



DeSoto State Park and park partners like Little River Canyon National Preserve, Jacksonville State University Field School, Little River Arts Council and more, team up to bring you many fun events throughout the year.

Campfire Talks, Classes, Demonstrations, Guided Interpretive or Fitness Hikes, Tours, Outdoor Adventures, Workshops.....topics covering art, science, nature, and much more!

DeSoto State Park also adds community events such as classes, festivals, workshops, local craft shows, etc to our calendar so that we can help our guests and visitors make their visit to Lookout Mountain, Alabama even more memorable.

For more events on Lookout Mountain, see www.discoverlookoutmountain.com



Alabama State Parks, a division of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, operates and maintains 21 parks encompassing approximately 48,000 acres of land and water. These parks rely on visitor fees and the support of other partners like local communities to fund the majority of their operations.

For more information on Alabama State Parks, visit www.alapark.com



DeSoto State Park's Campfire Talk Series

Campfire Talks are a series of educational & entertaining programs located in the great outdoors. Campfire programs are held almost every Friday & Saturday evening (May –October) in DeSoto's James L. Wynn Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground. All programs are open & free to everyone. *Seating is limited, so bring your own comfortable chair if you wish. In case of bad weather, programs are moved inside.*

Serious Skills Series

Hosted by DeSoto State Park. The Serious Skills series is a variety of classes and workshops that provide opportunities to discover a hidden talent or learn a new skill for personal enrichment. Classes are open to local residents, overnight guests and park visitors.



DeSoto State Park challenges you to become a DeSoto State Park Trail Trekker!



Hike the designated 23 miles of trails in DeSoto, (whether on your own or in a group, no time limit) and collect your prize, a Trail Trekkers Patch. Just log your hikes in the Trail Trekker log and record the date for each trail listed. Sign completed form and turn in to DeSoto State Park Country Store or Lodge to receive your patch!

This hike series is designed for those that prefer some company out on the trails with experienced park staff or volunteers. Each month there will be a different hike so you can start marking them off towards your patch!

Keep checking back for more 2024 events to be added!

AUGUST

World's Longest Yard Sale

The World's Longest Yard Sale starts each year on the first Thursday in August and continues for 4 days (Thursday thru Sunday.)

Running from Gadsden, Alabama to West Unity, Ohio, this event allows you to travel more than 690-miles of scenic beauty and see tons of yard sales. Get started on your journey by traveling the 93-mile Lookout Mountain Parkway route from Gadsden, Alabama to Chattanooga, Tennessee for the most "scenic rural America" in the United States

A section of this popular annual event travels thru DeSoto State Park, so be sure to use the park as your base as you travel to see the sights! (reservations recommended early)

Dates: August 1-4, 2024

#Hike24in24AL

Birding 101 Walk

Have you always wanted to learn more of the basics of bird identification? Birding is an excellent way to explore and connect to nature in a new and different way. It is a great skill, a fun activity, and easy to learn. Join DeSoto State Park staff for an early morning walk on the boardwalk and along some of the trails around Azalea Cascade. Easy, staying on and near the boardwalk. 1/2 mile total.

Date: 8/3/2024

Time: 6:30 a.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at Boardwalk Trailhead on County Road 89.

Fee: Free & open to everyone, no-preregistration required. Weather-dependent, please call the Lodge at 256.845.5380 beforehand to check on status of walk. Contact Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for any details. www.alapark.com/desoto-state-park/hiking

Forest Tales Outdoor Storytime Hike

Join DeSoto State Park Assistant Naturalist, Mirandi Watson, for an OUTDOOR story time catered towards you and your young nature lovers twice per month from April to September. Enjoy captivating tales and engaging movement activities amidst the beauty of nature. Get the chance to interact with the natural world around you, spotting wildlife, exploring hidden nooks, and perhaps even encountering a few surprises along the way.

About the hike: the hike is considered easy, perfect for little feet. Around 0.6 Miles Total

What to bring: Backpack with water & snacks. Closed-toed shoes.

Date: August 7, 2024

Time: 10:00 am to 11:00 am (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park, Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at the Benefield Nature Center next to the Country Store on County Road 89

Fee: Free, but RSVP is required, so we know how many to expect.

RSVP here: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-Forest-Tales>

This program is for grown-ups and their children -NO PETS PLEASE. Participants are invited to stay after for time to play, explore DeSoto State Park and socialize with other families.

Due to the nature of this hike only thunderstorms will cancel this event. Please dress accordingly.

Nature Journey Journal Hike

Join naturalists and artists for this creative nature observation hike, combining art & nature! The focus of this nature walk is to reflect your observations of nature using a personal journaling style.....in many different ways! Learn how to keep your own nature journal while strolling along trails in DeSoto State Park. Will hike about 1/2 mile to the West Fork of Little River and hang out for a while working on our nature journals with provided materials. For ages 8 to adult, we encourage all ages to join!

About the hike: the hike is considered moderate, because of the uneven, rocky terrain. Total 1 1/2 mile loop.

What to bring: Backpack with plenty of water and snacks. Closed-toed shoes. A favorite journal if you have one, and we will supply watercolor paper, watercolor pencils, clipboards, etc. Bring something to sit on if you prefer.

Date: August 7, 2024

Time: 11:00-2:00 (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park, Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at the Benefield Nature Center next to the Country Store on County Road 89

Fee: \$5.00-includes all supplies RSVP is required, so we know how many to expect.

RSVP here: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-Nature-Journal-Journey>

Due to the nature of this hike only thunderstorms will cancel this event. Please dress accordingly.

Campfire Talk: Cherokees: The Way We Were

Join us for a fun campfire talk in the Great Outdoors! Campfire Talks are a series of educational & entertaining programs located outside in DeSoto State Park. Campfire programs are held many Friday & Saturday evening (June – October) in our large campfire ring inside the improved campground. Talks are for all ages, & open to everyone!

Join DeSoto State Park Assistant Naturalist, Mirandi Watson to delve into the rich history and cultural heritage of the Cherokees of Lookout Mountain, Alabama, spanning across Etowah, Cherokee, and DeKalb counties. Discover the fascinating stories and traditions of the Tsalagi Tribes of Lookout Mountain, Alabama, to honor their legacy and delve into the depths of their past.

Date: Friday, August 9, 2024

Time: 8:00-9:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground (In case of inclement weather will be located in the CCC Pavilion in picnic area) Campground gates will open 30 minutes before program.

Fee: Free and open to everyone, no pre-registration required; For any details about the talk, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

Junior Ranger Adventure Series: Tree Discovery

This once-a-month hike is designed for explorers aged 3 to 103! Participants will have the opportunity to earn the coveted DeSoto State Park Junior Ranger Patch while discovering the wonders of nature and the park's historical treasures.

DSP Assistant Naturalist Mirandi Watson will be guiding this fun hike, geared toward all ages. This program will begin with an overview of the DSP Jr Ranger Program and will hike along different trails and focus on several topics in the booklet.

About the hike: the hike is considered moderate, because of the uneven, rocky terrain. Each month will utilize a different trail in the park, be beginner friendly, and be between 1-3 miles each. We will take our time, so this hike is good for all skill levels.

What to bring: Backpack with plenty of water, lunch, snacks. And a journal with a pen or pencil. Closed-toed shoes.

Date: August 10, 2024

Time: 11:00-2:00 (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park, Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at the Benefield Nature Center next to the Country Store on County Road 89

Fee: Free, but RSVP is required, so we know how many to expect.

RSVP here: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-JR-Adventure>

Birding 101 & Introductory Hike

Join the JSU Field School and the Little River National Preserve, for an exciting journey on Beaver Pond Trail, taking in every opportunity to learn more about the birds around. On this hike we will identify as many birds as possible of the southern Appalachians and we will be teaching you tips and tricks to successfully locate birds on a trail and recognize the species based on their call. All ages welcome.

Join us after the hike for refreshments at the Little River Canyon Center.

