

# *Motion on the Ocean*



A Public Health Guide to  
Physical Activity in Parks Across  
the Florida Keys

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# General Park Notes & Health Tips

**Hours:** Parks are typically open from dawn to dusk. Visit the park’s online site or call for park hours. Be sure to check ahead of time over the holidays, as some parks may be closed.

**Pets:** Most parks are pet-friendly. Owners are asked to keep pets on leashes and clean up after their pets (some of these parks even offer bags for cleaning up).

**ADA Compliance:** State, county, and municipal authorities are often required to adhere to guidelines under the Americans With Disabilities Act when it comes to parking, ramps, and other assistance for those with disabilities who want to access parks.

**See Your Doctor:** Before you make dramatic changes to your lifestyle, especially when it comes to eating and exercise habits, check with your doctor. Make sure that your plan is reasonable. You want to see results without injury.

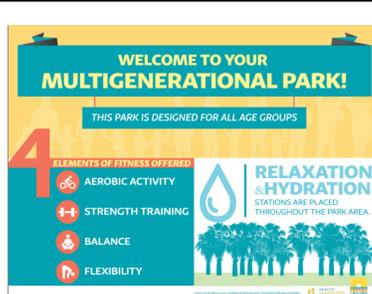
**Comfortable Clothing:** Be sure clothing is appropriate for your chosen activity, weather conditions, etc., and offers freedom of movement. For activities involving a lot of running, select shoes that are the proper size and offer foot and ankle support. If possible, leave at home, or locked in your car, anything that you carry that might interfere with your activity (backpacks, purses, etc.).

**Safety Gear:** It’s always a good idea to bring a portable phone with you so that you can call someone in case of emergency. If you’re exercising alone, consider wearing a whistle or alarm that you can use to signal anyone nearby should you be in trouble. Anyone going out on the water must have a life vest or personal flotation device.

**Hydration:** Temperatures in the Florida Keys can be punishing, especially during the summer months. Bring bottled water and take drink breaks every so often, especially if you’re engaging in vigorous physical activity.

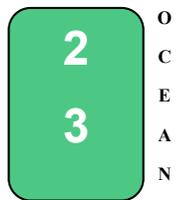
**Sun Protection:** Wear sunblock with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher. The fairer the skin, the higher the SPF. If it’s comfortable to do so, wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts. A hat can protect the scalp, ears, face, and neck. Sunglasses are particularly important in the outdoors.

**Mosquito Prevention:** Although all mosquitoes are pesky, some species of mosquito can actually carry disease and pose a risk to individual and public health. The best way to avoid mosquitoes while you’re in the outdoors is to wear mosquito repellent with DEET as a main ingredient. If it’s comfortable to do so, wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts.



*A multigenerational park is designed for all ages and abilities. Multigenerational parks offer opportunities for all park users to increase physical activity with multiple activities of varying intensities. Components of a multigenerational park include opportunities for participants to engage in the four key elements of fitness: (aerobic activity, strength (muscular) training, balance (stability), and flexibility, hydration and relaxation stations, and offer ADA compliant facilities. The image that appears next to Multigenerational Parks throughout this booklet is the same image posted on signs posted at parks throughout Monroe County, designating them as multigenerational.*

*Mile Markers are posted along the Overseas Highway. They are used to locate where along the string of islands a park is located. Mile Markers are posted every mile from the Monroe-Dade County line (MM113) down to Key West (MM0). They appear on the road, and in this directory, as white numbers on green background. A notation next to the Mile Marker in this directory indicates whether the park is on the Atlantic side of the Overseas Highway (Ocean) or the Gulf of Mexico side (Gulf).*



## From the Administrator

Welcome to *Motion on the Ocean*, a guide to parks across the Florida Keys that has been written, photographed, and designed with fitness in mind.

Monroe County boasts some of the most pristine parks in the state, offering locals and visitors endless opportunities to engage in calorie-burning activities on both land and sea.

Our partners at the state, county, and municipal levels do their best to ensure that these parks are easy to access, clean, and safe. In many cases, playing surfaces — basketball and tennis courts, skateboard ramps, soccer fields, etc. — have been paved and manicured to ensure the best playing surfaces possible.

As you leaf through this unique public health directory, I encourage you to shape a fitness routine that takes you to one or more of the more than 65 state, county, and municipal parks profiled here.

If you stick with your fitness program and eat healthy — ideally, you want to burn more calories than you consume — you should notice a change in your health in a few weeks.

Consider finding a partner, or group of partners, to join you in this effort. Make it a family affair. Employers might host a day out at a park, where employees can have fun while getting fit.

For anyone who'd like to learn more about all of the parks in the Florida Keys, challenge yourself to engage in a fitness activity every day, every other day, or every week, at a different park.

Best of luck!

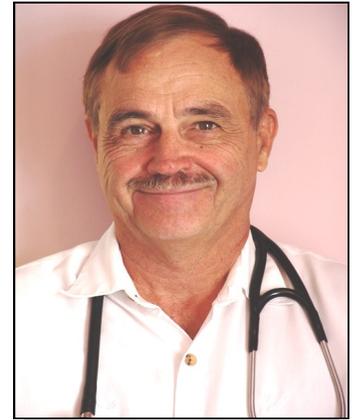


*Bob Eadie*

*Florida Department of Health in Monroe County*

*Administrator*

# From the Medical Director



Parks and preserves are essential not only to maintaining living systems and biodiversity, but also to promoting good health and well-being among the public. Parks are used for organized sports and fitness, public meetings and entertainment, water activities, education, and environmental activities. They also provide a place for people (and their pets) to simply wander around and enjoy the natural scene. As you will see in this directory, the Florida Keys have a multi-tiered system of parks and wildlife refuges administered through city, county, state, and federal authorities.

**Physical Activity and Exercise.** “Physical activity” is defined as anything that gets you moving (e.g., walking the dog); “exercise” is a more planned and structured form of physical activity. Regular physical activity and exercise is, quite simply, the most important thing we can do for our health. Also, see your doctor before you start an exercise program, especially if you have a chronic illness and/or have not exercised in a while.

**Natural Connection.** Connecting to the natural world not only helps reduce the stress that high-tech, fast-paced societies can bring, but also has a restorative effect and brings balance to our lives. Mobile EEGs (brain wave tracings) reveal that when we enter a natural setting, our minds enter a state resembling meditation. Potential health benefits of direct contact with nature include: reduced stress, lower blood pressure, increased mental clarity, and a more positive outlook on life. People can tune into the “natural rhythms of the earth” in our green areas, as well. Parks help us recharge our batteries and provide temporary refuge from the EMF noise of the city.



