

A Pennsylvania Recreational Guide for

Pymatuning

Pymatuning State Park

Pennsylvania
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Pennsylvania State Parks Mission

The primary purpose of Pennsylvania state parks is to provide opportunities for enjoying healthful outdoor recreation and serve as outdoor classrooms for environmental education. In meeting these purposes, the conservation of the natural, scenic, aesthetic, and historical values of parks should be given first consideration. Stewardship responsibilities should be carried out in a way that protects the natural outdoor experience for the enjoyment of current and future generations.

PAStateParks

2025



Top 10 Activities

1. Watch for eagles at Wilson Launch.
2. Catch a walleye or a crappie from one of the many developed shoreline fishing areas.
3. Take a kayak or canoe trip on the Shenango River Water Trail.
4. Feed the carp at the Linesville Spillway.
5. Rent a pontoon boat at Jamestown, Espyville, or Linesville marinas.
6. Explore the history of the dam and Gatehouse.
7. Spend a weekend at one of the campgrounds in the park.
8. Visit the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission's Linesville Fish Hatchery.
9. Watch the sunset from the Spillway Trail.
10. Stay in a modern cabin near the lake.



Pymatuning State Park

At 16,892 acres, Pymatuning State Park is one of the largest Pennsylvania state parks. The approximately 17,000-acre Pymatuning Reservoir is the largest lake in the commonwealth that extends into Ohio. Pymatuning is among the most visited state parks in Pennsylvania. Many visitors enjoy boating, fishing, swimming, camping, and other recreational opportunities.

Reservations

Make online reservations at www.pa.gov/state-parks or call toll-free 888-PA-PARKS (888-727-2757), 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday to Saturday.

Directions

Park Office GPS DD: Lat. 41.49937 Long. -80.46784

The southwest shore of the park, including Jamestown Campground, boat launch, beach, cabins, picnic areas, group tenting, and the park office, can be reached from US 322.

The north shore of the park, including Linesville Campground, beach, picnic areas, boat launch, marina, and cabins can be reached from US 6.

The east shore of the park, Tuttle Campground, beach, picnic areas, boat launches, and Espyville Marina can be reached from PA 285.

Learn, Experience, Connect

Pymatuning State Park offers a wide variety of programs year-round. Gain a better understanding of the park's natural, cultural, and historical resources through guided outdoor recreation, hands-on activities, walks, special events, and other programs. Program topics include history, wildlife, plants, ecology, and outdoor recreation. Paddling along the shores gives visitors a close-up view of songbirds, waterfowl, eagles, and glacial geology.

Curriculum-based environmental education programs are available to schools and organized groups. Call the park office to schedule a group program. A variety of professional development workshops are offered for teachers.

Contact the park office or explore the online calendar of events, https://events.dcnr.pa.gov, for more information on programs and other learning experiences.

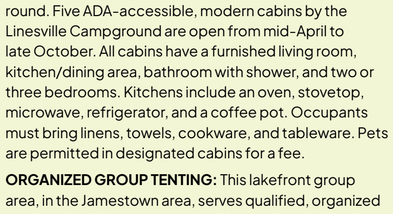


Photo by Katie Wickert

Painted turtle

History



Beginning with the glaciers that formed the Pymatuning Swamp approximately 22,000 years ago, the early history of Pymatuning State Park is both unique and complex. Even the name Pymatuning is not completely understood. While it is a known Native American term, its origin and exact translation are unknown. One possibility is "crooked mouthed man's dwelling place", however even that interpretation is steeped in debate. Perhaps we will never know the exact origin or translation of the namesake of Pymatuning State Park.

The modern history of Pymatuning is equally unique and complex: drain a swamp or build a dam. In 1868, a controversial survey of the Pymatuning Swamp determined draining the swamp to create agricultural land would devastate the industries in the Shenango and Beaver river valleys. The project was mostly abandoned until a series of severe droughts and floods struck beginning in 1908, reviving the Pymatuning Swamp discussion. An extreme flood in 1913 caused over $3,000,000 in damages followed by a severe drought the following year. These extreme weather events spurred legislation to appropriate funds for the construction of a dam.

At the 1931 groundbreaking ceremony, Governor Gifford Pinchot proclaimed, "Every human accomplishment had its beginning in a dream and that is true of what is to be known as the Pymatuning Reservoir."

As part of the first work relief program in Pennsylvania, over 7,000 men cleared what would become the Pymatuning Reservoir Basin from 1932 to 1933. The reservoir reached full pool by the end of 1935 and continues to serve downstream residences and businesses by maintaining a consistent public water supply. Additionally, it controls flood waters and provides recreation.