Things to bring: Plenty of water and/or sports drink, snacks, hiking poles/staff (optional), sturdy shoes (open toe shoes are not recommended). Please be sure to dress appropriately according to seasonal temperatures/weather. Download the Merlin app on your smart phone if you for some extra help identifying birds wherever you go.

WEATHER: As with all outdoor events, if it's raining/stormy or very poor trail conditions, we may have to cancel. If the weather is questionable, please check with the park before leaving home. Please make every effort to arrive early or on time.

Date: Saturday, August 10, 2024

Time: 7:00 am (CST)

Location: Meet at the trailhead for Beaver Pond Trail in the Little River National Preserve. Beaver Pond Trail is located just past Lynn Overlook on Highway 176. (within 10 miles of DeSoto State Park)

Sunset Simmer-Down Paddle Trip

DeSoto Falls Picnic Area-Alabama

DeSoto State Park staff offers this relaxing guided sunset paddle trip on the scenic Little River. Enjoy the peace and quiet of nature as we paddle upstream on the 'coke bottle clear' waters of the West Fork of Little River. Learn about this outstanding water source with its clear water, plant & animal life, and about the history of the area around DeSoto Falls in Dekalb County, Alabama.

What to know: This trip is approximately 4 miles round trip on flatwater, spans a 4-hour period and includes kayak & personal flotation device. Must be able to paddle upstream and back (no current)

What to bring: Appropriate clothing, headlamp or flashlight, bug spray, snacks, and drinking water.

Date: Saturday, August 10, 2024

Time: 4:00 pm-8:00 pm

Where: Meet at DeSoto Falls Picnic Area-Miller's Bend Paddle Shack (about 7 miles from main park area of DeSoto State Park) Coordinates: 34.549124, -84.589668

Fee: \$30.00 for single kayak rental (tandem kayaks are available on a limited basis for \$50.00)

Pre-registration closes August 6th. Pre-registration: <https://forms.office.com/g/vE4EV6xLAB>

MUSIC FOR THE PEOPLE Summer Music Series: Henri's Notions

Mentone, Alabama. Sponsored by Little River Arts Council, made possible in part by the Alabama State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Bring your own chair or blanket to enjoy the show & enjoy some food from Fontastic Food Truck.

Date: August 10, 2024

Times: 6:00-9:00 pm (CST)

Where: Linger Longer Pavilion-Behind Mentone Inn in Mentone, AL (within 10 miles of DeSoto State Park) Address: 6139 AL-117, Mentone, AL 35984

Fee: Free & open to everyone! www.littleriverartscouncil.org

Canyon Kids – Young Explorers Creek Stomp

JSU Field School

Join us for hands on adventure learning. The fall semester of Young Explorers will meet the 3rd Thursday of August, September, October and November of 2024! Children ages 7 to 12 years old will want to attend ALL of these hands-on adventures! To creatively learn about animals, plants, bugs, and more with JSU Field Schools.

Info on Full semester:

Thursday, August 15, 2024 – Creek Stomp

Thursday, September 19, 2024 – Tree ID

Thursday, October 17, 2024 – Nocturnal Predators - Hoo's Who

Thursday, November 21, 2024 – Native Americans - Traditions & Innovations

Date: Thursday, August 15, 2024

Time: 10:30 am–12:00 pm (CST)

Where: JSU's Little River Canyon Center in Fort Payne (within 10 miles of DeSoto State Park).

Fee: \$8 per class or \$25 when registering for entire spring semester. Pre-Registration required. For more details, email rmtaylor@jsu.edu or call 256-845-3548 More info: https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=286&SINGLESTOR E=true

Owl Prowl Night Hike

Owls are mysterious creatures to many, as we do not often see them, and only hear them calling at night outside of our homes. We will keep our eyes and ears open and hopefully catch a glimpse or hear one of the many owls that call DeSoto State Park home, as well as possibly other nocturnal creatures that might be out in the dark!

Bring the whole flock and join naturalists Jamie Rogers & Brittney Hughes as we search for our resident owls.

Flashlights should have a red-light mode, or the light should be covered with red cellophane in order to preserve visitors and wildlife's night vision. If you do not have red cellophane, the park will have some for you.

Date: Friday, August 16, 2024

Time: 9:00 pm (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground next to site 93. Campground gate will open before the hike begins.

Fee: Free, no pre-registration required; bring headlamps and wear closed-toed shoes.

Weather-dependent, please call the Lodge at 256.845.5380 beforehand to check on status of hike. For any details, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov

Hike with a Naturalist

Little Falls Trail in the Little River Canyon National Preserve.

Join JSU Field School staff on a guided 1.5 mile hike to Little River Falls on Bridge Trail.

Things to bring: Plenty of water and/or sports drink, snacks, hiking poles/staff (optional), sturdy shoes (open toe shoes are not recommended). Please be sure to dress appropriately according to seasonal temperatures/weather.

WEATHER: As with all outdoor events, if it's raining/stormy or very poor trail conditions, we may have to cancel. If the weather is questionable, please check with the park before leaving home. Please make every effort to arrive early or on time.

Date: Saturday, August 17, 2024

Time: 10:30 a.m. -1:30 p.m.(CST)

Where: Meet at JSU's Little River Canyon Center in Fort Payne (within 10 miles of DeSoto State Park).

Fee: Free and open to everyone! For details, contact 256-845-3548 (Canyon Center)

Park After Dark-Night Walk

Join DeSoto State Park staff to get to know the park after dark! You never know what you can discover during the night; we will be using our senses to discover what can be seen, heard, or even smelled on this fun hike! About the walk: we will be on the cabin road & go to the frog pond, near DeSoto's South entrance. All ages welcome, children must be supervised. We will meet & walk from DeSoto State Park Lodge-short distance, terrain will be a mix of asphalt and dirt road, closed toed shoes are preferred.

Date: 8/17/2024

Time: 9:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at DeSoto's Lodge

Fee: Free & open to everyone, no-preregistration required. Weather-dependent, please call the Lodge at 256.845.5380 beforehand to check on status of walk. Contact Brittney.Hughes@dnr.alabama.gov for any details. www.alapark.com/desoto-state-park/hiking

Third Saturday Sunset Cruise-in

Fort Payne, Alabama

The Third Saturday Sunset Cruise-In is a great car show, featuring over 200+ classic vehicles on display in Fort Payne's historic downtown district. This is a monthly event starting in April and ending in October (skipping September for Boom Days Festival). Music across the street from DeKalb Theatre and food vendors.

Date: Saturday, August 17, 2024

Time: 5:00-9:00 pm

Where: Downtown Fort Payne, Alabama (within 10 miles of DeSoto State Park)

Free & open to everyone. Info: www.facebook.com/3rdSaturdayFortPayneAl

Meandering Moonlight Guided Paddle

DeSoto State Park staff offers this relaxing guided moonlight paddle trip on scenic Little River. Enjoy the peace and quiet of nature as we paddle upstream on the 'coke bottle clear' waters of the West Fork of Little River. Enjoy this flatwater paddle as the sun goes down and the full moon comes up. Experience the peace & quiet of the gloaming-time!

What to know: This trip is approximately 4 miles round trip on flatwater, spans a 3 to 3 1/2-hour period and includes kayak, paddle, & personal flotation device. Must be able to paddle upstream and back (no current) Weight limits: 300 pounds for singles & 450 for tandems. Ages 8 to adult.

What to bring: Appropriate clothing for weather (you may get wet), headlamp or flashlight, bug spray, snacks, and drinking water.

Date: Tuesday, August 20, 2024

Time: 7:00 pm-10:00 pm

Where: DeSoto Falls Picnic Area-Miller's Bend Paddle Shack (about 7 miles from main park area of DeSoto State Park)

Fee: \$30.00 for single kayak rental (2 person-tandem kayaks are available on a limited basis for \$50.00)

Pre-registration closes August 16th. Pre-registration: <https://forms.office.com/g/1Bh261fzZd>

Hike with a Naturalist

Little Falls Trail in the Little River Canyon National Preserve.

