp,

linking Tampa and Miami and opening southwest Florida to travelers.

**Campground** sites have electricity, water, a grill and a picnic table. The restrooms have hot showers and one has a laundry facility. A centralized dump station is available for RV campers.

**Park programs** are offered from December to March. Park rangers present programs on a variety of topics about the park's plants, animals and history. Visit our website for park programs.

Visitors can experience this park's remarkable wilderness on several trails. The Blackwater River originates in the park and meanders several miles through the mangroves to Blackwater Bay and the Ten Thousand Islands. The park has **canoe rentals** along with a **boat ramp** that provides access to the Blackwater River. Other trails offer opportunities for **bicycling, hiking** and **nature observation**.

**Picnic area**, with a **playground**, has **pavilions** and grills for use on a first-come-first-served basis. A nearby **visitor center** features exhibits about the park.

## History & Nature

The park was originally created by Barron Gift Collier to preserve the royal palm trees and later the park was donated to the County. The park then served as a memorial to Barron Collier and those who fought on both sides of the Seminole Wars. In 1947, the county donated the land which became Collier-Seminole State Park.

In the 1700s, Seminole Indians emigrated from the Creek Confederacy to Florida. Three wars took place to remove the Seminoles from Florida and send them to reservations. During the Third Seminole War, the Seminoles resisted and retreated to the swamps of southwest Florida. Soldiers searching for the Indians drew maps. One crude 1857 military map illustrates the Blackwater River with an area labeled "palm grove." That area, now a part of the park, contains the beautiful royal palm trees.

In the early 1920s, advertising tycoon and pioneer developer, Barron Collier purchased nearly a million acres in southwest Florida. In 1923, it became Collier County. Barron Collier was a major investor in developing the Collier County section of the Tampa-to-Miami highway, the Tamiami Trail.

## **Directions**

Take I-75 south from Tampa to exit 101 (State Road 951/Collier Blvd.). Follow State Road 951 south to U.S. 41; turn left. The park is eight miles south on the right.

## **Park Guidelines**

- Hours are 8 a.m. until sunset, 365 days a year.
- An entrance fee is required.
- Plants, animals and park property are protected.
- Pets must be kept on a leash no longer than 6 feet and well behaved at all times.
- Please file a float plan at the ranger station when boating in the park.
- A Florida fishing license may be required.

- Fireworks and hunting are prohibited.
- Alcoholic beverage consumption is allowed in designated areas only.
- Become a volunteer. Inquire at the ranger station.
- For information about Friends of Collier-Seminole State Park, call (239) 394-3397.
- For camping information, contact Reserve America at (800) 326-3521 or (866) I CAMP FL or TDD (888) 433-0287 or visit [ReserveAmerica.com](http://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.

## **Contact Information**

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

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[FloridaStateParks.org](http://FloridaStateParks.org)