



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

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: Park After Dark Jeopardy

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.

Dive into the mysteries of the DeSoto State Park after dark with a trivia game! Join us for a unique trivia experience where you can test your knowledge of the park's natural history, starry skies, and nighttime wildlife.

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

Date: Friday, August 30, 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.

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: Snake Tales Jeopardy

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.

Join DeSoto State Park Staff and a few special scaly guests as we unravel the mysteries of Alabama's snake species through a fun and interactive Jeopardy-style game.

Did you know Alabama is home to over fifty snake species, ranging from the northern mountains to the sandy shores? While these creatures play a crucial role in our ecosystem, they are often misunderstood and feared. We will try to turn those fears into fascination! Discover how to identify different snake species and understand their importance in maintaining ecological balance.

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

Date: Saturday, August 31, 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.

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=IwZXhobgNhZWwCMTAAAR1vok5tgu1dXxNtIPYjqzyoyDUPheqixXvaBmDMwjEknPPTZRtM6xqH5ew_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

Serious Skills Series: Wildflower Watercolors for Beginners -Fall Blooms

Hosted by DeSoto State Park & Little River Arts Council . *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.*

Discover the beauty of native wildflowers through the art of watercolor in this beginner-friendly class. Designed for those who think they can't draw a stick figure, this course focuses on easy-to-learn techniques to capture the delicate charm of local flora. Using simple brush strokes and basic color mixing, you'll create vibrant, nature-inspired artworks while exploring the unique features of native wildflowers. No prior art experience is required—just bring your enthusiasm and a willingness to experiment. By the end of the class, you'll have a collection of small watercolor paintings and newfound confidence in your artistic abilities.

About the Instructor: Courtney Kinneman is a self-taught artist originally from Herscher, Illinois, who has called Alabama home since 2000. A lifelong lover and creator of art, Kinneman put her artistic pursuits on hold for 20 years while raising four incredible boys. Now that three of them have grown and started their own lives, she is ready to dive back into her art career with renewed energy. Art is deeply embedded in Kinneman's soul, and she believes it is where her heart truly lies. Kinneman's ultimate goal is to share her work with the world and inspire others to discover and nurture their own hidden talents. She recognizes the immense beauty in the world and believes that art is essential for people's well-being. Art has been a source of solace and strength for her during the darkest times of her life, and she is passionate about helping others experience the same transformative power.

Date: Saturday, September 7, 2024

Time: 2:00 pm-5:00 pm (CST)

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

Fee: \$55.00 -includes all supplies. Ages 12 to adult. Class space is limited to 10, pre-registration is required for attendance in this class. Pre-registration:

<https://www.littleriverartscouncil.org/wildflowerwatercolors1.html>

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.

Star Party

Join JAX State astronomy professor Dr. Laura Weinkauff, the JSU Field School, and the Little River National Preserve in this exploration of the night sky. If you have ever looked up at the stars and wanted to learn more about the constellations, planets, and the moon this is your chance. Join us on the back lawn of the Canyon Center for this free, family friendly night! Bring your binoculars, telescopes, and lawn chairs if you have them.

Date: Saturday, September 7, 2024

Time: 8:00 pm (CST)

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

Fee: Free and open to everyone! www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools

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@dnr.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@dnr.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 Canebroke,” “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, 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&SINGLESTORE=true

Plant Discovery Walk-Fall Blooms

In the H. Stanley Sims Native Plant Area

Join DeSoto State Park Staff for a meandering walk in the park, taking in every opportunity to learn more about the natural world. On this walk we will identify many native blooming plants of the southern Appalachians and will be teaching you how to recognize the species found in the park. Bring a notebook/camera if you wish and discover what can be seen along the way. All ages welcome

About the walk: We will be walking from the Lodge to the H. Stanley Sims Native Plant Area, which is a short 1,000-yard loop. Easy terrain, approx. 1 mile total

Date: Friday, September 20, 2024

Time: 4:00-6:00 p.m.

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet outside 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@dcnr.alabama.gov for any details.

Serious Skills Series: Nature's Touch:

Salve-Making with Native Plants

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.

Ethnobotany explores the relationship between people and plants, tracing how different cultures have historically used native plants for healing and daily life. Salve-making, a tradition rooted in this rich history, involves crafting soothing remedies from these plants, blending ancient knowledge with modern practices to create natural solutions for wellness.

