



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 2025 events to be added!

JANUARY

First Day Hike

New Year's Day-2025- DeSoto State Park Waterfall Hike

Start the New Year with a first day hike at DeSoto State Park! Join DeSoto State Park and JSU Field Schools staff on a fitness hike along several trails in DeSoto State Park. Come on out and burn those calories while enjoying the Great Outdoors!

Join DeSoto State Park staff & volunteers for a fun day of hiking through-out the park to see some of DeSoto's waterfalls, big & small. See Lost Falls, Laurel Falls, Indian Falls, & more water features like Laurel Creek & the West Fork of Little River. Trail weaves thru hardwood forest with sandstone outcroppings, streams, & wetlands.

About the hike: the trail will be moderate, rocky terrain over approx. 3 miles. We will utilize the orange and blue trails for this hike.

Date: 1/1/2025

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 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) Trail may be wet. Please be sure to dress appropriately according to seasonal temperatures/weather. No age restrictions on this hike and well-behaved dogs are allowed on a leash at all times.

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: January 4, 2025

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

Serious Skills Series: Night Skies in Oil Class

Hosted by DeSoto State Park & Little River Arts Council

Unleash your creativity under the stars in this immersive oil painting class focused on capturing the beauty of night skies! Perfect for beginners and seasoned artists alike, this course will introduce you to a variety of techniques to create breathtaking nocturnal landscapes. No prior art experience is required—just bring your enthusiasm and a willingness to experiment.

Each session will include hands-on demonstrations and ample time for practice, ensuring you leave with a solid understanding of oil painting techniques that you can use in your own future projects.

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: January 4, 2025

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: \$100.00 -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/nightskies.html>

Snake Tales Jeopardy

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.

Date: January 9, 2025

Time: 10:00 am-11:00 pm (CST)

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

Fee: Free & open to everyone, no-preregistration required.

#AlabamaWildlife #SnakeEducation #DeSotoStatePark

OUTDOOR OBSERVATIONS HIKE

Have you ever seen a plant, mushroom, or critter and wondered what it was? Even in the Winter 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: January 10, 2025

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

TRAIL TREKKER HIKE SERIES: NEVERLAND LOOP

Can you say "I Hiked Them All"? 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. Start marking them off towards your patch today!

About the hike: Will be hiking on the Never-neverland/Vizneyland trails, as well as the Dark Side trail for a longer hike which will be approximately 7 miles round trip, moderate. Trail weaves thru hardwood forest with sandstone outcroppings, streams, wetlands, and an old homeplace along the trail.

Date: January 11, 2025

Time: 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m (CST)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at DeSoto's Country Store on County Road 89. Will caravan to Lost Falls Trailhead.

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

BEAR TALES JEOPARDY

Did you know that in Alabama, the yearly cycle for black bears starts in February? This is the time when the female bears, known as sows, give birth to their adorable cubs snug inside their cozy dens. Black bears are native to Alabama and their population is on the rise. Historically found in the southwest area of the state, bears have also been migrating into northeast Alabama from northwest Georgia over recent years. Following in their wake are myths, tall tales, and misconceptions.

Join DeSoto State Park Staff to learn about Alabama's State Mammal, the Black Bear!

Test your knowledge, learn new facts, and discover the important role black bears play in our ecosystem with a fun & interactive Jeopardy-style game.

Date: January 11, 2025

Time: 4:00-5:00 p.m. (CST)

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

Fee: Free & open to everyone, no-preregistration required. Contact Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for any details. #AlabamaWildlife #BearEducation #DeSotoStatePark #Bearwise

TRAIL TREKKER HIKE SERIES: ALONG LITTLE RIVER

Can you say "I Hiked Them All"? 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. Start marking them off towards your patch today!

Aqua/Yellow Trail-Hike is approximately 1 1/2 miles round trip, moderate along rocky terrain.

Date: January 23, 2025

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

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at DeSoto's Country Store & Information Center 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:

History Hike

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.

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 hike along the White Trail to the Historic CCC Rock Quarry to learn about how DeSoto was built and see some cool rock formations.

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

Date: January 25, 2025

Time: 11:00 a.m.-1:00 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. <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-JR-Adventure>



HISTORY DAY

Little River Canyon National Preserve

Step back in time as we explore the history of the Hernando De Soto expedition through Little River Canyon and nearby areas, then look to the future by submitting suggestions for events/programs that you would like to see in the park.

Date: Jan 25, 2025

Time: 2:00-3:00 p.m. (CST)

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

Fee: Ages 12 and up are welcome to this program. For more info, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-9605 for more info.



SCIENCE SATURDAY: HERPETOLOGY, REPTILES &

AMPHIBIANS

JSU Field School

Join JSU Field School educator Christian Braswell as he discusses an often-misunderstood collection of animals, reptiles and amphibians! This event will exhibit live animals, including snakes, frogs, turtles, and lizards.

Date: Saturday, January 25, 2025

Time: 10:15 a.m. (CST)

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

Free and open to the public. For more info, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-9605 for more info.

<https://www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools>

SERIOUS SKILLS SERIES: STAINED GLASS MOSAIC PROJECT

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! DeSoto State Park Staff will teach design, techniques, and the skills of class cutting, gluing, and grouting with special emphasis on safety. We will be working on mosaic stepping stones that when finished will be on display in DeSoto's pollinator garden. Join in on the fun and create art to be enjoyed by others!

If you don't wish to work with the glass, still feel free to stop by and check out our progress!

Date: Saturday, January 25, 2025

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

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

Fee: Free & open to everyone. Ages 8 to adult. No pre-registration required. For any details email

Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov

FEBRUARY

PLANT DISCOVERY HIKE—WINTER FOLIAGE

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 winter 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 red trail & blue trail moderate due to slightly rocky terrain.

Date: Friday, February 7, 2025

Time: 3:30-5:00 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@dnr.alabama.gov for any details. www.alapark.com/desoto-state-park/hiking

LANDSCAPE WATERCOLOR CLASS

Hosted by DeSoto State Park & Little River Arts Council

Discover different techniques to paint skies, clouds, grass, mountains, etc. to learn skills to create your own landscape paintings. Designed for those who think they can't draw a stick figure, this course focuses on easy-to-learn techniques. Using simple brush strokes and basic color mixing, you'll create vibrant, nature-inspired artworks while exploring unique features. 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: Feb 8, 2025

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 below: <https://www.littleriverartscouncil.org/landscapewatercolor.html>



DUTCH OVEN CAMPFIRE COOKING 101

Dutch Oven Cooking Demonstrations will be happening throughout the day, presented by DeSoto State Park Naturalist Brittney Hughes.

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. The best time to swing by is when food is just coming off the fire!

Date: Saturday, February 8, 2025

Time: 10:00-2:00 p.m. central (stop by anytime)

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



CANYON KIDS—BACKYARD BIRDING

JSU Field School

In February we will learn about Backyard Birding while we Hike on the Path to Learning trail. Creatively learn about animals, plants, bugs, and more with JSU Field Schools.

Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025

Time: 10:30 am—11:15 am (CST)

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

Free event. Registration required. Limited availability.

Register Here:

https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=319&SINGLESTORE=true

For more info, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-9605 for more info.

<https://www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools>



LOVE YOUR PARK DAY

Little River Canyon National Preserve

Volunteer to help pick up trash in your park! Meet at the visitor center and together hike along the trails and pick up trash in the park. All ages are welcome, and supplies will be provided for cleanup. All you need to bring is your own water bottle and comfortable shoes to wear.

Date: Feb 15, 2025

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

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

Info: www.facebook.com/lirinps

LONGLEAF PINE JEOPARDY

Did you know the Longleaf Pine is Alabama's state tree? Historically, Longleaf Pine forests dominated the landscape, but much of this ecosystem has been lost due to land development and fire suppression. In Alabama, Longleaf Pine ecosystems are critical for biodiversity, supporting a wide range of plants, animals, and insects, some of which are rare or endangered. Join DeSoto State Park staff for a unique trivia experience where you can test your knowledge and learn new facts!

Date: February 15, 2025

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

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

Fee: Free & open to everyone, no-preregistration required. Contact Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for any details.

WINTER OUTDOOR OBSERVATIONS HIKE

Have you ever seen a plant, mushroom, or critter and wondered what it was? Even in the Winter 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: Feb 15, 2025

Time: 12:00-1:30 pm (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



CANYON EXPLORERS— BACK YARD BIRDING

JSU Field School

Hands-on adventure learning! The spring semester of Canyon Explorers will meet on the 3rd Wednesday of February, March, April, and May 2025.

Children ages 7 to 12 will love attending all of these exciting, hands-on adventures! They'll creatively explore animals, plants, bugs, and more with the JSU Field School team. Parents are welcome to stay for the class, or sign-in your children and drop them off for the class.

Date: Wednesday, February 19, 2025

Time: 10:30 am—12:00 Noon (CST)

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

Fee: \$8 per child per class or \$25 per child when registering for entire spring semester. Registration required. Limited availability.

Register Here:

https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=318&SINGLESTORE=true

For more info, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-9605 or email fieldschool@jsu.edu.

www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools



TAD OF JAZZ CONCERT

Featuring Jacksonville State University's very own Jazz Ensemble Live in Concert for this amazing Winter Jazz Dinner Show at JSU's Canyon Center!

Date: Friday, February 21, 2025

Time: Doors 5:30 pm | Dinner 6 pm | Music 7 pm.

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

More info: <https://www.jsu.edu/epic/EventCC.html?trumbaEmbed=view%3Devent%26eventid%3D179600542>

TRAIL TREKKER HIKE: WATERFALL HIKE

Join DeSoto State Park staff & volunteers for a fun day of hiking through-out the park to see some of DeSoto's waterfalls, big & small. See Lost Falls, Laurel Falls, Indian Falls, & more water features like Laurel Creek & the West Fork of Little River. 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: February 22, 2025

Time: 12:00-3:00 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

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: Thursday, February 27, 2025

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://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-JR-Adventure>

WINTER OUTDOOR OBSERVATIONS WALK

Have you ever seen a plant, mushroom, or critter and wondered what it was? Even in the Winter 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 walk: along the Talmadge Butler Boardwalk Trail, with multiple rest spots if needed. Less than half a mile walk total.

Date: Friday, February 28, 2025

Time: 12:00-1:30 pm (CST)

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

BEAR TALES JEOPARDY

Did you know that in Alabama, the yearly cycle for black bears starts in February? This is the time when the female bears, known as sows, give birth to their adorable cubs snug inside their cozy dens. Black bears are native to Alabama and their population is on the rise. Historically found in the southwest area of the state, bears have also been migrating into northeast Alabama from northwest Georgia over recent years. Following in their wake are myths, tall tales, and misconceptions.

Join DeSoto State Park Staff to learn about the Black Bear while testing your knowledge and discover the important role black bears play in our ecosystem with a fun & interactive Jeopardy-style game.

Date: February 28, 2025

Time: 4:00-5:00 p.m. (Central time)

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

Fee: Free & open to everyone, no-preregistration required. Contact Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for any details. #AlabamaWildlife #BearEducation #DeSotoStatePark #Bearwise

MARCH

PARK AFTER DARK JEOPARDY

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.

Date: Saturday, March 1, 2025

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

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

Fee: Free & open to everyone, no-preregistration required. Contact Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for any details.

SERIOUS SKILLS SERIES: QUILT THE FOREST 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.

Join fabric artist and nature enthusiast Michelle Reynolds, for a creative quilting workshop inspired by the beauty of the forest. In this hands-on class, you'll design and hand-sew small blocks onto a canvas square using colorful felts, embroidery threads, and other materials. Reflect on your favorite nature scenes as you create a unique vignette, cutting out symbols, layering colors, and stitching them together to tell your story.

Discover inspiration in nature, learn the art of storytelling through color, pattern, and texture, and explore applique techniques. This workshop offers a chance to connect with fellow participants while experimenting with techniques that resonate with you. All fabric and supplies will be provided, no previous experience required. About the artist: <http://textilesandtext.com/quilt-the-forest/>

Date: March 1, 2025

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 here: www.littleriverartscouncil.org/quilttheforest1.html



HIKE WITH A NATURALIST—SLANT ROCK

Little River Canyon National Preserve

Join JSU Field School staff on a guided 1.5 mile hike to visit a favorite spot in Little River. Hiking in the back county of the Little River National Preserve to Slant Rock. Please wear footwear suitable for hiking. Bring water, sun protection and possibly a snack. Free event. No registration required. This is a beginner to moderate level hike with varying and uneven terrain. Children and dogs on leash are welcome.

Date: Friday, March 7, 2025

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

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

Free and open to everyone! For details, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-3548. Registration appreciated, but not required. <https://www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools>

SERIOUS SKILLS SERIES:

STAINED GLASS MOSAIC PROJECT

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! DeSoto State Park Staff will teach design, techniques, and the skills of class cutting, gluing, and grouting with special emphasis on safety. We will be working on mosaic stepping stones that when finished will be on display in DeSoto's pollinator garden. Join in on the fun and create art to be enjoyed by others!

If you don't wish to work with the glass, still feel free to stop by and check out our progress!

Date: Saturday, March 8, 2025

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

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

Fee: Free & open to everyone. Ages 8 to adult. No pre-registration required. For any details email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov

PARK UPKEEP DAY-VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Join DSP staff for a day of stewardship and community as we come together to support the beauty and vitality of DeSoto State Park. Your opportunity to roll up your sleeves and make a tangible difference in the upkeep and preservation of our beloved park. Whether it's trail maintenance, habitat restoration, or beautification projects, there's something for everyone to contribute. Come connect with nature, meet fellow nature enthusiasts, and leave a lasting impact on our cherished outdoor space.