*Dr. Mark Whiteside*

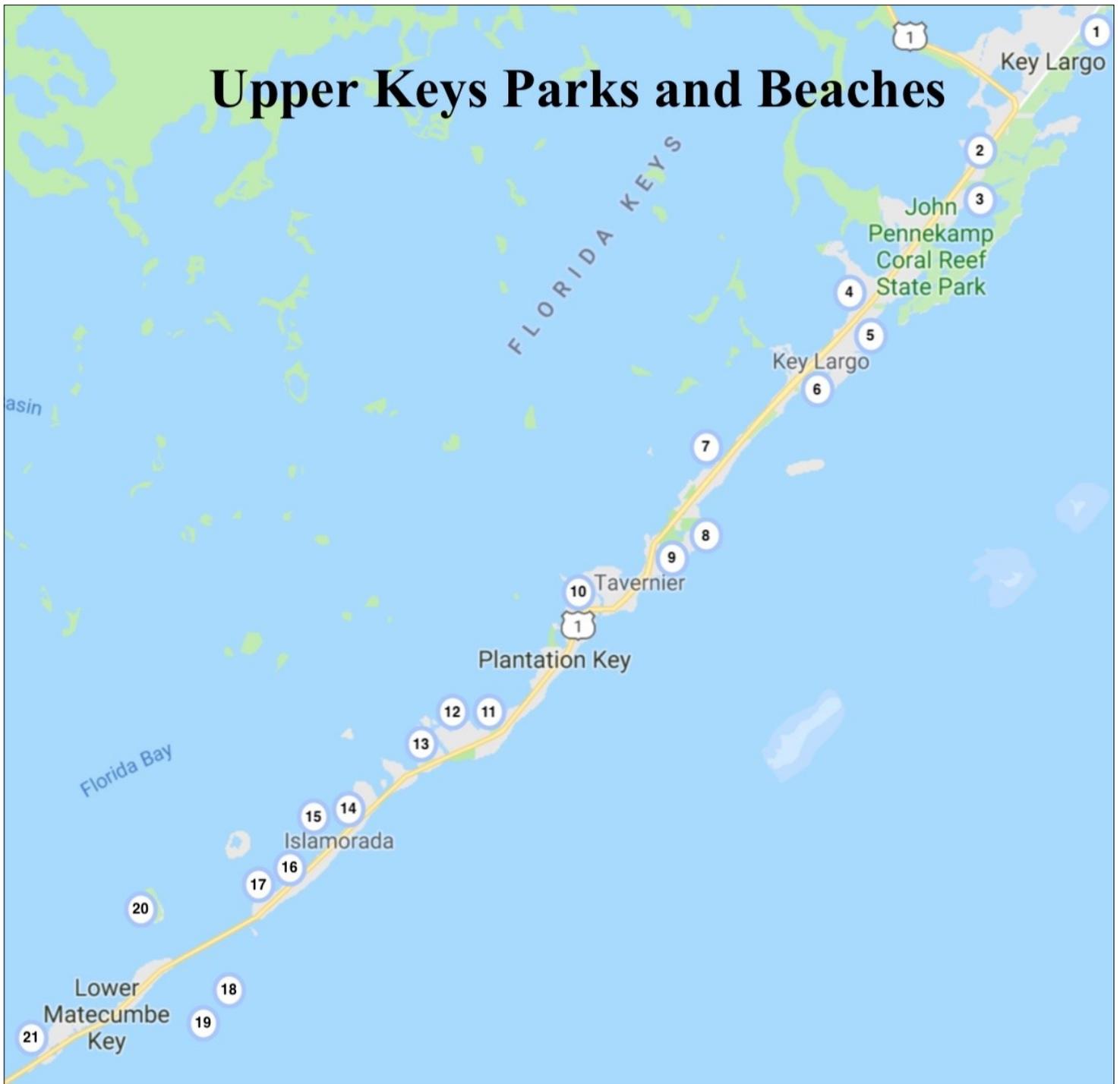
*Florida Department of Health in Monroe County  
Medical Director*

## **Benefits of Physical Activity and Exercise**

- Maintain a healthy weight
- Lower blood pressure
- Increase HDL (“good” cholesterol)
- Improve mood
- Boost energy
- Easier sleep and rest
- Lower chances of certain cancers
- Improve stamina
- Strengthen/tone muscles
- Enhance flexibility
- Reduce stress
- Help prevent falls

*Exercising 30-60 minutes per day can reduce the chances of premature disability or death*

# Upper Keys Parks and Beaches



1. Dagny Johnson Key Largo Hammock Botanical State Park
2. Florida Keys Overseas Heritage Trail
3. Murray E. Nelson Government Center's Peace Park
4. John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park
5. Friendship Park
6. Key Largo Community Park
7. Sunset Point Park
8. Harry Harris Park
9. Old Settler's Park
10. Plantation Tropical Preserve
11. Founder's Park
12. Plantation Hammocks Preserve
13. Windley Key Fossil Reef Geological State Park
14. Southwinds Park
15. Islamorada Library Beach Park
16. Green Turtle Hammock Nature Preserve
17. Key Tree Cactus Preserve
18. Indian Key Historic State Park
19. San Pedro Underwater Archaeological Preserve State Park
20. Lignumvitae Key Botanical State Park
21. Anne's Beach

## **1. Dagny Johnson Key Largo Hammock Botanical State Park**

This park covers over 2,400 acres on the northern third of the island of Key Largo. It contains the largest remaining fragments of rockland hammock in the continental U.S. and is home to 84 protected species of plants and animals. This is a particularly good park for anyone who'd like to incorporate walking into his/her fitness regimen. The nature trail begins at the main entrance and has both a full loop (2 miles) and a half-loop (1 mile), most of which is unpaved. Some areas of the trail may be underwater due to tidal flow. In addition to walking, bicycling is also popular. From late autumn to early spring, led nature walks are scheduled. The park is open daily from sunrise to sunset and costs \$2.50 per person (correct change necessary for the "iron ranger" honor system). For an additional 6 miles of trail more remotely located, get a backcountry permit at the park office at John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park. Especially during the wet summer season, mosquito repellent may be advised.

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*County Road 905 (Oceanside), approximately ½ mile north of the intersection with U.S. 1 at MM 106*  
*<https://www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/dagny-johnson-key-largo-hammock-botanical-state-park>*  
*(305) 676-3777*



## **2. Florida Keys Overseas Heritage Trail**

The Florida Keys Overseas Heritage Trail runs between Key West and Key Largo in segments. The longest and most continuous section of paved trail exists along MM 72 through MM 106. The trail is a multi-use facility that parallels Overseas Highway and can be used for bicycling, skating, hiking, running, fishing, and kayaking.

*[www.floridastateparks.org/floridakeys](http://www.floridastateparks.org/floridakeys)*  
*(305) 853-3571*

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### **3. Murray E. Nelson Government Center's Peace Park**

Peace Park is situated behind the Murray Nelson Government Center, which houses numerous county offices and meetings. This park features five pavilions, restrooms, picnic tables, benches, and beautiful scenic views of the bay. The water is also accessible for smaller boats.



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*102050 Overseas Hwy, Key Largo  
www.monroecounty-fl.gov, (305) 852-7161*

### **4. John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park**

This park encompasses almost 64,000 acres, most of which is underwater. Many visitors come to snorkel, scuba dive, or take a glass bottom boat to view the coral reef. Walkers can take advantage of short nature trails, as well as led nature walks. Paddlers can enjoy multiple kayak trails through the mangroves or in Largo Sound, and rentals are available for both kayaks and paddleboards. There are designated swimming areas; one with submerged artifacts from the 1715 Spanish Fleet shipwreck. The Visitor Center and Aquarium houses a 30,000-gallon saltwater aquarium and several smaller aquariums, and offers a variety of programs when you need a break from the exercise! Open from 8 a.m. to sunset daily, there is an entrance fee.

