



## Activities

**PICNICKING:** available at the picnic shelter and at various sites throughout the preserve on a first-come-first-serve basis.

**PICNIC PAVILION:** is available by reservation or on a first-come-first-serve basis. For reservations, call 941-748-4501 ext. 1807.

**PLAYGROUND:** playground and picnic tables are located next to the Rangers Station.

**WILDLIFE VIEWING:** a variety of birds and wildlife can be seen throughout the preserve in a variety of native ecosystems.

**HIKING:** available on all trails.

**FISHING:** permitted in the river, but all local, state, and federal laws apply.

**CANOEING OR KAYAKING:** launch is located off campground/parking area. Canoes and kayaks are not provided.

**BICYCLING:** allowed on designated biking trails only.

**HORSEBACK RIDING:** allowed on designated riding trails. Horses are not provided. Proof of a negative Coggins Test must be available upon request for each horse. Designated horse staging area is provided.

### Manatee County Commission

District 1  
Larry Bustle

District 2  
Michael Gallen

District 3  
John Chappie

District 4  
Robin DiSabatino

District 5  
Donna Hayes

At-Large  
Carol Whitmore

At-Large  
Joe McClash

## Camping

Available on Friday and Saturday nights only. Tent camping is only available on a first-come-first-serve basis.

- Camping fees are \$20.00 per site per night, plus tax. Cash only, please.
- A maximum of 6 people will be allowed to occupy a single campsite.
- Camping registration is at the Rangers Station from 3:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday. Checkout time is 2:00 p.m.
- You must register at the Rangers Station prior to setting up your campsite.
- Camping permitted at campground only.
- Persons under 18 years of age must be accompanied by an adult.
- No generators are permitted.
- Pets are allowed, but must be on a leash at all times.
- Firewood is provided when available and camp fires are permitted, except during periods of extreme drought.
- Camp fires may be banned during drought conditions. Violators may lose future camping privileges and face penalties from the State Division of Forestry.
- Please do not cut limbs, or nail, hang, or tie anything to trees or shrubs.
- Be courteous to others and keep noise to a minimum after 10:00 p.m.

Manatee County Government  
Natural Resources Department  
Rye Preserve  
905 Rye Wilderness Trail  
Parrish, Florida 34219  
Phone: 941-745-3723  
Fax: 941-741-3227  
[www.mymanatee.org](http://www.mymanatee.org)

Manatee County Natural Resources

# Rye Preserve



# Rye Preserve

is a 145 acre preserve located on the Manatee River just northwest of the Lake Manatee Dam.

The original river settlement dates back to the post-Civil War era. Erasmus and Mary Rye moved to the area to establish a homestead in 1889. A small community began to build up around the Rye homestead utilizing the upper Manatee River as the primary means of travel and access to the outside world.

In 1910, the United States Government dredged the Manatee River from Tampa Bay east to Rye to allow steamships access to the small settlements that were scattered along the river. The river steamship allowed the community to flourish. At its peak, the Rye settlement was occupied by 72 families, with stores, sawmill, gristmill, post office, and school.

Increased accessibility by car and train caused steamship lines across the nation to fold, including the Manatee River service, bringing about the end of the river trail era. The Rye settlement was once again isolated and had to survive without commercial access to the large coastal communities.

By 1929, even the post office had closed its doors. Until 1988, there were still standing structures where the Rye settlement once was, but a suspicious fire destroyed them. The small Rye family cemetery, maintained by the descendents of the families interred there, is our only reminder of this river community.

Rye Preserve's four distinctive ecosystems, sand pine scrub, xeric oak scrub, oak hammocks, and the river community, have remained relatively undisturbed over the years.

Dry upland portions of the park are home to several threatened animal species, including the gopher tortoise and Indigo snake. A variety of birds, including Florida scrub jays, owls, herons, warblers, turkeys, and several species of woodpecker seasonally visit and occupy the preserve. Larger animals, such as white-tailed deer, bobcat, and gray fox, can be seen around sunrise and sunset.



*Creek on west side of Rye homestead and cemetery.*



*Campground: Tent camping only is available on a first-come-first-serve basis.*



*"Red" Trail*

*Shell path, wheelchair accessible*



*Rye Pavilion - may be reserved. Call office for information - 941-748-4501 ext. 1807.*

**Remember:**  
*All plants, animals, and historical artifacts in the preserve are protected from harassment, damage, or removal.*