Date: Wednesday, March 12, 2025

Time: 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. (CST) (can work as long as you want, if not the whole day)

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

Weather dependent. To RSVP, see <https://forms.office.com/g/4zYrej21Um>



CANYON KIDS-ECO EXPLORERS

JSU Field School

Hands on adventure each month in 2025! Children (ages 3 years-3rd graders) will want to attend ALL of these hands-on outdoor adventures! Creatively learn about animals, plants, bugs, and more with JSU Field Schools.

Date: Wednesday, March 12, 2025

Time: 10:30 am—11:15 am (CST)

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

Free event. Registration required. Limited availability.

Register Here:

https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/store_main.jsp?STOREID=1&SINGLESTORE=true

For more info, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-9605 or email fieldschool@jsu.edu.

<https://www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools>

BEAR TALES JEOPARDY

Did you know that the Black Bear is Alabama's state mammal? Black bears are native to Alabama and their population is on the rise. Historically found in the southwest area of the state, bears have also been migrating into northeast Alabama from northwest Georgia over recent years. Following in their wake are myths, tall tales, and misconceptions.

Join DeSoto State Park Staff to learn about the Black Bear while testing your knowledge and discover the important role black bears play in our ecosystem with a fun & interactive Jeopardy-style game.

Date: Thursday, March 13, 2025

Time: 4:00-5:00 p.m. (Central time)

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

Fee: Free & open to everyone, no-preregistration required. Contact Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for any details. #AlabamaWildlife #BearEducation #DeSotoStatePark #Bearwise

CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS HISTORY HIKE:

THE CCC QUARRY

The Civilian Conservation Corps was one of the better known and most successful of the New Deal programs following the Great Depression; one that did a lot of good for forests, recreation, and the men for whom it provided short-term jobs. Between 1933 and 1942, an average of 30 camps operated across Alabama. CCC boys helped fight fires, reforest lands, protect the state's then newly acquired national forests and build roads and recreational facilities in Alabama State Parks.

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: Saturday, March 15, 2025

Time: 10:00 a.m.-12:00 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

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: Saturday, March 15, 2025

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

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at DeSoto's Lodge and we will caravan to trailhead.

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.



HIKE WITH A NATURALIST-YCC TRAIL

Little River Canyon National Preserve

Join JSU Field School staff on a guided 4-mile loop on the YCC Trail. This trail follows along select roads in the Wildlife Management Area of the Little River National Preserve. Please wear footwear suitable for hiking. Bring water, sun protection and possibly a snack. This is a moderate to difficult level hike with varying and uneven terrain. This is one of our longest hikes and may be challenging for children and dogs.

Date: Saturday, March 15, 2025

Time: 10:30 am - 1:30 pm (CST)

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

Free and open to everyone! Free event. Registration appreciated.

For details, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-3548. www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools



MAY'S GULF SONGWRITER SERIES VIII

JSU's Little River Canyon Center-Kickoff of the May's Gulf Songwriter Series

Get ready for an intimate and unforgettable musical experience. This small-stage concert series celebrates the artistry of local and regional singer-songwriters, bringing their original music to life in a unique and personal setting. An afternoon of extraordinary performances featuring the expressive vocals and eloquent lyrics from Jessica Willis Fisher and the rich blend of southern and Americana sounds of Anse Rigby.

Date: Sunday, March 16th

Time: 3 PM to 5 PM

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

PARK UPKEEP DAY-VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Join DSP staff for a day of stewardship and community as we come together to support the beauty and vitality of DeSoto State Park. Your opportunity to roll up your sleeves and make a tangible difference in the upkeep and preservation of our beloved park. Whether it's trail maintenance, habitat restoration, or beautification projects, there's something for everyone to contribute. Come connect with nature, meet fellow nature enthusiasts, and leave a lasting impact on our cherished outdoor space.

Date: Wednesday, March 19, 2025

Time: 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. (CST) (can work as long as you want, if not the whole day)

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

Weather dependent. To RSVP, see <https://forms.office.com/g/Zn68jjPLzb>



CANYON EXPLORERS— BIRD BUILDERS CHALLENGE

JSU Field School

Hands-on adventure learning! The spring semester of Canyon Explorers will meet on the 3rd Wednesday of February, March, April, and May 2025.

Children ages 7 to 12 will love attending all of these exciting, hands-on adventures! They'll creatively explore animals, plants, bugs, and more with the JSU Field School team. Parents are welcome to stay for the class, or sign-in your children and drop them off for the class.

Date: Wednesday, March 19, 2025

Time: 10:30 am—12:00 Noon (CST)

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

Fee: \$8 per child per class or \$25 per child when registering for entire spring semester. Registration required. Limited availability.

Register Here:

https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=318&SINGLESTORE=true

For more info, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-9605 or email fieldschool@jsu.edu.

www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools

EARLY SPRING WALK

Join DeSoto State Park Staff on a walk along the Talmadge Butler Boardwalk Trail to see what species of plants are starting to grow and bloom after a long winter season. We will learn some natural history of the plants, and some medicinal and historical uses as well.

Date: Thursday, March 20, 2025

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

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

SERIOUS SKILLS SERIES: ARCHERY

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.

Archery is the art, practice, and skill of shooting arrows with the use of a bow. Historically it has been used for hunting and combat and has been around for many years. Archery is also a sport that is becoming increasingly popular as an outdoor recreation activity. Ages 8 to adult

Join DeSoto State Park Staff for an opportunity to learn archery safety & techniques. Activity is suitable for those who have never shot a bow, or for those with some previous experience. All equipment provided.

Date: Friday, March 21, 2025

Time: Class times start at 10:00 am, 11:00, & 12:00 (Central time)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Picnic Area (Across the road from DSP's Country Store on County Road 89)

Fee: Free & open to the public. Pre-registration is NOT required, the public is more than welcome to come at any of the posted times. Please note archery may be cancelled due to wet conditions. Email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for any details.

SERIOUS SKILLS SERIES: ARCHERY

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.

Archery is the art, practice, and skill of shooting arrows with the use of a bow. Historically it has been used for hunting and combat and has been around for many years. Archery is also a sport that is becoming increasingly popular as an outdoor recreation activity. Ages 8 to adult

Join DeSoto State Park Staff for an opportunity to learn archery safety & techniques. Activity is suitable for those who have never shot a bow, or for those with some previous experience. All equipment provided.

Date: Saturday, March 22, 2025

Time: Class times start at 10:00 am, 11:00, & 12:00 (Central time)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Picnic Area (Across the road from DSP's Country Store on County Road 89)

Fee: Free & open to the public. Pre-registration is NOT required, the public is more than welcome to come at any of the posted times. Please note archery may be cancelled due to wet conditions. Email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for any details.

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: Saturday, March 22, 2025

Time: 3:00-5:00 p.m. (Central time)

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

Fee: \$15.00 -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



POTTERY 101 WORKSHOP

JSU FIELD SCHOOL

Unleash your creativity and get your hands dirty in this Pottery Wheel Workshop! This hands-on class is perfect for beginners and anyone looking to experience the magic of throwing clay on the wheel.

