

History & Nature

The outstanding feature of DeLeon Springs State Park's 600 acres is the headspring, with some 19 million gallons of water per day flowing from an underwater cavern at a constant year-round temperature of 72 degrees. The spring pool is artificially maintained for swimming.

Wading birds such as herons, egrets and ibis stalk their prey down river, while coots and ducks dive for dinner and ospreys soar overhead. Alligators, otters and manatees are common.

Above the spring is a hydric hammock, trees that flourish in wet conditions. Trails wind through a forest of red maples, sweet gums, magnolias, cabbage palms and water hickories filled with the sounds of woodpeckers and songbirds. Ferns, wildflowers and vines cover the ground. The endangered yellow anise tree is abundant here. Non-native ornamentals such as azaleas and various palm species were planted between the 1930s and 1960s near the trails and in the parking lot. The azaleas bloom throughout the park in early spring. A paved walkway leads to "Old Methuselah," a huge bald cypress that is more than 500 years old.

Visitors may notice an abundance of white or gray snail shells in the ground-evidence of centuries of occupation by Native American groups who came to the spring to gather food. They would cook the snails and discard piles of shells. Two dugout canoes found in the spring are among the oldest canoes in America (5,000 and 6,000 years old).

Let's Go  Outside

Florida State Parks

Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Recreation and Parks

DeLeon Springs State Park

601 Ponce DeLeon Boulevard
DeLeon Springs, FL 32130
(386) 985-4212

FloridaStateParks.org

Park Guidelines

- Hours are 8 a.m. until sunset, 365 days a year.
- An entrance fee is required.
- All plants, animals, artifacts 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, swimming and fires are allowed in designated areas only. A Florida fishing license may be required.
- Lifeguards are on duty only during the summer months. Swim at your own risk.
- Fireworks and hunting are prohibited in all Florida state parks.
- Alcoholic beverage consumption is prohibited.
- Become a volunteer. Inquire at the ranger station.
- 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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DeLeon Springs State Park

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

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Welcome to DeLeon Springs State Park, named for the Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de Leon who sought the Fountain of Youth in the 1500s.

Visitors can **swim** in the beautiful, tranquil spring boil. Lifeguards are available during the summer months. **Canoes, kayaks** and **paddleboats** may be rented at the park concession. A **boat ramp** and **boat dock** are available. The spring run provides access to the Lake Woodruff National Wildlife Refuge, with 18,000 acres of lakes, creeks and marshes to explore.

Fishing for bass and bream is offered from shore or from the fishing pier. A Florida freshwater fishing license is required for people between 16 and 65 years of age. Visitors can **hike** the half-mile paved nature trail or the 4.2-mile Wild Persimmon trail. **Picnic** tables are available under oak and pine trees near the spring at tables with grills or in one of the five large **pavilions**.

Breakfast or lunch in the **Old Spanish Sugar Mill Restaurant** features breads and cook-your own pancakes made from stone-ground flours. Books and gift items are available for purchase. The park offers **interpretation** of its natural and cultural history through kiosks and exhibits in the visitor center and special events such as a Civil War encampment and annual **reenactment** of an 1835 Second Seminole War skirmish.

CSO and Volunteers - The Friends of DeLeon Springs State Park, Inc. is very active in the park. Volunteers are always needed for events and projects.



Directions

DeLeon Springs is off U.S. 17 about 6 miles north of Deland. Take I-4 to exit 114; follow Highway 17 north to the town of DeLeon Springs, and look for state park signs. Turn left on Ponce DeLeon Boulevard. Proceed 1 mile (over railroad tracks) straight into the park.