Wildlife Watching

The Spillway

The Linesville Spillway has attracted visitors since its construction in 1934. Carp that were in the Shenango River began gathering at the spillway. The flow of water over the bowl provides a smorgasbord of plant material, insect larvae, crayfish, and other invertebrates for waterfowl and fish to eat. Over time, tourists began feeding bread to the carp and ducks that gathered there. Today, over 400,000 visitors yearly make this one of their vacation stops.

Feeding fish at the spillway is a unique exception to DCNR's "No Feeding Wildlife" policy. In the 1930s, it was common to feed wildlife at parks, and the spillway was no exception. Roadside vendors began to provide bread to feed the fish. As word of this unique area spread, it quickly became a popular tourist attraction. DCNR allows fish-feeding at the spillway because of its cultural and historical value.

Feeding wildlife may provide a few minutes of entertainment, but it can lead to serious problems for both humans and wildlife.

Follow posted rules and regulations and remember these important principles:

- Do not feed wildlife anywhere in the park with the unique exception of fish-feeding at the spillway.
- When feeding fish at the spillway, use the traditional bread or pellets, which target fish instead of ducks and geese. Do not feed fish other foods.
- Keep areas clean of food and litter.

Eagle Watching

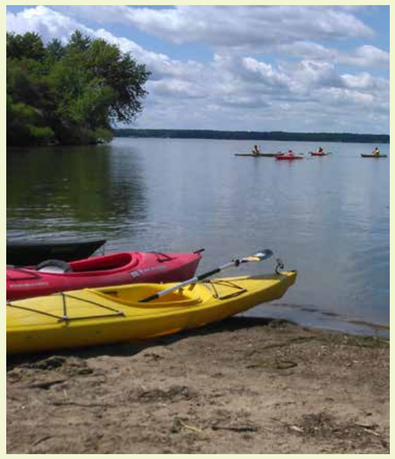


Pymatuning is the only known place in Pennsylvania where bald eagles have nested continuously, even through their population decline in the mid-1900s. Today, park visitors can spot eagles nesting and soaring over the lake throughout the year. During winter months, eagles can often be seen sitting on the ice, while in the summer months they tend to favor the northern area of the lake.



Recreational Opportunities

Spend the Day



BOATING: maximum 20 hp/15 kWh motors permitted
The Pymatuning Reservoir is popular for a variety of powered and non-powered boating activities with many boat launches along the shores, including several ADA-accessible launches.

The three Pennsylvania boat marinas offer boat mooring and rentals, bait, tackle, fuel, and snacks.

Motorboats must display a boat registration from any state. Non-powered boats must display one of the following: boat registration from any state; launching permit or mooring permit from Pennsylvania State Parks, available at most state park offices; launch use permit from the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission.

PICNICKING: Picnic tables are available in many areas. Jamestown and Linesville beaches have ADA-accessible picnic sites complete with grills and tables. There are 12 picnic pavilions that may be reserved up to 11 months in advance for a fee. Unreserved picnic pavilions are free on a first-come, first-served basis. Pets must be kept on a leash and are prohibited in swimming areas and some overnight areas.

SWIMMING: Four public beaches—Linesville, Tuttle, Beach 1, and Beach 2—are open the weekend before Memorial Day through Labor Day, weather and conditions permitting. A beach in Jamestown Campground offers additional swimming opportunities for those staying in the campground. Swim at your own risk. Please read and follow posted rules.

DISC GOLFING: An 18-hole, par 66, disc golf course is in the Jamestown Day Use Area near the park office. Score cards are available at the park office. The course is set up in two loops (Front 9 and Back 9) starting and ending at Pavilion 4.

FISHING: The Pymatuning Reservoir is a warmwater fishery. Common species are walleye, muskellunge, carp, crappie, perch, bluegill, and largemouth and smallmouth bass. Ice fishing during the winter months is also popular. There are several ADA-accessible fishing access areas and piers. When fishing by boat, fishing licenses issued by either Ohio or Pennsylvania are honored anywhere on the lake. When on the shore, only Ohio licensed anglers can fish from the Ohio shore and Pennsylvania licensed anglers from the Pennsylvania shore. Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission regulations and laws apply.





HUNTING AND FIREARMS: About 10,300 acres are open to hunting, trapping and the training of dogs during established seasons. Common game species are deer, turkey, rabbit, squirrel, and waterfowl.