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*Mile Marker 102.5 Overseas Highway, Key Largo*

For more information on boat tours, rentals, scuba lessons, gifts, and food:

*www.pennekamppark.com*

*(305) 451-6300*

The park's main contact for information:

*<https://www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/john-pennekamp-coral-reef-state-park>*

*(305) 676-3777*



## **5. Friendship Park**

This small county-run park has a baseball diamond, two basketball courts, and a playground. In addition, there are five picnic tables and five pavilions. The park features a Children’s Memorial Tree Garden as a peaceful place to sit and relax. Friendship Park is pet friendly and has restrooms.

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*69 Hibiscus Lane, Key Largo*  
*www.monroecounty-fl.gov, (305) 852-7161*

## **6. Key Largo Community Park**

Key Largo Community Park is sprawling with wide-open playing fields, courts and surfaces for tennis, soccer, baseball, volleyball, basketball, handball, and skateboarding. This park also has a fitness course. The Jacobs Aquatic Center is located on the edge of the park (admission fees apply). The county runs the park in partnership with the YMCA. It is located in a neighborhood near Mile Marker 99 of the Overseas Highway.



*500 St. Croix Place, Key Largo*  
*www.monroecounty-fl.gov, (305) 453-3422*



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## **7. Sunset Point Park**

This small county-run park features a boat ramp, offering kayakers and canoers access to surrounding waters. The park is located in a neighborhood near Mile Marker 95 of the Overseas Highway (bayside).

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*20 Sunset Road, Key Largo*  
*www.monroecounty-fl.gov, (305) 852-7161*

## **8. Harry Harris Park**

Harry Harris Park, (MM 92.6 US1 & Burton Drive to East Beach Rd.), has been undergoing repairs from Hurricane Irma. The open areas and amenities include the beach, tidal pool, playground, pavilions, BBQ grills, restrooms, baseball fields, and concession stand. There is also an easy access boat ramp with an ample amount of parking. The park is pet friendly and is open sunrise to sunset.

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*50 East Beach Road, Tavernier*  
*www.monroecounty-fl.gov, (305) 852-7161*



## 9. Old Settler's Park

One of the historic locations in Tavernier is Old Settler's Park, a small park located at MM 92. It features a pavilion, picnic table, walking trail, and playground. Benches scatter the park allowing visitors to enjoy a scenic view of the ocean. Pets are allowed.

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*91895 Overseas Highway, Tavernier  
www.monroecounty-fl.gov, (305) 852-7161*

## 10. Plantation Tropical Preserve

This small park located at mile 90.8 (bayside) features an ADA compliant kayak launch which provides easy access to Tavernier Creek, oceanside grass flats, and Tavernier Key which are managed as a 'Wildlife Management Area' by the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. The park also has a short, mulched walking path through native plant habitat along with picnic tables.

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*90800 Overseas Highway, Islamorada  
www.islamorada.fl.us, (305) 664-6400*

## 11. Founder's Park

Founder's Park is one of the largest parks in Monroe County, encompassing over 40 acres. This park features a splash pad play area, playground, baseball field, volleyball court, basketball court, a beach, boat ramp, fitness park, pickleball court, tennis courts, Vita Course, a dog park, and much more. One of the more grand features of Founders Park is their heated Olympic swimming pool equipped with a diving well and four spring boards. Visitors can also enjoy a leisurely stroll or jog on the walking and fitness trails. Fields are also well -maintained for multiple forms of recreational activities.

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*87000 Overseas Highway, Islamorada  
www.islamorada.fl.us, (305) 853-1685*



## **12. Plantation Hammock Preserve**

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This park which is located adjacent to Founders Park at mile 87 offers mulched walking paths through 8 acres of native plant habitat. The diversity of tree, shrub, and wildflower species along with ease of access makes for excellent bird and butterfly watching opportunities, especially during the spring and fall migrations. There are also benches with views across Florida Bay.



*Make immediate right turn behind Islamorada Visitor's Center inside the Founder's Park entrance*  
*[www.islamorada.fl.us](http://www.islamorada.fl.us), (305) 664-6400*

## **13. Windley Key Fossil Reef Geological State Park**

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A historic quarry with fossilized coral, Windley Key Fossil Reef Geological State Park allows visitors to step inside an ancient coral reef and discover the quarry's wonders. There are 1.75 miles of trails through the hardwood hammock and an education center with exhibits. Take a guided tour with a ranger (offered seasonally) or opt to use the self-guided tour book. Picnic tables are available inside the park. The park is open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thursday through Monday. Fees apply.



*84900 Overseas Highway, Islamorada*  
*[www.floridastateparks.org/windleykey](http://www.floridastateparks.org/windleykey), (305) 664-2540*

## **14. Southwinds Park**

This small 1.2-acre passive park in downtown Islamorada features a large open grass play or picnic area along with benches, a pavilion, and numerous large shade trees. No restrooms. Pets are allowed.

*82201 Overseas Highway, Islamorada*  
*[www.islamorada.fl.us](http://www.islamorada.fl.us), (305) 664-6400*

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## **15. Islamorada Library Beach Park**

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Library Beach Park, located behind the Islamorada Library, features a small playground, a Tiki pavilion, picnic tables, barbeque grills, and restrooms. Access is free.



*94 Johnson Rd, Islamorada*  
*[www.islamorada.fl.us](http://www.islamorada.fl.us), (305) 664-6400*

## **16. Green Turtle Hammock Nature Preserve**

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Purchased for conservation and recreational opportunities, this 10-acre park offers numerous mulched nature trails through a tropical hardwood hammock, a playground area, picnic tables, and portable restroom. The park also features a small boat basin on Florida Bay with a kayak launch, offering easy access for excellent paddling opportunities through the mangrove fringes of Little Basin and Florida Bay.



*81224 Overseas Highway, Islamorada  
www.islamorada.fl.us, (305) 664-6400*

## **17. Key Tree Cactus Preserve**

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Named for the endangered Key Tree Cactus, this 9-acre park was acquired by the Village of Islamorada to protect the site's natural resources from future development, for environmental education and to provide resource-based recreation. This park boasts a pristine tropical hardwood hammock along with mangrove wetlands with frontage on Florida Bay. Currently a short walking path, small play area and covered pavilion exist at this park. There is not a restroom available at the park.



*www.islamorada.fl.us  
(305) 664-6400*

## **18. Indian Key Historic State Park**

Indian Key Historic State Park was prosperous in the 1830s as the site of a business that salvaged cargo from shipwrecks in the Florida Keys. The island is located a half-mile from shore (Oceanside) at Mile Marker 79 and is accessible only by boat. Local businesses supply boat and kayak rentals. Visitors can enjoy swimming, snorkeling, fishing, and hiking around the island. Fees apply.

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*www.floridastateparks.org/indiankey  
(305) 664-2540*



## **19. San Pedro Underwater Archaeological Preserve State Park**

This underwater preserve features ballast stones, cannons and an anchor from the San Pedro that sank in 1733. Located offshore at Mile Marker 79, the San Pedro can be found by traveling 1.25 nautical miles south from Indian Key to 24 degrees 51.802'N, 80 degrees 40.795'W. An information buoy and five mooring balls surround the shipwreck. Visitors can snorkel or scuba dive at San Pedro to enjoy the wildlife among the sunken ship remains.

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*www.floridastateparks.org/lignumvitaekey, (305) 664-2540*



## **20. Lignumvitae Key Botanical State Park**

Located one mile west of U.S. 1 at Mile Marker 78.5, this island park features a 100-year-old caretaker's home surrounded by hardwood hammock and a mangrove forest. Ranger-led tours are offered seasonally, or take a self-guided tour of the 5 acres surrounding the home. Local businesses rent kayaks and boats to access the park. The park is open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thursday through Monday. Fees apply.

