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REELFOOT LAKE STATE PARK

Reelfoot Lake State Park is in the northwest corner of Tennessee and is noted for its fishing, boating, and wildlife viewing. The park offers camping year-round. The visitor's center provides insight into the origin of Reelfoot Lake and its complex ecosystem. Seasonal boat tours of the lake and guided tours to view wintering bald eagles and waterfowl are highlights of the park's interpretive efforts.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The 15,000-acre lake was created by a series of violent earthquakes in 1811-1812 that caused the Mississippi River to flow backwards for a short period of time, creating Reelfoot Lake.

The park's ecosystem is unlike any other place in Tennessee; Reelfoot Lake is a flooded forest. While majestic Cypress trees rise above the water, many submerged Cypress stumps are below the surface. A variety of aquatic plants and flowers occupy the shoreline and saturate the shallow water. The lake harbors almost every kind of shore, wading bird and golden and American bald eagles.

MEETING ROOMS

The Ellington Hall Auditorium is ideal for gatherings like banquets, reunions, and meetings. The 3,700 square foot, air-conditioned hall has kitchen facilities and can seat approximately 400 people theater-style or 240 banquet-style. Some audio/visual equipment is available, and outside catering can be used. Reservations are accepted up to 12 months in advance.

MUSEUM

Interpretive programming is available at the Reelfoot Lake State Park's R.C. Donaldson Memorial Museum and Nature Center. The center's attractions include non-releasable raptors, snakes, and other wildlife from around the area. The museum is open year-round, excluding Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. Admission is free.

PICNIC PAVILIONS AND PLAYGROUNDS

Reelfoot Lake State Park has one picnic shelter—the Keystone Shelter that may be reserved for your next event or gathering. The shelter is equipped with picnic tables and a grill and has access to restrooms. The shelter offers gorgeous views of Reelfoot Lake and is an excellent location for bird watching and other wildlife viewings.

FISHING

Tennessee's only natural lake is nationally known for crappie and Bluegill fishing. Fishing is best for these in April and May. Anglers can hook these as well as bass and catfish throughout the year. Fishing is productive by boat and from the bank, pier, and boardwalk. A lake permit is required. The park has five public boat launch ramps to accommodate fishing boats and small pontoon boats. Fish cleaning stations can be found throughout the park. Bait, tackle, snacks, and fishing licenses are for sale at nearby locations. Many guides are available locally.

REELFOOT LAKE STATE PARK

2595 Highway 21 East
Tiptonville, TN 38079
Office: 731-253-8003
Visitors Center: 731-253-9652

HOURS OF OPERATION

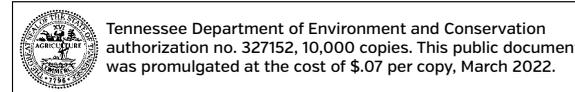
The park is open seven days a week.

DIRECTIONS

The park's 280 acres are broken into ten segments located along 22 miles of the Reelfoot Lake shoreline. The other park sections, including the visitor and interpretive center with its auditorium, picnic, and camping areas, are located along State Highways 21 and 22.



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TENNESSEE

PLANNED PROGRAMS

From early January through early March, park naturalists conduct daily eagle tours. Scenic pontoon tours are available daily, May through September. A guide is available to answer questions and to interpret the natural and cultural wonders of the lake.

CAMPING

Reelfoot features two campgrounds. Campsites provide water, electricity, tables, and grills. Many campsites are on the lakeshore. Both campgrounds have a small number of primitive sites with water access and some with picnic tables only.

HIKING

The park has several hiking trails popular for bird watching and wildlife viewing.

BOATING

One of the best ways to experience Reelfoot Lake is by boat. The lake is a shallow flooded forest, with lots of submerged stumps and standing trees. Boaters must navigate slowly and cautiously. As such, there are few large boats on the lake, which makes it an excellent place for canoes, kayaks, and jon boats when the winds are calm. Kayaks and canoes can be rented at the park and local businesses.