Hunting woodchucks, also known as groundhogs, is prohibited. Dog training is only permitted from the day following Labor Day through March 31 in designated hunting areas. The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Pennsylvania Game Commission rules and regulations apply. Contact the park office for ADA-accessible hunting information.

The Pennsylvania Game Commission's Wildlife Management Area has controlled hunting during the annual waterfowl season. Special areas are also established for duck hunting.

Public hunting is available in many areas surrounding the controlled hunting section; however, rifle hunting is prohibited along the Spillway Trail adjacent to the Propagation Area.

Use extreme caution with firearms at all times. Other visitors use the park during hunting seasons. Firearms and archery equipment used for hunting may be uncased and ready for use only in authorized hunting areas during hunting seasons. In areas not open to hunting or during non-hunting seasons, firearms and archery equipment shall be kept in the owner's vehicle or enclosed trailer. Exceptions include: law enforcement officers and individuals with a valid *Pennsylvania License to Carry Firearms* are authorized to carry a firearm concealed on their person while they are within a state park.

Adjacent to the park, Pennsylvania Game Lands 214 has many hunting opportunities, including controlled hunting areas.

BIKING: 3.25 miles
The paved Spillway Trail follows the shoreline and travels near the Spillway, Linesville Fish Hatchery, and historic Messerall Truss Bridge. Access this multi-use trail from Fries Road Trailhead, South Chestnut Street Trailhead, or Spillway Parking Area.

The mileage for this bike route is one way. Be cautious during hunting season since the trail passes through land open to hunting. Be respectful of other trail users. E-bikes are permitted but must follow all e-bike guidelines. www.pa.gov/dcnr/ebike-policy

The concession near the Spillway has a limited number of e-bikes available for rent spring through fall.



Stay the Night

CAMPING: Linesville Campground in the northern part of the park, Jamestown Campground on the southern side of the lake, and Tuttle Campground near Espyville are open from mid-April through late October. Each campground has modern restrooms with flush toilets and showers, campsites with electricity, full-hookup sites, designated pet-friendly campsites, ADA- accessible campsites, and a sanitary dump station. All campgrounds are near swimming, boating, fishing, and hiking. Jamestown and Tuttle Campgrounds each have a boat launch, beach, amphitheater, and playground for registered campers. Jamestown Campground also has a camp store.

Glamping sites are available at Tuttle Campground in partnership with Timberline Glamping. www.timberlineglamping.com

CABINS: Twenty modern cabins located near the Jamestown Campground are available for rent year-round. Five ADA-accessible, modern cabins by the Linesville Campground are open from mid-April to late October. All cabins have a furnished living room, kitchen/dining area, bathroom with shower, and two or three bedrooms. Kitchens include an oven, stovetop, microwave, refrigerator, and a coffee pot. Occupants must bring linens, towels, cookware, and tableware. Pets are permitted in designated cabins for a fee.

ORGANIZED GROUP TENTING: This lakefront group area, in the Jamestown area, serves qualified, organized youth and adult groups up to 400 people. Non-flush restrooms and potable water are available.

Enjoy the Winter



SNOWMOBILING: Snowmobile, Ackerman, Spillway, and Sugar Run trails provide more than 10 miles of snowmobiling opportunities.

ICE SAFETY: Ice thickness is not monitored. For your safety, make sure ice is at least 4" thick for a single user and 7" thick for a small group. For iceboating, make sure ice is at least 6" thick. Always carry safety equipment.

ICE FISHING: Species often caught through the ice of the Pymatuning Reservoir are walleye, perch, and crappie.

ICEBOATING: Iceboating is permitted everywhere on the lake.

SLEDDING: Sledding is popular on the slopes of the dam in the southern area of the park.

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING: All trails and open areas of the park are open to cross-country skiing. Trails are not groomed.

Information and Reservations

Pymatuning State Park
2660 Williamsfield Road
Jamestown, PA 16134
724-932-3142
PymatuningSP@pa.gov

@PymatuningStatePark

An Equal Opportunity Employer
www.pa.gov/state-parks

Make online reservations at www.pa.gov/state-parks or call toll-free 888-PA-PARKS (888-727-2757), 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday to Saturday.

Electric Vehicle Charging Station
A 2-plug, first-come, first-served, electric vehicle charging station is available for public use in the Jamestown Marina Parking Lot. There is a 4-hour maximum time limit. Overnight charging is prohibited. Please move to another parking space once your vehicle has been charged or the maximum time-limit has been reached.

Access for People with Disabilities

This symbol indicates facilities and activities that are Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible for people with disabilities. This publication text is available in alternative formats.

