

Ecological Information

Tropical Hardwood Hammock

A Tropical Hardwood Hammock is composed primarily of Live Oaks, Gumbo Limbos, Paradise Trees, Pigeon Plums and Sabal Palms. The canopy is formed from the crossing of branches of taller trees, creating shaded areas. The understory includes wild coffee, firebush, and rouge plant. This special habitat is a globally imperiled (FNAI) ecosystem! The Environmentally Endangered Lands (EEL) Program acquires and preserves these habitats, along with Miami-Dade County Parks' Natural Areas Management, in perpetuity. These programs have helped to restore Arch Creek Hammock to a more appropriate state by removing invasive exotic plant species from the park and leading environmental education initiatives.

Coontie (Zamia pumila)

A slow-growing plant, now endangered due to over-harvesting by white settlers. It is the larval host plant for the Atala Butterfly, which is also endangered.



Coontie (Zamia pumila)



Strangler Fig (Ficus aurea)

Strangler Fig (Ficus aurea)

The Strangler Fig earned its name because it wraps around a host tree, eventually consuming and killing the host. It is the larval host for the Ruddy Dagerwing Butterfly.

Gumbo Limbo (Bursera simaruba)

Gumbo Limbo has an attractive, reddish, flaking bark. One of its common names is the "toruist or sunburn tree." It is the larval host for Dingy Purplewing Butterfly.



Gumbo Limbo (Bursera simaruba)

Live Oak (Quercus virginiana)

Live Oaks provide significant food and cover for wildlife. Its branches are hosts to many epiphytic plants, especially bromeliads, ferns, and orchids. It is the larval host for Horace's Duskywing Butterfly.

Sabal Palm (Sabal palmetto)

Sabal Palm is Florida's State Tree. The hanging dead palm fronds provide a roosting habitat for native bats. It is the larval host for Monk Skipper Butterfly.



Live Oak (Quercus virginiana)

Sabal Palm (Sabal palmetto)



Pigeon Plum (Coccoloba diversifolia)

Pigeon Plum provides significant food and cover for wildlife. It is a nectar source for the Large Orange Sulphur and other butterflies, and attracts pollinating bees. Look for scratches on the bark of female trees left by raccoons climbing for fruit.

Spanish Moss (Tillandsia usneoides)

Spanish Moss is an epiphytic plant, meaning it grows on another plant and makes its own food. Several species of songbirds use it for nesting material or weave nests in its moss clumps. Warblers and bats are especially fond of Spanish Moss.



Spanish Moss (Tillandsia usneoides)

Firebush (Hamelia patens var. patens)

Firebush is one of the best bird and butterfly attractors in South Florida. The orange-colored flowers attract bees and other insect pollinators. Birds eat the fruit or prey on the many insects and spiders that make this shrub their home.

Wild Coffee (Psychotria nervosa)

Wild coffee provides significant food and cover for wildlife. It is a nectar source for the Atala, Great Southern White, Julia and other butterflies.

Rouge Plant (Rivina humilis)

The fruit found on the Rouge Plant have been used to make red dye and cosmetics for coloring cheeks and lips.



You are entering a natural area preserved and managed by Miami-Dade County Department of Environment Resources Management's (DERM) Environmentally Endangered Lands (EEL) Program. In 1990 voters created the EEL Program to acquire, restore, and manage natural areas in an effort to conserve the County's endemic and diminishing native habitats for the enjoyment of current and future generations.

Important Rules

We ask visitors to join us in the stewardship of Arch Creek Park in order to protect the natural resources and unique structures.

Stay on designated pathways.

Please refrain from making loud noises, feeding, harassing, or throwing objects at animals.

Do not pick plants, fruits, flowers, or limb trees.



To request materials in accessible format, sign language interpreters, CART and/or any accommodation to participate in any Miami-Dade Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces sponsored program or meeting, please contact Gisel Prado, (305)755-7848 or by email at Gisel.Prado@miamidade.gov at least 7 days in advance to initiate your request. TTY users may also call 711 (Florida Relay Service)



ARCH CREEK PARK

Self-Guided Nature Trail Map

Park & Preserve Hours

9:30am-5:30pm Daily

Museum & Nature Center Hours

10am-5pm Daily

miamidade.gov/parks

Guided naturalist tours are available upon request.

Connect with us:

@miamidadeparks @miamiecoadventures

Contact Info

1855 NE 135th Street
North Miami Beach, FL 33181

ecoadventures@miamidade.gov

305.944.6111

Stay active on the trail by identifying what you see and mapping your trail trip!



iNaturalist

iNaturalist helps you identify the plants and animals around you. Get connected with a community of over a million scientists and naturalists who can help you learn more about nature! What's more, by recording and sharing your observations, you'll create research quality data for scientists working to better understand and protect nature.



AllTrails

AllTrails provides detailed, hand-curated trail maps, along with reviews and photos crowdsourced from a community of over 20 million hikers, backpackers, mountain bikers, and trail runners. With over 100,000 trails, users can filter to find the route that's right for them, and hit the trail with confidence.



