of several mounds. Although later cultures, such as the Hopewell, utilized the larger examples of earthworks for burial purposes, these unique earthen features seem to have been used mostly for astronomical observations and as a prehistoric calendar.

Although much has been learned about the mounds and the people who built and used them, many questions remain unanswered. What happened to the Adena and Hopewell people? Why did they disappear? Although many theories abound, none has an answer.

In the early 19th century, a family of German immigrants, the Bronnenbergs, settled in the area. Owning more than 600 acres, they operated a large farm, with its fields and pastures located in the present-day picnic areas. They were among the first to raise horses, a practice that would lead to the great horse raising in the surrounding woodlands—the foundation is limestone quarried from nearby White River, the bricks were handmade on site, and most of the woodwork is tulipine. In 1839, some of the property was acquired by the Indiana Union Traction Company, which operated an amusement park in the southern end of the property. Attractions included an roller coaster, roller skating ring, shooting gallery, carousel, boat rides on the river, and a pavilion with a restaurant on the first floor and a dance hall on the second. Many dance marquees of the “Roaring Twenties” were held there. But when the Great Depression began, this business, like so many others, simply failed.

The Madison County Historical Society then purchased the property and donated it to the state of Indiana. Mounds Park became Mounds State Park in October 1930.

The property is located in the southern part of the park. It is accessed by Trail 1. Technically referred to as the Madison County Historical Society Park, the mounds are currently part of the state park system.

RESERVATIONS FOR ALL TYPES OF CAMPING, FAMILY CABINS, AND SHELTERS AT STATE PARKS, RESERVES, AND FORESTS CAN BE MADE ONLINE OR BY CALLING TOLL-FREE.

CHRISTMASunk IN 1839

Pavilion with a restaurant on the first floor and a dance hall on the second. Many dance marquees of the “Roaring Twenties” were held there. But when the Great Depression began, this business, like so many others, simply failed.

The Madison County Historical Society then purchased the property and donated it to the state of Indiana. Mounds Park became Mounds State Park in October 1930.

The property is located in the southern part of the park. It is accessed by Trail 1. Technically referred to as the Madison County Historical Society Park, the mounds are currently part of the state park system.

RESERVATIONS FOR ALL TYPES OF CAMPING, FAMILY CABINS, AND SHELTERS AT STATE PARKS, RESERVES, AND FORESTS CAN BE MADE ONLINE OR BY CALLING TOLL-FREE.

CHRISTMASunk IN 1839

Fishing—River bass, bluegill, catfish, and more. State license required and may be purchased online at IndianaOutdoor.IN.gov.

Hiking—Six miles of easy-to-rugged hiking on the park’s six trails.

INTERPRETIVE NATURALIST SERVICE—A variety of activities are offered for the entire family year-round. Available for request by church, scout, school, and civic groups. Write: Mounds State Park, Center, park office or gatehouse. Program schedules are available at InterpretiveServices.IN.gov or by calling (765) 649-8128.

Picnic Area—Tables, grills, restroom facilities, undercover playground equipment and open playfields are available.

Shelter Houses—Three available year-round the shelter house can be reserved by phone, first-come, first-served, or shelter houses may be reserved/rented for specific dates on reservation available April–December and must be reserved/rented for use. Includes chairs, tables, kitchen facilities, fireplace, restroom. Reservations available through the Central Reservation System.


Visitors Center—Open year-round, includes exhibits on the park’s history, a gift shop, a nature trail, and a boardwalk that skirts a spring-fed creek and onto the property office, interpretive center, wildlife viewing area, and forests can be made online or by calling toll-free.

Call: 1-866-63ampIN (1-866-622-6746)
Online: camp.IN.gov
Reservations for the Indiana State Park Inns and Inn-operated cabins can be made online or by phone. Call: 1-877-lodges1 (1-877-563-4371) or online at IndianaInns.com.

Tavel & Description Distance Difficulty

Trail 1
1 mile
Easy

You will find the 20 most common trees in Indiana marked for your convenience along this trail. The trail also winds around four prehistoric mounds, one is the Great Mound, the focal point of the park. A tree guide and mounds history guide can be obtained at the Visitors Center.

