

About Hoffman Park

This 354-acre park is comprised of hardwood forest, grasslands, and many ponds of various sizes. The ponds were created in the 1940s by Albert and Joyce Hoffman for erosion control, crop irrigation, and cattle management when the park was a working farm. Albert Hoffman was the son of the founder of the Hoffman Beverage Company. Albert's skilled innovations led to improvements in the sanitization, labeling, and packaging of bottles. He also invented biological filters that extracted impurities from concentrated sugar syrups. In 1929, the company became the first in the country to incorporate natural fruit ingredients into its products. In 1945, the Pabst Brewing Company bought the bottling plant. After Albert's death, Joyce sold the farm to the county and Union Township in 1999, maintaining life-rights until her death in 2006. The buildings are currently under the jurisdiction of Union Township with the land being managed by the county.



Albert Hoffman with farmhand on his farm, 1942

Recreational Opportunities

Hoffman Park's paved and gravel paths are excellent for bike riding and walking. The ponds offer good fishing, as well as opportunity for reflective nature study. In winter the paths provide a good place to cross-country ski.

Hoffman Park

Location: Hoffman Park is located in Union Township, west of Clinton and just south of Interstate 78. The main parking area is at 26 Baptist Church Road, Hampton 08827. The gate is open from 9:00 AM to sunset. A second parking lot is located at 751 Mechlin Corner Road, Hampton 08827.

Directions from the East/Clinton area:

Take Route 78 west to exit 11. Follow the circle around to the left and cross over Route 78, following the signs for Pattenburg. Immediately after crossing 78, turn left at the light. Proceed to the remains of an old church and veer right onto Baptist Church Road. Proceed on Baptist Church Road under a railroad bridge and shortly thereafter turn left into the park entrance, which is marked by a large brown sign.

General Trail Information

From the parking area, Hairpin Lane winds down a steep hill towards Manny's Pond. The vista at the start of the trail offers a wonderful view of Hoffman Park's fields and forests, as well as Spruce Run and the hills of the Highlands in the distance.

Once down the hill from Hairpin Lane, Hoffman Park's trails meander through woods and past ponds. Most of these trails are old gravel or paved roads that are flat and easy to hike, bike, cross-country ski, or push a stroller on. Most of the trails are named for features one would find on them. For example, Powerline Road has a power line running along it, and Birch Way has birches growing along the trail.

The Hunterdon County Division of Parks & Recreation is dedicated to preserving open space and natural resources, providing safe parks and facilities, and offering educational and recreational opportunities, all contributing to an enhanced quality of life for present and future generations.

Birds

A host of different bird species can be found in the forests and fields, but Hoffman Park is probably best known among bird watchers for endangered and threatened species that nest in its grassland habitat. These include Bobolinks, Eastern Meadowlarks, Grasshopper Sparrows, and Savannah Sparrows. Please keep pets on a leash as these birds nest directly on the ground and are highly susceptible to disturbance.

Eastern Bluebird nesting boxes and Wood Duck boxes were erected in 2000 as part of a Boy Scout Eagle project. The bluebird boxes are in the fields, where bluebirds can be spotted year-round. Wood Ducks are harder to find. They prefer wooded habitat near ponds or streams.

In the fall, this can be a good area for watching hawk migration. Northern Harriers and American Kestrels can sometimes be seen hunting over the fields in fall and winter.

Fishing

Several of the park's many ponds offer good fishing for bass (catch and release only) and sunfish. Anglers can concentrate their efforts at the pond along Crow's Road or at Manny's Pond (the large pond visible from the parking area), both of which have an open bank suitable for fly-casting. Manny's Pond is stocked with trout. Fishermen must display a trout stamp in order to keep the fish.

Hunting

In order to control the deer population, hunting is permitted in some sections of this park. Hunters must obtain a special permit issued by the Division. Visitors between September and February are strongly encouraged to wear blaze orange or confine visits to Sundays.