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*77200 Overseas Highway, Islamorada*

*www.floridastateparks.org/lignumvitaekey, (305) 664-2540*



## **21. Anne's Beach**

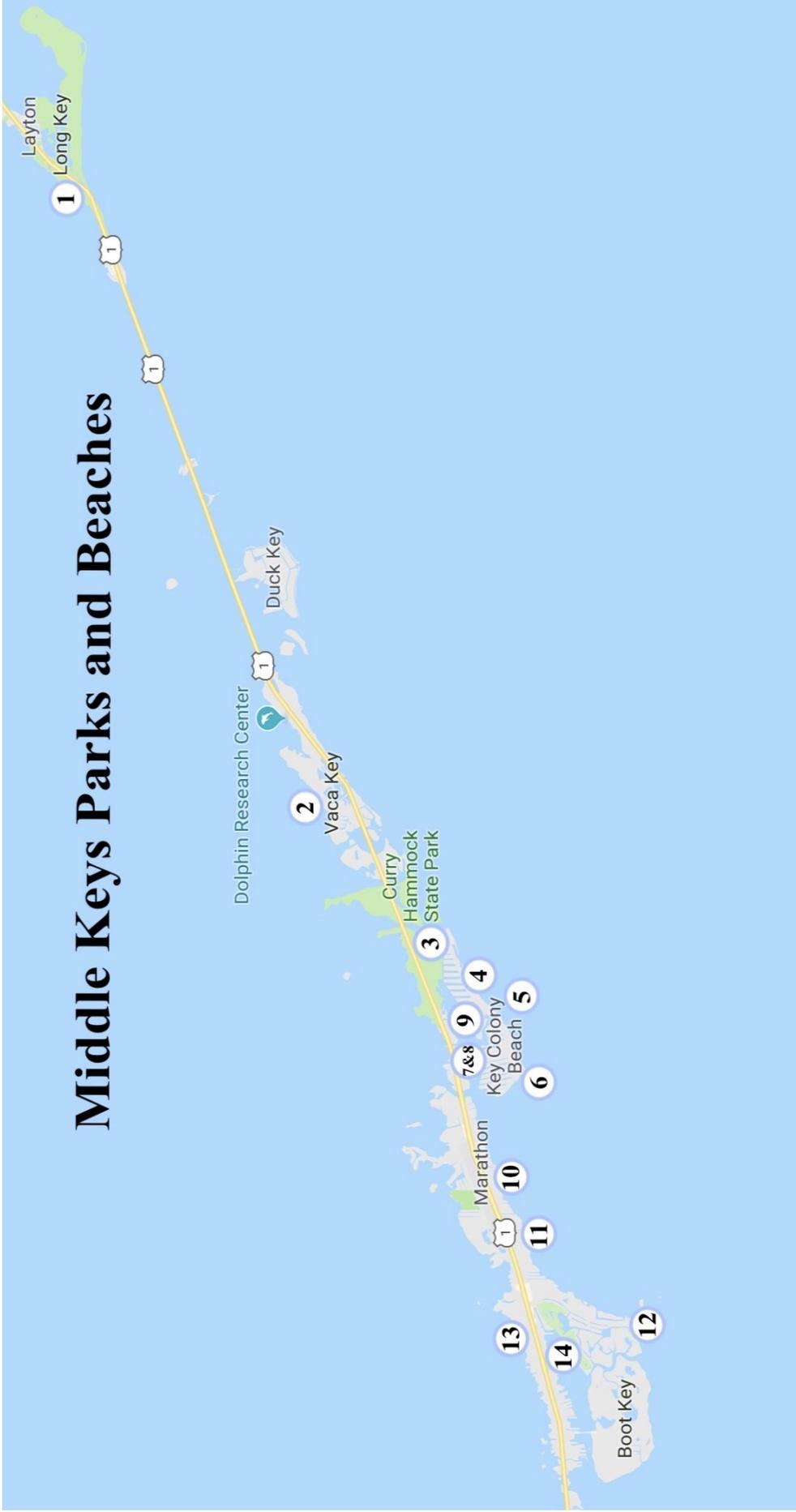
Anne's Beach is dedicated to Anne Eaton, a local environmentalist. The park is located on MM 73.5. Anne's Beach has been recently refurbished and features a shallow swimming area, a boardwalk, and picnic tables.

*www.islamorada.fl.us, (305) 664-6400*

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# Middle Keys Parks and Beaches



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|---|--|
| 1. Long Key State Park                    | 8. Key Colony Beach Golf and Tennis                |
| 2. Sunset Bay Park                        | 9. Key Colony Beach Walking and Jogging Paths      |
| 3. Curry Hammock State Park               | 10. Oceanfront Park                                |
| 4. Coco Plum Beach                        | 11. Rotary Children's Park and Marathon's Dog Park |
| 5. East Side Park                         | 12. Sombrero Beach                                 |
| 6. Sunset Park Beach                      | 13. Jessie Hobbs Park                              |
| 7. Key Colony Beach Children's Playground | 14. Marathon Community Park and Skate Park         |

## 1. Long Key State Park

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Long Key State Park is also known as “Cayo Vivora,” —Rattlesnake Key— as the island bears a resemblance to a snake opening its mouth. The park offers visitors kayaking opportunities on both the Long Key Lake and Atlantic Ocean. A 1.1 mile loop trail with observation tower allows visitors the chance to explore the many unique habitats that make up the Florida Keys, including critical habitat for the Miami blue butterfly. Picnic tables, grills and hammock stands are available inside the park. This park also offers a full facility for camping. Fees apply.



*67400 Overseas Highway, Long Key-  
www.floridastateparks.org/longkey, (305) 664-4815*

## 2. Sunset Bay Park

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Sunset Bay Park features a multitude of native plants and provides a habitat for numerous species of crabs and birds. Visitors can relax at the picnic tables. Also at this park is an Osprey nesting platform that was erected with the help of Florida Keys Electric Cooperative and the City of Marathon.

*Located on Grassy Key at MM 58 left of the intersection of Morton Street and Kyle Avenue  
www.ci.marathon.fl.us/sunset-bay-park, (305) 289-4123*

## 3. Curry Hammock State Park

Halfway between Key Largo and Key West sits the 1,000 acre Curry Hammock State Park. This park is the largest uninhabited parcel of land between Key Largo and Big Pine Key. The park protects large areas of mangrove swamp, rockland hammocks and seagrass beds essential to the Florida Keys ecosystem. The park is an ideal destination to kayak and paddleboard, and with the Atlantic Ocean as a backdrop, it's easy to understand why this stunning plot of land was left as nature intended. The park is also equipped with a playground, showers, restrooms, and picnic areas.

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*56200 Overseas Highway, Marathon  
www.floridastateparks.org/CurryHammock, (305) 289-2690*



#### **4. Coco Plum Beach**

Coco Plum Beach is a long sandy beach on MM 55 in Marathon and can be accessed via Coco Plum Blvd. Available at this beach is a covered pavilion and restrooms. It is a popular locale for turtle nesting.

*1690 Coco Plum Drive, Marathon  
www.ci.marathon.fl.us, (305) 743-0033*

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#### **5. East Side Park**

On the east end of Key Colony Beach, East Side Park features a picnic area, grassy fields, and tennis courts.

