experience the Everglades and to see its wildlife. Days are usually mild and winter is the best season to explore the Everglades. Everglades National Park and Big Cypress National Preserve protect a unique wilderness. In these parks you can still experience the sights and sounds of the Everglades. Big Cypress National Preserve where you will find the large strands of bald and dwarf cypress. A trip into one of these strands can be a true wilderness adventure. You will find cypress trees covered with vines, orchids, and other strange air plants. If you are lucky, you might even see signs of the endangered Florida panther or rare black bear. If you are unfamiliar with this area check with a park ranger before venturing in.

**EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK**

Winter is the best season to explore the Everglades. Days are usually mild and rain-free, while mosquito and other biting insect populations are at their low point (though never completely absent from some areas.) Winter is also the best time of year to see wildlife in one of this country’s richest biological preserves. You will find that one of the best ways to experience the Everglades and to see its wildlife is to park you car and walk the trails. The well maintained trails and boardwalks give you a distinct advantage over the early explorers and Indians, but try to envision what they must have encountered as they made their own trails through the wilderness.

The Everglades (with a lower case “e”) is the name for the sawgrass prairie ecosystem—so named by the early explorers for its outward similarity to the European “glades”, and for its seemingly endless expanse. There are many subtleties of the sawgrass prairie you will miss if you limit your visit to viewing from your car.

But all of the Everglades (upper case “E”) denotes the National Park) is not everglades! In Everglades National Park you will also find large tracts of pine forest, jungle-like tropical hardwood hammocks, and vast mangrove forests. Each has its own unique flora and fauna, and each its own story—a story influenced by elevation, water, and fire. Take time to learn this story: read the interpretive signs, go on a guided nature walk, or just reflect on your own as you walk the nature trails.

**BIG CYPRUS NATIONAL PRESERVE**

If you are looking for the “everglades” popularized by the media—the tangled jungle with tree limbs dripping snakes, vines, and exotic orchids—you will probably find that Big Cypress National Preserve more accurately fits this description. Together the Everglades and Big Cypress comprise a block of over 3000 square miles of contiguous land and water. There are similarities between the Everglades and Big Cypress (both contain sawgrass prairie, hardwood hammocks, pine and mangrove forests), but it is in the Big Cypress National Preserve where you will find the large strands of bald and dwarf cypress. A trip into one of these strands can be a true wilderness adventure. You will find cypress trees covered with vines, orchids, and other strange air plants. If you are lucky, you might even see signs of the endangered Florida panther or rare black bear. If you are unfamiliar with this area check with a park ranger before venturing in.

**BISCAYNE NATIONAL PARK**

In the Everglades and Big Cypress the land and its rich variety of plant and animal life dominates the scene; in Biscayne Bay it is the watery expanse of grassy waters, the tropical reef and a rich variety of bird life that capture the visitors' attention. Visitors to Fort Jefferson can not only introduce you to the diverse wildlife of the coral reefs but experience the endless expanse. There are many subtleties of the sawgrass prairie you will miss if you limit your visit to viewing from your car.

**FORT JEFFERSON MONUMENT**

Visitors to Fort Jefferson can not only experience the myriad marine life of a tropical reef and a rich variety of bird life scattered among the numerous keys (islands), they can also experience a part of 19th century American history. This national monument is a combination wildlife refuge and historic site. Snorkel among the coral reefs and old shipwrecks, or walk along the foot high walls of the fort and try to imagine what it would have been like for the troops living on the island during the Civil War.

Fort Jefferson National Monument, Biscayne and Everglades National Parks, and Big Cypress National Preserve protect a small portion of the original wilderness which once covered South Florida. But these isolated tracts of wilderness cannot exist independent of what goes on around them. Urban sprawl, the draining of wetlands, and the sheer impact of ever increasing numbers of visitors all combine to pose a serious threat to the very existence of wilderness areas. To continue to have areas set aside that preserve parts of our original American wilderness will require that we make some tough choices on conflicting uses. There are of course practical reasons for preserving wilderness. Everglades and Big Cypress protect the fresh water supply for millions of South Floridians. The mangrove forests of Biscayne and the Everglades are the nursery grounds for the marine life that make possible the multimillion dollar commercial and recreational fishing industries. But just as important, these national parks and monuments are among the last refuges from the stress of urban living. They represent one of the last outposts where we can still reflect in a quiet, natural, and unhurried environment, and view a small part of the original wilderness which is such an important part of our national heritage.

