# Florida State Beach Parks Are Listed Among Best in The Nation

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TALLAHASSEE, FL, UNITED STATES, June 10, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Florida's award-winning state parks are rightly acknowledged as the best in the nation and one reason are its magnificent beaches which attract millions of visitors every year.

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St. George Island State Park in the Panhandle and Caladesi Island State Park west of Tampa, have just been named among the nation's 2021 Top Ten beaches in the annual listing by 'Dr. Beach'.

Dr. Stephen P. Leatherman, better known as 'Dr. Beach', is director of the Laboratory for Coastal Research at Florida International University in Miami. His top ten rankings are based on scientific studies of the shore and its environment. He has been ranking the top beaches in the U.S. for 30 years and Florida's beach parks have consistently featured.

Grayton Beach State Park near Santa Rosa Beach was not eligible for this year's ranking as it won the title of the best beach in 2020.

"While we have some of the most unspoiled, sandy, sun-kissed beaches in the world, they are much more than just a tourist attraction, albeit a very lucrative one. Beach parks contribute millions of dollars a year to the state's economy and support thousands of local jobs," said Gil Ziffer, President of the Florida State Parks Foundation.

"Florida State Parks has 100 miles of the best beaches in the state and arguably the world, and works with all its partners to preserve them, ensuring they will continue to inspire and protect the residents and visitors of Florida for generations to come," he said.

"Protecting our beaches is critical because they each support delicate ecosystems and many imperiled species. Sand dunes capped by sea oats provide vital protection to our beach ecosystem and the wildlife that inhabit it.  Sea oat root systems hold beach dunes together and prevents the sand and soil from blowing away during storms," said Ziffer.

"The dunes, in turn, protect the coastline from storm surge and erosion. They also provide essential habitat to a variety of wildlife, including nesting shorebirds and sea turtles."

Florida is host to the largest population of nesting loggerhead sea turtles in the world and offers refuge to nesting, resting shorebirds. The Florida Keys has the third-largest reef system in the world and is the site of many protection efforts.

"It is crucial that our world-class beaches continue to receive the investment needed to restore, maintain and protect our state's coastal resources," he said.

The Foundation, founded in 1993 as Friends of Florida State Parks and renamed in 2018, is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation whose mission is to support and help sustain the Florida Park Service, its 175 award-winning parks and trails, local Friends groups and more than 20,000 park volunteers.

It does this through programs that preserve and protect state parks, educate visitors about the value of state parks, encourage community engagement and active use of state parks, and advocacy.

The volunteer Board of Directors represents private and public sectors as well as local and statewide interests.

Julia Gill Woodward
Florida State Parks Foundation
+1 850-559-8914
email us here

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