*Located in between 1st and 2nd Street, Key Colony  
www.keycolonybeach.net  
(305) 289-1212*

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#### **6. Sunset Park Beach**

Sunset Park Beach is on the west end of Key Colony. Visitors can picnic here under the tiki pavilion, walk on the dock, and watch the sunset. Dogs are also permitted at this venue. Fishing and swimming, however, are not permitted.

*Beach at West Ocean Drive and 12th Street, Key Colony  
www.keycolonybeach.net  
(305) 289-1212*

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#### **7. Key Colony Beach Children's Playground**

The children's playground at Key Colony Beach is on Shelter Bay Drive and 7th Street. There are slides, swing sets, tetherball, a gym climber, see saws, a swing bridge, and spring horses.

*www.keycolonybeach.net  
(305) 289-1212*

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## **8. Key Colony Beach Golf & Tennis**

Fees apply for utilizing the golf course. Also at this site are tennis courts, a basketball court, bocce ball court, and a horseshoe pit; all available to visitors free of charge.

*460 8th Street, Key Colony*  
*www.keycolonybeach.net, (305) 289-1212*

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## **9. Key Colony Beach Walking and Jogging Paths**

Starting on Ocean Street and Ocean Drive in Key Colony Beach, there are three pedestrian walking and jogging paths. The first is 0.4 miles along Ocean Drive East, the second is 0.5 miles on Ocean Drive West, and the last is 0.8 miles along the Sadowski Causeway. The City of Key Colony Beach reminds bicyclists who choose to use these paths to warn pedestrians of passing via an audible alert to prevent an injury from happening.

*www.keycolonybeach.net, (305) 289-1212*

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## **10. Oceanfront Park**

This eight acre park, located between 98th and 99th Streets, is Marathon’s newest park— Oceanfront Park. It features many amenities including several tiki pavilions, a fishing pavilion, boardwalk, mangrove nature trail, and kayak launch. Pavilions can be used for reading, meditating, and picnicking. Visitors can also read information panels about the native habitat and marine life are displayed. The park is handicap accessible. The park is open from 7:30 a.m. to dusk.

*www.ci.marathon.fl.us, (305) 743-0033*



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## **11. Rotary Children’s Park and Marathon’s Dog Park**



Across from the Marathon Airport at Overseas Highway and 75th Street, the Rotary Children’s Park features unique playgrounds, including Thomas the Train, a ship, a shark, tunnels, and other multi-level climbing, sliding, and swinging equipment. The park also features picnic areas, a lookout tower, and restrooms. Neighboring the children’s park is the Marathon Dog park at 75th Street. The park is open from 7:30 a.m. to dusk.

*7575 Overseas Highway, Marathon.*  
*www.ci.marathon.fl.us, (305) 743-0033*

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## 12. Sombrero Beach

Tucked away at the end of Sombrero Beach Road, south of the Overseas Highway at MM 50, is Sombrero Beach. This well-maintained site has a sizeable and sandy white beach. It is also a popular turtle nesting spot. Visitors can swim, snorkel, and kayak. The grounds of the park have numerous picnic areas, barbeque pits, grassy areas, a playground, fishing pier, volleyball court, restrooms, and showers. It includes total handicap accessibility and ample parking. The park is open from 7:30 a.m. to dusk.

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*2150 Sombrero Beach Road, Marathon*  
*www.ci.marathon.fl.us, (305) 743-0033*

## 13. Jessie Hobbs Park

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On the intersection of Overseas Highway and 41st Street in Marathon is Jessie Hobbs Park. The park is equipped with a playground, picnic tables, benches, basketball courts with bleachers, and restrooms. The park has lighting at night and is open from 7:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.

*www.ci.marathon.fl.us*  
*(305) 743-0033*



## 14. Marathon Community Park and Skate Park

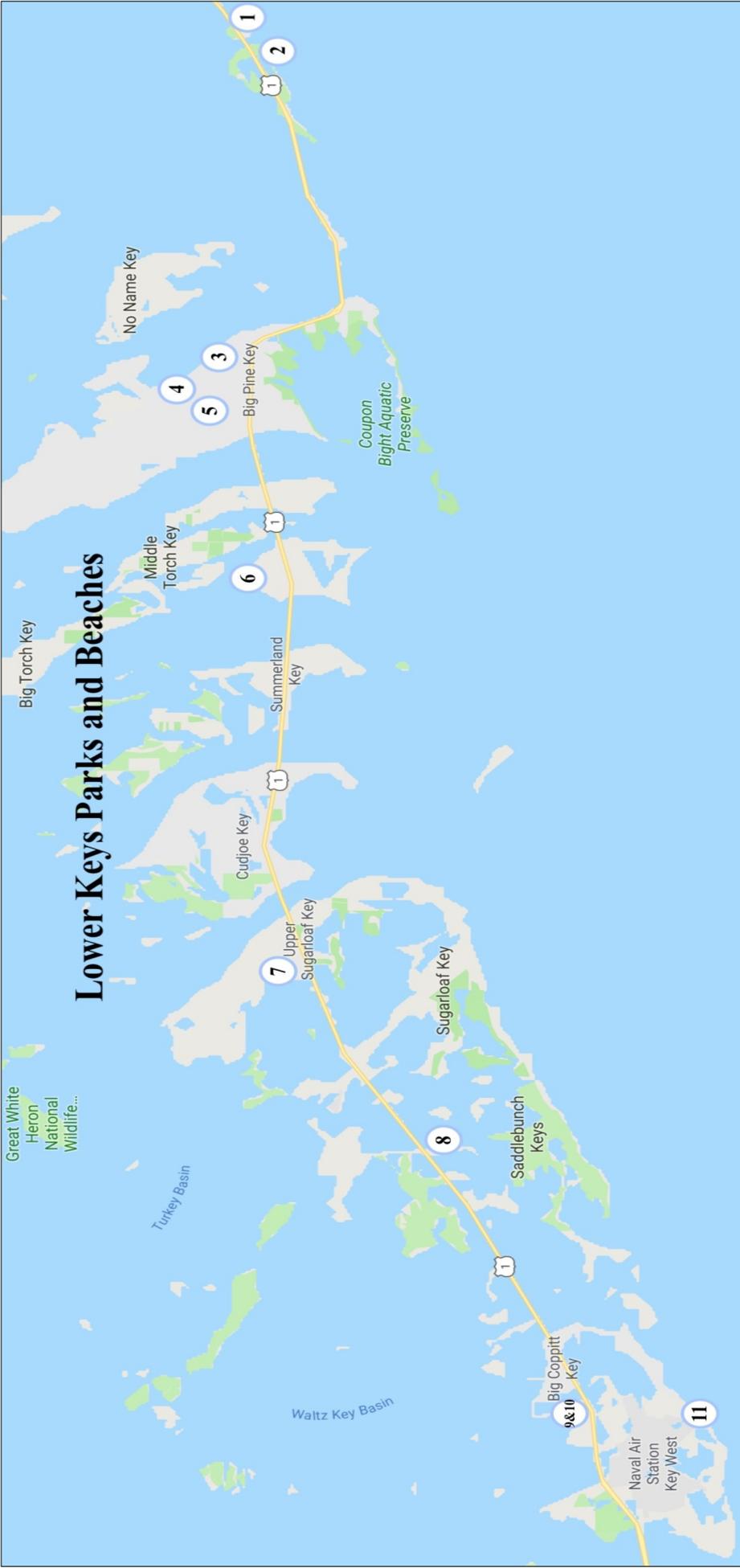


Marathon Community Park provides facilities for a variety of activities, including four tennis courts, a tennis wall, three basketball courts, and a roller hockey court. There are also two little league fields, two soccer fields, and a shuffle and bocce ball court. Unique to this park is a large amphitheater with plentiful space for audience members to enjoy a show or event, including the Original Marathon Seafood Festival. There is also a skate park that can be used for rollerblading or skateboarding. Smaller children can play on the large playground. The park has lighting at night and is open from 7:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.