**Can The Florida Panther Be Saved?**

Most visitors to Everglades National Park expect to see an alligator. Without this experience, their trip is incomplete. However, there is another animal in this park that is so scarce and elusive that most visitors aren’t even aware of its existence. How much more exciting and unforgettable a visit to Everglades National Park would be if a Florida panther were spotted?

A glimpse of its fluid stride, tawny coat, alert eyes and long, gracefully curving tail would leave any visitor an image of freedom that is rare in today’s civilized and structured world.

But how much longer can the Florida panther exist in its shrinking habitat? Although the “Felis concolor coryi,” as scientists know it, has been on the endangered species list since 1967, today it is in serious jeopardy. Scientists say the present populations are too small to be self-sustaining, and the panther is directly related to the encroachment of man.

The remnant south Florida population—estimated to be only a few dozen individuals—is all that remains of the untold numbers that roamed the eastern United States 100 years ago.
GENERAL INFORMATION

ENTRANCE FEES are $2.00 for each private motor vehicle (including motorcycles). The permit is good until 12 midnight of the day it is purchased. Bus passengers, bicyclists, and hikers pay $0.50 per person. The main park entrance is open 24 hours daily, including holidays. SPECIAL ENTRANCE PASSPORTS are available at the entrance station and campgrounds. The GOLDEN EAGLE PASSPORT is available for $10.00, and is valid from the day of purchase through the last day of the calendar year. The GOLDEN AGE PASSPORT is a lifetime permit issued free to U.S. citizens age 62 and older. The GOLDEN ACCESS PASSPORT is a lifetime permit issued free to permanently disabled individuals. Inquire at the Main Entrance Station for more information.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Everglades National Park:
General Information: (305) 247-6211
Emergency Telephone: (305) 247-7272

GENERAL INFORMATION

VISITOR CENTERS are located at the Main Park Entrance, Royal Palm, Flamingo, and Everglades City. Hours of operation are generally 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. All visitor centers provide exhibits, maps, and information. The Main Visitor Center also provides a 15 minute introductory film.

FOR YOUR SAFETY please do not feed or harass the wildlife. Feeding wildlife is not only dangerous to you, it is also harmful to them. People who feed wildlife create nuisance animals that must often be removed or destroyed.

THEFT does occur in the Park. Do not leave vehicles unlocked or with windows rolled down. Secure your vehicle and lock valuables in the trunk where they will be out of sight.

PETS are allowed only in the parking lot and campground areas, and must be on a leash or otherwise under control at all times. Pets are not allowed on any park trails. Plan ahead so that you do not have to leave a pet unattended in a closed vehicle. Even in winter vehicles left in the sun will heat up rapidly inside.

Have Five Hours To Spend?

"Understanding the Everglades," formerly the Everglades National Park Institute, is an umbrella title for programs designed to give you more time to explore a single topic or area of interest with our ranger-naturalists. The programs last 5 hours, from 10:00 am until 3:00 pm unless otherwise noted when you reserve a space. Most bird walks begin earlier. Reservations are required and may be made by telephone (305) 247-6211 ext. 220. Or you may write to Understanding the Everglades, Box 279, Homestead, FL 33030.

Each program is limited to 30 people. Please cancel reservations that you will not use. Clubs, schools and organizations are limited to 15 of the 30 spaces until two weeks prior to the program.

TOPIC STARTING LOCATION DATE(S)
Migratory Birds Main Visitor Center Oct. 3, Oct. 5
Explore Turner River Everglades City Oct. 12, Nov. 9, Jan. 12
Birds - Cypress Memoir Shark Valley Nov. 8
Group Leading (scouts, church) Shark Valley Dec. 6
Basic Canoeing Flamingo Jan. 23
What's An Epiphyte? Shark Valley Feb. 28
Mangroves and Florida Bay Flamingo March 7
The Everglades at Night Shark Valley March 21
Endangered Species Main Visitor Center April 22
Breeding Birds Main Visitor Center May 3

For All To Enjoy

For the last six years the National Park Service has been working hard, nationwide, to modify existing facilities, programs, and services to provide accessibility to all park visitors. Here at Everglades we come a little close to that goal each year. Along with modifications to buildings and trails, special emphasis has been placed on providing more interpretive information to the disabled visitor in the form of written and audio material and ranger-led programs.

As you begin your visit to Everglades National Park pick up a free accessibility guide at any Visitor Center or at the Entrance Station. Hearing impaired visitors wishing more information about the park before arriving may call TTY 305-246-6211.

