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.

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.

Lodging
It is the policy of the County to provide reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities upon advance notice of need. Persons requiring accommodations should make a request at least two weeks prior to program attendance.

With the exception of park properties with reservable facilities, all properties are “CARRY IN / CARRY OUT” and trash/recycling receptacles are not provided. Please plan accordingly and do not leave any trash/recyclables behind.
The rules and regulations governing the facilities or properties administered by the Hunterdon County Division of Parks and Recreation are promulgated in accordance with provisions of the NJ 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 superintendence, 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.

Permit: 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 local municipality may require additional permits.

Regulated Activity: The violation of any Municipal, State, or Federal law, advertising, solicitation, ice skating, ice fishing, any other ice activities, downhill skiing, tubing, full-powered modeled aircraft, the release of any animal, explosion of any kind, poison of any kind, arson, use, sale, or disposition of a permit in a non-designated area, controlled dangerous substances, weapons, posting of signage, inappropriate attire, and dimming lights, or delaying from any cliff, rock face, or boulder, with or without the use of specialized equipment.

Regulated Activities: The sale of merchandise, aviation, boating, cross-country skiing, bicycling, and sledding. Bottom 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 fees 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, or bury in, cut, or remove trees or any property, organic or inorganic.

Prohibited Acts for the Protection of Natural Resources: No person shall deface, defile in any manner. No person shall pollute waters, litter dumping 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 issuance.

Prohibited Acts: The violation of any Municipal, State, or Federal law.

Vehicles: All the provisions of the NJ State Motor Vehicle Code 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 provisions 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 property administered by the County Division of Parks and Recreation.

Penalty: Any person violating any of the provisions of these regulations shall, upon conviction before a court of ordinary jurisdiction, be liable for the replacement, repair or restoration of damaged property, if any, and shall disturb wildlife or vegetation in any manner. 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 property administered by the County Division of Parks and Recreation.

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