Trail 2
1 mile
Rugged

Begins at pavilion. Going to the left, it descends to a boardwalk that skirts a spring-fed creek and onto the backside of the Great Mound. When starting from behind the pavilion, it provides a shortcut down stairs to the White River and intersects with Trail 5.

Trail 3
1 mile
Rugged

The trail descends into the woods from the first two parking lots on the left side of the road in the picnic area. It winds through the forest, passing views of different species of birds and animals. It intersects with Trail 5 and skirts the backside of the pavilion.

Trail 4
1 mile
Rugged

Begins from the back parking lot at the pool. This trail is suited for a hike and ridden by cases of rugged terrain and steep hills. It can be traveled to and from the campground via a long boardwalk, which descends into a ravine with a creek and then climbs up the bluff. It provides a scenic overlook with all types of wildlife and many feathered friends. It intersects Trail 5 three times.

Trail 5
2.5 miles
Moderate

Begins at the main gate and skirts the boundary of the park. It provides a scenic view as it follows along the White River and the limestone bluffs. One might catch glimpses of different types of waterfowl and aquatic life. It crosses several creeks and goes on into the woods, where songbirds and upland game make their home. This is a great trail for spring wildflower enthusiasts and fans of the majestic hardwood trees that populate the forest.

Trail 6
4 miles
Moderate

Begins at the campground control station and leads to either the campground or the canoe launch area. This trail is great for campers who wants to fish or purchase items from the camp store. It’s a great trail for a short hike and enjoying the outdoors.

Please stay on marked trails.

Bicycles are prohibited on trails.

As the name suggests, Mounds State Park contains and preserves some of the finest examples of earthwork and mound building in Indiana. Built by the Adena and Hopewell cultures around 160 B.C., the 10 mounds and earthworks within park boundaries range in size from a few feet to several feet high. These mounds were used primarily for ceremony, celebration, and observation of solstices, equinoxes, and stellar events. Research indicates that these mounds were used in the annual tracking of the passing of more than 100 of the brightest stars, as well as those of the moon and visible planets. The largest and best preserved of the park’s mounds is the “Great Mound,” easily accessed by Trail 1. Technically referred to as a “circular enclosure,” this earthwork is the largest of its kind in the state, and nearly a quarter-mile in circumference.

Among the first inhabitants of this area were the Adena, who dated to 1,000 B.C., and were primarily a hunter/gatherer society. They left their mark by the construction

fishing, hiking trails, seasonal interpretive service, picnicking, playground area, boat rental, shelter house, swimming beach, youth tent areas, wildlife watching

4306 Mounds Road
Anderson, IN 46017
Call: (765) 642-6627
Online: on.IN.gov/moundssp
For More Information

Please let wild animals remain wild. Feeding or damaging the natural environment of the animals can result in harm to both animals and people. Animals who depend on handouts become too accustomed to humans and are at danger to themselves. Please lock all food and coolers inside cars or campers. Roll up car windows tightly.

Please carry out all trash you produce in order to keep your park clean and beautiful for others to enjoy!

Please let wild animals remain wild. Feeding or damaging the natural environment of the animals can result in harm to both animals and people. Animals who depend on handouts become too accustomed to humans and are at danger to themselves. Please lock all food and coolers inside cars or campers. Roll up car windows tightly.

Please let wild animals remain wild. Feeding or damaging the natural environment of the animals can result in harm to both animals and people. Animals who depend on handouts become too accustomed to humans and are at danger to themselves. Please lock all food and coolers inside cars or campers. Roll up car windows tightly.

Please let wild animals remain wild. Feeding or damaging the natural environment of the animals can result in harm to both animals and people. Animals who depend on handouts become too accustomed to humans and are at danger to themselves. Please lock all food and coolers inside cars or campers. Roll up car windows tightly.

Please let wild animals remain wild. Feeding or damaging the natural environment of the animals can result in harm to both animals and people. Animals who depend on handouts become too accustomed to humans and are at danger to themselves. Please lock all food and coolers inside cars or campers. Roll up car windows tightly.

Remember, the park has camping, cross-country skiing, fishing, hiking trails, seasonal interpretive service, picnicking, playground area, boat rental, shelter house, swimming beach, youth tent areas, wildlife watching.