If you need an accommodation to participate in park activities due to a disability, please contact the park you plan to visit.

In an Emergency

Call 911 and contact a park employee to summon medical, fire, or safety professionals.

Call or text 988 to contact a crisis center counselor during a mental health or substance abuse crisis.

Directions to the nearest hospital are posted on bulletin boards and at the park office.

NEAREST HOSPITALS
To the South:
UPMC Horizon: Greenville
110 North Main Street
Greenville, PA 16125
724-588-2100

To the East:
Meadville Medical Center
751 Liberty Street
Meadville, PA 16335
814-333-5000





Nearby Attractions

Information on nearby attractions is available from:

The Crawford County Convention and Visitors Bureau. 800-333-1258. www.visitcrawford.org

Visit Mercer County PA. 724-901-6024. www.visitmercercountypa.com

The 2,856-acre **Maurice K. Goddard State Park** features the 1,680-acre Lake Wilhelm, which is very popular with anglers and boaters. Many recreational activities attract visitors in all seasons, including a paved, 12-mile multi-use trail. 724-253-4833

The **Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission Hatchery** at Linesville is the largest in the state with educational opportunities, a visitor center, and wildlife viewing areas. 814-683-4451

Adjacent to Pymatuning Reservoir, **State Game Lands 214** consists of 9,661 acres, including a wildlife propagation area. Hunting in this area is managed by the Pennsylvania Game Commission with special permits. Various wildlife watching opportunities are available. 833-742-9453

Conneaut Lake is of glacial origin and the largest natural lake in Pennsylvania. Opportunities include boating, fishing, and swimming. The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission maintains a public launch on the north side of the lake off PA 618. 814-382-7749

The 3,511-acre **Pymatuning State Park (Ohio State Parks)** has opportunities for camping, lodging, fishing, boating, hiking, and swimming on the western side of Pymatuning Reservoir. 440-261-4551



Tiger swallowtail

Protect and Preserve Our Parks

Please make your visit safe and enjoyable. Obey all posted rules and regulations and respect fellow visitors and the resources of the park.

- Be prepared and bring the proper equipment. Natural areas may possess hazards. Your personal safety and that of your family is your responsibility.
- Alcoholic beverages are prohibited.
- Place trash accumulated during your stay in proper receptacles or take it home with you.
- Please camp only in designated areas and try to minimize your impact on the campsite.
- Firewood Advisory: Firewood may contain non-native insects and plant diseases that threaten park resources and the health of our forests. Use local firewood. Do not take wood home and do not leave firewood. Burn it!
- Shoreline fires are prohibited. Prevent forest fires by having fires in proper facilities. Do not leave a fire unattended and dispose of hot coals properly.
- Because uncontrolled pets may chase wildlife or frighten visitors, pets must be physically controlled, attended at all times, and on a leash, caged, or crated. Electronic fences and leashes are prohibited. Pets are prohibited in swimming areas.

PYMATUNING STATE PARK

Park Office
Contact Station
Blue Symbols Mean ADA Accessible
Emergency Phone
Enviromental Learning Classroom
Restrooms - Modern
Shower House/Restrooms
Amphitheater
Camp Store
Food Concession
Picnic Pavilion
Camping
Sanitary Dump Station
Organized Group Tenting
Cabins
Playground
Wildlife Viewing
Disc Golfing
Sledding
Swimming Area
Fishing Pier
Developed Fishing Access

Marina
Boat Rental
Boat Launch
Boat Mooring
Boat Fuel
Boat Launch - Hand-carry
Trail - Hiking, Cross-country Skiing
Trail - Multi-use: Hiking, Cross-country Skiing, and as designated
Biking
Biking - Mountain
Snowmobiling
Road - Unpaved
Road - Paved
Route from Office to Spillway
Parking - Unpaved
Parking - Paved
Electric Vehicle Charging Station
State Park - No Hunting
State Park - Hunting
State Park - Archery Only
State Park - Boundary
State Park - Natural Area
Restricted Access (PGC Propagation Area)
Ohio State Parks
Wetlands

CONTOURS ARE ON 50 FT. INTERVALS

Park Office
41.499416, -80.467877

1 0 1 2 3 KILOMETERS
1 0 1 2 MILES

Park Office & Pymatuning Dam Area

Westinghouse Classroom Trail
Jamestown Marina
Beach 2
Ackerman Island
Ball Field
Dam
Sugar Run Trail
⅛ 0 ⅛ ¼ MILE

Rev. 2/9/2026

Hiking: 17.7 miles



Ackerman Trail
1.9 miles | Easiest hiking | Out-and-back trail | No blazes
Recreations permitted: hiking, mountain biking, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing recommended, snowshoeing recommended
Trailhead amenities: modern restrooms, picnic tables
In the southernmost part of the park, this former railroad corridor travels along the lakeshore. A nesting platform provides views of osprey. On clear water days, visitors can spot fish and turtles in the bays. A shaded section of trail through a pine forest is a great location for looking for animal prints in the snow and mud.