Join JSU Field School staff on a beautiful outdoor adventure hike to Little Falls. This hike is a moderately challenging 1.5 mile hike. This hike has 140 uneven, stone steps that are steep. It is not recommended for pets or people who have difficulty climbing stairs and steep terrain.

Things to bring: Plenty of water and/or sports drink, snacks, hiking poles/staff (optional), sturdy shoes (open toe shoes are not recommended). Please be sure to dress appropriately according to seasonal temperatures/weather.

WEATHER: As with all outdoor events, if it's raining/stormy or very poor trail conditions, we may have to cancel. If the weather is questionable, please check with the park before leaving home. Please make every effort to arrive early or on time.

Date: Thursday, August 22, 2024

Time: 10:30 a.m. -1:30 p.m. (CST)

Where: Meet at the picnic area at Little River Falls at 10:30 am (CST).

Fee: Free and open to everyone! For details, contact 256-845-3548 (Canyon Center)

Campfire Talk: Landscaping with Native Plants

Join us for a fun campfire talk in the Great Outdoors! Campfire Talks are a series of educational & entertaining programs located outside in DeSoto State Park. Campfire programs are held many Friday & Saturday evening (June -October) in our large campfire ring inside the improved campground. Talks are for all ages, & open to everyone! Landscaping with native plants is sometimes called "naturescaping." Native doesn't have to mean wild, though! You can have a garden that is just as refined and glamorous as anyone else's. Even though it is made up of native plants, the design is up to you. Many species of birds, pollinating bees and insects, butterflies and moths rely on our landscapes for homes, nest material, protection and food, so come and learn about our native wildflowers, trees, grasses and shrubs and how they play a key role in our ecosystem. Just in time for Fall planting season, learn what plants to have on your Natives look-for list! Learn how to enhance your landscaping skills while promoting biodiversity.

Date: Friday, August 23, 2024

Time: 8:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground (In case of inclement weather will be located in the CCC Pavilion in picnic area) Campground gates will open 30 minutes before program.

Fee: Free and open to everyone, no pre-registration required; For any details about the talk, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

Serious Skills Series: Mosaic Bee Watering Station

The Serious Skills series is a variety of classes and workshops that provide opportunities to discover a hidden talent or learn a new skill for personal enrichment. Classes are open to local residents, overnight guests and park visitors.

Learn the beautiful and ancient art of mosaics! DSP Staff will teach design, techniques, and the skills of class cutting, gluing, and grouting with special emphasis on safety. Participants will mosaic a wide, shallow tray for use as a watering station for bees & other pollinators. Not only will this project be beautiful, but it will also serve as a crucial and safe water source for our important pollinator allies. Ages 8 to adult.

Date: Saturday, August 24, 2024

Time: 1:00 pm-5:00 pm

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, AL. Nature Center next to DeSoto's Country Store & Information Center on Co. Rd. 89

Fee: \$45.00 -includes all supplies. Class space is limited to 10, pre-registration is required for attendance in this class. Pre-registration: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-SSS-MosaicTray2>

Insect Pinning Workshop

Join the JSU Field School and Instructor Christian Braswell as we learn all about insect collecting and pinning and start your very own bug collection. Pinning insects is an important education tool and hobby. All supplies are included, however, if you have an insect you have collected and would like to use, you are welcome to bring your own bug. Ages 10 and older.

Date: August 24, 2024

Time: 10:30 - 12:30 pm (CST)

Where: JSU's Little River Canyon Center-Fort Payne, Alabama (within 10 miles of DeSoto State Park)

Fee: FREE, but registration required. Space is limited.

https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=289&SINGLESTORE=true&fbclid=IwY2xjawEPsLlleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHCySAVx6OQ14ArsO2cdto_AsyPPoyxmHQl8LHYIz7yYg8qUO4B5PozGQlw_aem_sD-mUfhi5RAYqTDjnZ1a2w

Cherokee Ways of Knowing: Cherokee Storytelling

Join DeSoto State Park Assistant Naturalist, Mirandi Watson, on her monthly excursions to learn about the Cherokee people and their cultural tie to the environment. Each monthly excursion will feature a unique topic and a walk in the woods with stops along the way to learn more about the Cherokee Ways of Knowing.

About the hike: We will walk a small portion of the Red Trail to see a shelter that was used by Native Americans. Although the hike is considered moderate (because of the uneven, rocky terrain), we will be

taking a slow walk through the woods. Please bring a hiking stick for stability if you wish. This program is perfect for beginners or those just wanting a leisurely stroll through the woods.

Date: August 30, 2024

Time: 2:00-4:00 pm. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park, Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at the Benefield Nature Center next to the Country Store on County Road 89

Fee: Free, but RSVP is required, so we know how many to expect.

RSVP here: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-Cherokee-Ways-of-Knowing>

Due to the nature of this hike only thunderstorms will cancel this event. Please dress accordingly.

Campfire Talk: Poisonous & Venomous Organisms Trivia

Join us for a fun campfire talk in the great outdoors! Campfire Talks are a series of educational & entertaining programs located in the great outdoors. Campfire programs are held many Friday & Saturday evening (May –October) in DeSoto State Park.

Enjoy a fun trivia game presented by Jacksonville State University Toxicologist Dr. James Rayburn. Learn about how some plants & animals really get your attention with their special lines of defense. Beware out there! Seating is limited, so bring your own comfortable camp chair if you wish.

Date: Friday, August 30, 2024

Time: 8:00 p.m.

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground (In case of inclement weather will be located in the CCC Pavilion in picnic area) Campground gates will open 30 minutes before program.

Fee: Free and open to everyone, no pre-registration required; For any details about the talk, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

Alabama Paleontology

Join JSU Field School and Instructor Christian Braswell on a journey back in time to discover Alabama's earliest fossil plants and animals!

Date: August 31, 2024

Time: 10:30 a.m. (CST)

Location: JSU's Little River Canyon Center (within 10 miles of DeSoto State Park)

Fee: Free and open to everyone! For details, contact 256-845-3548 (Canyon Center)

www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools

Follow Your Art

Sponsored by Little River Arts Council and the Mentone Educational Resources Foundation

The Sweetest Little Festival in Mentone! Music, Storytelling, Children's Art Projects, Face painting, Mobile Munchies Food Truck, Freudian Sip coffees, smoothies. Art vendors will line the winding walking trail behind the MERF House, on Highway 117, just east of Mentone. 30 of the areas favorite artists and makers will have work for sale in a variety of media: painting, ceramics, woodcarving, photography, textile arts, jewelry-making, and more. The focus at this show is community, with local artists and musicians, a return of the popular sidewalk chalk contest, storytelling, face painting and more.

One of the main attractions of Follow Your Art is the return of the popular Sidewalk Chalk Art Contest. The contest is open to all ages, individuals, or groups, interested in creating works of art along the track. Prizes will be awarded!

Exhibiting Artists: Awards totaling \$900 for Best of Show (Art); Best of Show (Craft); & 1st & 2nd places.

PLUS awards for Best Chalk Art (Adult); Best Chalk Art (Youth); and a People's Choice Award.

Little River Arts Council will provide the chalk or participants can bring their own. Chalk artists can arrive as early as 7:00 AM on Saturday morning, so that their creations are completed or nearly completed when visitors start to arrive.

Date: Saturday, August 31, 2024

Time: 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: MERF's Pathway to Community Walking Track in Mentone, AL, 4561 AL HWY 117, Next door to MOON LAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY.

More Info: www.littleriverartscouncil.org/fya

Environmental Education Excursions: (Animal Clues)

Experience this monthly series of nature programs designed to immerse you in the beauty of the outdoors! These offerings provide adults with the opportunity to relish a taste of "camp life," featuring activities like tree identification, birdwatching, tracking scat and prints, fossil exploration, and refining your nature journaling skills. Don't miss out on the chance to reconnect with nature and foster a deeper appreciation for the world around us!

