

GARDEN ISLAND STATE RECREATION AREA

FACILITIES AND FEATURES

- Safe harbor
- Boat docking
- Picnic area
- Fire rings
- Toilets
- Shelter

VISITOR FAVORITIES

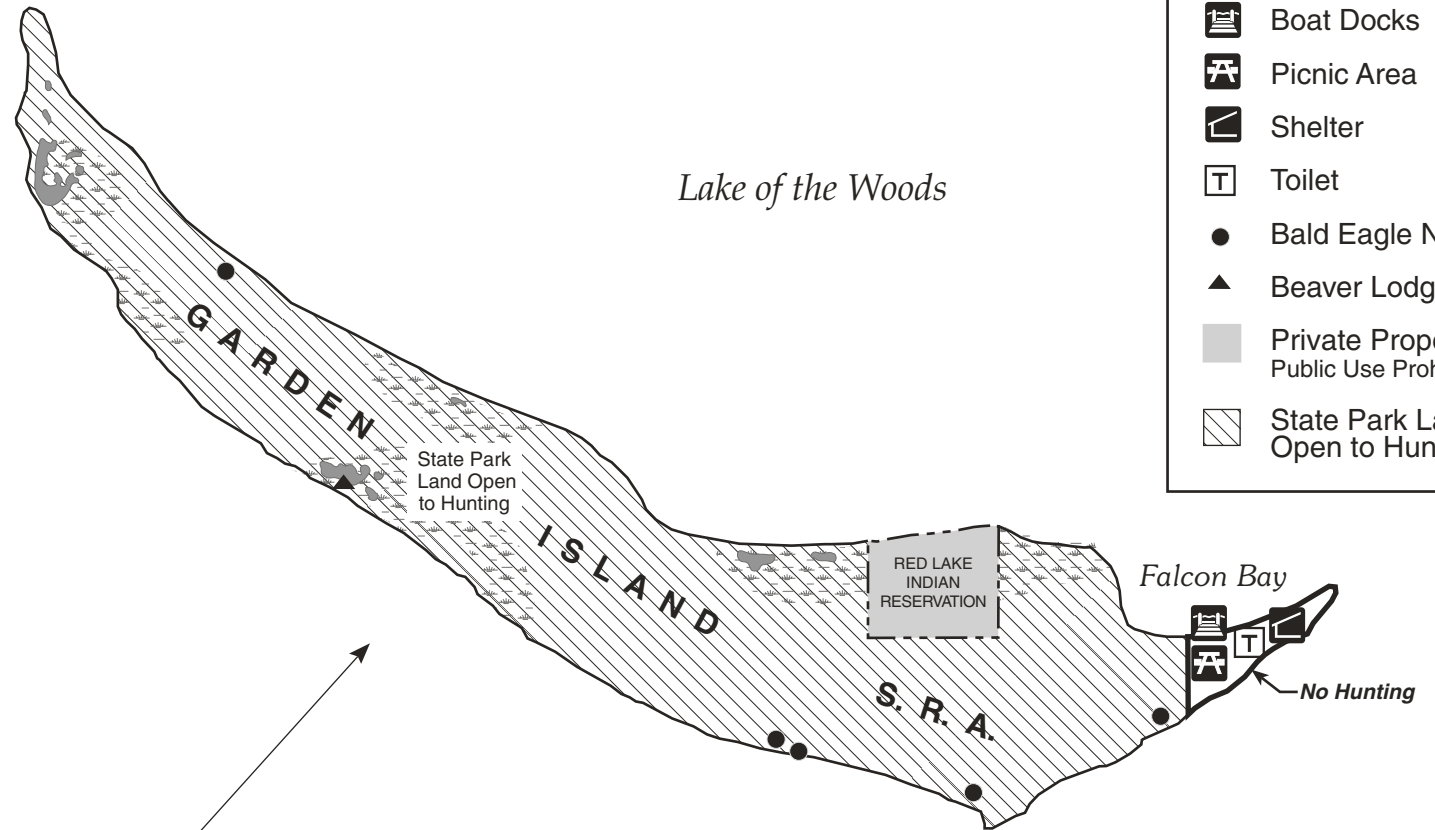
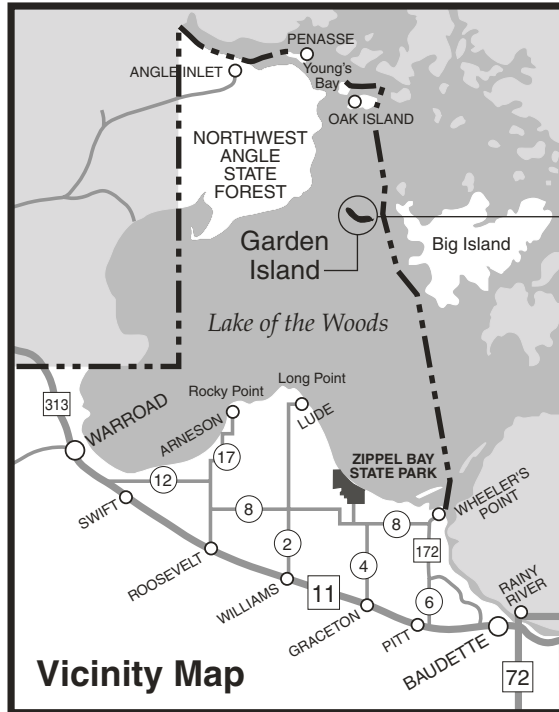
- Shore lunch
- Beach walking
- Fishing
- Swimming
- Boating
- Hiking
- Birdwatching
- Snowmobiling

