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Lee County's Manatee Park releases winter program schedule

Ft. Myers, FL, Dec. 1, 2015 – Lee County Parks & Recreation's Manatee Park has two programs scheduled for the upcoming winter season.

The Habitat Tour of Gardens is at 9:30 a.m. Sundays, Dec. 6 and through March 27. Explore the native habitats that supply food, shelter and space for many species of birds, butterflies and other wildlife. The tour begins on the porch of the Calusa Blueway Outfitters gift shop. The tour is free with paid parking.

The All About Manatees program will be offered at 2 p.m. daily in December and then will be offered twice daily, at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., beginning Jan 1. Learn all about the biological characteristics and habitats of the Florida manatee. Discover where manatees live, what they eat and the challenges they face in the shallow coastal waters of Florida. The program is free with paid parking.

The Calusa Blueway Outfitters & Gift Shop at Manatee Park is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. Kayak and Canoe rentals start at \$15 an hour. Come paddle for spectacular views of manatees and other wildlife as you paddle along the Orange River.

Manatee Park is a non-captive refuge for the endangered Florida Manatee. Optimum viewing for the Florida manatee is between the months of November through March. Visitors will enjoy walking the ADA-accessible paths through the restored native plant habitats and beautiful butterfly gardens. Volunteer interpretive naturalists provide guidance along the walkways throughout the park. In addition to wildlife observation the park offers picnic facilities, playground, fishing pier, self-guided ethnobotany trail and canoe and kayak launch to the Orange River.

Manatee Park is open 8 a.m. to dusk. A parking fee applies of \$2 an hour per vehicle, maximum \$5. No pets are allowed. Manatee Park is at 10901 Palm Beach Blvd. 1.3 miles east of I-75 on SR 80 directly across the street from the FPL power plant. For more information go to www.LeeParks.org or call 239-533-7275.