Learn some the very basics of making healing salves with native plants in our hands-on workshop. Learn to create some soothing salves from local herbs, discover their healing properties, and make a few salves to take home. No experience required—just bring your curiosity and leave with new skills and your own homemade remedies!

Date: Saturday, September 21, 2024

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

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Meeting place disclosed at time of registration.

Fee: \$45 per person. Pre-registration is required, as spaces are limited. Register here:
<https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-SSS-Salves>

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)

For more info, see www.boomdays.com

www.facebook.com/boomdays

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@dnr.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

Campfire Talk-Fire in Our Forests: How Fire Shapes Alabama's Flora and Fauna

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!

Alabama's forests are intimately tied to fire. Fire's interactions with our plants and animals have shaped the states' ecosystems for thousands of years. Restoring a fire regime in areas where fire has been removed from the landscape can be very difficult. Join guest Naturalist Jimmy Stiles to learn about the importance of prescribed fire to maintaining our astounding biodiversity.

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

Date: Friday, September 27, 2024

Time: 7:00 pm-8:00 pm (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.

Herp Herp, Hooray! Reptiles & Amphibians of Alabama

From the elusive Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake to the colorful Green Salamander, Alabama boasts an incredible diversity of herps that play essential roles in our ecosystem. Learn about these remarkable creatures, their habitats, and their importance in maintaining ecological balance. Whether you're a seasoned naturalist or new to herpetology, this exploration offers a captivating glimpse into Alabama's unique wildlife.

Whether you love them or hate them, get better acquainted with what herp species Alabama has and how they are a big part of our ecosystem. This live animal presentation with Herpetologist Jimmy Stiles will focus on Alabama's amazing reptile and amphibian diversity. Intended for people of all ages to learn about our native herps!

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

Date: Saturday, September 28, 2024

Time: 10:00-11:30 a.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. CCC Pavilion in DeSoto's Picnic Area (across the street from Country Store)

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

#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

Serious Skills Series: Wildflower Watercolors for Beginners -Fall Blooms

Hosted by DeSoto State Park & Little River Arts Council. 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.

Discover the beauty of native wildflowers through the art of watercolor in this beginner-friendly class. Designed for those who think they can't draw a stick figure, this course focuses on easy-to-learn techniques to capture the delicate charm of local flora. Using simple brush strokes and basic color mixing, you'll create vibrant, nature-inspired artworks while exploring the unique features of native wildflowers. No prior art experience is required—just bring your enthusiasm and a willingness to experiment. By the end of the class, you'll have a collection of small watercolor paintings and newfound confidence in your artistic abilities.

Date: Saturday, September 28, 2024

Time: 2:00 pm-5:00 pm (CST)

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

Fee: \$55.00 -includes all supplies. Ages 12 to adult. Class space is limited to 10, pre-registration is required for attendance in this class. Pre-registration:

<https://www.littleriverartscouncil.org/wildflowerwatercolors2.html>

Campfire Talk: Mammals of 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!

Alabama is home to 62 native mammals: 22 species of rodents, 16 species of bats, 11 species of carnivores, six species of insectivores, four species of rabbits, one ungulate, one opossum and one armadillo.

Join Amber Baker, Wildlife Biologist from the Division of Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries for an entertaining program featuring the warm-blooded critters that can be seen through-out the state. See a collection of furs & skulls & discover characteristics of many different species.

Seating is limited, so bring your own comfortable camp chair if you wish-campground gate will open 30 min. before program.

Date: Saturday, September 28, 2024

Time: 7:00 pm-8:00 pm (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)

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

OCTOBER

Junior Ranger Adventure Series: Secrets of the Forest Floor

This once-a-month series 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 Naturalist Brittney Hughes 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. We will explore along the trails of DeSoto State Park, & discover who lives on the forest floor.

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

Date: October 4, 2024

Time: 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. Email us OR pre-register here: <https://alapark.itinio.com/register/DSP-JR-Adventure>

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@dcnr.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

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

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.

Serious Skills Series: Finger Weaving Workshop

Hosted by DeSoto State Park & Little River Arts Council

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.

Did you know that the same methods used to make that friendship bracelet for your BFF in 4th grade are the same methods that were used by people in the past to make baskets, mats, and sashes and also the same methods used by finger weaver Keena Graham to make bags to carry more yarn and wine? Yep! So join instructor Keena Graham to learn the very basics of finger weaving that will have you making your own bracelets, belts, and bags in no time.

