

Dead Horse Ranch Park Rules

- Camping fees are per vehicle, maximum of **two vehicles** per campsite. (Campsite fees are based on two vehicles per site with no more than one of the vehicles being an RV/motorhome. There is a \$15 per night fee for second vehicles. The fee does not apply to vehicles towed behind a primary vehicle when the primary vehicle remains at the site and the towed vehicle is used for transportation.)
- When leaving your campsite unattended, please do something to demonstrate occupancy.
- Pets must be kept on a leash and may not be left unattended. Please clean up after your pet. Pets are not permitted in park buildings.
- Firewood gathering is prohibited on park grounds.
- Quiet hours are from **10 p.m. to 8 a.m.**
- Generators are prohibited.
- Amplified music / public address systems are prohibited.
- Vehicles and trailers must be parked on paved surfaces only (including campsites).
- Grey water must be contained.
- RV and vehicle washing is prohibited in the park.
- Swimming is prohibited in the lagoons.
- No metal detecting.

FAQ about Dead Horse Ranch

Q: How did the park get its name?

A: The Ireys family came to Arizona from Minnesota looking for a ranch to buy. As the family searched for a ranch, they found one with a dead horse lying by the road. When the family asked the children which ranch they liked, they replied "the one with the dead horse" — the name stuck.

Q: What is there to do at this park?

A: Arizona State Parks fall into three major categories: historic, educational, and recreational. Dead Horse Ranch is a recreational facility with RV accommodations, camping facilities, shared-use trails, fishing lagoons, river access, and an equestrian concession.

Q: What is the Verde River Greenway State Natural Area? What is a "Riparian" Area?

A: The word "riparian" is derived from Latin ripa, meaning river bank. Riparian zones occur along the interface between land and a waterway. The [Verde River Greenway State Natural Area](#) includes the Fremont Cottonwood-Goodling Willow Riparian Forest, one of only 20 such stands in the world; and is a separately managed part of the Arizona State Parks system. You may camp or park at Dead Horse Ranch to access the [Verde River Greenway State Natural Area](#).

Q: What kind of birds can be seen here?

A: The park's official bird list includes 180 species, although the Northern Arizona Audubon Society reports as many as 240 species in the immediate area. Since the park's boundaries fall entirely within the Tavasci Marsh IBA (Important Birding Area), there are many different types of birds present, including loons, herons, wrens, egrets, eagles, hawks, hummingbirds, owls, quail, flycatchers, swallows, swifts, and even ducks.

Q: Do you have snakes?

A: Arizona has more species of snakes than any other state. Although the park does have snakes, they avoid contact with humans. We ask you to help us maintain the park's natural ecological balance by treating all wildlife with respect, including snakes.

Q: What kind of fish live in the lagoons and river?

A: Largemouth bass, channel catfish, bluegill, crappie, and rainbow trout.

Q: Where do the lagoons get their water?

A: Water flows into the park from the Verde River via the Hickey Ditch, which boasts the oldest water rights in Northern Arizona. Unlike other parts of the U.S., where a "ditch" might simply be a trench by the side of a road, ditches in Arizona are legally defined and protected by Arizona state law.

Q: How difficult are the trails?

A: The trails accommodate a wide range of ability levels, including folks with mobility limitations as well as expert hikers, equestrians, and mountain bikers.

Q: What can you tell me about the old graveyard?

A: The cemetery is not owned by the state or the park, but is privately owned by the Trustees of the San Luis Rey Cemetery. Local residents, including miners, cowboys and Hispanic laborers are buried in the graveyard. The park does not act as curator.