A listing of ranger-led programs are posted at all visitor centers and campgrounds. Many are along accessible trails or offer hands-on experiences. Special notation is indicated for wheelchair accessible programs. One tram (open-air bus) at Shark Valley has space for two wheelchair passengers on this two-hour ranger narrated tour. A written tram script for the hearing impaired is also available. Advanced reservations for the tram tour can be made by calling 305-221-4453.

The Main Visitor Center has an open captioned version of the park orientation film available for viewing upon request. Written scripts are available for most audio displays at the Main Visitor Center and at the Flamingo Visitor Center.

Taped cassette trail guides for vision impaired visitors are available for loan at Royal Palm for the Anhinga Trail and at Shark Valley for the Bobcat Trail.

The concession operated boat tours at Flamingo and Everglades City will provide assistance in boarding for wheelchair passengers.

BIENVENU! BIENVENIDO! WILLKOMMEN!

On se procure des renseignements en Francais aux centres des visiteurs. Se obtiene informacion sobre el parque en Espanol en los centros turisticos. Information uiber den park auf deutsch ist im Besucherzentrum erhaltlich.
On Your Own

Short Trails (all are ½ mile or less)

ANHINGA TRAIL — famous for its winter concentration of alligators, birds and other wildlife as well as plants in the slough environment.

GUMBO LIMBO TRAIL — views it way through a dense tropical hardwood forest, offering views of air plants, butterflies and unusual tropical trees.

PINELANDS TRAIL — offers an introduction to the most diverse plant community in the Park and the major factor responsible for its preservation — fire.

PA-HAY-OKEE — an observation platform offering a panoramic view of the “river of grass”. Look for hawks and wading birds.

MAHOGANY HAMMOCK — a magnificent tropical hardwood ‘hammock’ where tropical and temperate plants, song birds and elusive owls can be found. Please respect the owls and their territories by not calling them with tape recorders.

WEST LAKE TRAIL — a walk through a tropical mangrove forest, one of the most productive ecosystems (in terms of nutrients and food) in the world.

BAYSHORE LOOP — offers good birding and marine life and a look at plants found in the coastal prairie.

PAUROTIS POND — Just a short drive off the main road. Enjoy the rare view of pauroris palms over the pond and look for wading bird during the dry winter months. A nice casual canoeing and picnicking area.

WEST LAKE POND — Often alligators and birds are seen here. A good area to sit on a dock and watch birds or the fish in the water.

MRAZEK POND — This pond is right alongside the main road and provides some of the best birding and photography during a short period of time every winter.

ECO POND — A cattle-filled pond which offers a .2 mile walk around the perimeter. This is a good birding and wildlife viewing area.

Canoe Trails

NINE MILE POND — 5.2 mile loop. This is the only canoe trail through the fresh water ‘glades’. It offers wide open views and is a good trail for beginners.

NOBLE HAMMOCK — 5.2 mile loop. This is also a good beginner trail, winding through a maze of mangrove lined creeks and small ponds. Noble Hammock was the site of an old bootleggers camp.

MUD LAKE — Part of a 4.8 mile pass. Passes through mangrove lined lakes and small creeks. It connects Buttonwood Canal, Coot Bay, Mud Lake, and Bear Lake. Is a good birding and fishing area.

BEAR LAKE — 1.5 miles one way. The trail travels along an old canal that is lined by tropical hammock and mangroves. Look for birds. An interpretive trail guide is available at the Visitor Centers.

BRADLEY KEY — 1.7 miles one way. A short trip on Florida Bay to a mangrove island. A small beach on the SW corner of the island is open to landing (daylight hours only). Look for birds and marine-life.

FLORIDA BAY — Paddle out onto Florida Bay for as long as you like and enjoy the great variety of birdlife and marinelife to be seen there. Check with the Flamingo rangers for suggestions.

At Everglades City

There are no designated self-guided walking or canoe trails, however one can enjoy a leisurely stroll along the water front or rent a canoe to explore the many creeks nearby. Check with the ranger for maps and suggestions.

Join A Ranger

Royal Palm

INTERPRETIVE WALKS AND SHORT TALKS — ½-3/4 hour. Programs will cover the plants, animals and special problems of protecting the Park’s delicate resources. Offered daily.

GUIDED HIKES — 2-4 hours. A more lengthy hike into the Everglades. This program requires old clothes, long pants, and lace-up shoes that can get muddy. Water, sunscreen, and bug repellent are recommended.

PA-HAY-OKEE — ½ hour talk. This unique location allows views of birds, alligators, and the expansive “river of grass”. Offered at special times throughout the week.

