

extending from the Atlantic Ocean to the Matanzas River, Washington Oaks Gardens State Park preserves 425 acres of Florida's original coastal scenery. Ocean waves have washed away the sand, exposing a stratum of coquina rock and creating a

picturesque, boulder-strewn beach. At low tide, many species of shore-birds feed among the rocks while brown pelicans soar overhead. Limpets and mussels cling to the rocks; and anemones, starfish and crabs are common in the tidal pools.

Next to the beach is a coastal scrub community which is the preferred habitat of the Florida scrub jay, a colorful member of the crow family which faces an uncertain future because of the steady loss of its habitat. The stunted vegetation is adapted to surviving under the harsh, dry, desert-like condition of the old dunes.

Moving westward across Florida A1A, the scrub give way to the lush coastal hammock where towering live oaks, hickories and magnolias offer their welcome shade. This is the home of deer, raccoon, bobcat, fox, opossum, gray squirrel, pileated woodpecker and cardinal.

Bordering the hammock are scenic tidal marshes of the Matanzas River, where wading birds, waterfowl and sea gulls are often seen. Watching the sun set over these marshes is a memorable experience.

This land was part of Bella Vista Plantation owned by Gen. Joseph Hernandez, a Spanish Floridian.

Hernandez was a militia general who commanded troops in this part of Florida during the Second Seminole War. A surveyor named George Washington, a relative of the first President of the United States, married Hernandez's daughter Louisa in 1845.

The gardens, groves and planting were expanded when the place was purchased in 1936 by Mr. and Mrs. Owen D. Young. Young was chairman of the board of General Electric. The property was donated to the state in 1964 by Mrs. Young after his death. The donor's home at Washington Oaks has been converted into "The Owen D. Young Visitors' Center," which features the natural and cultural history of the park.

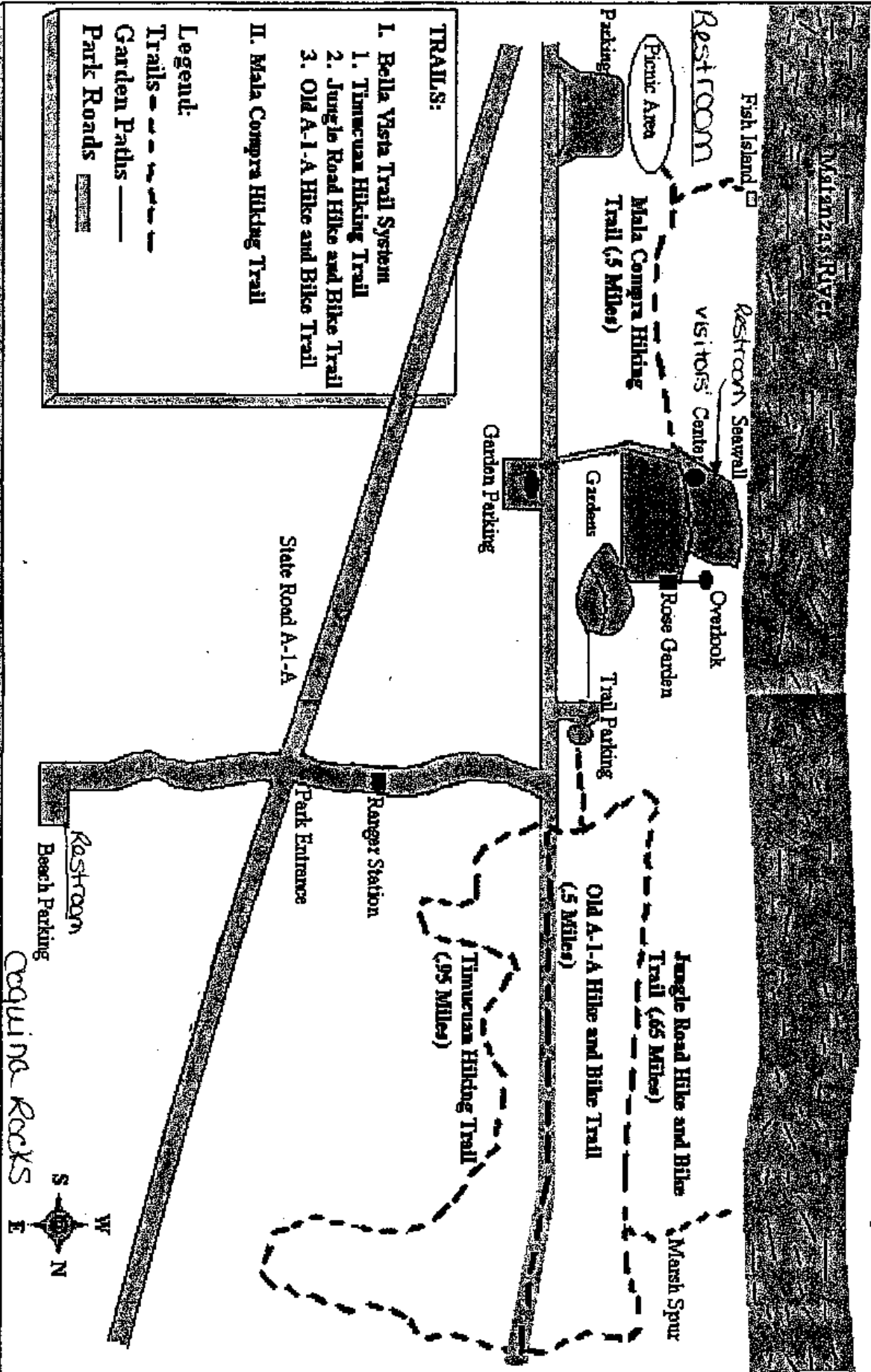
A portion of the hammock contains a formal gardens where many species of exotic plants from around the world are displayed along footpaths and around reflecting pools. The gardens are well-known for their azaleas, camellias and roses.

