



Fins, Feathers and Flowers is a weekend packed with a variety of activities for wildlife watchers. The weekend is a cooperative effort of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, State Park Division, Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

***** Fins, Feathers and Flowers Overnight Weekend Package Rate*****

Package includes room accommodations for Friday and Saturday nights, Friday night social, Saturday and Sunday breakfast buffet, Saturday night dinner buffet and all programming. Single Rate \$240.00 Double Rate \$299.00. Use Code 5676 when making reservations.

Friday Night

4:00 PM to 7:00 PM - Conservation Fair

Join us in Lakepoint's Lodge lobby from 4:00 – 7:00 PM. We will have individual booths set up for you to explore and experience various Conservation organizations across Alabama.

Gulf State Park Booth: Meet our Southwestern District Naturalist, Kelly and our Gulf State Park Assistant Naturalist, Nancy. They will be available to answer your nature questions and will be bringing some of their Education Animal Ambassadors for you to meet. Stop by and get your picture taken. Post it on our social media with #FFF2023.

Friday Night Program:

7:00 PM Social, Magnolia Room

7:30 PM **"Talking BUZZ about Bees"** presented by Allyson Andrews of Wildly Blessed - Magnolia Room. Join the Central Alabama Beekeeper of Year, Allyson Andrews for a presentation about the importance of bees in our parks and as important pollinators for our ecosystem.

Friday Night Hike

"Adventures under the Stars?" - Immediately following the Friday Night Special Presentation. Join our Southwest District Naturalist, Kelly for a night hike on the Diverse Use Trail. We will open a whole new world as you explore the park under the night sky. Keep an open mind and let your sense of wonder take over. Bundle up, wear closed-toed shoes for

mostly flat walking on a paved path, a flashlight, and your sense of adventure. We will meet at the Activities Building in the campground. Approximately 1 mile.

Saturday Programming

5:30 – 7:00 AM – Field Trip to the Houston Unit at USFWS Eufaula Wildlife Refuge.

The Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge is approximately 11,184 acres consisting of wetlands, croplands, woodlands, and grasslands. It is a mosaic of wildlife-rich habitats that support almost 300 species of birds, 40 species of mammals and many species of amphibians, reptiles, and fishes.

Meet in the lobby for a quick cup of coffee. We will leave promptly at 5:45 AM and will carpool over to the refuge. Bundle up!! Bring binoculars and wear closed toed shoes for walking the flat gravel road at the impoundment. Sunrise is a great time to see ducks waking up and heading off to their daytime locations. Target species include Bald Eagle, various waterfowl, raptors, wading birds, and wintering passerines.

7:00 – 8:15 – Breakfast Buffet in the Dining Room. Overnight guests' tickets are included with package. Day guest may purchase buffet separately.

8:30 AM – 10:00 AM – Field Trip Block 1 (Choose 1) See descriptions of field trips below.

Pontoon Boat Tours – Dock (Limited seating, First Come First Serve)

Guided Bird Field Trip to Yoholo Micco Trail – Meet your guide in front of the Patio Room, carpooling and drive to location in downtown Eufaula.

Bird Photography - Join *Alabama The Beautiful's™* Beth Cowan Drake to learn about the best gear, settings and process for getting tack-sharp images of moving or stationary birds. She will also be discussing editing techniques using Adobe Lightroom and Topaz. Skill level – Beginners to Intermediate.

Open Gates Day – Self Guided, Kennedy Unit, USFWS Eufaula Wildlife Refuge

10:30 AM – 12:00 PM – Field Trip Block 2 (Choose 1)

Pontoon Boat Tours – Dock (Limited seating, First Come, First Serve, 2 boats)

Birding Field Trip to Lakepoint State Park Trail – Meet guide in front of the Patio Room

Bird Photography - Presented by *Alabama The Beautiful's™* Beth Cowan Drake. Have you always wanted to learn more about how to take beautiful photos of birds? This class is the perfect opportunity to learn some basic skills of bird photography. Skill level: Beginner to Intermediate.

Open Gates Day – Self Guided, Kennedy Unit, USFWS Eufaula Wildlife Refuge

Recreational Activity – Archery – Meet the WFF Conservation Officers at Lakepoint Community Archery Park for a lesson on the fundamentals of shooting a bow and the sport of archery. Equipment provided. Beginner skill level. Follow signs on campground road to Archery Park.

Lunch on your own.

1:15 – 1:50 PM – Program – “Raptor Conservation – A Live Birds of Prey Program”, Presented by Valerie Castanza, Founder of Raptor Ridge Wildlife Education - Magnolia Room. This live birds-of-prey presentation will focus on these beautiful dynamic creatures. Valerie will talk about raptors, environmental stewardship, and conservation. This will be a fun and interactive presentation.

2:00 – 3:30 PM – Field Trip Block 3 (Choose 1)

Pontoon Boat Tours – Dock (Limited seating, First Come, First Serve)

Open Gates Day – Self Guided, Kennedy Unit, USFWS Eufaula Wildlife Refuge

Bird Photography Field Experience – Join *Alabama The Beautiful's™* Beth Cowan Drake and put your newly learned skills to test in the field. Skill level – Beginners to Intermediate.

Recreational Activity – Archery – Meet the WFF Conservation Officers at Lakepoint Community Archery Park for a lesson on the fundamentals of shooting a bow and the sport of archery. Equipment provided. Beginner skill level. Follow signs on campground road to Archery Park.