CAR CARAVAN — 4-6 hour guided vehicle trip on Saturdays. This trip through the Park to Flamingo takes you through 5 different environments of the Everglades. Bring your lunch, sun-screen, water and insect repellent.

SUNRISE/MOONRISE — 1-2 hours. Explore the very special conditions that exist in the everglades at the break of day or just after dark. Insect repellent is recommended.

EVENING PROGRAMS — ¾-4/4 hour. This program may be a slide presentation, a star talk, or a special guest speaker from another organization. Located at the Long Pine Key Campground Amphitheater and offered several nights per week.

Check bulletin boards for specific dates and times.

Flamingo

INTERPRETIVE TALKS — Are of various lengths and are on a variety of subjects. They are offered daily in Flamingo.

GUIDED WALKS — 2-3 hours. These walks explore the area hiking trails and assist visitors in discovering the local plant and animal life. Given several afternoons a week.

BIRD WALKS — 1½-2 hours walk in the early morning in search of birds and other wildlife. Offered several mornings per week.

CANOE TRIPS — Explore the Park on one of these free Ranger-guided canoe trips. RESERVATIONS REQUIRED and can be made NO MORE than 3 DAYS IN ADVANCE of the day of the trip. Call (305) 253-2241. Reservations are taken daily between the hours of 8:30 am and 4:30 pm. Due to safety factors, children under age 6 not permitted. Organized groups are limited to 12 participants per trip. Larger groups should contact TW Services for specially guided trips.

EVENING PROGRAMS — A special evening presentation is offered every other evening at Flamingo campground amphitheater. Check bulletin boards for specific dates and times.

Shark Valley

Shark Valley will be closed through the winter months and is not expected to open until April, 1967. Check page 5 for more details.
Camping

Two National Park Service campgrounds are available in Everglades National Park. Long Pine Key Campground, with 108 sites, is located 5 miles from the Main Park Entrance, and Flamingo, with nearly 300 sites, is located 28 miles from the Entrance Station. Both have asphalt pads accommodating those in trailers and recreational vehicles. The Flamingo campground has walk-in sites for those who are tenting. No hook-ups of any kind are available, although modern comfort stations and trailer sewage dumping stations are located in both campgrounds. The Flamingo campground has one coldwater shower. Basic camping supplies are available at the Flamingo Marina; no supplies are available at Long Pine Key campground. Campground rates are expected to remain as follows: trailers and tent sites, $5.00 per night. Walk-in sites (Flamingo only), $4.00 per night.

Campsers with a Golden Age or Golden Access Passport receive a 50% discount. Group camping is available to educational or national groups. Reservations must be made in writing no more than 90 days in advance. Mail reservation requests to: National Park, P.O. Box 279, Homestead, FL 33030, Attn: Group Camping Reservations.

GROUP CAMPING

One group campsite is located at Long Pine Key Campground and four are found in the Flamingo Campground. Each site can accommodate between 4 and 15 people. The current nightly fee is $7.50 per site, however, it may be increased some time this winter. These group sites are available to youth, religious, and educational groups. Reservations must be made in writing no more than 90 days in advance. Mail reservation requests to: Everglades National Park, P.O. Box 279, Homestead, FL 33030, Attn: Group Camping Reservations.

Boating

A major portion of the park includes water areas, and there are ample opportunities for boating by private businesses. Fees are required to comply with United States Coast Guard Safety requirements such as, personal flotation devices for each passenger.

Boats with motors are not allowed on freshwater lakes and creeks, including L-67 canal. The following restrictions are in effect for saltwater lakes and creeks: Motors no larger than 5.5 horsepower are permitted on West Lake, West Lake Pond, and Hell's Bay Trail. All motors are prohibited on Bear Lake Canal to East Captiva Island, and associated waters, Captiva Pond, and Mud Lake. All other salt water areas have no restrictions except closed areas which are posted.

So that many of the Everglades birds will not be disturbed, all keys in Florida Bay are closed to landing except North Key, Rabbit Key, and Key Capitol (North Sandy) Key. Check with a Ranger if you have any questions.

Free boat ramps are located at Pauan (hand propelled craft only) and West Lake. Two boat ramps at Flamingo provide access to both the White Water Bay and Florida Bay sides of the Buttonwood plug. A hoist on the plug is available to lift boats up to 26 feet and 8 tons across the plug.