Funding Statement

This project is sponsored in part by the Department of State, Division of Historical Resources and the State of Florida



Self-Guided Trail Map: Where History & Nature Meet (500 BCE to Present)

1 Arch Creek Natural Limestone Bridge

What you are looking at today is a replica of the Arch Creek natural limestone bridge, which was said to have been a place of natural beauty and one of the greatest natural wonders of South Florida. In Miami's early days, it was a stopover for carriages and stage coaches as well as a popular picnic spot. Sadly, the bridge collapsed in 1973. Erosion and old age were determined to be its downfall, combined with automobile traffic and vibrations from the nearby railroad tracks. In 1986, after years of fundraising, this replica of the natural bridge was constructed.



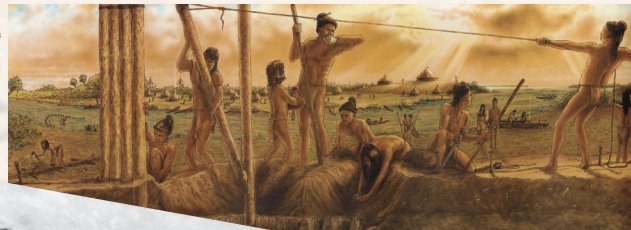
Settlers visiting the natural bridge, circa 1910
Courtesy of HistoryMiami Museum

2 Midden (500 BCE - 1750)

Arch Creek Park is home to a Glades Periods (500 BCE - 1750) shell midden, a deposit of ancient refuse where a large amount of pottery sherds, conch shell tools, and animal bones have been found. Archaeological findings suggest this site may have been a seasonal or temporary home for the Tequesta, Seminole, and Miccosukee.



Conch shell tools



Miami Circle, John LeCastro
Courtesy of HistoryMiami Museum

3 Military Trail (1800s)

During the Third Seminole War, Military Trail was built by the U.S. Army, under the leadership of Captain Abner Doubleday. At the time, it was the only road leading from Fort Dallas along the Miami River to Fort Lauderdale. In 1892, it became a portion of the first County road, and later became known as Dixie Highway. All of these paths utilized the natural limestone bridge to pass over Arch Creek.



Seminole family in dugout canoe, circa 1916
Courtesy of State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory

4 Coontie Mill (1858)

In 1858, a mill was operated near the natural limestone bridge to turn the coontie plants' roots into an edible starch. The mill relied upon the waters of Arch Creek, running through a sluice, to power a large water wheel that was later partially excavated by archaeologists. The mill at Arch Creek was one of the only known coontie mills to have used a sluice and the only excavated mill site in South Florida.



Edward DeVere Burr family home, circa 1907
Courtesy of Robert Burr

5 Florida East Coast Railway (1900s)

In 1903, the Florida East Coast Railway established the Arch Creek depot about a half-mile south of the natural limestone bridge, which drew many visitors to this special site. The depot played a large role in helping the sparsely populated area become the town of Arch Creek.



Florida East coast Railway first arrival to Miami, 1896.
Courtesy of HistoryMiami Museum

6 Tequesta (500 BCE - 1700s)

Arch Creek was one of many indigenous habitation sites of the Native American tribe known as the Tequesta. They utilized the adjacent hardwood hammock, which provided much needed shade and shelter, along with nutritious edible plants, nuts, and berries. Biscayne Bay, less than a half mile away, offered a variety of food sources including fish, shellfish, sharks, manatee, and turtles.

7 Early Settlers (Mid 1800s)

Settlers started arriving around the natural bridge and Arch Creek as early as 1858. Soon, the town of Natural Bridge (later known as the town of Arch Creek) was established with a post office, train depot, and school. The town prospered in the early 1900s, eventually being incorporated into Miami Shores, and later North Miami.

8 Hardwood Hammock EEL Preserve (1996-Present)

See Ecological Information on reverse side.

Land Acknowledgment Statement for Parks

Indigenous peoples of Florida, known as Florida's First People, include the Ais, Apalachee, Calusa, Creek, Miccosukee, Seminole, Tequesta, Timucua, and Yemassee. Their interactions with European settlers and Florida Homesteaders led to their death, enslavement, or removal from their native lands by these colonizers.

The Seminole stewarded the park preserve as their hunting grounds until their forced removal from the lands under the Indian Removal Act of 1830.

Present day tribes in South Florida include the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida and the unaffiliated Independent or Traditional Seminoles.

The park recognizes and honors the Indigenous communities of this region, acknowledging that Miami and the park occupies Indigenous homelands and resources.

We honor these cultures, their ancestors and their descendants as past, present and future stewards of these lands.

MAP LEGEND

- Road
- Railroad
- Nature Trail
- Challenging Terrain
- Parking
- Pedestrian & Bicycle Entry
- State Historical Marker
- Interpretive Signage

Scan QR Code for Spanish and Creole

Arch Creek

Florida East Coast Railway

Historic Military Trail

Park Entrance

Natural Bridge

Nature Center & Museum
EcoAdventures Office

Outdoor Learning Area

Pollinator Garden

Ravine

Mock Archaeological Dig Site

Wetland Habitat

Camp Fire Circle

Picnic Shelter

Solution Hole

Hardwood Hammock Rest Area

NE 135th Street

Biscayne Boulevard