

History & Nature

Barrier islands buffer the mainland from unforgiving winds and threatening tides while providing habitat for shore birds and other coastal animals. The dramatic changes in the park after hurricanes Ivan (2004) and Dennis (2005) are proof that barrier islands are extremely dynamic.

Salt spray and wind are the primary factors that determine the kind and abundance of plant life along the Gulf. Sea oats dominate the primary dunes and are tolerant of this environment. The trees and shrubs found behind the primary dunes are often twisted and pruned by the forceful winds and constant salt spray. The flora rarely reaches above the height of the protective dunes.

Though not many animals can survive in this harsh environment, there are two species for which the area is known: loggerhead sea turtles and the Perdido Key beach mouse. Both are federally listed as endangered species.

Female sea turtles return in early summer to the exact beach where they were born to lay their eggs for the next generation. During this time, Park Rangers and volunteers patrol the beach every morning to look for evidence of nesting. When nests are discovered, they are roped off and monitored until the baby sea turtles hatch.

The Perdido Key beach mouse was first listed as an endangered species in 1986 and is native to a very small area of western Florida and eastern Alabama. And while severe weather can cause tremendous changes in mouse habitat, the primary reason for the decline of this species is the loss of habitat due to development.

Florida State Parks

Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Recreation and Parks

Perdido Key State Park

c/o Big Lagoon State Park
12301 Gulf Beach Highway
Pensacola, Florida 32507
(850) 492-1595

FloridaStateParks.org

Park Guidelines

- Hours of operation are 8 a.m. until sunset, 365 days a year.
- An entrance fee is required.
- The collection, destruction or disturbance of plants, animals or park property is prohibited. When beachcombing, remember that occupied shells are alive and must be left alone. Drift wood and small plants play a vital role in the formation of new dunes and should never be disturbed.
- Pets, fires and alcoholic beverages are not permitted.
- Fireworks and hunting are prohibited in all Florida state parks.
- A Florida fishing license may be required.
- Become a volunteer. Inquire at the Big Lagoon State Park Ranger Station.
- For information about joining Friends of Pensacola State Parks call (850) 492-2785 or visit www.pensacolastateparks.org.
- 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 at 850-492-1595.

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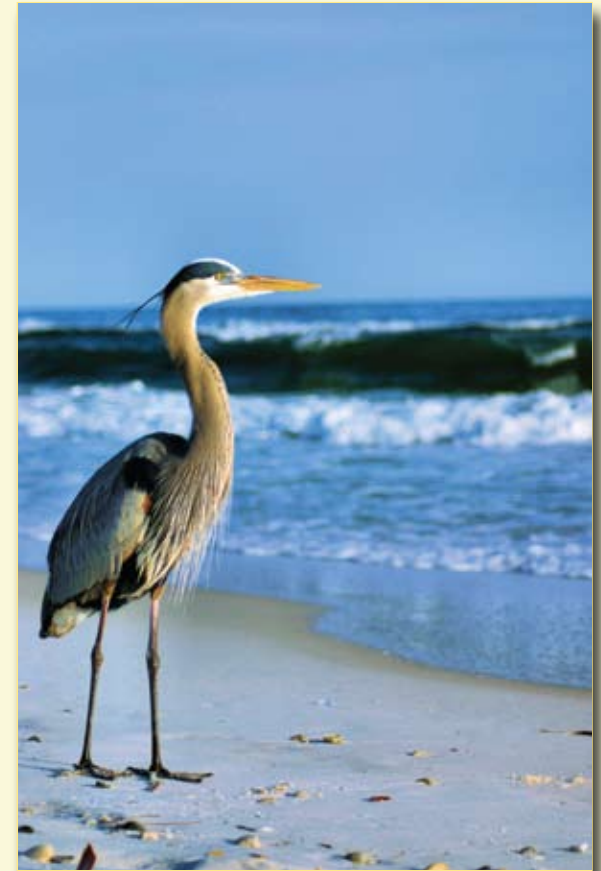
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Northwest
Florida