In this guided two-hour session, you'll learn:

- ✓ How to center your ball of clay on the wheel
- ✓ Techniques to shape it into a cylinder, bowl, or your own unique design
- ✓ Select finishing touches and choose your glaze color for a personalized masterpiece

What to Expect:

Wheels can be used individually or shared by two people. Once your piece is complete, we'll glaze and fire it—ready for pickup in 3-4 weeks. Recommended for ages 10+, but younger children are welcome with an adult. Come spin, shape, and create something one-of-a-kind! No prior experience needed—just bring your enthusiasm and let's make some pottery.

Date: Saturday, March 22, 2025

Time: 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM (Central Time)

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

Fee: \$75/Wheel (1 or 2 people per wheel) Registration required.

https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=340&SINGLESTORE=true



HIKE WITH A NATURALIST—BEAVER POND TRAIL

Little River Canyon National Preserve

Join JSU Field School staff on a guided 1.5-mile loop at the Little River National Preserve. Please wear footwear suitable for hiking. Bring water, sun protection and possibly a snack. This is a beginner to moderate level hike with varying and uneven terrain. Children and dogs on leash are welcome.

Date: Monday March 24, 2025

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

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

Free and open to everyone! No registration required.

For details, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-3548. www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools

PARK UPKEEP DAY—VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Join DSP staff for a day of stewardship and community as we come together to support the beauty and vitality of DeSoto State Park. Your opportunity to roll up your sleeves and make a tangible difference in the upkeep and preservation of our beloved park. Whether it's trail maintenance, habitat restoration, or beautification projects, there's something for everyone to contribute. Come connect with nature, meet fellow nature enthusiasts, and leave a lasting impact on our cherished outdoor space.

Date: Wednesday, March 26, 2025

Time: 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. (CST) (can work as long as you want, if not the whole day)

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

Weather dependent. To RSVP, see <https://forms.office.com/g/f2q9EgCtSj>

CRANES OVER ALABAMA

Explore the majestic cranes of Alabama in this informative session, Cranes Over Alabama! Staff from the International Crane Foundation will provide a detailed overview of both Whooping and Sandhill Cranes, focusing on their migration patterns and the best times to spot them in Alabama. Learn about the significance of these birds in the region and discover key facts about their behavior, habitats, and conservation efforts. Whether you're a birdwatching enthusiast or just curious about local wildlife, this program is a perfect introduction to the incredible cranes that grace Alabama's skies.

Date: Wednesday, March 26, 2025

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

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

JUNIOR RANGER ADVENTURE SERIES:

BE A FIELD BIOLOGIST

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.

Join staff from the International Crane Foundation for an exciting hands-on experience in field biology! Students will learn to identify Whooping and Sandhill Cranes by sight and sound, gaining practical skills in crane monitoring. Through interactive activities, participants will also explore field biology tools and techniques, deepening their understanding of crane conservation. Whether you're a future biologist or wildlife enthusiast, this event offers a unique opportunity to engage with the science of crane study.

Date: Wednesday, March 26, 2025

Time: 11:30 a.m.

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

Fee: \$2.00 per person. Spaces are limited. Pre-registration is required.

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

EARLY SPRING HIKE

Join DeSoto State Park Staff on a moderate meandering hike along the West Fork of Little River to see what species of plants is starting to grow and bloom after a long winter season. We will learn some natural history of the plants, and some medicinal and historical uses as well. About the hike: the trail will be moderate, rugged terrain over approx. 2 miles. We will utilize the DeSoto Scout trail & green trail for this hike.

Date: Thursday, March 27, 2025

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

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: ARCHERY

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.

Archery is the art, practice, and skill of shooting arrows with the use of a bow. Historically it has been used for hunting and combat and has been around for many years. Archery is also a sport that is becoming increasingly popular as an outdoor recreation activity. Ages 8 to adult

Join DeSoto State Park Staff for an opportunity to learn archery safety & techniques. Activity is suitable for those who have never shot a bow, or for those with some previous experience. All equipment provided.

Date: Friday, March 28, 2025

Time: Class times start at 10:00 am, 11:00, & 12:00 (Central time)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Picnic Area (Across the road from DSP's Country Store on County Road 89)

Fee: Free & open to the public. Pre-registration is NOT required, the public is more than welcome to come at any of the posted times. Please note archery may be cancelled due to wet conditions. Email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for any details.

SERIOUS SKILLS SERIES: ARCHERY

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.

Archery is the art, practice, and skill of shooting arrows with the use of a bow. Historically it has been used for hunting and combat and has been around for many years. Archery is also a sport that is becoming increasingly popular as an outdoor recreation activity. Ages 8 to adult

Join DeSoto State Park Staff for an opportunity to learn archery safety & techniques. Activity is suitable for those who have never shot a bow, or for those with some previous experience. All equipment provided.

Date: Saturday, March 29, 2025

Time: Class times start at 10:00 am, 11:00, & 12:00 (Central time)

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Picnic Area (Across the road from DSP's Country Store on County Road 89)

Fee: Free & open to the public. Pre-registration is NOT required, the public is more than welcome to come at any of the posted times. Please note archery may be cancelled due to wet conditions. Email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for any details.

BEAR TALES JEOPARDY

Did you know that the Black Bear is Alabama's state mammal?. Black bears are native to Alabama and their population is on the rise. Historically found in the southwest area of the state, bears have also been migrating into northeast Alabama from northwest Georgia over recent years. Following in their wake are myths, tall tales, and misconceptions.

Join DeSoto State Park Staff to learn about the Black Bear while testing your knowledge and discover the important role black bears play in our ecosystem with a fun & interactive Jeopardy-style game.

Date: Saturday, March 29, 2025

Time: 3:00-4:00 p.m. (Central time)

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

Fee: Free & open to everyone, no-preregistration required. Contact Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for any details. #AlabamaWildlife #BearEducation #DeSotoStatePark #Bearwise

APRIL



HIKE WITH A NATURALIST—BRIDGE TRAIL LITTLE FALLS

Little River Canyon National Preserve

Join JSU Field School on a guided 3-mile hike at the Little River National Preserve. We will pass Little River's wonderful waterfall on our way to Little Falls, just downstream. Please wear footwear suitable for hiking. Bring

water, sun protection and possibly a snack. This is a Moderate to arduous level hike with varying and uneven terrain. Children and dogs may find it challenging.

Date: April 4, 2025

Time: 10:30 am - 1:30 pm (CST)

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

Free and open to everyone! Registration appreciated.

For details, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-3548. www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools

LANDSCAPING WITH NATIVE PLANTS

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 Spring planting season, learn what plants to have on your Natives look-for list! Learn how to enhance your landscaping skills while promoting biodiversity. Will include presentation & afterwards an optional meandering walk-about to see native plants around the Nature Center.

Date: Saturday, April 5, 2025

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

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

Fee: Free and open to everyone, no pre-registration required; For any details, email

Brittney.Hughes@dnr.alabama.gov.