SPECIAL FEATURES

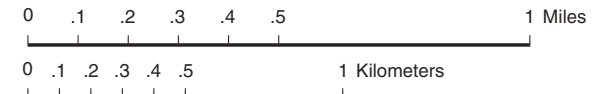
- Nesting bald eagles
- Spectacular beaches

Distances to Garden Island from:

Zippel Bay	21 miles
Long Point	15 miles
Rocky Point	18 miles
Warroad	28 miles
Wheeler's Point	24 miles
Oak Island	10 miles
Young's Bay	15 miles
Angle Inlet	19 miles



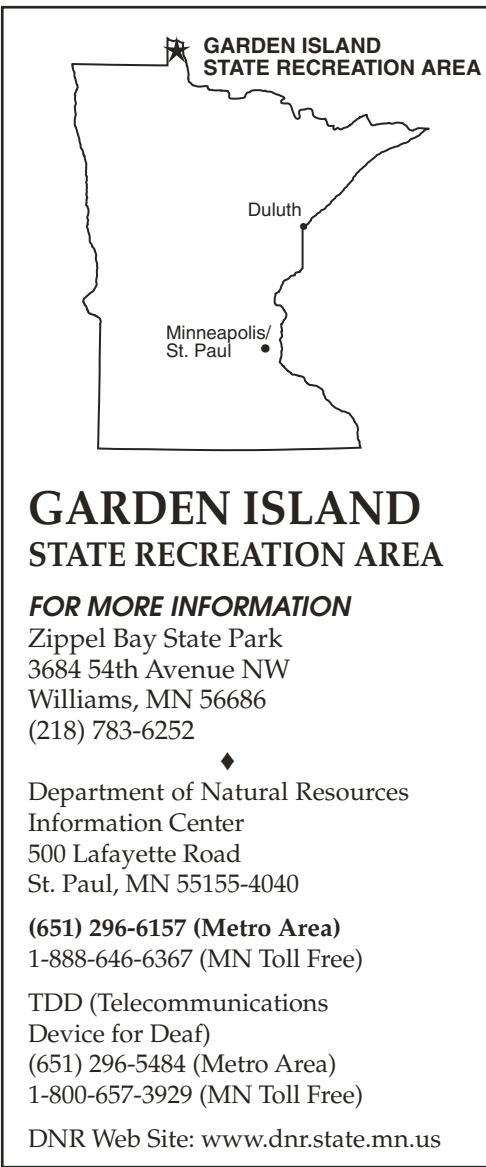
Because lands exist within the boundaries of this park that are not under the jurisdiction of the D.N.R., check with the park manager if you plan to use facilities such as trails and roads other than those shown.



LOOKING FOR MORE INFORMATION ?

The DNR has mapped the state showing federal, state and county lands with their recreational facilities.
Public Recreation Information Maps (PRIM) are available for purchase from the DNR gift shop, DNR regional offices, Minnesota state parks and major sporting and map stores.

Check it out - you'll be glad you did.



GARDEN ISLAND STATE RECREATION AREA

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Zippel Bay State Park
3684 54th Avenue NW
Williams, MN 56686
(218) 783-6252

Department of Natural Resources
Information Center
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155-4040

(651) 296-6157 (Metro Area)
1-888-646-6367 (MN Toll Free)

TDD (Telecommunications
Device for Deaf)
(651) 296-5484 (Metro Area)
1-800-657-3929 (MN Toll Free)

DNR Web Site: www.dnr.state.mn.us

Garden Island State Recreation Area is located 18 miles due north of Zippel Bay State Park. It is situated in the SE corner of the Northwest Angle, some 15 miles from the Angle Inlet and 10 miles from Oak Island.

