

Commune with nature, take in striking views and get some heart-healthy exercise by exploring Galveston's parks and nature preserves. There are endless ways to take in the island's natural beauty.

East End Lagoon Nature Park & Preserve

[East End Lagoon Nature Park & Preserve](#) (EEL) on Boddeker Road spans almost 700 acres and functions as a stunning oasis from the outside world. The park is a great spot for birding, since many species nest and migrate through the area. EEL is also home to many species of wildflowers, insects, reptiles, and amphibians, making it an ideal destination for any and all nature photographers. Other available activities include walking or jogging on the nature trail, kayaking, fishing on the lagoon, and exploring the reef on the lagoon's beach side.

Galveston Island State Park

[Galveston Island State Park](#) is located on the west end of the island at 14901 FM3005, and the size and location allows visitors to explore both Galveston Bay and the Gulf of Mexico. Bring comfortable shoes and take in the scenery by walking or jogging, or get out on the water by kayaking, surfing or fishing. Bird watchers will love observing local species on one of the available birdwalks, and photographers can practice their skills by capturing the views for posterity. Campsites are available and picnicking is encouraged. Admission costs \$5 per person, and advance reservations are required. Make your reservation [online](#) or call (612) 389-8900.

Artist Boat Coastal Heritage Preserve

Artist Boat Coastal Heritage Preserve, located at 13117 Settegast Road, operates with the goal of promoting both the awareness and preservation of coastal margins and their natural wildlife. Bird watchers will appreciate the Edward & Helen Oppenheimer Bird Observatory, and anyone who loves being out on the water should book a guided eco-art kayak adventure. If you're interested in giving back, Artist Boat has a variety of volunteer opportunities that are suitable for all ages and time frames. Email the Habitat and Stewardship Program Manager at habitat@artistboat.org for details.

Seawolf Park

Nature lovers and history buffs alike will enjoy a visit to [Seawolf Park](#), whose namesake is a United States Navy submarine that American Navy forces mistakenly sunk during World War II. Located on Pelican Island, the park features a fishing pier, scenic picnic areas, and a playground. In addition, the park is home to several World War I and World War II relics: the *USS Cavalia* (a submarine), the *USS Stewart* (a Navy ship), and the *S.S. Selma* (an oil tanker).

The park is open 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. There is a parking fee, and separate fees apply for fishing on the pier and visiting the naval museum.

Pocket Parks

The West End of Galveston Island includes two small [Pocket Parks](#). Pocket Park 1, at 11102 San Luis Pass Road, is a quiet spot perfect for sitting on the sand, listening to music or the sounds of the ocean and enjoying a picnic or barbecue. Parking is available, and fees apply from mid-March through Labor Day.

Pocket Park 2 is just down the road from Pocket Park 1 (the address is 11745 San Luis Pass Road). Parking is free, and indoor restrooms, showers, and umbrella and chair rentals are available during the main tourist season (mid-March through Labor Day). [Topsy Turtle Bar & Grill](#), the on-site restaurant, offers live music along with plenty of tasty food and drinks.