Learn the basics of this old craft with a long history. Keena will demonstrate and teach the 3 styles of finger weaving: the "four" method, cardboard loom weaving, and the "three columns" method. Participants will work on a project using one of the methods. All materials will be furnished.

Date: Saturday, October 19, 2024

Time: 1:00-4:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park in Fort Payne, Alabama. Benefield Interpretive Center next to Country Store on County Road 89

Fee: \$55-includes all supplies. Class space is limited to 12, pre-registration is required for attendance in this class. Pre-registration: <https://www.littleriverartscouncil.org/fingerweaving.html>

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@dnr.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@dnr.alabama.gov

NOVEMBER

Serious Skills Series: Leaf Pounding Class

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.

Leaf pounding is a simple, stunning technique, historically used by Native American women to decorate fabric. Pounding with a rock or a hammer transfers the natural dyes of a leaf to fabric while retaining the design of the original leaf. In this class, join DeSoto State Park Naturalist Brittney Hughes on a quick walk to ID leaves that can be used for leaf pounding, then get a chance to unleash your creativity to make a beautiful and unique piece of fabric to take home. Participants can also bring their own fabric like t-shirts, handkerchiefs, pillowcases, etc. as long as it is 100% cotton. This class is for ages 8 to adult.

Date: Friday, November 1, 2024

Time: 3:00-5:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park in Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at Lodge, in the pollinator garden.

Fee: \$10.00 -includes all supplies. Class space is limited, pre-registration is required for attendance in this class. Pre-registration: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-SSS-LeafPounding>

This class will be held outside under a covered pavilion, be prepared for whatever weather conditions are present. For any questions, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov

#Hike24in24AL

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/littlerivercanyoncenter

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.littleriverartscouncil.org/artist-entry-form.html

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

Serious Skills Series: Nature's Elements in Metal Art Workshop

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.

Unleash your creativity as you design and create your own unique metal art piece inspired by the beauty of nature. Join artist Kevin Watson from Tintations for a fun workshop that utilizes reclaimed tin and barn wood. Make your own piece of art to hang at home or give to someone special. This class is for ages 14 to adult.

What to Bring: Enthusiasm (all materials and tools needed to complete this project will be provided). Wear comfortable, casual clothing and bring drinks/snacks if you wish. This workshop emphasizes the use of hand tools, students should have moderate hand strength.

Date: November 16, 2024

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

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama-Location disclosed at time of registration

Fee: \$40.00 includes all supplies. Class space is limited, pre-registration is required for attendance in this class.

Pre-register here: <https://www.littleriverartscouncil.org/metalarts1.html>

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

Trail Trekker Hike: DeSoto Scout Trail

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: Hike is approximately 3.5 miles round trip, moderate to strenuous along rocky mountainous terrain with some steep slopes. We will go from Gilliam Loop Trailhead down Exit 1 and upstream to Indian Falls and back. Closed toed shoes are preferred.

Date: Friday, November 22, 2024

Time: 12:00-4:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at DeSoto's 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@dcnr.alabama.gov for any details. www.alapark.com/desoto-state-park/hiking

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

Serious Skills Series: Flintknapping Workshop

Hosted by DeSoto State Park & Little River Arts Council

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.

Delve into the ancient art of stone tool-making! Long ago, the earliest humans transformed simple pieces of stone into sophisticated tools that revolutionized their lives. Many people are familiar with stone artifacts such as arrowheads created by traditional cultures in North America and around the world. Uncover the secrets behind these ancient techniques and create your own stone projectile points, similar to those used by traditional cultures across North America and around the world.

About the class: Each student will be given a large piece of stone and, using a smooth cobble as a hammerstone, shown how to remove a "flake", or small piece. Next, they will be given a pressure flaker tool and instructed how to thin and shape their flakes into a finished arrowhead. Each student will have the opportunity to create several projectile points, and they will take home their finished pieces and the pressure flaker, as well as several additional flakes to complete on their own.

No prior knowledge of or experience with flintknapping is necessary. All materials and tools will be provided. Wear comfortable clothing suitable for hands-on activities.

Date: November 23, 2024

Time: 9:00-4:00 (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park in Fort Payne, Alabama. Country Store & Information Center on Country Road 89.