Getting out to this 762-acre island is part of its attraction. Setting course across the Big Traverse Bay of Lake of the Woods to Garden Island is a great experience in itself. As visitors set their bearings from the lake's south shore for this island that can not yet be seen across the distant horizon, they will truly appreciate the size of this big lake. Once visitors have reached Garden Island, they are still not even close

to the northern side of this massive lake. At its farthest reaches, Lake of the Woods is 90 miles long by 55 miles wide. This lake is truly ocean-like in its size and moods. Imagine a lake with 1,485 square miles of water, 65,000 miles of shoreline and over 14,000 islands! Or better yet, come and experience it for yourself.

Garden Island offers a sandy beach for swimming and boat docking, accessible by even the largest of boats found on the lake. Most visitors to the island are fishermen taking a break from the confines of their boat. However, this island is worthy of making the voyage out just to walk the undeveloped beaches or explore its thick forest interior.

In order to perpetuate the recreational opportunities Garden Island provides to the public, the State of Minnesota purchased 324 acres on the island in 1998. This land combined with 402 acres of existing state-owned property was developed as a State Recreation Area in that same year. The Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians owns the remaining 36 acres on the island.

SNOWMOBILING: Garden Island lies along the Ballard snowmobile trail about 35 miles from Baudette. This snowmobile trail continues up to Oak Island and the Angle Inlet. A ride across the open expanse of snow-covered ice will leave a lasting impression, with a feeling of crossing the Arctic tundra. A shelter is present on Garden Island near this trail as a place to take a break and escape the winter's wind. A snowmobile trail from Warroad to the Angle Inlet also runs past the island's western tip.

WILDLIFE: A walk along the beach can be a shorebird's paradise. Shorebirds of all kinds stop to rest and feed on the sand beaches of this island during their annual migrations. Pelicans, cormorants, gulls and terns are all commonly seen on the sand spit stretching out to the island's eastern tip. The island interior also offers a variety of habitats ranging from inland open marsh to cedar forest. Much of the overstory consists of aspen, balsam poplar, box elder, elm, spruce and cedar. Deer, bear, beaver, mink, otter, fox and snowshoe hare can be observed on the island. Grey wolves may also be seen on occasion in the winter months hunting the island. Also present on the island are seven bald eagle nests. At least two of these nests are occupied by breeding pairs each year.

HISTORY: Evidence of human habitation on the shores of Lake of the Woods and the Rainy River date back at least 8,000 years. This lake offered a bountiful supply of fish, wildlife, and wild rice. It was also a main hub in a large transportation network of its time. To the west and south, its tributaries connected with land routes to the plains and prairies. The northern routes from Lake of the Woods extended up to Hudson Bay. To the east, a connection of waterways led people to the Great Lakes and eventually to the Atlantic Ocean. This latter route is what brought the

first European explorers to this area.

In 1688, Jacques Du Noyon, a young French explorer, constructed a trading post near the lake along the Rainy River. This established himself as the first European to have seen Lake of the Woods. It was not until 44 years later, however, when the man most responsible for exploring this area appeared.

It was mid-July, 1732, at a time when George Washington was but four months old, when another French explorer by the name of Pierre Gaultier, sieur de la Verendrye paddled past the eastern tip of Garden Island reporting an area populated with Cree, Monsonis, Assiniboine and Dakota Indians. The Ojibwe (or Chippewa) had not yet pushed westward in large numbers as far as Lake of the Woods. La Verendrye and his fleet of 50 canoes were on their way to establish Fort St. Charles. This historic fort (a reconstruction of which now stands on the original site), is located on what is now Magnuson's Island in the Angle inlet, 12 miles from Garden Island.

From this outpost, LaVerendrye managed the exploration work which would eventually open up the north and west to a tide of traders who came to gather the rich harvest of furs provided by the forest and lake environment. Fort St. Charles was abandoned by 1763, when claim to the area was transferred to the British at the end of the Seven Years War.

THE FALCON: Shaw-Shaw-Wa-Be-Na-Se, translated as the Falcon, was one of the most fascinating characters to have ever roamed this area. Born in 1779 as the son of a pioneer clergyman, John Tanner was kidnapped by the Shawnee from his frontier Kentucky home at the age of ten. He spent two years captive by them until he was rescued by an Ottawa woman known as Net-No-Kwa, or Otter Woman. She raised Tanner as one of her own, took good care of him and gave him the name of the Falcon. They eventually traveled to the Lake of the Woods area where he grew to adulthood learning the ways of the Indian. He spent much of his time living on Garden Island. He soon grew to become known as one of the greatest hunters in the area, gaining great respect from all that knew him. He worked with his new family as a trapper and hunter selling furs and hides to the trading posts.