4:00 PM – Sunset – Guided Field Trip – USFWS Eufaula Wildlife Refuge

Meet at parking lot in front of the Lakefront Cabins with vehicle. We will carpool over to the refuge.

Sunset – 7:15 PM – Buffet Dinner in Dining Room. (Package holders, present tickets, non-package holders pay at door)

7:30 – 8:30 PM – Keynote Program — **“Black Bears in Alabama”** *presented by Traci Wood, State Wildlife Grants Coordinator, Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division.* The Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division is currently working with Auburn University to conduct black bear research in the state. In this presentation Traci will walk you through the life ecology of a bear, discuss the current population status of black bears in the State and provide you, the citizen, with the tools on how to be “Bear Aware” in the event you have a black bear sighting.

Sunday Programming

7:00 – 8:30 – Breakfast Buffet in Dining Room

9:30 – 11:30 – **Guided Field Trip to Wehle Conservation Center**, Midway, AL. – Be sure to check out prior to leaving for this field trip. Meet at Wehle Conservation Center. Wiregrass Birding Trail Stop.

Fins, Feathers Flowers Field Trip Descriptions

Pontoon Boat Tour – Join our Park naturalists and WFF Conservation Officers for a tour of Cowikee Creek. Bundle up!! Bring your binoculars, and a sense of adventure as we search for alligators, turtles, Bald Eagles, Great Blue Herons, and waterfowl.

Guided Bird Walk – Yoholo Micco Trail – Is a stop on the Wiregrass Birding Trail. The trail traverses some of the 3.2 miles through grassy meadows, mixed woodlands, a hidden waterfall, and across a former railroad bridge skirting the shoreline of Lake Eufaula. This Eufaula Rails-to-Trails project was renamed Yoholo Micco Trail in honor of Yoholo, the Creek Chief of Old Eufaula Town. You will walk along a paved, level trail that encompasses most of the habitat found in the Eufaula area. You will likely see Ospreys, Chickadees, Common Loons and a common Ground Dove. Bring your binoculars and wear closed toed shoes for walking.

Guided Bird Walk – Lakepoint State Park – Is a stop on the Wiregrass Birding Trail. This stop offers a wide variety of habitats for birds. You will make stops along the shoreline of Lake Eufaula, grassy meadows, mature pine woodlands, and the water treatment lagoons. You will get good looks at nesting Ospreys, wintering shorebirds, Canada Geese, Eastern Meadowlarks, wintering sparrows, Brown-headed Nuthatches, Woodpeckers, and Loggerhead Shrikes. This field trip you will be carpooling and stopping at each of the habitats listed. Bring your binoculars and wear closed toed shoes for walking.

For more information regarding the Wiregrass Birding Trail go to <https://alabamabirdingtrails.com/trails/wiregrass/>

Bird Photography - Presented by Beth Cowan Drake founder of the Alabama the Beautiful™ Magazine. – Learn about the best gear, settings, and process for getting tack-sharp images of moving or stationary birds. Beth will also review editing techniques using Adobe Lightroom and Topaz. Be sure to bring your cameras. Skill level: Beginners to Intermediate

Bird Photography Field Experience - Put your newly learned skills to test as Beth takes you on a photoshoot. Be sure to bring your camera, close-toed shoes for walking, and water. Skill level: Beginners to Intermediate.

USFWS – Eufaula Wildlife Refuge Open Gates Day - This is a self-guided tour of the Kennedy Unit. This is a once-a-year opportunity for you to drive into the Kennedy Unit and explore marshlands and impoundments. Be sure you stop and talk to the members of the USFWS and Friends of Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge. This is another stop along the Wiregrass Birding Trail. Great opportunities for seeing alligators, raptors, wading birds, wintering shorebirds, and wintering waterfowl. To access the Kennedy Unit from Lakepoint State Park. At US431 turn left heading south. Travel approximately 1.5 miles. Turn left at the white sign before the Liberty Gas Station.

Recreation Activity – Archery - Lakepoint Community Archery Range – Located on Campground Road across from the day-use area. The Lakepoint Community Archery Park is a partnership between the Archery Trade Association and ADCNR's Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries with funding through license sales and federally matched Pittman-Robertson Act funding. This facility features an 8-target Adult range from 15 to 50 yards and a 4-target youth range from 5 to 20 yards.

Join our WFF Conservation Officers for a fun time learning basic archery. They will teach safety, determining eye dominance, equipment, and the eleven steps to archery success. These basics provide a foundation to support a lifetime of archery enjoyment. All equipment provided.

Sunday Field Trip - Wehle Conservation Center – Midway, AL – This is a guided field trip. The Wehle Land Conservation Center is on 1550 acres of rolling pine hills and hardwood bottoms managed by The Forever Wild Land Trust. This Wiregrass Birding Trail stop has documented over 175 species including the Northern Bobwhite, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Red-headed Woodpecker, Kentucky Warbler and Bachman's Sparrow. You will also have opportunities hear about the history of the Wehle Tract and to see a covered bridge. Bring your binoculars and wear closed toed shoes for walking. For more information check out this link <https://www.alabamaforeverwild.com/wehle-tract>. Maps will be made available. From Eufaula: Travel west on U.S 82 for 16.7 miles. Turn left onto Barbour Co. Rd 49. Travel 4.4 miles and turn right on Mt. Pleasant Rd. Travel 2.7 miles to WLCC entrance.