Fishing

Snapper, sea trout, snook, redfish, tarpon, bonefish, bass, and bluegill are some of the salt and freshwater species available to anglers in the Everglades. Freshwater fishermen must have a Florida fishing license which can be purchased at marinas and sporting goods stores outside the park.

Popular freshwater fishing areas in the park include Nine Mile Pond, Pauan, Puspa Pond, Picus Pond, Pine Glades Lake, Sisal Pond and Sweet Bay Pond. Only hand propelled craft are allowed on freshwater ponds. Fishing is not allowed in the ponds by the Main Visitor Center, from the Taylor Slough Bridge, or Royal Palm, Shark Valley, Coot Bay, Mazeekers, or Eos Ponds.
EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK

Please Don’t Feed Us!!!

Everglades National Park is home for a variety of wild animals, such as alligators, raccoons, and many beautiful birds. Unfortunately some of these animals are being enticed with tidbits of food from Park visitors. This act conditions the animals to approach people whether or not there is food available. Imagine the implications when the animal is an alligator, or a raccoon that happens to be carrying rabies. Even the crows and gulls can do harm to you or your property.

Park managers over the years have had to make some tough decisions concerning the fate of some wild animals. In the past the Park’s actions have involved relocation or destruction of these conditioned animals. We now realize there are other answers to the problem. YOU can help:

— observe wildlife from a safe distance.
— report aggressive or overly friendly animals to a ranger
— store your food in a non-pliable container.
— dispose of your trash properly
— PLEASE… don't feed wildlife

Let’s all work together at keeping Everglades National Park a natural wonder and a safe place to visit.

Raccoons become too bold when fed, and can cause injury. Natural food is abundant for these appealing wild animals.

Shark Valley Road Construction

The Shark Valley loop road on the Park’s northern boundary is temporarily closed to the public this winter while being rebuilt. Construction delays have caused the opening date to be postponed, perhaps as late as spring ’87. The National Park Service regrets that visitors cannot use the area during construction for safety reasons.

Each year, seasonal high water has flooded the road, stopping the popular tram tours for several months. The old road had too few culverts to permit a free flow through the wetlands. The new design by the Federal Highway Administration, approved by all responsible Federal and State authorities, will mitigate adverse effects on the delicate park environment, adding over 500 new culverts and raising the road surface above the normal high water level.

The 15-mile road is for open-air tram, bicycle, and pedestrian use, rather than private automobiles. The quiet tram tours are operated by a park concessioner, Shark Valley Tours, Inc. A park ranger is on board most tours to interpret the natural world of the Everglades during the 2-hour experience. Often rare and endangered wildlife species are seen.

All efforts are being made to reopen this area of Everglades National Park as soon as possible. For further information, call Park headquarters, (305) 247-6211.

Panther

Continued From Page 1

collars and electronically tracked in the Fakahatchee Strand (Collier County) and Big Cypress National Preserve. The physical examination of the captured cats and subsequent radio-tracking have provided important facts about their home range, feeding habits and general health.

It was such information that led to changes in interstate highway design and the lowering of speed limits on highways that cross the panther’s habitat (U.S. 41 and Fla. 29 and 84).

Engineers have redesigned Interstate 75 to include several underpasses in areas frequented by panthers in an effort to keep the animals off the super-highway.

The study team’s findings also have encouraged special interest groups to accelerate their efforts to acquire additional land for federal and state preserves.

HUNT CAREFULLY PLANNED

The capture of panthers is a delicate operation. The capture team is obligated to use techniques designed to impose the least possible stress on the panther. On a day carefully selected after considering the weather and other factors that might affect the panther, the tracker releases his dogs — bred so selectively and trained so intently that they will track ONLY cats.

Once the dogs find a panther scent, the chase is short. A Panther usually is tried within 15 minutes. When this happens the tracker calls in the other team members by radio.

Experts on the team observe the cat for several minutes before determining if sedation and capture are practical. For instance, pregnant or nursing cats would not be immobilized.

When the decision is made to proceed, a tranquilizer dart is used to sedate the panther. When the tranquilizer has taken effect every team member has a specific responsibility to assure that the panther is not injured. A “crash bag” is placed on the ground. A net is suspended above the bag. The panther is secured with rope and gently lowered.

During the next hour the animal is thoroughly examined by the veterinarian and biologists. Upon completion of the examination, the team will know the panther’s length and weight, its age and general health condition. Finally a radio collar, 2 1/2 inches wide and weighing two pounds, will be fitted around the panther’s neck. One of its ears will be tattooed to assure identification should the collar ever be lost.