WILDFLOWER WATERCOLORS FOR BEGINNERS – SPRING BLOOMS

Hosted by DeSoto State Park & Little River Arts Council

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: April 5, 2025

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 below:

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



CANYON KIDS—FUN WITH FUNGUS

JSU Field School

Hands on adventure each month in 2025! Children (ages 3 years-3rd graders) will want to attend ALL of these hands-on outdoor adventures! Creatively learn about animals, plants, bugs, and more with JSU Field Schools.

Date: Wednesday, April 9, 2025

Time: 10:30 am—11:15 am (CST)

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

Free event. Registration required. Limited availability.

Register Here:

https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/store_main.jsp?STOREID=1&SINGLESTORE=true

For more info, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-9605 or email fieldschool@jsu.edu.

<https://www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools>

APRIL DAYBREAK FLATWATER PADDLE TRIP

DeSoto Falls Picnic Area-Alabama

DeSoto State Park staff offers this relaxing guided morning 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. 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, under your own power & spans a 3 to 3 1/2-hour period. Includes kayak, paddle, & personal flotation device.

Participants 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, bug spray, snacks, and drinking water.

Date: Thursday, April 10, 2025

Time: 7:00 am-10:00 am

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 (tandem kayaks are available on a limited basis for \$50.00 email to check availability) Pre-registration closes April 2nd.

Pre-register here: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-Daybreak-Paddle>

www.alapark.com/kayak-little-river

TRAIL TREKKER HIKE: NEVERLAND LOOP

Can you say "I Hiked Them All"? 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. Start marking them off towards your patch today!

About the hike: Will be hiking on the Never-neverland/Vizneyland trails, as well as the Dark Side trail for a longer hike which will be approximately 7 miles round trip, moderate. Trail weaves thru hardwood forest with sandstone outcroppings, streams, wetlands, and an old homeplace along the trail.

Date: April 12, 2025

Time: 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m (CST)

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

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



EARTH FEST

Celebrate Earth Day with the JSU Field School with Yoga, Hikes, Woody's Food Truck, Live Animals, Crafts, Music & More! Come learn about Alabama's native animals. Show off your skills in the Sidewalk Chalk Art Competition or show off your Electric Vehicle in the EV Showcase with the Alabama Clean Fuels Coalition!

Tentative Schedule

9:30 - 10:30 - Free Yoga Class with Soul Shine Yoga & Wellness Studio
10:45 - 11:05 - Family Yoga for Kids
11:00 - 12:00 - Live Reptile and Amphibian Presentation
1:00 - 2:00 - Venomous Snakes of Alabama

Date: Saturday, April 12, 2025

Time: 10:00 am—2:00 pm (CDT)

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

Please call the Canyon Center at 256-845-3548 or email the JSU Field School at fieldschool@jsu.edu if you have any questions. www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools



CANYON EXPLORERS—NATIVE PLANTS

JSU Field School

Hands-on adventure learning! The spring semester of Canyon Explorers will meet on the 3rd Wednesday of February, March, April, and May 2025.

Children ages 7 to 12 will love attending all of these exciting, hands-on adventures! They'll creatively explore animals, plants, bugs, and more with the JSU Field School team. Parents are welcome to stay for the class, or sign-in your children and drop them off for the class.

Date: Wednesday, April 16, 2025

Time: 10:30 am—12:00 Noon (CST)

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

Fee: \$8 per child per class or \$25 per child when registering for entire spring semester. Registration required. Limited availability.

Register Here:

https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=318&SINGLESTORE=true

For more info, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-9605 or email fieldschool@jsu.edu.

www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools

OUTDOOR OBSERVATIONS WALK

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 walk: We will walk around the pollinator garden, along the edge of the road leading to the pond to see what we can find.

Date: April 18, 2025

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

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. In front of 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

JUNIOR RANGER ADVENTURE SERIES: POLLINATOR

JOURNAL JOURNEY HIKE

Chalet StoryHike Trail

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.

Join DeSoto State Park Staff for this creative nature observation hike, combining art & nature! Discover how to keep your own nature journal while strolling along trails in the park and learn more about our beautiful pollinators and beneficial insects!

We will hike on the chalet trail which is .7 to the Gilliam Loop Trailhead. We will hang out for a while working on our nature journals with provided materials. We encourage all ages to join!

About the hike: the hike is considered easy to moderate on uneven terrain. Total 1.4 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: April 19, 2025

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

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

Fee: \$5.00-includes all supplies. Pre-registration required.

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 stained glass 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 April 19, 2025

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

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.



HIKE WITH A NATURALIST—CANYON MOUTH TRAIL

Little River Canyon National Preserve

Get ready for an unforgettable outdoor adventure! Join us for a guided 2-mile hike through the stunning Canyon Mouth Park in the Little River National Preserve. In celebration of Fee Free Day on April 19th, all

national parks are offering free admission, so there's no better time to explore the beauty of nature without any cost. As you hike along the breathtaking CMP Trail, you'll be surrounded by scenic views and diverse wildlife. Afterward, take some time to relax and explore the incredible recreational area, making this day one to remember. Don't miss out on this amazing opportunity to connect with nature!" This is an easy to moderate level hike with varying and uneven terrain. Children and dogs are welcome.

Date: April 19, 2025

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

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

Free and open to everyone! Registration appreciated. For details, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-3548. www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools

LOST FALLS 10K / HALF MARATHON

DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama

From the same directors of Eagle Ridge, Grand Viduta Stage Race, Wade Mountain & Wild Thangs Trail Series, River Monster Trail Run, & the Cathedral Caverns Trail Run.

Running Lane Events presents the Lost Falls 10K / Half Marathon

The race is capped at 350 runners. All runners who sign up will receive a t-shirt, and finisher medal as well as a hot meal post-race.

Date: Saturday, April 26, 2025

Where: Desoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama

Registration <https://ultrasignup.com/register.aspx?did=107154>

More info <https://www.facebook.com/RunningLaneEvents/>



FLY FISHING 101 WORKSHOP

JSU Field School

Join Dr. Tim Lindblom for Fly Fishing 101! Learn the basics to get started on your own fly fishing adventures! We discuss gear selection, knots, fly selection, and casting instructions. Participants will get hands-on experience and the opportunity to make that first catch. Ages 14 and over are welcome.

What to Bring: Please bring water, sun protection and a snack. All equipment will be provided, but you are welcome to bring your own.

Date: Sunday, April 27, 2025

Time: 2 pm - 5 pm (CST)

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

Fee: \$50 per participant. No refunds after April 19. Pre-registration required. For details, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-3548. www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools

MAY

33RD ANNUAL WILDFLOWER SATURDAY

Weekend of Friday, May 2nd & Saturday 3rd, 2025

Wildflower Saturday is an annual event held in DeSoto State Park atop Lookout Mountain in Fort Payne, Alabama, always the first Saturday of May

Springtime at DeSoto State Park is truly beautiful, with wildflowers & trees blooming around every corner. Join DeSoto State Park staff & guest speakers for a wonderful weekend of learning about the many species of blooming plants found on Lookout Mountain. Choose to stay the whole weekend, or just come for the day to enjoy the hikes and programs.