Join in on the hunt for clues to see what animals live here! Assistant Interpretive Naturalist, Mirandi Watson, will lead you on a journey to look for animal clues along the trails of DeSoto State Park. Bring along a backpack with plenty of water, snacks, and lunch. You may also want to grab your favorite journal and some crayons or colored pencils to write down your clues as we go along. While tailored for adults, this program warmly welcomes children to join in and learn alongside you.

Date: August 31, 2024

Time: 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park, Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at the Benefield Nature Center next to the Country Store on County Road 89

Fee: Free, but RSVP is required, so we know how many to expect.

RSVP here <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-EE-Excursions>

Due to the nature of this hike only thunderstorms will cancel this event. Please dress accordingly.

Campfire Talk: Amphibian Metamorphosis: From Egg to Frog, What a Leap!

Join us for a fun campfire talk in the great outdoors! Campfire Talks are a series of educational & entertaining programs located in the great outdoors. Campfire programs are held many Friday & Saturday evening (May –October) in DeSoto State Park.

Enjoy a fun trivia game with Jacksonville State University's Dr. James Rayburn while exploring how amphibians transform from a single cell to the wonderful hopping creatures we all know. Meet live tadpoles...and perhaps adopt your own non-native tadpole pet! Seating is limited, so bring your own comfortable camp chair if you wish.

Date: Saturday, August 31, 2024

Time: 8:00 p.m.

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground (In case of inclement weather will be located in the CCC Pavilion in picnic area) Campground gates will open 30 minutes before program.

Fee: Free and open to everyone, no pre-registration required; For any details about the talk, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

SEPTEMBER

Campfire Talk: Gardening for Wildlife

Join us for a fun campfire talk in the Great Outdoors! Campfire Talks are a series of educational & entertaining programs located outside in DeSoto State Park. Campfire programs are held many Friday & Saturday evening (June –October) in our large campfire ring inside the improved campground. Talks are for all ages, & open to everyone!

By nurturing the natural world in your own backyard, you become a steward of biodiversity, creating a haven for wildlife and a sanctuary for yourself. A wildlife-friendly habitat garden replaces manicured lawns with native plants that attract birds, butterflies, and other wildlife seeking food and shelter. Join

guest naturalist Michelle Reynolds to discover proven ways to create an inviting home environment that attracts and protects birds, butterflies, insects, and many other species.

Date: Friday, September 6, 2024

Time: 8:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground (In case of inclement weather will be located in the CCC Pavilion in picnic area) Campground gates will open 30 minutes before program.

Fee: Free and open to everyone, no pre-registration required; For any details about the talk, email Brittney.Hughes@dnr.alabama.gov.

Sandstone Glade Hike

A glade is an open area where the bedrock is at or near the surface, and where soils are so thin, trees and shrubs find it difficult to grow, yet you'll find thriving, rare and unique plant communities that depend on the chemistry and conditions the environments provide. Join guest naturalist Michelle Reynolds for a hike to explore the glades in DeSoto State Park. Scout out rare, beautiful plants and wondrous rock formations among the natural clearings dotting Lookout Mountain's porous cap. About the hike: Moderate hike along rocky terrain. Approximately 1.10 miles round trip

Read about sandstone glades here: https://www.alapark.com/sites/default/files/2020-03/Sandstone%20glades%20of%20Lookout%20Mountain%20Fall%202015%20Lookout%20Alabama.pdf?fbclid=IwZXhobgNhZWoCMTAAAR1vok5tgu1dXxNtIPYjqzyoyDUPheqixXvaBmDMwjEknPPTZRtM6xqH5ew_aem_ATXcRYo8kDDDP71od37KyMTjjs-Mw8v7EG63BUhOlwcM8lJz4-5DhtypZlsJUuzvVH2ZLsehA4sojZfoRNd5ntrr

Date: Saturday, September 7, 2024

Time: 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at DeSoto's Country Store on County Road 89

Fee: Free & open to everyone, no-preregistration required. Weather-dependent, please call the Lodge at 256.845.5380 beforehand to check on status of hike. Contact Brittney.Hughes@dnr.alabama.gov for any details.

Things to bring: Plenty of water and/or sports drink, snacks/lunch, hiking poles/staff (optional), sturdy shoes (open toe shoes are not recommended)

WEATHER: Please be sure to dress appropriately according to seasonal temperatures/weather. As with all outdoor events, if it is stormy or very poor trail conditions, we may have to cancel. If the weather is questionable, please call the park before you leave home to check if the hike is still on (256.845.0051)

Please note: GPS can be unreliable in this area, for directions to Desoto State Park see www.alapark.com/DSP-Plan-Your-Trip

Campfire Talk: Fierce Flyers: The World of Loggerhead Shrikes"

Join us for a fun campfire talk in the Great Outdoors! Campfire Talks are a series of educational & entertaining programs located outside in DeSoto State Park. Campfire programs are held many Friday & Saturday evening (June –October) in our large campfire ring inside the improved campground. Talks are for all ages, & open to everyone!

The Loggerhead Shrike has some extraordinary habits that make it one of the most unique birds in North America You might have seen this small, unassuming bird perched on a fence post or utility wire, but don't let its modest appearance fool you. Despite its size, this bird is a fierce predator, earning it the nickname "Butcher Bird." One of their most fascinating behaviors is impaling their prey on thorns, barbed wire, or sharp twigs. Join guest naturalist Michelle Reynolds to discover the fascinating world of the Loggerhead Shrike.

Date: Saturday, September 7, 2024

Time: 8:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground (In case of inclement weather will be located in the CCC Pavilion in picnic area) Campground gates will open 30 minutes before program.

Fee: Free and open to everyone, no pre-registration required; For any details about the talk, email Brittney.Hughes@dnr.alabama.gov.

Environmental Education Excursions: Nature as Art (land art, & natural pigment painting)

Experience this monthly series of nature programs designed to immerse you in the beauty of the outdoors! These offerings provide adults with the opportunity to relish a taste of "camp life," featuring activities like tree identification, birdwatching, tracking scat and prints, fossil exploration, and refining your nature journaling skills. Don't miss out on the chance to reconnect with nature and foster a deeper appreciation for the world around us!

Have you ever thought of Nature as Art? Come learn how to use the natural world around you to create your own art! During this program, led by Assistant Interpretive Naturalist, Mirandi Watson, we will learn about nature photography, how to create land art in an environmentally friendly way, and how to use pigments from our natural world to create art. Bring along a backpack with plenty of water, snacks, and lunch. Please also bring a journal, crayons or colored pencils. While tailored for adults, this program warmly welcomes children to join in and learn alongside you.

Date: September 11, 2024

Time: 12:030 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park, Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at the Benefield Nature Center next to the Country Store on County Road 89

Fee: Free, but RSVP is required, so we know how many to expect.

RSVP here <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-EE-Excursions>

Due to the nature of this hike only thunderstorms will cancel this event. Please dress accordingly.

Girl Scouts Love State Parks Weekend Alabama State Parks

Come and explore our State Parks to celebrate the national event, Girl Scouts Love the State Parks! Over 25,000 Girl Scouts around the USA will be participating with their troops and families. Your troop or family can bring their own picnic style lunch to enjoy at the park.

While this year will be self-guided in DeSoto State Park, there are many ways Girl Scouts can enjoy Their state park. Take a hike, go birding on a walk along the Talmadge Butler Boardwalk Trail, kayak the river, go waterfall hunting, go mountain biking, take a dip in Little River. Visit the Benefield Interpretive Center to learn about the people and the critters that have called Lookout Mountain home, and discover the park's history by visiting the Civilian Conservation Corps Museum. Complete DeSoto's Jr. Ranger booklet and turn it in for a free patch to be mailed; work on finding the trees along the boardwalk with our tree scavenger hunt. Enjoy the day or the weekend in the Great Outdoors!

