

History & Nature

The gardens were developed by the City of Palatka, the Federal Civil Works Administration (CWA) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) during the Great Depression from 1933-39 in an effort to spur the economic recovery of the City of Palatka. Azaleas were chosen as the theme flower of the gardens because of their brilliant bloom during the tourist season. By 1934 over 95,000 had been planted by Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) workers.

In 1937, the gardens were declared "the Nation's Outstanding CWA Project." Ravine Gardens is one of the nine New Deal-era state parks in Florida. The surviving structures and landscape features—examples of the American Rustic architectural style popular during the mid-20th century—include the main entrance, two suspension bridges, amphitheater, stone terraces and the Court of States with its obelisk dedicated to President F. D. Roosevelt.

In recognition of its historic significance, Ravine Gardens was officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places by the U. S. Department of the Interior in 1999, and was recognized as a National Landmark for Outstanding Landscape Architecture by the American Society of Landscape Architects.

This 146-acre park is a combination of formal and natural gardens. Natural vegetation ranges from mosses and ferns to woody shrubs and hardwood forest. Look for live oaks, hickory, sweet gum, longleaf pines, cabbage palm and cypress. About five acres are formal gardens, with stone terraces and water features. During the peak blooming season from January through April, the park bursts into color from thousands of azaleas, chickasaw plums, dogwoods and camellias.

Florida State Parks

Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Recreation and Parks

Ravine Gardens State Park

1600 Twigg Street,
Palatka, FL 32177
(386) 329-3721

FloridaStateParks.org

Park Guidelines

- Hours are 8 a.m. until sunset, 365 days a year.
- An entrance fee is required. Additional user fees may apply.
- All plants, animals 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 not permitted.
- Fireworks and hunting are prohibited in all Florida state parks.
- Alcoholic beverage consumption is allowed in designated areas only.
- 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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Ravine Gardens State Park

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Welcome to Ravine Gardens State Park in Palatka, Florida. Dramatic gardens in the ravine are landscaped with a magnificent combination of tropical and subtropical plantings. Drive through a 1.8-mile trail loops around the ravines which is thickly blanketed with azaleas and other blooms and hiking trails curve gracefully from one observation terrace to another with a view of the beautiful gardens.

Picnic tables and **grills** are available throughout the park. A small picnic **pavilion** is located by the amphitheater. A 2000 square foot picnic pavilion near the civic center may be reserved for family reunions and other group functions.

Visitors can **walk** the extensive **trails** that lead around the ravine and along the spring-fed stream. An accessible par course fitness trail features **exercise stations** designed to condition the entire body through stretching and cardiovascular conditioning. Visitors can relax on a bench in the shade to admire the beautiful flowers and soak up the serenity.

Volunteers are always welcome to become part of the Ravine Gardens team. The Friends of Ravine Gardens, Inc, a citizen support organization, sponsors the annual **Azalea Days** event in March. Volunteer opportunities include working in the park, gardening and maintaining trails. The newly renovated **Roy E. Campbell Civic Center** includes an auditorium, banquet facilities and conference rooms that are available for meetings, conferences, receptions and other functions. For booking information, please contact the park office.



Directions

Ravine Gardens State Park is located in Palatka, Florida. From US 17 State Road 100, turn south onto Moseley Avenue, then turn east onto Twigg Street.