The recovery period could take from two to five hours. During this time, the panther will be in a “recovery tent” and will be monitored continuously until it regains consciousness and normal behavior. When it does recover, the panther is released to resume its normal activities.

The radio collar is designed to function for at least two years. During this time, scientists will keep track of the collarded animals, recording where they go, when they go there and note their reaction to storms and other environmental conditions. Scientists will be able to draw conclusions about the animal’s feeding habits and perhaps something about its mating activities.

Visitors can make a significant contribution to the panther study if they report to the National Park Service when they see a panther and note the date, time of day, location and describe what the panther was doing when sighted. Scientific wildlife observation cards are available at visitor centers.

The effort to prevent the extinction of the Florida panther is a precedent-setting project involving the combined efforts of the National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission and the Florida Department of Natural Resources.

Everglades National Park visitors are invited to discuss the project with park staff.

The Bicentennial Of Our Constitution

Did you know that our country is now observing the Bicentennial of our U.S. Constitution? For the next few years, major milestones in the development of our American way of self-government will be celebrated. Two hundred years ago, a young nation of only thirteen states faced the urgent need to formulate its fundamental and supreme laws. The result was the United States Constitution, a document which spells out the rights, responsibilities, and organization of the central government. Your rights as a citizen are derived from this document. Read more about the U.S. Constitution and how it has endured through 200 years of social, political, and economic change, determining our way of life in the United States.

1872, Florida was not yet a part of the United States, being claimed by Spain. The tip of the Florida peninsula, now Everglades National Park, was a tropical wilderness, little touched by human activities. Although no one at that time could have conceived that a portion of the Everglades would eventually become a National Park, the U.S. Constitution is the instrument that made it possible. In Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution, Congress is empowered to provide for the general welfare of its citizens. In 1872, Congress began to create national parks as a grand social experiment, unique in the world, to preserve its “crown jewels” for present and future generations.
Lying at the extreme western end of the Florida Keys, 68 miles west of Key West, are the seven sand isles of the Dry Tortugas. Dominating the lonesome keys is the mammoth bulwark of Fort Jefferson.

The reeds and shoals of the Tortugas were first discovered by Ponce de Leon in 1513. Named for the abundant "tortugas" or turtles, the subtropical keys were a bountiful discovery. The large sea turtles provisioned the vessels with fresh meat but there was no fresh water. The Tortugas were dry.

Down through the years the Dry Tortugas have been the haunt of pirates and late wreckers. United States military attention was drawn to the keys in the early 1800's not because of high sea piracy, but because of their strategic location. Naval commanders felt that whoever controlled the Tortugas could control the Straits of Florida and the entrance to the Gulf of Mexico.

Plans were made for a massive fortress. Fort Jefferson would represent the largest of the new nation's seacoast fortifications. Construction proceeded from 1847-1874 but the fort was never completed. The invention of the rifled cannon made the fort obsolete before its completion. Even as construction had proceeded the fort began to crumble under its own weight. Yellow fever and hurricanes ravaged soldiers and military intentions.

During the Civil War the fortress served as a military prison for Union deserters. On sixteen acres of sand and brick the Union garrisoned 800 prisoners and guards. The most famous prisoner was the ill-fated Dr. Mudd, implicated in the conspiracy to assassinate Lincoln, and spent four years at Fort Jefferson before being pardoned.

Construction on the facility was halted in 1874. In subsequent years the military outpost was used periodically as a quarantine station, a coaling station for sea-going naval steam ships, and as a World War I seaplane base, but as the world changed the strategic value of Fort Jefferson waned.

Conversely, as the world grew larger the importance of the pristine reefs, abundant sea life, and overwhelming bird life grew in value. In 1935, President Franklin Roosevelt, set aside Fort Jefferson and the surrounding waters as a national monument.

The keys of the Dry Tortugas represent the most important area colony in the contiguous states — home to 120,000 Sooty and Noddy Terns each spring and summer. White-tailed Tropicbirds, Masked Brown Boobies, and other rarities occur each year. Peregrine Falcons, sharp-shinned Hawks, Merlin's and other birds of prey move south overhead each fall.

Endangered sea turtles, the Loggerhead and Green, nest each year on the isolated sand keys. Scientists boast that the reef is one of the most interesting and best developed in the nation. Hard and soft corals and richly colored reef fishes create a kaleidoscope underwater world. Shipwrecks from centuries past lie silent and undiscovered.