Dates: September 13-15, 2024

Info on the weekend & how to get the patch: <https://www.girlscouts.org/en/members/for-girl-scouts/ways-to-participate/camp-and-outdoors/love-state-parks.html#:~:text=Every%20year%2C%20Girl%20Scouts%20explore,10%20and%2011%20this%20year>

Events in Alabama State Parks: <https://www.alapark.com/alabama-state-parks-love-girl-scouts>

Girls Scouts Love the Outdoors Challenge: <https://www.girlscouts.org/en/activities-for-girls/for-every-girl/girl-scouts-love-the-outdoors-challenge.html>

Info on things to see & do in DeSoto State Park: <https://www.alapark.com/parks/Desoto-Events>

Campfire Talk: Plants & Natural History

Join us for a fun campfire talk in the Great Outdoors! Campfire Talks are a series of educational & entertaining programs located outside in DeSoto State Park. Campfire programs are held many Friday & Saturday evening (June –October) in our large campfire ring inside the improved campground. Talks are for all ages, & open to everyone!

Delve into the fascinating world of plants and their natural history. Dr. Jimmy Triplett from Jacksonville State University will talk about how various cultures have used plants for medicinal purposes over the generations, and also showcase the rich variety of local flora found in our region.

Date: Friday, September 13, 2024

Time: 7:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground (In case of inclement weather will be located in the CCC Pavilion in picnic area) Campground gates will open 30 minutes before program.

Fee: Free and open to everyone, no pre-registration required; For any details about the talk, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

Outdoor Observations Hike

Have you ever seen a plant, mushroom, or critter and wondered what it was? Especially in the Spring there are some cool things to see, so join DeSoto State Park staff to discover what can be observed & recorded using iNaturalist! iNaturalist is a free app that can be used to record observations of all sorts of things — plants, animals, and even fungi. Learn how to use the simple app to help contribute to park species lists and about species seen in the park. About the hike: Moderate hike along mountainous terrain, some rocky terrain. Approximately 2 miles round trip.

Date: Saturday, September 14, 2024

Time: 10:00-12:30 (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at DeSoto's Country Store on County Road 89.

Fee: Free & open to everyone, no-preregistration required. Weather-dependent, please call the Lodge at 256.845.5380 beforehand to check on status of hike. Contact Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for any details. www.alapark.com/desoto-state-park/hiking

Junior Ranger Adventure Series: Carnivorous Plants

This once-a-month hike is designed for explorers aged 3 to 103! Participants will have the opportunity to earn the coveted DeSoto State Park Junior Ranger Patch while discovering the wonders of nature and the park's historical treasures.

DSP Assistant Naturalist Mirandi Watson will be guiding this fun hike, geared toward all ages. This program will begin with an overview of the DSP Jr Ranger Program and will hike along different trails and focus on several topics in the booklet.

About the hike: the hike is considered moderate, because of the uneven, rocky terrain. Each month will utilize a different trail in the park, be beginner friendly, and be between 1-3 miles each. We will take our time, so this hike is good for all skill levels.

What to bring: Backpack with plenty of water, lunch, snacks. And a journal with a pen or pencil. Closed-toed shoes.

Date: September 14, 2024

Time: 2:00-4:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park, Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at the Benefield Nature Center next to the Country Store on County Road 89

Fee: Free, but RSVP is required, so we know how many to expect.

RSVP here: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-JR-Adventure>

Campfire Talk: Natural History of the Appalachian Fiddle

Join us for a fun campfire talk in the Great Outdoors!

Campfire Talks are a series of educational & entertaining programs located outside in DeSoto State Park. Campfire programs are held many Friday & Saturday evening (June –October) in our large campfire ring inside the improved campground. Talks are for all ages, & open to everyone!

Traditional Appalachian fiddlers celebrated the beauty and mystery of the natural world with their music, giving tunes commemorative names like “Piney Woods,” “Head of the Creek,” “Horses in the Canebrake,” “Icy Mountain” and “Shaking Down the Acorns.” Join botanist and fiddler Dr. Jimmy Triplett from Jacksonville State University on a musical journey through this rich heritage and learn about the interplay between Appalachian natural history and folkways.

Date: Saturday, September 14, 2024

Time: 7:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground (In case of inclement weather will be located in the CCC Pavilion in picnic area) Campground gates will open 30 minutes before program.

Fee: Free and open to everyone, no pre-registration required; For any details about the talk, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

Meandering Moonlight Guided Paddle

DeSoto State Park staff offers this relaxing guided moonlight paddle trip on scenic Little River. Enjoy the peace and quiet of nature as we paddle upstream on the 'coke bottle clear' waters of the West Fork of Little River. Enjoy this flatwater paddle as the sun goes down and the full moon comes up. Experience the peace & quiet of the gloaming-time!

What to know: This trip is approximately 4 miles round trip on flatwater, spans a 3 to 3 1/2-hour period and includes kayak, paddle, & personal flotation device. Must be able to paddle upstream and back (no current) Weight limits: 300 pounds for singles & 450 for tandems. Ages 8 to adult.

What to bring: Appropriate clothing for weather (you may get wet), headlamp or flashlight, bug spray, snacks, and drinking water.

Date: Wednesday, September 18, 2024

Time: 7:00 pm-10:00 pm

Where: DeSoto Falls Picnic Area-Miller's Bend Paddle Shack (about 7 miles from main park area of DeSoto State Park)

Fee: \$30.00 for single kayak rental (2 person-tandem kayaks are available on a limited basis for \$50.00)

Pre-registration closes September 14th. Pre-registration: <https://forms.office.com/g/DsTrt2kgHa>

Canyon Kids – Young Explorers Tree ID

JSU Field School

Join us for hands on adventure learning. The fall semester of Young Explorers will meet the 3rd Thursday of August, September, October and November of 2024! Children ages 7 to 12 years old will want to attend ALL of these hands-on adventures! To creatively learn about animals, plants, bugs, and more with JSU Field Schools.

Info on Full semester:

Thursday, August 15, 2024 – Creek Stomp

Thursday, September 19, 2024 – Tree ID

Thursday, October 17, 2024 – Nocturnal Predators - Hoo's Who

Thursday, November 21, 2024 – Native Americans - Traditions & Innovations

Date: Thursday, September 19, 2024

Time: 10:30 am–12:00 pm (CST)

Where: JSU's Little River Canyon Center in Fort Payne (within 10 miles of DeSoto State Park).

Fee: \$8 per class or \$25 when registering for entire spring semester. Pre-Registration required. For more details, email rmtaylor@jsu.edu or call 256-845-3548 More info:

https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=286&SINGLESTOR E=true

Boom Days Heritage Celebration

Boom Days Heritage Celebration honors Fort Payne's rich cultural past with events that tie the history to the present, great historical artifacts, and clothing at the Fort Payne Depot Museum, a miniatures railroad system in the original office of the Coal, and Iron Company, music covering all musical genres. City Park, once the front yard of the DeKalb Hotel with its 1889 Ginkgo trees, is filled with some of the finest arts and craftsmen in the region. There is a children's area, artist demonstrations, and a wine tasting. Boom Days begins on the third Friday of September each year and runs through Saturday ending with musical acts at the Rotary Pavilion

Dates: September 20-21 2024

Where: Fort Payne, Alabama (Within 10 miles of DeSoto State Park)

Campfire Talk: Falconry in Alabama

Join us for a fun campfire talk in the Great Outdoors!

Campfire Talks are a series of educational & entertaining programs located outside in DeSoto State Park. Campfire programs are held many Friday & Saturday evening (June –October) in our large campfire ring inside the improved campground. Talks are for all ages, & open to everyone!

Falconry is the hunting of wild animals in their natural state and habitat by means of a trained bird of prey. Join guest speaker Matt Whitfield to learn about falconry, which is one of the world's oldest forms of hunting. Falconry is currently practiced in many countries around the world. In Alabama, the most commonly used bird is the red-tailed hawk and squirrel is the most commonly pursued game animal. There are currently approx. 58 permitted falconers in the state.