Fee: \$85-includes all supplies. Class space is limited to 4, pre-registration is required for attendance in this class. Pre-registration: <https://www.littleriverartsCouncil.org/flintknapping.html>

#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

Junior Ranger Adventure Series: Snake Tales

This once-a-month series 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.

Did you know that from the northern mountains to the sandy shores, Alabama is home to over fifty species of snakes? Despite being vital to our state's ecosystem, these scaly creatures are often misunderstood and feared. Join DeSoto State Park Naturalist Brittney Hughes along with a few scaly creature teachers to turn fears into fascination.

Learn about the different snake species of NE Alabama, both venomous and nonvenomous. Plus, gain valuable knowledge on how to tell the difference between the two.

Date: Friday, December 6, 2024

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

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Benefield Nature Center next to the Country Store on Co. Rd. 89

Fee: Free, but RSVP is requested, so we know how many to expect. Pre-register here: <https://alapark.itinio.com/register/DSP-JR-Adventure>

#AlabamaWildlife #SnakeEducation #DeSotoStatePark

#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@dcnr.alabama.gov for any details. www.alapark.com/desoto-state-park/hiking

Serious Skills Series: Creative Spirit Nature Art Workshop

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.

Explore your wild creativity and discover ancient art with nature as your muse! For thousands of years, humans have been creating art through nature. Our ancestors' sacred relationship with the natural world prompted them to express themselves thru the materials around them, in all seasons.

In this workshop, participants will create works of art using a variety of natural materials, using materials like clay, leaves, acorns, pinecones, etc. Nature Journaling supplies will also be available to create your own unique memory of your day in DeSoto State Park. (Bring your favorite journal if you wish) Art forms such as watercolors, leaf pounding, leaf rubbings, clay imprints, etc.

Date: December 7, 2024

Time: 2:00 pm-5:00 pm (CST)

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

Fee: \$55.00 -includes all supplies. Ages 12 to adult. Class space is limited to 10, pre-registration is required for attendance in this class. Pre-registration: <https://www.littleriverartscouncil.org/natureart.html>

#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

Serious Skills Series: Nature's Elements in Metal Art Workshop

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.

Unleash your creativity as you design and create your own unique metal art piece inspired by the beauty of nature. Join artist Kevin Watson from Tintations for a fun workshop that utilizes reclaimed tin and barn wood. Make your own piece of art to hang at home or give to someone special. This class is for ages 14 to adult.

What to Bring: Enthusiasm (all materials and tools needed to complete this project will be provided). Wear comfortable, casual clothing and bring drinks/snacks if you wish. This workshop emphasizes the use of hand tools, students should have moderate hand strength.

Date: December 14, 2024

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

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama-Location disclosed at time of registration

Fee: \$40.00 includes all supplies. Class space is limited, pre-registration is required for attendance in this class.

Pre-register here: <https://www.littleriverartscouncil.org/metalarts2.html>

Primitive Skills-Natural Cordage & Pitch Glue

Hosted by DeSoto State Park & Little River Arts Council .

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.

Create glue and cordage using only simple, natural elements! Scientists have written that cordage (string) and glue were not merely for making the lives of traditional cultures easier; they literally held their world together. In this workshop students will learn two important skills: how to process plant fibers to create cordage, and how to combine natural elements to create glue.

About the class: Part I is cordage, in which students will first learn how to refine the leaves and stalks from various plant species in order to expose the fibers. Next, students will be taught the reverse-twist method of creating actual cordage. Each student will take home the cordage strands they create, as well as extra material to process and twist on their own.

Part II is making pine-pitch glue, where students are provided three ingredients: charcoal, dried plant matter and pine sap. First, a minimal amount of processing will be done to break down and purify the ingredients. Then, students will melt the sap over a heat source and gradually add the other two elements. When the correct consistency is achieved, students will learn how to attach the liquified glue to the end of a small piece of wood for storage. Each student will take home several of these 'pitch sticks'. The workshop will culminate in students using their glue and cordage to haft a projectile point onto a river cane handle.

Date: December 14, 2024

Time: 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park in Fort Payne, Alabama. Country Store & Information Center on County Road 89

Fee: \$85-includes all supplies. Class space is limited, pre-registration is required for attendance in this class.

Pre-registration: <https://www.littleriverartscouncil.org/primitive-cordage.html>



**For even more fun events,
see**

www.alapark.itinio.com/register/

**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
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