Weekend starts off with a welcome social and guest speaker program on Friday night, a day full of hikes to choose from and a guest speaker on Saturday night.

www.alapark.com/DSP-Wildflower-Saturday



HIKE WITH A NATURALIST—LITTLE FALLS TRAIL

Little River Canyon National Preserve

Join JSU Field School on a guided 1.5-mile hike at the Little River National Preserve. We will hike from Little River Falls to the wonderful Little Falls, just downstream. Please wear footwear suitable for hiking. Bring water, sun protection and possibly a snack. This is a Moderate to difficult level hike with varying and uneven terrain. Children and dogs may find it challenging.

Date: May 2, 2025

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

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

Free and open to everyone! Registration appreciated. For details, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-3548.

www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools

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. Participants 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: Saturday, May 10, 2025

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, email to check availability)

Pre-registration closes May 1st. Pre-registration: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-Moonlight-Paddles>

About the paddle: www.alapark.com/kayak-little-river



CANYON KIDS—WILDFLOWER BLOOM BOOMS

JSU Field School

Hands on adventure each month in 2025! Children (ages 3 years-3rd graders) will want to attend ALL of these hands-on outdoor adventures! Creatively learn about animals, plants, bugs, and more with JSU Field Schools.

Date: Wednesday, May 14, 2025

Time: 10:30 am—11:15 am (CST)

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

Free event. Registration required. Limited availability.

Register Here:

https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/store_main.jsp?STOREID=1&SINGLESTORE=true

For more info, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-9605 or email fieldschool@jsu.edu.

<https://www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools>

HIKE WITH A NATURALIST: DESOTO SCOUT TRAIL

Join DeSoto State Park and JSU Field Schools 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: May 17, 2025

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.

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)

SERIOUS SKILLS SERIES: FOLDED BARK BASKETS

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.

Bark baskets made by Eastern Woodland Indians were used for cooking, gathering berries, hauling water, storing food, as cradleboards, and even for burying the dead. Most often baskets were made from poplar, pine, ash, or birch bark that was harvested in the spring when the bark was most pliable. The bark was then folded into the desired shape and sewn with spruce root and rimmed with arrowwood or other natural materials.

About the Instructor: Andrew Lee is a professional educator with over two decades of teaching experience. The bark baskets and stone bladed knives that he creates are ways that he expresses this love of history and nature. Andrew's Bio: www.theprimitivearts.com/about

About the class: Students will learn how bark is removed from trees, folded, and crafted into usable containers. This class is 6 hours of instruction, with time for lunch in between morning & afternoon. Logs & tools will be supplied, and students will learn how to remove, fold, & begin to dry a piece of bark. Students will take this unfinished piece and other supplies home to complete on their own, after the bark has dried. Students will also be supplied with a pre-dried folded bark basket to embellish with handle, rims, feathers, etc. No prior experience or knowledge of basketry is necessary.

Date: Saturday, May 17, 2025

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

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

Fee: \$85-includes all supplies. Adults only. Class space is limited to 6, pre-registration is required for attendance in this class. Pre-registration: <https://www.littleriverartscouncil.org/barkbaskets.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: Sunday, May 18, 2025

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>



CANYON EXPLORERS—POLLINATOR GARDENS

JSU Field School

Hands-on adventure learning! The spring semester of Canyon Explorers will meet on the 3rd Wednesday of February, March, April, and May 2025.

Children ages 7 to 12 will love attending all of these exciting, hands-on adventures! They'll creatively explore animals, plants, bugs, and more with the JSU Field School team. Parents are welcome to stay for the class, or sign-in your children and drop them off for the class.

Date: Wednesday, May 21, 2025

Time: 10:30 am—12:00 Noon (CST)

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

Fee: \$8 per child per class or \$25 per child when registering for entire spring semester. Registration required. Limited availability.

Register Here:

https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=318&SINGLESTORE=true

For more info, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-9605 or email fieldschool@jsu.edu.
www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools

DAYBREAK FLATWATER PADDLE TRIP

DeSoto Falls Picnic Area-Alabama

DeSoto State Park staff offers this relaxing guided morning 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. 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, under your own power & spans a 3 to 3 1/2-hour period. Includes kayak, paddle, & personal flotation device.

Participants 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, bug spray, snacks, and drinking water.

Date: Saturday, May 24, 2025

Time: 7:00 am-10:00 am

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 (tandem kayaks are available on a limited basis for \$50.00 email to check availability) Pre-registration closes May 16th. Pre-registration: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-Daybreak-Paddle>

www.alapark.com/kayak-little-river



LITTLE RIVER CANYON NATIONAL PRESERVE BIOBLITZ

Calling all photographers, botanists, birders, herpers, insect enthusiasts..... well, if you love nature, and you love Little River Canyon Preserve, then join us for the BioBlitz!

Plan on coming out sometime to help us document the flora and fauna of the park. Little River Canyon is a biological hotspot! It is home to roughly 50 species of reptiles and amphibians, 40 species of fish, over 145 species of birds, and many rare, threatened, or endangered species of plants. We will be exploring the park with scientists, naturalists, students, and professors (oh my!) and the public is encouraged to join us. The public can explore, learn and become Citizen Scientists by helping to record the presence and distribution of our species.

You can choose to join us for an organized event, hike an easy trail or challenge yourself on a canyon trail. We are lining up specialists to help discover fish, amphibians and reptiles, birds or any creature or plant that call this place home.

Date: May 30th-31st 2025

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

Info: <https://www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools/events>

JUNE



HIKE WITH A NATURALIST-POWELL TRAIL

Little River Canyon National Preserve

Join JSU Field School staff for Hike with a Naturalist! We will be hiking Powell Trail. This is 2 mile trail in the Little River Canyon National Preserve.

This hike is a strenuous 2 mile journey with varying and steep terrain into the canyon. Cell phones may have little to no reception. Please wear footwear suitable for hiking, dress in layers, bring water, hiking poles, sun protection and a snack!

Date: June 6, 2025

Time: 10:30 am - 11:30 pm (CST)

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

Free and open to everyone! Registration appreciated. For details, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-3548.

www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools



CANYON KIDS—AMAZING AMPHIBIANS

JSU Field School

Hands on adventure each month in 2025! Children (ages 3 years-3rd graders) will want to attend ALL of these hands-on outdoor adventures! Creatively learn about animals, plants, bugs, and more with JSU Field Schools.

Date: Wednesday, June 11, 2025

Time: 10:30 am—11:15 am (CST)

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

Free event. Registration required. Limited availability.

Register Here:

https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/store_main.jsp?STOREID=1&SINGLESTORE=true

For more info, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-9605 or email fieldschool@jsu.edu.