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*200 36th St., Marathon*  
*www.ci.marathon.fl.us, (305) 743-0033*



## Lower Keys Parks and Beaches

- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Veteran’s Memorial Park            | 7. Sugarloaf School                            |
| 2. Bahia Honda State Park             | 8. Bay Point Park                              |
| 3. Big Pine Key Community Park        | 9. Wilhelmina Harvey Park                      |
| 4. Palm Villa Park                    | 10. Big Coppitt Volunteer Fire Department Park |
| 5. Watson Field and Big Pine Dog Park | 11. Boca Chica Beach                           |
| 6. Ramrod Park                        |  |

## 1. Veteran's Memorial Park

Little Duck Key is home to the Veteran's Memorial Park located on the west end of the Seven Mile Bridge. It has a sandy beach, picnic areas, grills, restrooms, and a foot wash station. Pets are allowed.

*39900 Overseas Highway, Little Duck Key  
www.monroecounty-fl.gov, (305) 295-4385*

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## 2. Bahia Honda State Park

Bahia Honda is home to the largest span of natural beach of all the Florida Keys State Parks. The old Bahia Honda bridge, a culture icon for Henry's Flagler's Overseas Railroad, adds to the park's unique setting for snorkeling, swimming, and watching sunsets. Other park activities include bicycling, boating, camping, fishing, hiking, and picnicking. Snorkel gear and kayaks are available for rent. Additionally, beach wheelchairs are available upon request at the entrance of the park; first-come, first-served.

*36850 Overseas Highway, Big Pine Key  
https://www.floridastateparks.org/bahiahonda, (305) 872-2353*

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## 3. Big Pine Key Community Park

This park is equipped with many amenities, including a roller hockey rink, basketball court, handball courts, baseball field, tennis courts, bocce courts, and shuffleboard courts. Visitors can also use the existing fitness trail while they enjoy the view of the bay in this gulf front park. There is also a large playground, skate park, and community center that can be used for various engagements, including meetings and parties. It is located at the end of Sands Road on Big Pine.

*31009 Atlantis Road, Big Pine Key  
www.monroecounty-fl.gov, (305) 295-4385*



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## 4. Palm Villa Park

This small park is located at the end of Palm Avenue and Wilder Road in Big Pine. Palm Villa Park has one picnic table and a large grassy area with a spectacular view of the bay.

*30478 Palm Drive, Big Pine Key  
www.monroecounty-fl.gov, (305) 295-4385*

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## 5. Watson Field Park and Big Pine Dog Park

This park serves as an off-leash dog park equipped with shaded canopy areas, benches, and water fountains. There is also one baseball field, one sandy volleyball court, and two well-maintained tennis courts. The property is maintained by Monroe County.

*30150 South Street, Big Pine Key  
www.monroecounty-fl.gov, (305) 872-0292*



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### 6. Ramrod Park

At the very end of Bay Shore Drive on Ramrod Key is Ramrod Park. This quiet and sandy park offers a unique swim hole in a canal as well as a wide bay-front beach. Visitors can enjoy walking or relaxing on the sand while watching the sunset.

*Bay Shore Drive, Ramrod Key*  
*www.monroecounty-fl.gov, (305) 295-4385*



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### 7. Sugarloaf School

At Mile Marker 19, the Sugarloaf School Track and Field is accessible to the public during after school hours. In addition to the track, visitors can enjoy various recreational sports in the open grassy areas. Bathrooms may not be available after school hours.

*255 Crane Boulevard, Summerland Key*  
*www.keysschools.com, (305) 745-3282*



### 8. Bay Point Park

Bay Point Park is a relatively large park located behind Baby’s Coffee in the Saddlebunch Keys. Visitors can use the sand volleyball court, basketball court, tennis court, and bocce court. Children can also play on the sandy playground that includes swing sets and a jungle gym. In addition, the park has a large grassy field and a soccer net. Benches, picnic tables, and barbeque pits are also available.

*6 West Circle Drive , Saddlebunch #1 Key*  
*www.monroecounty-fl.gov, (305) 295-4385*

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## **9. Wilhelmina Harvey Park**

The gated Wilhelmina Harvey Park has a jungle gym, swing set, and a picnic area. This family friendly park features an open grassy area with a small walking trail. Residents and visitors commonly bring their dogs to this park.

*373 Avenue F, Big Coppitt Key*  
*www.monroecounty-fl.gov, (305) 295-4385*

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## **10. Big Coppitt Volunteer Fire Department Park**

The Big Coppitt Volunteer Fire Department Park has several opportunities for physical activity. These include a basketball court, roller hockey rink, bocce courts, horseshoe pits, and a handball court. After a period of activity, visitors can rest at one of six tables and benches.

*280 Avenue F, Big Coppitt Key*  
*www.monroecounty-fl.gov, (305) 295-4385*

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## **11. Boca Chica Beach**

Boca Chica Beach is adjacent to the Naval Air Station in East Rockland Key. This park features a small beach area with plenty of shade from native trees.

*354 Boca Chica Road, Boca Chica Key*  
*(305) 293-2430*

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# Key West Parks and Beaches



- |   |                                      |                                    |
|---|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Florida Keys Community College Swimming Pool | 8. Clayton Sterling Complex          | 17. Bill Butler Park               |
| 2. Bernstein Park                               | 9. Rosa Hernandez Softball Field     | 18. Simonton Beach                 |
| 3. Key West Pines Park                          | 10. Wickers Sports Complex           | 19. Martin Luther King Jr. Pool    |
| 4. Smathers Beach                               | 11. City of Key West Nature Preserve | 20. Nelson English Park            |
| 5. Cozumel Park                                 | 12. Rest Beach/C.B. Harvey Park      | 21. Willie Ward Park               |
| 6. Little Hamaca Park                           | 13. Sonny McCoy Indigenous Park      | 22. Frederick Douglass Gym         |
| 7. Fran Ford White-Crowned Pigeon Preserve      | 14. Higgs Beach                      | 23. Truman Waterfront Park         |
|   | 15. Astro Park Playground            | 24. Fort Zachary Taylor State Park |
|   | 16. Bayview Park                     |                                    |

# Stock Island

## 1. Florida Keys Community College Swimming Pool

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A public, junior Olympic sized swimming pool can be accessed at Florida Keys Community College for a fee. The pool is heated and has an eight lane, 25-yard facility set for lap swimming. It is open Monday through Saturday. Swim lessons are offered for adults and children. Aqua fitness classes are also offered at the pool.



5901 College Road, Stock Island, back left hand corner of campus.  
www.fkcc.edu, (305) 296-9081

## 2. Bernstein Park

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Stock Island has a newly renovated park known as Bernstein Park. It features sports fields for baseball, basketball and soccer, a playground, and a nice walking and jogging track. Fitness stations have also been recently added to the park. Shaded pavilions can be used by visitors. The park can be found on the intersection of 5th Street and 5th Avenue in Stock Island.

www.monroecounty-fl.gov, (305) 295-4385



# South Key West

## 3. Key West Pines Park

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Key West Pines Park is an open picnic area under Australian pines next to Key West International Airport and East Martello Towers. Pets are allowed and there is a view of the water and sunrise with plenty of shade.