Classroom Trail
0.25 mile | Easiest hiking | Out-and-back trail | White blazes
Recreations permitted: hiking, cross-country skiing recommended, snowshoeing recommended
Near the Jamestown Marina, this short trail follows the shoreline along a boat mooring area to the historic Westinghouse Bay which was used by Westinghouse Corporation in WWII for testing torpedoes.

Log Cabin Trail
1.3 miles | Easiest hiking | Out-and-back trail | Yellow blazes
Recreations permitted: hiking, snowshoeing recommended
Trailhead amenities: modern restrooms, picnic tables
Log Cabin Trail allows visitors to walk through a shady woodland between the Jamestown Campground and cabin area and the Tamarack Trail Loop. Wildflowers bloom along the trail in the spring.

Snowmobile Trail
8.2 miles | Easiest hiking | Out-and-back trail | Orange blazes
Recreations permitted: hiking, mountain biking, snowmobiling, snowshoeing recommended
Trailhead amenities: modern restrooms, picnic tables
Along the eastern lake shore, this trail consists of four trail segments that connect to roads and other snowmobile trails in the area. Hiking is permitted, but maintenance is limited outside of winter months. The trail segments pass through a variety of environments including lakefront, thick pine stands, campgrounds, and beaches.

Spillway Trail
4.9 miles | Easiest hiking | Out-and-back trail | No blazes
Recreations permitted: hiking, biking, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing recommended, snowshoeing recommended
Trailhead amenities: restrooms (Fries Rd. and Spillway), picnic tables
In the northeastern section of the park, the linear Spillway Trail can be accessed at either Fries Road, Spillway Parking Lot, and S. Chestnut Street Parking Lot. This former railroad bed is now a paved, multi-use trail. In summer months, find yellow warblers darting along the path. Spring brings in migrating waterfowl including tundra swans and many species of ducks and grebes. The sunset views along the trail are some of the best in the park.

Sugar Run Trail
1.0 mile | Easiest hiking | Loop trail | Blue blazes
Recreations permitted: hiking, mountain biking, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing recommended, snowshoeing recommended
Trailhead amenities: modern restrooms, picnic tables
In the southernmost part of the park below the dam, this multi-use trail runs along beautiful, tree-lined Sugar Run and the Shenango River. Stop and listen for songbirds, relax by the small rapids, and check out the large sandstone rocks lining the stream bottom and banks.

Tamarack Trail
1.2 miles | Easiest hiking | Loop trail | Red blazes
Recreations permitted: hiking, snowshoeing recommended
Trailhead amenities: modern restrooms, picnic tables
Located along West Lake Road just past the Century Club, Tamarack Trail is named for the deciduous conifer trees that grow in the area. The trail winds along the edge of a bay and passes through a mixed deciduous forest of black cherry, maple, and tamarack trees. Hikers may catch a glimpse of great blue herons, red-tailed hawks, and warblers.

Natural Areas

Pennsylvania State Park Natural Areas have unique scenic, geologic, or ecological value and are set aside for scientific observation and to protect outstanding examples of natural interest and beauty. Pymatuning has two natural areas in the northern part of the lake: Black Jack Swamp and Clark Island. Although there are no trails or facilities, visitors are welcome to explore the undeveloped natural areas.

Black Jack Swamp Natural Area encompasses 725 acres comprised of a mature forest of narrow, shrub-lined channels, hardwoods, eastern white pines, and secluded coves. Vast wetlands protected the area from settlement, leaving it mostly untouched. The natural area provides diverse habitats for a variety of plants and animals.

At 161 acres, Clark Island Natural Area is the largest of Pymatuning State Park's islands. With the construction of Pymatuning Reservoir in 1934, this hilltop was surrounded by water, isolating it from the adjacent land. As a result, the island is an outstanding example of an undisturbed plant community that features a mature forest of hardwoods and eastern white pines. Picturesque coves and a sheltered inland pond add to the beauty and serenity of the area.



Black Jack Swamp