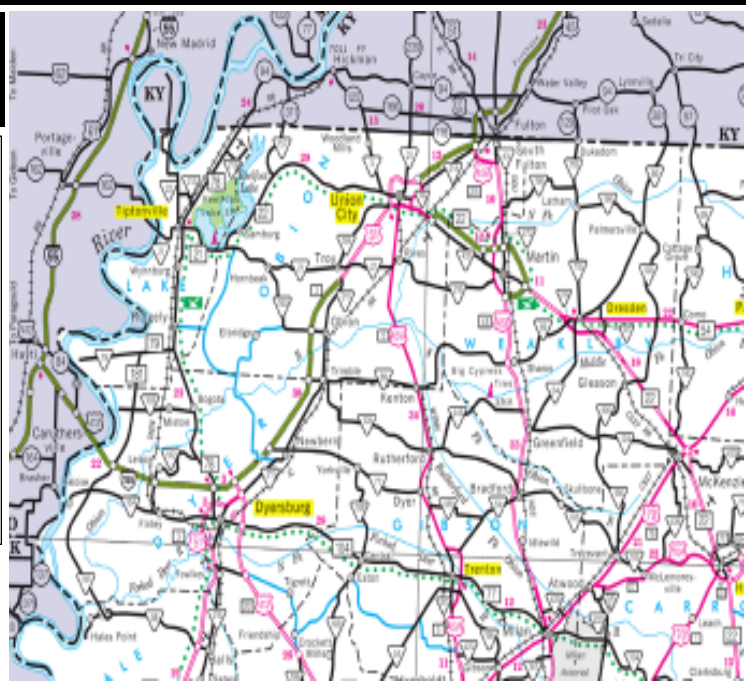


# Reelfoot Lake

## Background

Reelfoot Lake is the only naturally formed lake in the state of Tennessee. Reelfoot formed in the early 1800's as the result of a major earthquake along the New Madrid Fault, located underneath present-day I-40 in Memphis, Tennessee. The Mississippi flowed backwards for several days after the earthquake. This allowed water to flow into low lying area in the northwest corner of Tennessee. Once the Mississippi returned to normal, the channel was closed and Reelfoot Lake was born.



## Hiking & Camping

There are three hiking trails operated by the state park. The Airpark Trail is a forty-five minute hike through the forest. The Black Bayou Trail is a two-mile trail that visits the old bayou and is an excellent place to observe birds and wildlife. The Keystone Trail follows the shoreline of Reelfoot Lake for 1.5 miles.

The state of Tennessee operates two campgrounds at Reelfoot Lake. The Main Campground, located at the southern end of Reelfoot Lake on Tennessee Highway 21-22, has sixty-eight paved sites and eighteen gravel sites. The Airpark Campground, located at the northern end of Reelfoot Lake on Tennessee Highway 213, contains fourteen gravel campsites. Both of these campgrounds have luxuries similar to those found at places like Piney Campground and other civilized campgrounds.

## Museum

A museum, located at Reelfoot Lake, features exhibits on Native Americans, exploration of the region, the New Madrid Fault, ecology of Reelfoot Lake, and history of the region. The avian flight cage is the most interesting exhibit. Injured birds that cannot return to the wild are brought to the flight cage; visitors can learn about the birds and, in some cases, interact with the birds. Adjacent to the museum is a very popular quarter mile boardwalk. Visitors can take beautiful photographs of bald eagles and other fowl from the boardwalk. However, the birds typically stay far enough away that a telephoto lens is necessary.



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