(Revised 10/2012)

Hoffman Park

Trail Map and Guide



Manny's Pond in autumn



County of Hunterdon Division of Parks and Recreation

Office Location:

1020 State Route 31, Lebanon, NJ 08833 (Clinton Twp.)

Mailing Address:

PO Box 2900

Flemington, NJ 08822-2900

Phone: (908) 782-1158 * Fax: (908) 806-4057

E-mail: parks@co.hunterdon.nj.us

Website: www.co.hunterdon.nj.us
(click on "Parks & Recreation")

Office Hours:

Mon.-Fri. 8 AM to 4:30 PM

SUMMARY OF RULES AND REGULATIONS

The rules and regulations governing use of facilities or properties administered by the Hunterdon County Division of Parks and Recreation are promulgated in accordance with provisions of the N.J. Statutes Title 40:32-7.12, which reads as follows:

"The Board of Chosen Freeholders may by resolution make, alter, amend, and repeal rules and regulations for the supervision, regulation and control of all activities carried on, conducted, sponsored, arranged, or provided for in connection with a public golf course or other county recreational, playground, or public entertainment facility, and for the protection of property, and may prescribe and enforce fines and penalties for the violation of any such rule or regulation."

These rules and regulations have been promulgated for the protection of our patrons and for the facilities and natural resources administered by the Hunterdon County Division of Parks and Recreation.

Permits: A fully executed Facility Use Permit, issued by the County of Hunterdon for any activity, shall authorize the activity only insofar as it may be performed in strict accordance with the terms and conditions thereof. The State of NJ, County of Hunterdon, or the local municipality may require additional permits.

Prohibited Acts: The violation of any Municipal, State, or Federal law. Advertising, solicitation, ice skating, ice fishing, any other on-ice activities, downhill skiing, bathing, fuel-powered modeled aircraft, the release of any animal, explosives of any kind, poisons of any kind, after-hours use, alcohol without a permit in a non-designated area, controlled dangerous substances, weapons, posting of signage, inappropriate attire, and climbing on, or rappelling from any cliff, rock face, or boulder, with, or without the use of specialized equipment.

Regulated Activity: The sale of merchandise, aviation, boating, cross-country skiing, bicycling, and sledding. Battery-powered modeled aircraft and horses must be in designated areas, dogs must be restrained with a leash not exceeding six feet, pet waste must be removed, camping/fires are by permit only. All groups of 15 or more must obtain a permit for use of any Park area.

Prohibited Acts for the Protection of Property: No person shall make, excavate on, destroy, paint, fill in, cut, remove or tamper with any property, organic or inorganic.

Prohibited Acts for the Protection of Natural Resources: No person shall disturb wildlife or vegetation in any manner. No person shall pollute waters, litter, dump debris, or release helium balloons in any property. It is illegal to remove any natural resource from, or introduce any plant material, bulbs, or seeds to any property without a proper permit or license.

Prohibited Acts for the Protection of People: No person shall obstruct a county employee/official, interfere with a visitor, conduct any unsafe act, or cause a hazardous condition.

Vehicles: All the provisions of the NJ State Motor Vehicle Act apply. Vehicles are not allowed in unauthorized areas. Parking is allowed in designated areas only. **ATVs, dirt bikes, and snowmobiles are prohibited on County Park lands.**

Enforcement: The rules and regulations of the County shall be enforced by duly authorized Rangers or representatives of the County under the provision of N.J.S.A. 40:32-2, thru 40:32-7.13. Any person who enters into a County Park for any purpose whatsoever has a duty and is presumed to be aware of the provisions of these rules and regulations governing the use of the facilities and properties administered by the Hunterdon County Division of Parks & Recreation.

Penalties: Any person violating any of the provisions of these regulations shall, upon conviction before a court or other adjudicative body of jurisdiction, be liable for the replacement, repair or restoration of damaged property, if any, and shall pay a penalty of not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) or other amount in the discretion of the court or other adjudicative body, or may be sentenced to imprisonment in the County jail for the term not exceeding ninety (90) days, or both, provided that this section shall not supersede any applicable penalty provision for specific offenses, which may be set forth in the New Jersey Code of Criminal Justice, N.J.S.A. 2C:1-1, et seq., or in any other applicable state or federal law.

NOTE: County Park Rangers of the Division of Parks and Recreation have the authority to issue summons and make arrests for violations of rules and regulations governing the use of facilities and properties administered by the Division of Parks and Recreation. This is only a summary of the rules and regulations. Rules applying to special conditions, activities, or situations may be supplemental to these rules and regulations. When special rules apply, they will be posted at affected areas. The complete text of regulations is available for inspection at the Park administration office in Clinton Township during regular business hours.