Guest Speaker Matt Whitfield is a licensed Falconer in the State of Alabama and has 2 captive bred Harris Hawk he will be bringing. Come on out to meet them and learn about these beautiful birds!

Seating is limited, so bring your own comfortable camp chair if you wish.

Date: Saturday, September 21st

Time: 7:00 pm

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground (In case of inclement weather will be located in the CCC Pavilion in picnic area)

Fee: No pre-registration required, fee & open to everyone. For any details about the talk, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov

#Hike24in24AL

Nature Journey Journal Hike

Join naturalists and artists for this creative nature observation hike, combining art & nature! The focus of this nature walk is to reflect your observations of nature using a personal journaling style.....in many different ways! Learn how to keep your own nature journal while strolling along trails in DeSoto State Park. Will hike about 1/2 mile to the West Fork of Little River and hang out for a while working on our nature journals with provided materials. For ages 8 to adult, we encourage all ages to join!

About the hike: the hike is considered moderate, because of the uneven, rocky terrain. Total 1 1/2 mile loop.

What to bring: Backpack with plenty of water and snacks. Closed-toed shoes. A favorite journal if you have one, and we will supply watercolor paper, watercolor pencils, clipboards, etc. Bring something to sit on if you prefer.

Date: September 26, 2024

Time: 11:00-2:00 (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park, Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at the Benefield Nature Center next to the Country Store on County Road 89

Fee: \$5.00-includes all supplies RSVP is required, so we know how many to expect.

RSVP here: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-Nature-Journal-Journey>

Due to the nature of this hike only thunderstorms will cancel this event. Please dress accordingly.

Plant Discovery Hike-Fall Blooms

Join DeSoto State Park Staff for a meandering journey within the forest, taking in every opportunity to learn more about the natural world. On this hike we will identify many native plants of the southern Appalachians and will be teaching you how to recognize the species found in the park. Scout out rare, beautiful plants and wondrous rock formations among the natural clearings dotting Lookout Mountain's porous cap. Bring a notebook/camera if you wish and discover what can be seen along the trails. About the hike: Approx. 1 1/2 miles round trip, utilizing aqua trail & DeSoto Scout Trail. moderate due to slightly rocky terrain.

Date: 9/27/2024

Time: 4:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at Boardwalk Trailhead on County Road 89.

Fee: Free & open to everyone, no-preregistration required. Weather-dependent, please call the Lodge at 256.845.5380 beforehand to check on status of hike. Contact Brittney.Hughes@dnr.alabama.gov for any details. www.alapark.com/desoto-state-park/hiking

#Hike24in24AL

National Public Lands Day: DeSoto Scout Trail

Join DeSoto State Park Staff on a beautiful outdoor adventure hike on the Desoto Scout Trail (DST). This hike is a challenging & steep 6.5 mile hike. The trail follows the West Fork of Little River and traverses a varied terrain of ridges, valleys, fern glades, rock formations, waterfalls, beside deep pools, riffles, through rhododendron tunnels, creek crossings, swimming holes, and sandy stretches. About the hike:

Approx 6.5 miles round trip, moderate to strenuous along rocky mountainous terrain. We will meet & start at DeSoto State Park Lodge, hike downstream to the backcountry trailhead off Road 5 in the Little River WMA (car caravan back to lodge)

Date: 9/28/2024

Time: 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at Lodge

Fee: Free & open to everyone, no-preregistration required. Weather-dependent, please call the Lodge at 256.845.5380 beforehand to check on status of hike. Contact Brittney.Hughes@dnr.alabama.gov for any details. www.alapark.com/desoto-state-park/hiking

OCTOBER

Campfire Talk: Cherokee Trail of Tears

Campfire Talks are a series of educational & entertaining programs located outside in DeSoto State Park. Campfire programs are held many Friday & Saturday evening (June –October) in our large campfire ring inside the improved campground. Talks are for all ages, & open to everyone!

In 1838, the Cherokee Nation, comprising over 16,000 men, women, and children, was forcibly removed from their ancestral lands in the Southeastern United States and relocated to the Indian Territory, now known as Oklahoma. This harrowing journey, which also affected other tribes such as the Creek and Choctaw, resulted in the deaths of approximately 4,000 Cherokees. The Cherokee refer to this event as Nunna daul Isunyi—“the Trail Where They Cried.” Retired JSU professor Dr. Kelly Gregg will recount the experiences of Native American people before, during, and after this tragic period in our nation's history.

Date: Friday, October 4, 2024

Time: 7:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground (In case of inclement weather will be located in the CCC Pavilion in picnic area) Campground gates will open 30 minutes before program.

Fee: Free and open to everyone, no pre-registration required; For any details about the talk, email Brittney.Hughes@dnr.alabama.gov.

#Hike24in24AL

Civilian Conservation Corps History Hike: The CCC Quarry

Join DeSoto State Park Staff on a moderate hike to the CCC Quarry from the 1930s. Learn how the Civilian Conservation Corps constructed the original structures that you can still see in the park today. About the hike: Moderate hike along mountainous terrain, some rocky terrain. Approximately 2 miles round trip.

Date: 10/5/2024

Time: 1:00-3:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at DeSoto's Country Store on County Road 89. Fee: Free & open to everyone, no-preregistration required. Weather-dependent, please call the Lodge at 256.845.5380 beforehand to check on status of hike. Contact Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for any details. www.alapark.com/desoto-state-park/hiking

Serious Skills Series: Dutch Oven Campfire Cooking Demo

Hosted by DeSoto State Park. The Serious Skills series is a variety of classes and workshops that provide opportunities to discover a hidden talent or learn a new skill for personal enrichment. Classes are open to local residents, overnight guests and park visitors.

Dutch ovens have been in use for hundreds of years; especially when our country was expanding and families were on the move. Unable to bring their large cook stoves with them, women learned how to cook entire meals from stews & soups to bread & desserts, in their Dutch ovens. Learn the basics about Dutch ovens, how to clean & care for your cookware, AND cook (& eat!) dinner & dessert at the same time! Starts around 4:00 p.m, located at the DeSoto State Park Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground. This is a demonstration so you can swing by anytime, & the best time is when food is just coming off the fire!

Seating is limited, so bring your own comfortable camp chair if you wish. Drop in whenever you like & check out the food!

Date: Saturday, October 5, 2024

Time: 4:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. (CST) Stop by anytime!

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground next to site 93 (gate will open to the public)

Fee: Free & open to everyone, no pre-registration required. For any details about the demo, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov

Campfire Talk: History of Moonshine

Join us for a fun campfire talk in the Great Outdoors!

Campfire Talks are a series of educational & entertaining programs located outside in DeSoto State Park. Campfire programs are held many Friday & Saturday evening (June –October) in our large campfire ring inside the improved campground. Talks are for all ages, & open to everyone!

Moonshining began very early in American history & for early moonshiners, making and selling alcohol wasn't just for fun or a few extra bucks — it was a means of survival. Learn about the history of moonshining in the Appalachian chain. Bring the family along for fresh popcorn! (Sorry, no samples of the moonshine) Seating is limited, so bring your own comfortable camp chair if you wish.

Date: Saturday, October 5, 2024

Time: 7:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground (In case of inclement weather will be located in the CCC Pavilion in picnic area) Campground gates will open 30 minutes before program.

Fee: Free and open to everyone, no pre-registration required; For any details about the talk, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

Campfire Talk: Hernando DeSoto in Northeast Alabama

Join us for a fun campfire talk in the Great Outdoors!

Hernando de Soto, a Spanish explorer and conquistador is most famous for his exploration of North America. He & over 600 men landed in North America 483 years ago on May 25, 1538. They first arrived near what is now Tampa Bay, Florida & spent the next four years traveling over 4,000 miles all over the American Southeast. They went to a total of ten states that exist today, & De Soto and his men were the first Europeans to reach and cross the Mississippi River.