## Real Fun in the Real Florida

- A scenic, self-guiding trail leads along the marsh between the center and the picnic area. Ranger-guided walks are provided on weekends and by request.
- Picnicking and fishing are popular activities. A picnic area is located in a shady hammock south of the gardens.
- Surf fishing in the Atlantic Ocean for whiting, redfish, bluefish and pompano is a popular activity enjoyed here. A seawall is provided for fishing on the Intracoastal Waterway.
- Swimming is not permitted at the beach. Because of coquina rocks in the surf, hazardous conditions sometimes exist. No life guards are provided.
- Some facilities and activities are accessible to people with disabilities. All terrain or wide tired wheelchairs are recommended on pathways. See a park ranger for special needs.
- For more information, contact Washington Oaks Gardens State Park, 6400 N. Oceanshore Blvd., Palm Coast, FL 32137, (386) 446-6780. [Washington.Oaks.Gardens@dep.state.fl.us](mailto:Washington.Oaks.Gardens@dep.state.fl.us)



# WASHINGTON OAKS GARDENS STATE PARK TRAIL SYSTEM



- TRAILS:**
- I. Bella Vista Trail System**
    1. Timucuan Hiking Trail
    2. Jungle Road Hike and Bike Trail
    3. Old A-1-A Hike and Bike Trail
  - II. Mala Compra Hiking Trail**
- Legend:**
- Trails - - - - -
  - Garden Paths - - - - -
  - Park Roads - - - - -



# THE BELLA VISTA AND MALA COMPRA

## HIKING TRAILS

The Hiking Trails at Washington Oaks Gardens State Park Were developed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection in cooperation with the Florida Trails Association Inc. and are part of the Florida Greenways and Trails System.

The Bella Vista trails explore a mature Coastal Maritime Hammock and venture into the edge of the dense canopied Coastal Scrub. The Mala Compra Trail visits the ecotone between the Coastal Maritime Hammock and an Estuarine Tidal Marsh along the Malanzas River.

The trails are blazed white for main trails and blue for connectors. The connecting trail from the gardens does continue past the trail head parking lot to reach the beginning of the Bella Vista Trails.

The trails are designated as foot paths, however bicycles are permitted on the Jungle Road and Old A-1-A portions of the Bella Vista Trails. Biting is not permitted on the Timucuan hiking trail or the Mala Compra hiking trail.

It is recommended that hikers wear appropriate shoes and clothing. The use of insect repellent is recommended during warmer months. Remember that the Park closes at sunset. so please time your hike accordingly.

We hope you enjoy your hike through the "Real Florida" at Washington Oaks and please remember that all plants and animals are protected on State Parks.

Please Take Nothing But Pictures and Leave Nothing But Footprints.

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# TRAILS



## WASHINGTON OAKS GARDEN STATE PARK