Today, haunting and mysterious, the fortress is integrated into the seacoast forttry and cry and ride the wind. Far out at sea the brick fort stands sentinel guarding the past as we protect the future.

ACCESS:
Public transportation to the fort is available from Key West by seaplane. Nautical charts for the route can be purchased at marinas and boating supply outlets in Key West. Information can be obtained in Key West from the U.S. Coast Guard, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Charter Boat Association. Boaters should be experienced and aware of the possibility of extreme weather conditions.

The fort is open daylight hours only. An orientation slide show and self-guiding walking tour are available. There are excellent opportunities for snorkeling, SCUBA diving, and fishing. Camping is permitted in the grassy picnic area where grills and tables are provided. Remember, no water, food, supplies, or shower facilities or accommodations are available. For more information about the monument write to Superintendent, Everglades National Park, Box 279, Homestead, Florida 33030.
BISCAYNE NATIONAL PARK

From the native's point of view, the months of October to May, with their cool nights, warm days, low humidity, and relative lack of mosquitoes, are the best time of the year to visit Biscayne National Park. Whether your interests are boating, fishing, camping, hiking, snorkeling, picnicking, or just enjoying the solitude of Florida's tropical island paradise, there is something for everyone to see and do.

Most of Biscayne National Park's 181,000 acres are under water, so the best way to see the park is by boat. If you have your own boat there are excellent launching facilities at Homestead Bayfront Park, Matheson Hammock Park, Crandon Park on Key Biscayne, and the launching ramps at Dinner Key. Biscayne National Park has a 66-slip harbor at Elliott Key where boaters may spend the day or night. Anchorage areas may be found off Elliott Key, Sands Key, and at Boca Chita Key.

Biscayne National Park offers excellent fishing opportunities, from shoreline fishing at Convoy Point for mangrove snapper, to the grassy flats of Biscayne Bay for sea trout and bonefish, and on to the ocean for the larger game fish. All fishing in Biscayne National Park conforms to Florida state regulations. To find out about season, size, number and method of capture, pick up a copy of "Facts for Florida Fishing." No license is required for saltwater fishing.

For those interested in other water activities, we recommend snorkeling in Biscayne Bay, or along the coral reefs offshore. For those without a boat there are snorkeling and glass-bottom boat trips available from Convy Point.

For the hiker, Elliott Key has a short ½ mile boardwalk on the ocean side of the island which begins about ½ mile east of the Elliott Key Visitor Center. This boardwalk makes travel along the coral rock shoreline easier. At the end of the boardwalk is a self-guided ½ mile trail through the tropical hardwood hammock in the central area of the key. If you are interested in a longer hike, take the old road which runs the length of the island.

See a Park Ranger for information about the city of Islandia, which was once planned for these keys.

Boca Chita, recently acquired by the Park Service, has a trail which runs around the perimeter of the island.

Picnicking areas with grills are located at Elliott Key, Convoy Point, and Boca Chita Key.

For the camper, tent sites with grills are available next to the Elliott Key harbor and a group campsite with a fire ring is available on the ocean side of the key. Restroom facilities with fresh water and cold showers are located next to the visitor center. Campers are requested to protect their food and garbage from raccoons and other small animals by using sturdy containers. Since there is no trash pickup on the Keys, visitors must pack out their trash.

We hope that your visit to Biscayne National Park will be enjoyable. To add to your comfort while visiting the park bring insect repellent, sunscreen and a jacket for our cool evenings.

Biscayne National Park offers a tropical island experience visitors never forget. If you would like to visit and need further park information, call (305) 247-PARK.

For island excursions to Elliott Key or for a Glass Bottom Boat Trip call (305) 247-2400.

This article was written by Bob Van Eck who worked as a volunteer at Biscayne National Park for the summer of 1986.

Convoy Point Visitor Center

Open: Weekdays 9:00 a.m. — 4:30 p.m.
Weekends 8:00 a.m. — 6:00 p.m.
Location: 9 miles east of U.S. 1 on North Canal Drive (SW 328th St ), Neighboring Homestead Bayfront Park. From the turnpike take the Tallahassee Rd. exit (SW 137th Ave.). Turn left and follow and follow signs to the park.

Elliott Key Visitor Center

Open: Weekends — Saturday 10:00 a.m. — 5:30 p.m.
Sunday 10:00 a.m. — 5:30 p.m.
Location: 7 miles across Biscayne Bay, boat transportation provided by Park Concessioner.