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NEARBY ATTRACTIONS

- Emmett Lewis Heritage Museum, Tiptonville: three miles
- Reelfoot National Wildlife Refuge: eight miles
- Dixie Gun Works, Union City: 25 miles

NEARBY STATE PARKS

Big Cypress Tree State Park: 46 miles

ANNUAL EVENTS

- January–February: Bald Eagle and Waterfowl Tours
- February: Eagle Festival
- May–September: Scenic Pontoon Tours
- First Weekend in October: Arts and Crafts Festival
- October: Pelican Festival

GET INVOLVED

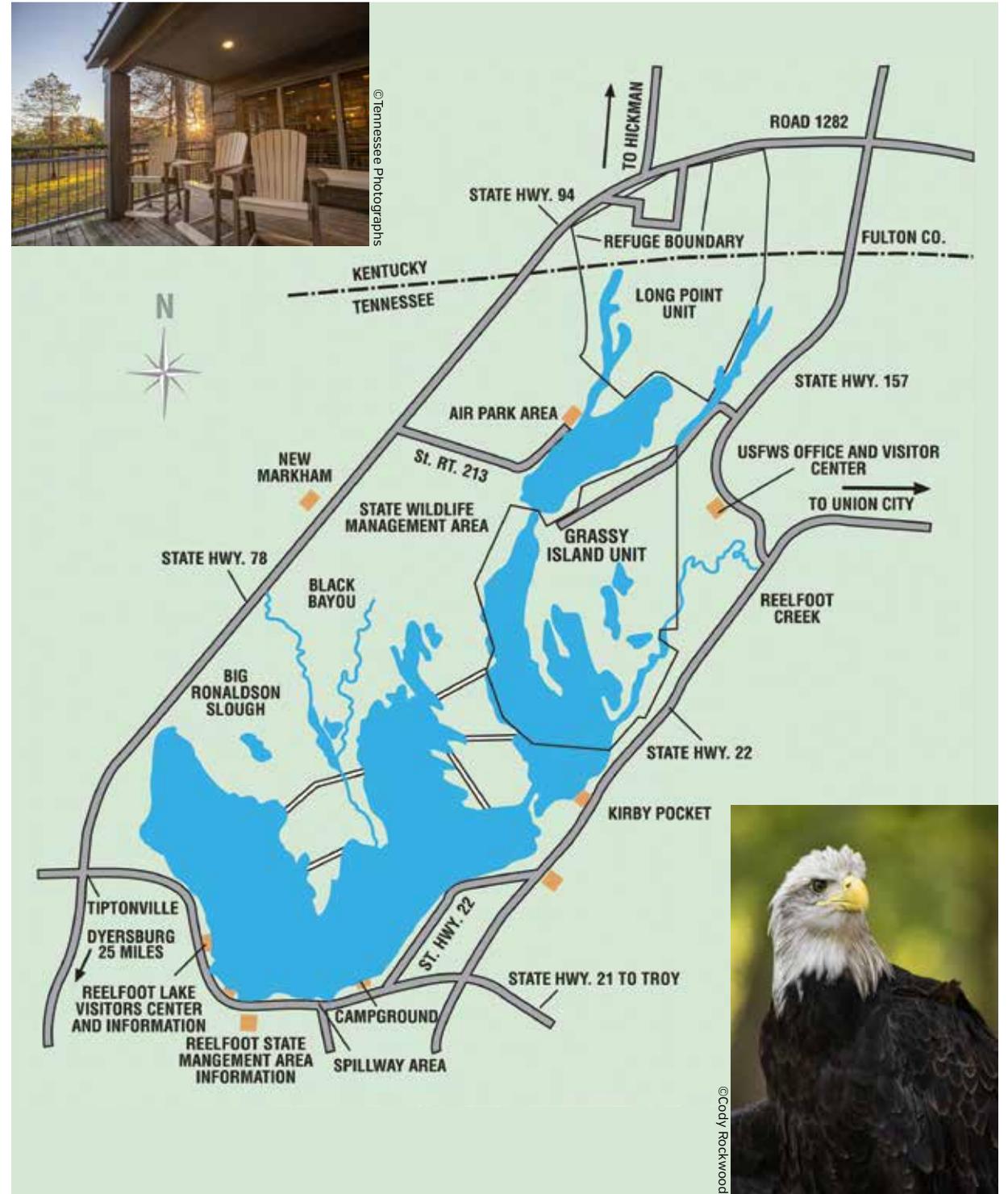
Volunteers and Friends assist in protecting, preserving, and promoting their favorite state park's cultural and natural resources. They do this by giving their time and talents to ensure the park's integrity for future generations. It's easy to show your support—join a Friends group or participate in one of the many volunteer opportunities offered. To learn more, visit tnstateparks.com/about/get-involved.



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