<https://www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools>

JUNE 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. Participants 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, June 11, 2025

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, email to check availability)

Pre-registration closes June 3rd. Pre-register here: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-Moonlight-Paddles>

www.alapark.com/kayak-little-river



BLUEGRASS ON THE RIM

JSU's Little River Canyon Center

Jacksonville State University presents the premiere Bluegrass on the Rim at Little River Canyon. Enjoy bluegrass performers play authentic mountain music, guaranteed to resonate with die-hard bluegrass purists as well as followers of folk, country, rhythm & blues and rock & roll. You'll hear bluegrass talent from around the country. Come out and enjoy some of the south's best BBQ & Bluegrass under the stars!

This year's concert featuring Kristy Cox & Grasstime | Foggy Hollow Review.

Date: June 14, 2025

Time: Doors open at 5:30 p.m., music starts at 6:30 p.m. (CST) – so arrive early and bring lawn chairs, blankets, family and friends, to sit before the Canyon Concert outdoor stage adjacent to the beautiful Little River Canyon National Preserve.

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

Lineup, prices, & ticket link posted here: www.jsu.edu/epic/EventCC.html

WATERCOLORS FOR BEGINNERS –

DISCOVER THE BEAUTY OF NATIVE BUGS & INSECTS

Hosted by DeSoto State Park & Little River Arts Council

Dive into the vibrant world of watercolors as you explore the fascinating details of native bugs and insects! 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 fauna. Using simple brush strokes and basic color mixing, you'll create vibrant, nature-inspired artworks while exploring the unique features of Mother Nature. 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: June 21, 2025

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 below: <https://www.littleriverartscouncil.org/insectwatercolors.html>



HIKE WITH A NATURALIST—LOWER TWO MILE TRAIL

Little River Canyon National Preserve

Join JSU Field School staff on a beautiful outdoor adventure hike to Lower Two-Mile. Don't let this hike fool you. It may be short, but it's steep. This hike is a challenging, arduous and steep 1/2 mile hike. This hike is extremely steep and not recommended for pets or people who have difficulty climbing stairs and steep terrain.

Date: June 21, 2025

Time: 10:30 am - 1:30 pm (CST)

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

Free and open to everyone! Registration appreciated. For details, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-3548. www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools

JUNE DAYBREAK FLATWATER PADDLE TRIP

DeSoto Falls Picnic Area-Alabama

DeSoto State Park staff offers this relaxing guided morning 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. 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, under your own power & spans a 3 to 3 1/2-hour period. Includes kayak, paddle, & personal flotation device.

Participants 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, bug spray, snacks, and drinking water.

Date: Friday, June 27, 2025

Time: 7:00 am-10:00 am

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 (tandem kayaks are available on a limited basis for \$50.00 email to check availability) Pre-registration closes June 20th.

Pre-register here: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-Daybreak-Paddle>

www.alapark.com/kayak-little-river

JULY

DESOTO STATE PARK'S ANNUAL INDEPENDENCE DAY

EVENTS ATOP LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN

This annual event is fun for both children & adults!

Celebrate Independence Day and enjoy good ol' fashioned fun at DeSoto State Park. Participate in the flag making contest & eat ice cream at the annual ice cream social.

Date: July 4th-5th

Where: DeSoto State Park in Fort Payne, Alabama

Fee: Free to everyone; Great for all ages!

Independence Day Flag-Making Contest

Make your own homemade flag to be judged in this fun contest. All ages are welcome to participate. Materials & flag-making rules will be available at the campground pavilion in the Improved Campground starting Thursday, July 3rd if needed (Flags are made on white foam boards, participants use natural materials). Flags can be turned in any day that week but MUST be turned in no later than 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, July 4th to be judged. (Turn in flags at DeSoto's Nature Center) Winners will be announced on DeSoto's facebook page on Saturday July the 5th (Winners will be contacted) Open to everyone-Be sure to join in the fun- Free to participate and open to all ages!

Splish & Splash Pool Party

Join the fun at our 12th Annual Splish & Splash Pool Party! Cool off in our Olympic-size pool, eat ice cream, & enter for door prizes!

\$1.00 per person-admission fee.

Friday, July 4, 2025 from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Subject to cancellation if inclement weather

Ice Cream Social

Social starts at 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 5th, located at the Campground Pavilion in DeSoto's Improved Campground. Sit around & relax, eat ice cream, & meet your fellow guests at DeSoto State Park. Flag-Making Contest winners will be announced at the Ice Cream Social.

You are welcome to bring your own favorite homemade ice cream recipe or other desserts to share with your fellow guests.

Bring your own comfortable camp chair as seating is limited. Free to participate, & open to everyone! Campground gate will be open for you. Subject to cancellation if inclement weather



CANYON KIDS—INSECT INVESTIGATORS

JSU Field School

Hands on adventure each month in 2025! Children (ages 3 years-3rd graders) will want to attend ALL of these hands-on outdoor adventures! Creatively learn about animals, plants, bugs, and more with JSU Field Schools.

Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025

Time: 10:30 am—11:15 am (CST)

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

Free event. Registration required. Limited availability.

Register Here:

https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/store_main.jsp?STOREID=1&SINGLESTORE=true

For more info, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-9605 or email fieldschool@jsu.edu.

<https://www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools>

JULY 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. Participants 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: Friday, July 11, 2025

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, email to check availability)

Pre-registration closes July 3rd. Pre-register: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-Moonlight-Paddles>

www.alapark.com/kayak-little-river

SERIOUS SKILLS SERIES: QUILT THE FOREST 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.

Join fabric artist and nature enthusiast Michelle Reynolds, for a creative quilting workshop inspired by the beauty of the forest. In this hands-on class, you'll design and hand-sew small blocks onto a canvas square using colorful felts, embroidery threads, and other materials. Reflect on your favorite nature scenes as you create a unique vignette, cutting out symbols, layering colors, and stitching them together to tell your story.

Discover inspiration in nature, learn the art of storytelling through color, pattern, and texture, and explore applique techniques. This workshop offers a chance to connect with fellow participants while experimenting with techniques that resonate with you. All fabric and supplies will be provided, no previous experience required.

About the artist: <http://textilesandtext.com/quilt-the-forest/>

Date: July 26, 2025

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 here: <https://www.littleriverartscouncil.org/quilttheforest2.html>

JULY DAYBREAK FLATWATER PADDLE TRIP

DeSoto Falls Picnic Area-Alabama

DeSoto State Park staff offers this relaxing guided morning 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. 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, under your own power & spans a 3 to 3 1/2-hour period. Includes kayak, paddle, & personal flotation device.

Participants 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, bug spray, snacks, and drinking water.

Date: Saturday, July 26, 2025

Time: 7:00 am-10:00 am

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 (tandem kayaks are available on a limited basis for \$50.00 email to check availability) Pre-registration closes June 18th.

