

I Spy Groveland Oaks County Park



Located on Stewart Lake just 1.5 miles east of I-75 in Holly, Groveland Oaks' 361 acres feature a campground with 267 individual and 13 group sites, as well as eight cabins and four yurts.

Park Information

- Three of the four islands on Stewart Lake offer recreational opportunities.
 - Paradise Island connects both sides of the park via the paved Park Trail Loop and is home to the boathouse (with arcade), boat rental, and pavilion.
 - Cottage Island, featuring two yurts, is linked by trail to the west side of Stewart Lake
 - Mathews Island is linked to the east side of Stewart Lake and offers a picnic pavilion.
 - Honeymoon, or Windmill Island – is no longer accessible except by boat; it previously featured a windmill that was iconic to the former private campground.
- At the north end of Stewart Lake is a small dam with a kiddie pool where Thread Creek enters Stewart Lake.
- The paved Park Trail Loop links the concession areas, beach and islands. Three bridges along the Park Trail Loop connect to Paradise Island, Cottage Island, and Mathews Island.
- Built in 2006, the one-mile paved Thread Creek Trail runs through the natural area north of the campgrounds. The Wildlife Loop, a mowed grass trail connected to Thread Creek Trail, was created in 2012 through the fields west of the main entrance drive section of Groveland Boulevard. There are plans to develop a storybook trail in this area, in 2020.
- Campground recreation programs held on weekends are targeted to campers and families. Limited programming will occur in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The general recreational area, on the east side of Stewart Lake, serves both day-use visitors and campers. It includes the day-use parking lot, picnic areas, activity pavilion, skate park, playground, basketball courts, volleyball courts, activity stage, gaga ball pit, pedal boats, bike rental and mini-golf, plus an area to launch your kayak. Swimming is available at the beach. There are no lifeguards on duty.

Natural Resources

- Thread creek runs from south to north through the park and is part of the Flint River watershed
- The former golf course now has prairie fen remnants re-emerging. Prairie fens are globally rare wetlands found in southern Michigan that are fed by groundwater springs and are home to some of our parks' most unique plants.
- Fringed gentian, small yellow lady-slipper and shrubby cinquefoil are some of the interesting and unique plants found on the property.
- The park was likely primarily an oak-hickory forest prior to the 1800s.
- Groveland Oaks was the first park in Michigan to be certified by the Michigan Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Program (MTESP) which promotes best practices for stormwater management.



History

- In the 1850s the land that became Groveland Oaks was owned by Hannah Lennon who was born in Ireland. She inherited the land when her first husband died in 1852.
- Peacocks, monkeys and giant bullfrogs from Arkansas were all part of Paradise Beach which was located where Groveland Oaks Park is today. The recreation area was the brainchild of Dr. Lamar Mathews, an eye specialist who began his practice in Pontiac.
- At the corner of Dixie Highway and Grange Hall Road where the park is now located, there was once a considerable settlement called Groveland or Groveland Corners. It included two hotels, a store, a school and several blacksmith shops. One hotel called "Groveland Cottage" was a stage coach stop.
- The fire station at the southwest border of the park was originally a Kaiser-Frazer car dealership and later converted to an eye clinic.
- Stewart Lake was once much smaller than it is now. Dr. Lamar Mathews, one-time owner of the land that became the park, dredged it and doubled its size in the 1950s. He also added the islands and built a windmill "Honeymoon Island," with accommodations for newlyweds. This was all part of the recreation area called Paradise Beach.