Jacksonville State University's Dr. Harry Holstein will take you through the amazing adventures of Hernando DeSoto, as he searches for the ancient town of "Coosa."

Seating is limited, so bring your own comfortable camp chair if you wish.

Date: October 11, 2024

Time: 7:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground (In case of inclement weather will be located in the CCC Pavilion in picnic area) Campground gates will open 30 minutes before program.

Fee: Free and open to everyone, no pre-registration required; For any details about the talk, email Brittney.Hughes@dnr.alabama.gov.

Canyon Half Marathon

Possibly one of the most scenic half marathons in the country, the certified course loops 13.1 miles on paved roads, starting and ending at JSU's Little River Canyon Center.

Starting at 8:00 am, the first 5 miles of the run will follow the Little River Canyon National Preserve's scenic and sometimes challenging rim of the canyon, as the remainder winds through gently rolling farm country including Randy Owen Drive and his famous Tennessee River Music Hereford and Angus cattle ranch.

Date: October 12, 2024

Time: 8:00 a.m. (CST)

Where: JSU's Little River Canyon Center (within 10 miles of DeSoto State Park)

Info: https://www.active.com/fort-payne-al/running/distance-running-races/11th-annual-canyon-half-marathon-2024?fbclid=IwARogdC8MoVJgCI_TvjmF_RIVEYFNCQ7P6mKeHS5x8mNz9oM-HCedjw_Mnno_aem_ARdrqhlSWT33iDPG2RIFG-E_zBEWV8vGRbuCzsFoxoMEYnx187eDmW5a7xJ9iNy6YGsGs_WhV1QsClBadkFc7bxd

#Hike24in24AL

Trail Trekker Hike: Gilliam Loop

About the hike: We will be hiking from the Lodge to Gilliam trailhead along the Green trail, then on the Gilliam Loop Trail/Chalet Trail back to the Lodge. Mileage is approximately 4.8 miles round trip, moderate along rocky terrain. No major inclines.

Date: 10/12/2024

Time: 1:00-5:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at Gilliam Loop Trailhead (past the Lodge on cabin road)

Fee: Free & open to everyone, no-preregistration required. Weather-dependent, please call the Lodge at 256.845.5380 beforehand to check on status of hike. Contact Brittney.Hughes@dnr.alabama.gov for any details. www.alapark.com/desoto-state-park/hiking

Canyon Kids – Young Explorers Nocturnal Predators - Hoo's Who

JSU Field School

Join us for hands on adventure learning. The fall semester of Young Explorers will meet the 3rd Thursday of August, September, October and November of 2024! Children ages 7 to 12 years old will want to attend ALL of these hands-on adventures! To creatively learn about animals, plants, bugs, and more with JSU Field Schools.

Info on Full semester:

Thursday, August 15, 2024 – Creek Stomp

Thursday, September 19, 2024 – Tree ID

Thursday, October 17, 2024 – Nocturnal Predators - Hoo's Who

Date: Thursday, October 17, 2024

Time: 10:30 am—12:00 pm (CST)

Where: JSU's Little River Canyon Center in Fort Payne (within 10 miles of DeSoto State Park).

Fee: \$8 per class or \$25 when registering for entire spring semester. Pre-Registration required. For more details, email rmtaylor@jsu.edu or call 256-845-3548 More info:

https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=286&SINGLESTOR E=true

Campfire Talk: Backyard Habitat for Wildlife

Join us for a fun campfire talk in the Great Outdoors! Campfire Talks are a series of educational & entertaining programs located outside in DeSoto State Park. Campfire programs are held many Friday & Saturday evening (June –October) in our large campfire ring inside the improved campground. Talks are for all ages, & open to everyone!

Join Mercedes Maddox, Nongame Wildlife Biologist from the AL Division of Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries, to learn how to create a wildlife-friendly backyard. Whether you have a plethora of acres or a small fenced-in yard, there are many things you can do to add natural value to your landscape. Mercedes will focus on the three necessities, food, water, and shelter, and explore both artificial and natural ways you can incorporate these into your backyard. With a few key habitat traits, your backyard can turn into your own wildlife refuge.

Date: Friday, October 18, 2024

Time: 7:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground (In case of inclement weather will be located in the CCC Pavilion in picnic area) Campground gates will open 30 minutes before program.

Fee: Free and open to everyone, no pre-registration required; For any details about the talk, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

Third Saturday Sunset Cruise-in

Fort Payne, Alabama

The Third Saturday Sunset Cruise-In is a great car show, featuring over 200+ classic vehicles on display in Fort Payne's historic downtown district. This is a monthly event starting in April and ending in October (skipping September for Boom Days Festival). Music across the street from DeKalb Theatre and food vendors.

Date: Saturday, October 19, 2024

Time: 5:00-9:00 pm

Where: Downtown Fort Payne, Alabama (within 10 miles of DeSoto State Park)

Free & open to everyone. Info: www.facebook.com/3rdSaturdayFortPayneAl

Campfire Talk: Golden Eagles

Join us for a fun campfire talk in the Great Outdoors! Campfire Talks are a series of educational & entertaining programs located outside in DeSoto State Park. Campfire programs are held many Friday & Saturday evening (June –October) in our large campfire ring inside the improved campground. Talks are for all ages, & open to everyone!

Golden eagles are among North America's largest birds of prey, some with wingspans broader than 7 feet (2.1 meters). They're mostly brown, but are named for the golden feathers at the back of the head and neck.

Golden eagles are uncommon visitors to Alabama in late summer and winter, usually starting to arrive in mid- to late November and staying through March. They are most commonly found in the western half of the United States, but can be seen in eastern locations, especially during migration or the winter. Join Mercedes Maddox, Nongame Wildlife Biologist from the AL Division of Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries to discover more about Alabama's golden eagle research.

Date: Saturday, October 19, 2024

Time: 7:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground (In case of inclement weather will be located in the CCC Pavilion in picnic area) Campground gates will open 30 minutes before program.

Fee: Free and open to everyone, no pre-registration required; For any details about the talk, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

Spookapalooza Pumpkin Carving Contest 2024

DeSoto State Park is glad to host the 14th Annual Spookapalooza Pumpkin Carving Contest! Entries will be judged on overall appearance, creativeness, neatness, and originality. Entries can have any theme or design, i.e., Halloween, nature, fall season, etc. All ages may enter contest.

Date: Entries must be turned in no later than 12:00 noon on Saturday, October 26th 2024 to be judged. Turn in at DeSoto's Country Store on County Road 89-table will be set up on porch. Winners will be announced on Sunday, October 27th via DeSoto's Facebook/Instagram(#desotostatepark)

Where: DeSoto State Park in Fort Payne, Alabama.

Entries may be picked up at the DSP Country Store on Sunday, October 27th. Free and Open to all ages. Email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for any details.

Spookapalooza Spooktacular Campsite Contest 2024

Campers in DeSoto State Park have been decorating their campsites with Halloween decorations for years.....now there is a campsite decorating contest! Decorate your site with the most original and creative Halloween décor you can find ... you might win a prize! The best decorated sites will win great prizes like free camping and more-there will be a 1st, 2nd, & 3rd place winner, as well as Most Creative to boost that competitive spark!

Winners will be announced on Sunday, October 27th via DeSoto's

Facebook/Instagram(#desotostatepark) Winners will be contacted via email or phone

Regulations: We ask that decor remains on the individual sites and does not bleed over into others sites, roadways, trails, etc. Décor must be completely removed from site at camper checkout-PLEASE no glitter/confetti, paint, toilet paper or other materials that cause damage to the park. Please help us observe Leave No Trace in the park where we can, especially with picking up litter.

Date: Halloween Weekend 2024

Where: DeSoto State Park in Fort Payne, Alabama. Improved Campground Email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for any details.

BATS ALIVE!

Vicky Beckham Smith of A-Z ANIMALS presents a fascinating program about those night creatures people either love or hate....Bats!