Tanner once successfully led a group of twenty of his companions and fifty mercenary soldiers to retake Fort Daer, a Hudson Bay Company fort, near what is now Pembina, North Dakota. This fort had just been seized by men of the Northwest Trading Company. Lord Alexander Selkirk, a Scottish nobleman and founder of the Selkirk settlement in the vicinity of where Winnipeg now stands, rewarded Tanner for his heroism by giving him 20 pounds per year for life. He also helped reunite him with his family in Kentucky whom he thought had been killed. The Falcon, however, soon returned to the home that he knew on Lake of the Woods and the surrounding area.

In 1823 he was shot and nearly killed. He was

returned to health by a military surgeon at a nearby fort. During his long stay, the surgeon learned from the trappers and Native Americans that passed by of the fascinating story of the Falcon that he was treating at the time. In 1830, the surgeon published the narratives of John Tanner, and the Falcon became nationally known. Later in life he became an interpreter in Sault St. Marie, Michigan. While there, he was accused of killing the brother of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, the famed discoverer of the headwaters of the Mississippi River at Lake Itasca. The Falcon fled in exile. The true murderer of Schoolcraft later confessed and the Falcon was exonerated. He may have returned to his gardens on the big lake, no one will ever know, for he was never to be heard from again.

THE GARDEN: It is not known for sure when Garden Island was given its name. However, how the name came about is not difficult to understand. John Tanner wrote in his narratives of frequently taking care of gardens on this island in the early 1800s. Simon J. Dawson, an explorer and surveyor, was sent by Her Majesty Queen Victoria in 1859 to find a land and water route for emigration from eastern Canada to the Red River Valley of the North. When Dawson stopped on Garden Island to inquire from the resident Indians the most efficient route, he was amazed to see a well-cultivated garden located on the east end of the island. He reported to parliament that it included a cornfield of at least five acres and another three acres of pumpkins, squash and potatoes. The last garden he had seen had been more than a thousand miles away along the St. Lawrence. Imagine his surprise! Dawson did not learn of the well-traveled trail used by the Native Americans that day. He did however, eventually establish the famed Dawson Trail which began at the very northwestern tip of the Northwest Angle and traveled to what is now the City of Winnipeg.

125 years earlier, La Verendrye had claimed to have taught the local residents how to raise corn. He wrote in his journal in 1734: "I have induced two families of Indians, by earnest solicitations, to sow maize. I trust that the benefits they will derive therefrom will induce others to follow their example." La Verendrye would have been proud!

Up until the early 1900s, before the lake level increased due to the construction of the Kenora dam, Native Americans were known to have walked from the village of Warroad along the shore of the lake and out to Garden Island to tend to their gardens. The gardens were still in existence at that time.

COMMERCIAL FISHING INDUSTRY: Commercial fishing began on the American side of Lake of the Woods along its south shore in 1888 and on the Canadian side in 1892. Fish were plentiful, and the industry developed rapidly. The principle catch was sturgeon and whitefish.

Garden Island had several commercial fishing outposts beginning around 1915. Most of the fish

harvested in the area were whitefish. The largest of these operations was the Boothe Fishery. Located at the eastern end of the island, it included a large fishery house, a bunk house for the men that worked there, a manager's house, a huge ice house that stored lake ice packed in sawdust for cooling the summer's catch, and a 70-foot dock. The Boothe fishery operated on the island until 1923 when a new law limited the number of nets that could be used on the American side of the lake.

Commercial fishing gradually switched over to walleye, sauger, northern pike, and a variety of rough fish as the sturgeon and whitefish numbers declined. The industry remained viable up to the time when the State of Minnesota bought out the commercial licenses from the fishery owners in 1985. Commercial fishing continues to take place on the Canadian side of the lake.

Lake of the Woods continues to be a world-class fishery, best known for its excellent walleye fishing. Walleye can be found around Garden Island year-round. Sauger, a smaller relative of the walleye is also found in great numbers in Lake of the Woods. In addition, many of the 27 American islands and the Angle Inlet of the Northwest Angle provide some of the best muskie, northern pike, and small mouth bass fishing anywhere.

Garden Island is now a popular shore lunch destination for Lake of the Woods' fishermen. It's a great place to take a break from fishing. Visitors can stretch their legs while on a walk along the waters edge, then cook up a fresh catch of fish in the picnic area along a beautiful sandy beach.

REGULATIONS: Garden Island State Recreation Area is for day use only. Overnight camping, at this time, is prohibited. Trespassing on private property, as identified on the map, is not allowed. Waterfowl hunting is permitted in season.

Please do not leave any garbage on the island. Take nothing but pictures, leave nothing but footprints.

This information is available in alternative format upon request.

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DNR Maps