Ranger-Led Activities

December 28, 1986-April 18, 1987

SECRETS OF THE SEA — Come and discover the intimate secrets of the sea. This 45 minute program will discuss some special features of this unique water park. Meet at Convoy Point Visitor Center. (Saturday, Sunday, Wednesday and Friday at 2:00 p.m.)

ESCAPE TO ELLIOTT - Cruise to this tropical island paradise with Capt. Ed Davidson aboard the 50' Reef Rover III. Once on the island, join a Park Ranger for a program on some aspect of the park's natural or cultural history. For reservations and fee information call Biscayne Aqua-Center (305) 247-2400.

BENEATH BISCAYNE WATERS — (Glass Bottom Boat Tour) - Through the 18' viewing well experience the beautiful underwater world of Biscayne National Park. From the mangrove shoreline to the coral reef, this is an adventure you will never forget! For reservations and fee information call Biscayne Aqua-Center (305) 247-2400.

Island camping is permitted on Elliott Key.
OTHER SERVICES WITHIN THE NATIONAL PARKS

SERVICES IN GREEN ARE AVAILABLE YEAR-ROUND. For further information, consult brochures available at Visitor Centers. Approximate opening and closure dates are shown. The hours of operation shown below are subject to seasonal change, and some services are limited May through October. These facilities and services are offered by authorized concessioners and organizations. The National Park Service does not make concession reservations.

Flamingo

Located 38 miles from the Main Park Entrance and Visitor Center, provides naturalist programs, museum, campground and concession facilities and services. Call (813) 695-3101 or (305) 253-2241 for details and reservations concerning Flamingo concession services.

Where To Stay

For further information or reservations call (813) 695-3101 or (305) 253-2241, or write Flamingo Lodge, Flamingo, FL 33030.

Flamingo — Motel rooms and cottages with kitchens.

Where To Eat

Sandwiches and drinks available year-round at the Marina Store and poolside by the lodge.

Flamingo Restaurant

Breakfast 7:00-10:30 a.m.
Lunch 11:30-2:00 p.m.
Dinner 5:00-9:00 p.m.
Hours vary seasonally.

Cocktails

Nov. 1 to April 30
Flamingo Restaurant — during lunch and dinner.
Buttonwood Patio Bar — Hours vary seasonally.

Rental Boats and Canoes

Flamingo Marina — Rental skiffs, motors, canoes, patio-boats, houseboats, and bicycles.

Gasoline and Propane

Flamingo Marina — (813) 695-3103 or (305) 253-2241. Regular, unleaded or diesel fuel available year round.

Everglades City

A quiet community surrounded by the Park on the Gulf Coast, approximately 80 miles west of Miami via US 41 and SR 29.

Sightseeing Boat Tours, Gifts and Canoe Rental

Sightseeing boat tours, gifts and canoe rental. Call Everglades National Park Boat Tours at (813) 695-2591. 2½ and 1½ hour narrated boat tours. Trips to nearby Sandfly Island and shuttle service are available. Call for schedule.

BISCAYNE NATIONAL PARK

Sightseeing Boat Tours

Four-hour excursions to Elliott Key and glass-bottom boat tours, Snorkel and SCUBA tours available.

Dive Equipment, Gifts

Convoy Point, year-round

Worship Services Within The Park

A Christian Ministry in the National Parks conducts non-denominational services on Sundays: 9:00 a.m. — Flamingo Campground Amphitheater, 5:00 p.m. — Long Pine Key Campground Amphitheater.

Florida National Parks & Monuments Association, Inc.

This newspaper is published as a service to Park visitors by the Florida National Parks & Monuments Association, Inc. (formerly Everglades Natural History Association), a private, non-profit organization. This association is one of over 60 Cooperation Associations operating throughout the National Park system in support of interpretive and related visitor service activities. Cooperating Associations operate small bookstores and sales counters in park visitor facilities for the purpose of making available literature and other items that assist the visiting public to better understand the parks and their related values. Monies from these sales are used to sponsor numerous visitor activities in the parks. In general, the Associations offer support services that would not otherwise be available through federally funded sources. The Florida National Parks & Monuments Association, Inc., operates bookstores in Everglades National Park at the Headquarters Visitor Center, Royal Palm, and Shark Valley; in Biscayne National Park at Convoy Point and on Elliott Key, Big Cypress National Preserve and at Fort Jefferson National Monument in the Dry Tortugas Islands. You are invited to browse in our bookstores, where you may purchase a variety of park-related literature on many subjects, audio-visual items, mementos, and some convenience items such as film and insect repellent. We hope that you enjoy your visit.