Bats are the only mammals capable of true flight. With extremely elongated fingers and a wing membrane stretched between, the bat's wing anatomically resembles the human hand. Almost 1,000 bat species can be found worldwide. In fact, bats make up a quarter of all mammal species on earth! A little known fact is that the bat plays an important role in many ecosystems. They help to keep the populations of insects and bugs from getting too high & also help with pollination, something that the bees and birds are usually given all of the credit for. Bring along the family to see Vicki's live collection of bats!

Be sure to bring your own comfortable camp chair or blanket, as seating is limited. crafts/activities will follow @11:00

Date: Saturday, October 26, 2024

Time: 10:00 a.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park in Fort Payne, Alabama. CCC Pavilion in Picnic Area, across the road from the Country Store

Fee: Free & open to everyone. For info call 256.997.5025 or email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov

NOVEMBER

Outdoor Observations Hike

Have you ever seen a plant, mushroom, or critter and wondered what it was? Even during the Winter there are some cool things to see, so join DeSoto State Park staff to discover what can be observed & recorded using iNaturalist, a free app that can be used to record observations of all sorts of things — plants, animals, and even fungi. Learn how to use the simple app to help contribute to park species lists and about species seen in the park. About the hike: Moderate hike along mountainous terrain, some rocky terrain. Approximately 2 miles round trip.

Date: 11/2/2024

Time: 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at DeSoto's Country Store on County Road 89. Fee: Free & open to everyone, no-preregistration required. Weather-dependent, please call the Lodge at 256.845.5380 beforehand to check on status of walk. Contact Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for any details. www.alapark.com/desoto-state-park/hiking

CanyonFest

JSU's Little River Canyon Center

Canyon Fest is an annual celebration of art and nature featuring local art, crafts, live animal shows, music, food and fun for the entire family. Pets welcome on leashes.

Date: Saturday, November 2, 2024

Time: 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Where: JSU's Little River Canyon Center on AL Hwy 35 (within 10 miles of DeSoto State Park)

Fee: Free and open to everyone. INFO: www.facebook.com/littlivercanyoncenter

9th Annual Creative Spirit Market

Hosted by DeSoto State Park & Little River Arts Council

Adding a new twist to a typical art fair, this event is designed as an open air showcase, with artist demonstrations, locally & regionally created fine & folk art, premium hand-crafted goods, & live acoustic music. Shoppers can browse and watch artists in their creative process, listen to music, plus purchase goods from fine and folk artists such as painters, potters, quilters, weavers & basket makers, fabric spinners, culinary artists and craftsmen. Some unique and one-of-a-kind gifts will be available for purchase. Stop by and get some early gift-shopping in!

Dates: November 9 & 10, 2024 (Second weekend of November) Times: 10:00 am-3:00 pm each day

The market is held near DeSoto State Park's picnic area across from the Country Store on County Road 89. If the weather is chilly, market-goers can enjoy a blazing fire in the stone fireplace in the CCC pavilion.

Bring your own camp chair to hang out a while and listen to the music. Dogs on a leash are allowed in the park.

There is limited parking in the picnic area, the tennis court area, and in front of the Country Store. If parking anywhere in the picnic area, a \$2 per vehicle fee applies. There is no fee to attend the open-air market. Rain or shine event. Call 256.997.5025 or email for more details. Artist Entry Info: www.littliverartscouncil.org/artist-entry-form.html

Facebook page #creativespiritmarket #desotostatepark #littliverartscouncil
www.littliverartscouncil.org

Canyon Kids – Young Explorers Native Americans - Traditions & Innovations

JSU Field School

Join us for hands on adventure learning. The fall semester of Young Explorers will meet the 3rd Thursday of August, September, October and November of 2024! Children ages 7 to 12 years old will want to attend ALL of these hands-on adventures! To creatively learn about animals, plants, bugs, and more with JSU Field Schools.

Info on Full semester:

Thursday, August 15, 2024 – Creek Stomp

Thursday, September 19, 2024 – Tree ID

Thursday, October 17, 2024 – Nocturnal Predators - Hoo's Who

Thursday, November 21, 2024 – Native Americans - Traditions & Innovations

Date: November 21, 2024

Time: 10:30 am—12:00 pm (CST)

Where: JSU's Little River Canyon Center in Fort Payne (within 10 miles of DeSoto State Park).

Fee: \$8 per class or \$25 when registering for entire spring semester. Pre-Registration required. For more details, email rmtaylor@jsu.edu or call 256-845-3548 More info:

https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=286&SINGLESTOR E=true

#Hike24in24AL

Discovery Hike: Unveiling the Geological Wonders

During the Fall months, particularly along Laurel Creek, it's common for the waterfalls at DeSoto State Park to experience reduced flow or even dry up. Surprisingly, this dry spell enhances the hiking experience, providing a unique opportunity to observe the rocks beneath and the intricate markings etched on them over countless eons. Embark on this expedition with DSP staff to uncover the mysteries concealed within the rocks. About the hike: the trail will be moderate, rugged terrain over approx. 3 miles. We will utilize the orange and blue trails for this hike.

Date: 11/23/2024

Time: 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at DeSoto's Country Store on County Road 89. Fee: Free & open to everyone, no-preregistration required. Weather-dependent, please call the Lodge at 256.845.5380 beforehand to check on status of walk. Contact Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for any details. www.alapark.com/desoto-state-park/hiking

DECEMBER

#Hike24in24AL

Civilian Conservation Corps History Hike: Morris Branch Bridge

This incomplete bridge stands as a powerful testament to the commitment of the CCC in advancing the development of DeSoto State Park. Between the mid-1930s and early 1940s, the CCC undertook various stone projects in the park, including the construction of this bridge over Morris Branch. Their ambitious goal was to establish a direct highway connecting DeSoto State Park to May's Gulf, which is today recognized as Little River Canyon. Regrettably, their honorable mission was left unfinished when the CCC disbanded in 1942. Take the opportunity to accompany DeSoto State Park staff as they delve into the history and significance of this remarkable endeavor. About the hike: the trail will be moderate, no major inclines, approx. 2 ½ miles total. Meet at DeSoto State Park Lodge and car caravan to the trailhead in the Little River WMA.

Date: 12/7/2024

Time: 10:00-12:30 p.m (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at DeSoto's Lodge

Fee: Free & open to everyone, no-preregistration required. Weather-dependent, please call the Lodge at 256.845.5380 beforehand to check on status of walk. Contact Brittney.Hughes@dnr.alabama.gov for any details. www.alapark.com/desoto-state-park/hiking

#Hike24in24AL

Adventure Hike-DeSoto Falls Basin

Set out on an adventure hike with DeSoto State Park staff to the bottom of one of Alabama's tallest waterfalls, DeSoto Falls! Learn about Little River, an outstanding water source with its clear water & plant & animal life. Discover the history of the area around DeSoto Falls in Dekalb County, Alabama. About the hike: This hike is approximately 1.5 miles total but considered moderate to strenuous due to the mountainous terrain and elevation. Will be hiking on rocky terrain down to the West Fork of Little River and walking upstream to the view of DeSoto Falls.

Date: 12/14/2024

Time: 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at DeSoto falls Trailhead on County Road 613

Fee: Free & open to everyone, no-preregistration required. Weather-dependent, please call the Lodge at 256.845.5380 beforehand to check on status of hike. Contact Brittney.Hughes@dnr.alabama.gov for any details. www.alapark.com/desoto-state-park/hiking



**For even more fun events,
see**

www.Alapark.com/Events

**DeSoto State Park~Fort Payne,
Alabama #desotostatepark**



Contacts for event planning/programs:

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|--|
| DeSoto State Park | 256.997.5025 | Brittney M. Hughes Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov www.Alapark.com/DeSotoresort |
| JSU Field Schools | 256.845.3548 | Rebekah Taylor or Beth Sewell fieldschool@jsu.edu www.jsu.edu/epic/field_schools/ |
| Little River Canyon National Preserve | 256.845.9605 | www.nps.gov/liri/index.htm |