

Key Vista Nature Park



ABOUT

While this park is only 101 acres, it rates as one of the top birding locations in Pasco based on the number of species seen. Explore the hiking trails through sand pine uplands and visit the observation tower overlooking mud flats where shorebirds and waders feed at low tide. The trails that run west from the parking lot connect with the coastal trail from Anclote Gulf Park to the south. Over the past couple of years, Pasco County has put in a bike path along the eastern edge of the park, resulting in loss of habitat for birds, but may provide access via bike to areas previously hard to see, so that cyclists who are also birders may now have additional access to several miles of coastal habitat.

BIRDS

Common Loon, Bufflehead, Red-breasted Merganser, Horned Grebe, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Great Horned Owl, Chuck-Wills-Widow, Spotted Sandpiper, Whimbrel, Green Heron, Prairie Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, Hooded Warbler

eBird hotspot link:
<https://ebird.org/hotspot/L192383>

DIRECTIONS

From Highway 19 in New Port Richey go west on Moog Road 1 ½ miles then left on Strauber Memorial Highway for 1 mile. Left on Bailey's Bluff Road; park entrance ¼ mile

2700 Bailey's Bluff Road, Holiday

FACILITIES

Parking, restrooms, picnic tables, trails, boardwalk, and observation tower. Access to Coastal Anclote Trail



TIPS

The parking lot itself can be a place to hear Nighthawk and Chuck-Wills-Widow before dawn, not to mention the Great Horned Owls, who have been nesting nearby for several years. Also listen for warblers, Brown Thrasher, and a range of passerines.

There are a couple of footpaths that lead west to the river and on to the coast. Look for Great Horned Owl along the way. The river can play host to many waders when the tide is low. The entire park can be a great place for raptors, including Merlin, Kestrel, Sharp-shinned, and Coopers Hawks, as well as Red-tailed Hawks, so don't forget to look up and check the many snags located through the park.

From the coast, when the tide is out far enough to see a rocky outcrop extending out into the Gulf, scan carefully for Whimbrel. Various shorebirds can be found at the beach at quieter times, although this beach can be used by local residents for dog walking, which can encourage them to move on to other locations. The coastal path can be very active - particularly during migration. Check out the observation tower here. At times a Bald Eagle sits in the pine tree next to the tower, providing a great opportunity for a photograph. This is a great place to spot Gulls, Terns, ducks, raptors, wading birds and shorebirds - even the occasional Frigatebird.



While you are here... Key Vista Nature Park is very centrally located. It is easy to partner a visit here with nearby Anclote Gulf Park to the south or Eagle Point Park to the north. Alternatively, you may want to check out the Holiday Recreation Center (aka J. Ben Harrill Recreation Complex) about a mile away off Gulf Trace. Here you may well find Southeastern American Kestrels, Monk and Nanday Parakeets, a variety of waders etc.