

Pickerel Lake State Recreation Area



Located: 1 mile east and 11 miles north of Waubay, South Dakota.

Day County, West Unit – Twp 124N Rng 53W Sec 22; East Unit- Twp 124N Rng 53W Sec 26

Access: State Park entrance fee or license required. Paved roads, parking lots, and maintained hiking trails throughout.

Pickerel Lake State Recreation Area – West Unit (photo by Dennis Skadsen)

Description:

This park, located along the shoreline of the states deepest natural lake, has several different habitat types to explore. The west unit has a large mature stand of ponderosa pine and eastern red cedar that frequently attracts several uncommon and even rare birds during the winter months. Species observed in the past include Merlin, Barred owl, Red-breasted nuthatch, Townsend’s solitaire, Varied thrush, Bohemian waxwing, Pine grosbeak, and both Red and White-winged crossbills. The east unit of the park supports several wetlands where waterfowl and other species like the Swamp sparrow may be observed. Efforts are underway to restore the east unit’s remnant tallgrass prairie. Controlled burns and shrub removal have been implemented to reinvigorate prairie forbs and grasses. Rare plants found on the parks prairie include pincushion cactus, downy gentian and wild prairie lilies. The Eastern chipmunk and Woodchuck can be found along the lakes wooded shorelines as well as several species of woodland butterflies and birds.