Pre-register here: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-Daybreak-Paddle>

www.alapark.com/kayak-little-river

AUGUST

AUGUST 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. Participants 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: Saturday, August 9, 2025

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, email to check availability)

Pre-registration closes August 1st. Pre-register: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-Moonlight-Paddles>

www.alapark.com/kayak-little-river



CANYON KIDS—REPTILE RANGERS

JSU Field School

Hands on adventure each month in 2025! Children (ages 3 years-3rd graders) will want to attend ALL of these hands-on outdoor adventures! Creatively learn about animals, plants, bugs, and more with JSU Field Schools.

Date: Wednesday, August 13, 2025

Time: 10:30 am—11:15 am (CST)

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

Free event. Registration required. Limited availability.

Register Here:

https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/store_main.jsp?STOREID=1&SINGLESTORE=true

For more info, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-9605 or email fieldschool@jsu.edu.

<https://www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools>

AUGUST DAYBREAK FLATWATER PADDLE TRIP

DeSoto Falls Picnic Area-Alabama

DeSoto State Park staff offers this relaxing guided morning 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. 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, under your own power & spans a 3 to 3 1/2-hour period. Includes kayak, paddle, & personal flotation device.

Participants 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, bug spray, snacks, and drinking water.

Date: Thursday, August 28, 2025

Time: 7:00 am-10:00 am

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 (tandem kayaks are available on a limited basis for \$50.00 email to check availability) Pre-registration closes August 23rd.

Pre-register here: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-Daybreak-Paddle>

www.alapark.com/kayak-little-river

SEPTEMBER

HIKE WITH A NATURALIST: DESOTO SCOUT TRAIL

Join Desoto State Park and JSU Field Schools 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: Friday, September 5, 2025

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.

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

SEPTEMBER 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. Participants 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: Saturday, September 6, 2025

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, email to check availability)

Pre-registration closes September 1st. Pre-register: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-Moonlight-Paddles>

www.alapark.com/kayak-little-river



CANYON KIDS—TREE DETECTIVES

JSU Field School

Hands on adventure each month in 2025! Children (ages 3 years-3rd graders) will want to attend ALL of these hands-on outdoor adventures! Creatively learn about animals, plants, bugs, and more with JSU Field Schools.

Date: Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Time: 10:30 am—11:15 am (CST)

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

Free event. Registration required. Limited availability.

Register Here:

https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/store_main.jsp?STOREID=1&SINGLESTORE=true

For more info, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-9605 or email fieldschool@jsu.edu.

<https://www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools>

ADVENTURE HIKE ON DESOTO SCOUT TRAIL

For Girl Scouts Love State Parks Weekend-For Girl Scouts ages 14 to 18.

Join DeSoto State Park Staff on a beautiful outdoor adventure hike on the Desoto Scout Trail (DST).

This hike is a challenging, rocky & steep 3.5 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. Bring a hammock along, or we will have some to borrow & 'hang out' along the trail.

About the hike: Approx 3.5 miles round trip, moderate to strenuous along rocky mountainous terrain, with some uphill.

Date: September 13, 2025

Time: 9:00 am-2:00 pm (CST)

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

Fee: *Free & open to Girl Scouts ages 14 to 18 and their parents/guardians.* This hike will be led by female staff. Pre-registration required. For any information, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

Pre-registration: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-Girl-Scouts-Weekend>

WILDFLOWER WATERCOLORS FOR BEGINNERS

FALL BLOOMS

For Girl Scouts Love State Parks Weekend-For Girl Scouts ages 7 to 18.

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 13, 2025

Time: 1:00 pm-4:00 pm (CST)

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

Fee: \$25.00 -includes all supplies. For Girl Scouts ages 7 to 18. This class is taught by female staff. Class space is limited, pre-registration is required for attendance.

Pre-registration: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-Girl-Scouts-Weekend>

FROM FOREST TO CANVAS: LEAF POUNDING

For Girl Scouts Love State Parks Weekend-For Girl Scouts ages 7 to 18.

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 staff 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.

Date: Saturday, September 13, 2025

Time: 10:00 am-12:00 pm (CST)

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

Fee: \$15.00-includes all supplies. For Girl Scouts ages 7 to 18. This class is taught by female staff. Class space is limited, pre-registration is required for attendance.

Pre-registration: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-Girl-Scouts-Weekend>

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 27, 2025

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-register here: <https://www.littleriverartscouncil.org/wildflowerwatercolors3.html>

OCTOBER



CANYON KIDS—FALLING FOR FALL LEAVES

JSU Field School

Hands on adventure each month in 2025! Children (ages 3 years-3rd graders) will want to attend ALL of these hands-on outdoor adventures! Creatively learn about animals, plants, bugs, and more with JSU Field Schools.

Date: Wednesday, October 8, 2025

Time: 10:30 am—11:15 am (CST)

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

Free event. Registration required. Limited availability.

Register Here:

https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/store_main.jsp?STOREID=1&SINGLESTORE=true

For more info, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-9605 or email fieldschool@jsu.edu.

<https://www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools>

WATERCOLORS FOR BEGINNERS –NATIVE MUSHROOMS

Hosted by DeSoto State Park & Little River Arts Council

Discover the beauty of native mushrooms 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 fungi. Using simple brush strokes and basic color mixing, you'll create vibrant, nature-inspired artworks while exploring the unique features of Mother Nature. 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: October 11, 2025

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 below: <https://www.littleriverartscouncil.org/fungiwatercolors.html>

SPOOKAPALOOZA PUMPKIN CARVING CONTEST 2025

DeSoto State Park is glad to host the 15th 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 25th 2025 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 26th 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 26th. Free and Open to all ages. <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/spookapalooza-pumpkin-carving-2025-desoto>

SPOOKAPALOOZA SPOOKTACULAR CAMPSITE CONTEST

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 26th 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 2025-Sites must be done by Saturday, October 25th to be judged

Where: DeSoto State Park in Fort Payne, Alabama. Improved Campground

NOVEMBER



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 1, 2025

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



CANYON KIDS-ECO EXPLORERS

JSU Field School

Hands on adventure each month in 2025! Children (ages 3 years-3rd graders) will want to attend ALL of these hands-on outdoor adventures! Creatively learn about animals, plants, bugs, and more with JSU Field Schools.

Date: Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Time: 10:30 am—11:15 am (CST)

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

Free event. Registration required. Limited availability.

Register Here:

https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/store_main.jsp?STOREID=1&SINGLESTORE=true

DECEMBER



CANYON KIDS—CHRISTMAS CRAFTS

JSU Field School

Hands on adventure each month in 2025! Children (ages 3 years-3rd graders) will want to attend ALL of these hands-on outdoor adventures! Creatively learn about animals, plants, bugs, and more with JSU Field Schools.

Date: Wednesday, December 10, 2025

Time: 10:30 am—11:15 am (CST)

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

Free event. Registration required. Limited availability.

Register Here:

https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/store_main.jsp?STOREID=1&SINGLESTORE=true

For more info, call the Canyon Center at 256-845-9605 or email fieldschool@jsu.edu.

<https://www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools>



**For even more fun events in
Alabama State Parks, 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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