3501 South Roosevelt Blvd, Key West  
www.monroecounty-fl.gov, (305) 295-4385

## 4. Smathers Beach

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Smathers Beach has the longest stretch of white sand in Key West that was imported from the Bahamas. The beach is a popular place for tanning, sitting on beach, picnicking, watersports like windsurfing and beach sports like volleyball. There are concessions, showers, and restrooms. The mile-long sidewalk is much used by bicycles, joggers, and walkers of all ages. The walking trail is well-known to locals.

3471 South Roosevelt Blvd, Key West  
www.cityofkeywest-fl.gov, (305) 809-3700



# New Town

## 5. Cozumel Park

Cozumel Park small park exists at the cul-de-sac of 19th Terrace and Donald Avenue. The gated park has two jungle gyms, splash pad, a swing set, basketball court, handball court, and exercise bars. There is also a shaded picnic area and walking trail.

*1220 19th Terrace, Key West  
www.cityofkeywest-fl.gov, (305) 293-8367*

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## 6. Little Hamaca Park

Little Hamaca Park, off of Government Road about a half mile down, has a newly constructed nature trail and boardwalk that cut through low hammock and mangrove habitats. It is an out-of-the-way green space that has been replanted with native trees, where exotics are controlled. It is a good habitat for breeding Keys birds and migrants, such as warblers. Visitors can enjoy a bike ride through Little Hamaca, and watch the airplanes take off.

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*www.cityofkeywest-fl.gov, (305) 293-8367*

## 7. Fran Ford White-Crowned Pigeon Preserve

Located near the beginning of Government Road, within Little Hamaca Park and across from the Cuban airplane, is the Fran Ford White-Crowned Pigeon Preserve. It is an open brushy area with a pavilion displaying photographs of birds, butterflies, and other wildlife. It was replanted with native plants and trees, such as poisonwood, which the white-crowned pigeons like. It is a good place for wintering birds and native butterflies that come here on sunny afternoons.

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*www.keywestgardenclub.com, (305) 294-3210*

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### **8. Clayton Sterling Complex**

On the intersection of Northside Drive and Kennedy Drive is Clayton Sterling Complex. The complex features four state-of-the-art baseball fields, most active in the spring and summer with leagues ranging from T-Ball to competitive teen leagues. Wildlife include active osprey nests that are frequently seen on the light poles.



*900 Kennedy Drive, Key West  
www.cityofkeywest-fl.gov, (305) 293-8367*

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### **9. Rosa Hernandez Softball Field**

Neighboring Clayton Sterling Complex is Rosa Hernandez Softball Field. Spring leagues accommodate youth ages five years old to fourteen years old in addition to summer clinics. There is a concession stand, restroom, and bleachers.

*Located on Northside Drive and Kennedy Drive  
www.cityofkeywest-fl.gov, (305) 293-8367*



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### **10. Wickers Sports Complex**

This sports complex comprises a football stadium and soccer field. It is located across the street from Poinciana Elementary School. The stadium and field were previously known as Tommy Roberts Stadium (the football stadium), the George Mira football field (the actual football playing field), and the DeWitt Roberts softball field. It is located on the intersection of Kennedy Drive and Flagler Avenue at 1445 Kennedy Drive. There is also a small skate park, known as Blake Fernandez Skate Park, adjacent to George Mira football field on 14th Street and Flagler Avenue.

*1445 Kennedy Drive, Key West  
www.cityofkeywest-fl.gov  
(305) 293-8367*

# Old Town

## 11. City of Key West Nature Preserves

There are two units of preserved areas off of Atlantic Boulevard between White Street and Bertha Street. One is near 1800 Atlantic Boulevard and the other one is located near 1700 Atlantic Boulevard. The nature preserves have nice paths and boardwalks that wind through mangrove ponds to the beach. They are good for wintering birds and some breeding birds as well. These areas are home to less-disturbed beaches with native vegetation.

*www.cityofkeywest-fl.gov, (305) 809-3700*



## 12. Rest Beach/C.B. Harvey Park

Rest Beach, also known as C.B. Harvey Park, is adjacent to White Street Pier and the AIDS Memorial. Visitors can use the available picnic tables and benches. There is coastal scrub, a variety of plantings, a narrow beach, and great views of the ocean. The park is named after the late C.B. (Cornelius Bradford) Harvey, former Key West mayor and commissioner.

*1300 Atlantic Blvd, Key West  
www.cityofkeywest-fl.gov, (305) 809-3700*



## 13. Sonny McCoy Indigenous Park

At the end White Street and Atlantic Boulevard is Indigenous Park. The park was replanted some time ago with native vegetation, hence the name. There is a fresh water pond cared for by the Florida Keys Audubon Society. This is the home of Wildlife Rehabilitation Center. The park is a good breeding ground for various wildlife, including wintering birds. Occasional vagrant West Indies birds have included Western Spindalis and Bahama Mockingbird. There is a pavilion that can be reserved for various special events, including weddings, graduation parties, or birthdays.

*www.keywestwildlifecenter.org, (305) 292-1008*



## 14. Higgs Beach

Adjacent to the Casa Marina Resort, Higgs Beach offers a variety of activities that visitors can enjoy, including swimming, snorkeling, beach volleyball, and tennis. West Martello, which neighbors the beach, is a historic civil war era fort and offers a free self-guided tour. It is also the home of the Key West Garden Club, containing an acre and a half of tropical plants. The serene gardens are a place for contemplation, yoga, meditation, reading and exploring the kaleidoscope of flora in the Lower Keys. Across from the beach, there is a dog park featuring areas for large and small dogs as well as a fitness path.

*1050 Atlantic Boulevard  
www.monroecounty-fl.gov, (305) 295-4385;  
www.keywestgardenclub.com*



### **15. Astro Park Playground**



Located across from Higgs Beach is Astro Park Playground. It features a large sandy playground, barbecue pits, a volleyball court, picnic tables, tennis courts, handball courts, and restrooms. It is a well-known setting to all Key West parents of small children.

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*1000 Atlantic Blvd, Key West  
www.monroecounty-fl.gov  
(305) 295-4385*

### **16. Bayview Park**

At the intersection of Truman Avenue and Jose Marti Drive is Bayview Park. It is a refreshing green space at the entrance to Old Key West. The park is complete with a gazebo, picnic areas, six tennis courts, softball/soccer fields, and basketball court. The park has restrooms for use. This park often hosts community and social events open to the public.

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*www.cityofkeywest-fl.gov  
(305) 809-3700*

### **17. Bill Butler Park**

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The tucked-away Bill Butler Park features an open park area with playground equipment and a picnic area for community gatherings. The park was opened in 1986 and named for William “Bill” Butler, Sr., who was a musician and member of the Welter’s Coronet Band and founding father of the Key West Junkanoos (a celebration with African roots that had its beginning in the Bahamas in the 17th century to preserve African cultural traditions in danger of being lost in the displacement process of the slave trade.)