**Perdido Key
State Park**

Oasis in the Florida panhandle



...the Real FloridaSM

National Gold Medal Winner

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



**FLORIDA
State Parks**
...the Real FloridaSM
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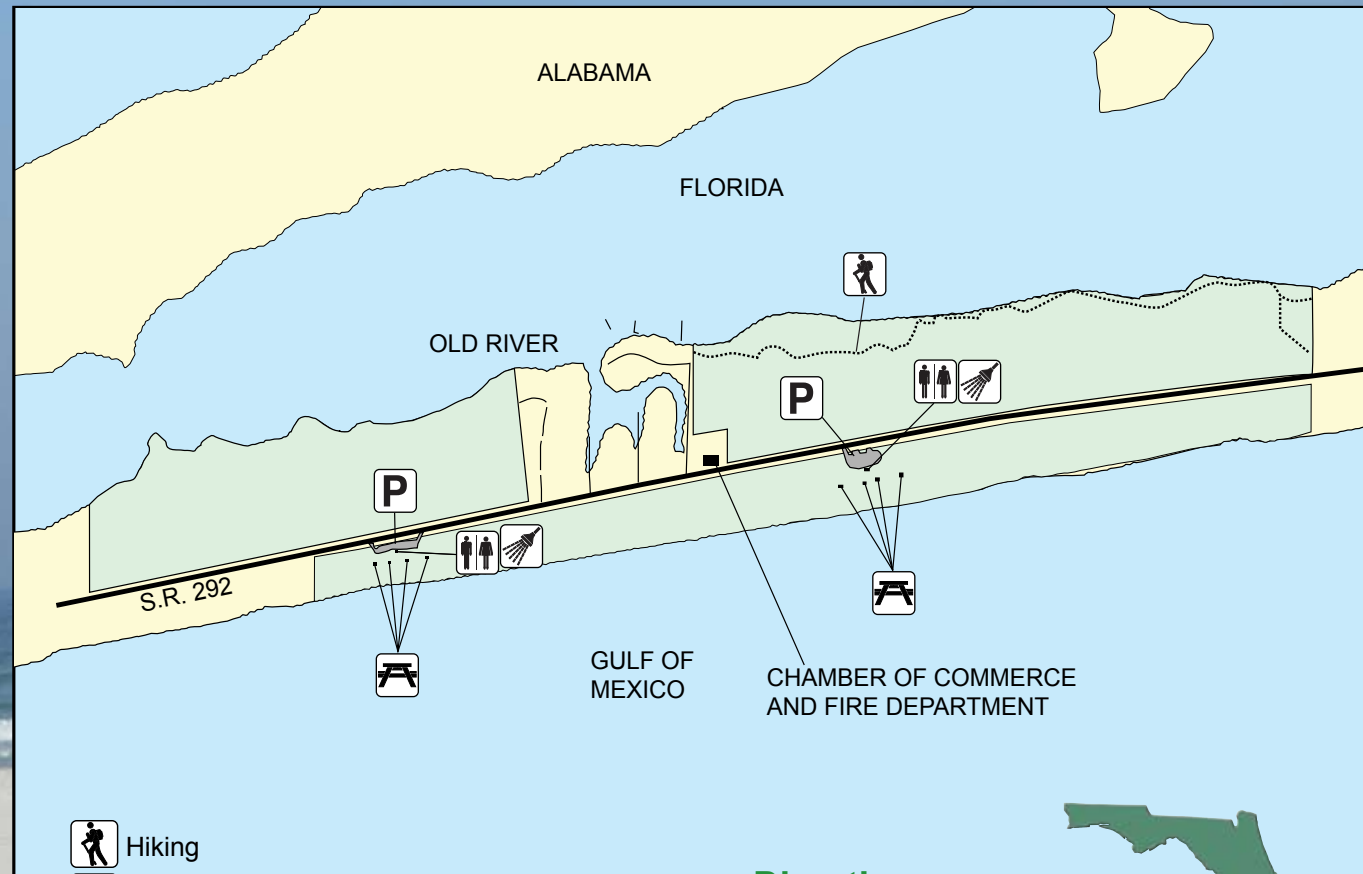


Real Fun in ...the Real FloridaSM

Located on Perdido Key near the Alabama border, Perdido Key State Park officially opened in 1980 as a 247-acre state preserve. Its wide, white, sandy beaches and rolling sea oat-covered dunes make this an oasis in the middle of a rapidly developing Florida panhandle.

Along Perdido Key State Park's 1.4 miles of beach are two parking areas with boardwalks that allow access to the beach while protecting the dune from heavy foot traffic. Other amenities include covered pavilions, outdoor showers and modern restrooms. Visitors should bring sunscreen and drinking water.

The park offers a myriad of beach activities including **swimming, surfing, shelling** and **sun bathing**. **Fishing** is popular along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, with opportunities for catching redfish, pompano, whiting and flounder. **Birding** is a widespread activity along the coast because of the numerous native shore birds and unique seasonal visitors. Many species of herons, plovers and gulls can be seen nearly every day of the year. Winter species can include black skimmers, loons, gannets and mergansers. During spring and summer, visitors may encounter restricted areas of the beach and dune, to accommodate nesting birds. Please respect these restrictions to give young birds a chance to survive.



Directions

Perdido Key State Park is located 15 miles southwest of Pensacola, off State Road 292.