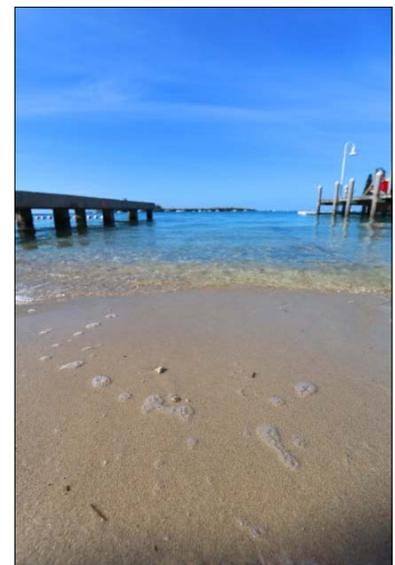
*721 Poorhouse Lane, at the end of the street adjacent to Windsor Lane.  
www.cityofkeywest-fl.gov  
(305) 809-3700*

### **18. Simonton Street Beach**

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Simonton Street Beach is a small beach equipped with a boat ramp for small boats. There is also a small dock that visitors can use for sightseeing. Restrooms and changing rooms are also available.

*0 Simonton Street at the north end of the street  
www.cityofkeywest-fl.gov, (305) 809-3700*



# Bahama Village

## 19. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Pool



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center & Pool houses a pool and community meeting rooms. There are two pools, one adult, where lap swimming, water exercise classes, and other water activities can be enjoyed by visitors, and there is a pool for young children. The pool is open to the public for free. Water exercises are offered at the pool several times a week during the spring and summer months for free.

*300 Catherine Street, Key West*  
*www.cityofkeywest-fl.gov, (305) 809-3700*



## 20. Nelson English Park

Also located at 300 Catherine Street is Nelson English Park. This park was named for one of the island's great civic leaders of the past and the first African American postmaster in Key West (1882-86). It is a popular site for family gatherings and other community social outdoor events. The park is well-equipped with adult exercise equipment, basketball courts, and several types of playground equipment for children that include climbing apparatus, swings, and a merry-go-round. This is a typical resident park located in the heart of Bahama Village.

*300 Catherine Street, Key West*  
*www.cityofkeywest-fl.gov, (305) 809-3700*



## 21. Willie Ward Park

Known as the “twin park” to Nelson English, the Willie Ward Park is adjacent to the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center & Pool. It is a relatively hidden and subdued space compared to Nelson English Park. The park contains a great amount of trees and shrubbery and is considered a great location for reflection and communing with nature. There are benches, picnic tables, and a pavilion for private or public group activities.

*www.cityofkeywest-fl.gov, (305) 809-3700*



## 22. Frederick Douglass Gym



The Frederick Douglass Community Center & Gym houses a large basketball court, bleachers, and a stage. Various activities for children and youth take place on this site, including a citywide annual basketball clinic and tournament. It is also used for community social events. This gym was the site of the Frederick Douglass School, named after the famous African American historian and orator, that served the children of Black families in Key West from 1871 – 1965

*111 Olivia Street, Key West*  
*www.cityofkeywest-fl.gov, (305) 809-3700*



### **23. Truman Waterfront Park**

Overlooking sunsets on Truman Harbor, Truman Waterfront Park is one of the City of Key West’s newest parks. What was once an old Navy shipyard is now the home to a covered playground, splash pad, benches, open grassy fields, and a fitness trail with workout stations.

*At the intersection of Southard Street and Howard England Way, Key West  
www.cityofkeywest-fl.gov, (305) 809-3700*



### **24. Fort Zachary Taylor State Park**

On the southern edge of Key West, Fort Taylor predates the Civil War and is a National Historic Monument housing the largest cache of Civil War armament in the world. Beyond its historical importance, the park is the southernmost state park in the continental United States. Walk the red-brick corridors of Fort Zachary Taylor, past cannon and gun ports, and history becomes more real than books and photos can depict. One better grasps how soldiers lived as they defended the nation’s southeastern coastline. Tour guides and interpretive panels explain how the fort played important roles in the Civil War, Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, and the Cuban Missile Crisis. The park also boasts Key West’s favorite beach, located at the southern end of the park, providing opportunities for picnicking, swimming, snorkeling, paddling and fishing



*601 Howard England Way, Key West  
www.floridastateparks.org, (305) 292-6713*



## The Dry Tortugas National Park

The Dry Tortugas are a small group of islands located about 67 miles west of Key West in the Florida Keys. They were discovered in 1513 by Ponce de Leon. He gave the islands the name “Tortugas” because it means turtles in Spanish, and he caught over 100 of them during his time on the islands. The “dry” part of the Dry Tortugas came later on to indicate that the land mass lacked fresh water.

During the civil war, a fort, Fort Jefferson was built on the Dry Tortugas to protect one of the most strategic deep water anchorages in North America. It helped control the Gulf of Mexico as well as the Straits of Florida. Today, it is a protected national park and popular tourist destination for tens of thousands every year.

Getting to the islands is made simple by modern day transportation and the popularity of the park. A ferry called the Yankee Freedom Ferry offers transportation to the park once a day and provides full amenities such as lunches, restrooms (on the boat), guided tours, and much more. Another way out to the islands is to take a boat plane which is a 45 minute ride, but is a bit more expensive. The park allows boating, so tourists can bring private boats and enjoy the amenities of the park. Overnight boat parking is allowed only on certain parts of the island for campers.

Fort Jefferson is a great place to tour and daily guided tours are offered year round. It is a great way to exercise as it takes about 45 minutes to walk around the fort on a guided tour, or less for those who wish to take a self-guided tour. Many tourists also enjoy walking the moat wall. It is an easy six tenths of a mile hike around the fort and provides a great view of the coral and fish in the water.

The Dry Tortugas also offer great snorkeling as the islands are surrounded by coral. The coral serves as a home to many types of fish and other aquatic wildlife. Snorkeling along the outside of the moat wall or around the pilings of the south coaling dock is recommended. There are no life guards on duty, so swimmers are cautioned to swim at their own risk. Fishing is also permitted in the park in certain areas, but lobstering and spear fishing are prohibited.

The Dry Tortugas are also a great place to camp. Those who wish, can also bring tents and camp in the Dry Tortugas on an island called Garden Key (the same island as the fort). A 10-site, primitive campground is located on Garden Key. Eight individual sites can each accommodate up to ten two-person tent and are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Campsites have picnic tables and grills. Campers must bring all supplies, including a tent, fresh water, fuel, ice, and food. The island offers spectacular views of the stars and are a great place to stay overnight for lovers of the outdoors.

The islands are also home to lots of wildlife including over 300 species of birds! Bird watching is becoming much more popular and the Dry Tortugas are a spectacular place to do it. The Tortugas offer a vital layover for migrating birds traveling between South and North America making a staple in the Great Florida Birding Trail. Spring is the optimal time to view birds, but any season offers the chance to see something unique at this exquisite Florida Keys Birding spot.

Rounding out the list of great ways to get active in the Dry Tortugas are the beaches. Whether looking to lie out and tan, throw the Frisbee or to swim, the Dry Tortugas are home to some of the most beautiful beaches and water in the Keys. They are a great place to kick back and enjoy the sun. Regardless of taste, everyone has fun on the islands, there is something for everyone to do.





**Photos and Information Courtesy of:**

Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Florida Department of Health

Monroe County

Islamorada, Village of Islands

City of Key West

City of Marathon

National Park Service

Follow Your Detour

Savannah Runco

Lynda Erd

*View online at [floridahealth.gov/multigen](http://floridahealth.gov/multigen)*

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