



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

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

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

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



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

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



DeSoto State Park's Campfire Talk Series

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

Serious Skills Series

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



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

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

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

Keep checking back for more 2024 events to be added!

APRIL

Nature Journal Journey Hike

Join naturalists and artists for this creative nature observation hike, combining art & nature! The focus of this nature walk is to reflect your observations of nature using a personal journaling style.....in many different ways! Learn how to keep your own nature journal while strolling along trails in DeSoto State Park. Will hike in about ½ mile to the West Fork of Little River and hang out for a while working on our nature journals with provided materials. For ages 8 to adult, we encourage all ages to join!

About the hike: the hike is considered moderate, because of the uneven, rocky terrain. Total 1 ½ mile loop.

What to bring: Backpack with plenty of water, and a lunch or 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: Thursday, April 4, 2024

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

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

Fee: \$500 -includes all supplies. Class space is limited to 10, pre-registration is required for attendance in this class. Pre-registration: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-Journal-Journey>

Due to the nature of this hike, rain or high winds will reschedule this hike

Canyon Campout for Women

Women- join staff from the JSU Field School and Desoto State Park on a weekend adventure for women. This will be an intro to tent camping, at an easy-going pace. This is an ideal adventure for women who want to explore Little River Canyon National Preserve.

Combine stunning scenery with an easy, comfortable camping experience. This event was designed by women for women to learn about camping while appreciating nature and building community with likeminded women. Join us for activities such as hiking, nature journaling, outdoor yoga, and outdoor cooking. Our private campground includes warm showers and flush toilets. All meals will be provided. Enjoy hot coffee or tea each morning and a Dutch-oven cooking demonstration and workshop for lunch.

Want to come, but don't have any camping supplies? No problem. Please let us know if you need to borrow any gear, and we should be able accommodate you.

Who: Women ages fourteen years of age and older. Participants under 18 years of age must be accompanied by an adult.

Date: Friday, April 5th to Saturday, April 6th, 2024. Check in will begin at 3pm on Friday, April 5th.

Where: Little River Canyon National Preserve (within 10 miles of DeSoto State Park)

Fee: \$75 per person (Covers all fees for workshops and classes and three meals). Registration is required for this event. Space is limited.

What to Bring: Participants can bring their own camping equipment

(tent, sleeping bag, or sleeping hammock). Please let us know if you don't have these items and we should be able to lend you some for the weekend. Register now:

https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=251&SINGLESTOR E=true

Snake Tales

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

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

Date: Saturday, April 6, 2024

Time: 11:00 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 pre-registration required. For any info, email Brittney.Hughes@dnr.alabama.gov

Plant Discovery Hike-Spring Blooms

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

Date: 4/6/2024

Time: 1:00 a.m.-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

Fly Fishing 101 Workshop

JSU's Little River Canyon Center is excited to offer the workshop, Fly Fishing 101. Join Dr. Tim Lindblom to learn the basics to get started on your own fly-fishing adventures! He will 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.

Date: Sunday, April 7, 2024

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

Time: 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm (CST)

Fee: \$75 per participant, or \$35 for JSU students with student ID. Pre-registration required, limited spaces available.

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

Register today -

https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=256&SINGLESTOR E=true

Solar Eclipse Viewing Party

Come view the 2024 Solar Eclipse with the JSU Field School. Learn about the science behind solar eclipses through STEM activities and crafts. Enjoy music, snacks, and more. We'll have eclipse viewing glasses for, while supplies last. Watch the total eclipse live broadcast Through the Eyes of NASA in English and Spanish. You don't want to miss this amazing event! The Canyon Center will be open from 12/noon to 4pm for this event.

Date: Monday, April 8, 2024

Time: 12:30pm to 3:30pm (CST)

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

Fee: Free and open to the public. No registration necessary. <https://www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools>

Trail Trekker Hike: Gilliam Loop

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

Date: Thursday, April 11, 2024

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

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

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

Serious Skills Series: Mosaic Bee Watering Station

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

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

Date: Friday, April 12, 2024

Time: 10:00 am-3:00 pm (will break for lunch)

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

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

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. Learn how to enhance your landscaping skills while promoting biodiversity!

Will include presentation & a meandering walk-about to see native plants around the park.

Date: Saturday, April 13, 2024

Time: 2:00-5:00 p.m.

DeSoto State Park, Fort Payne, Alabama. Benefield Nature Center, next to the Country Store & Information Center

Fee: Free & open to everyone. RSVP is appreciated so we know how many to expect or in case of cancellation. RSVP here: <https://forms.office.com/g/m3pYXh5JTa>

Environmental Education Excursions:

Bug's Eye View

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

Embark on an enriching Spring Photography Walk led by Assistant Interpretive Naturalist, Mirandi Watson, as we delve into nature through a unique "Bug's Eye View." Bring along your smartphone to master the art of capturing intricate close-up photos of your cherished flora & fauna. While tailored for adults, this program warmly welcomes children to join in and learn alongside you.

Date: April 16, 2024

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

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

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

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

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

Forest Tales Outdoor Storytime Hike

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

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

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

Date: April 17, 2024

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

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

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

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

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

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

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: 4/18/2024

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

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at DeSoto's Country Store on County Road 89 Fee: Free & open to everyone, no-preregistration required. Weather-dependent, please call the Lodge at

256.845.5380 beforehand to check on status of hike. Contact Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for any details. www.alapark.com/desoto-state-park/hiking

Serious Skills Series: The Art of Woodburning- Make Your Own Souvenir Ornament

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.

Pyrography or woodburning is the art of decorating wood or other materials, the term meaning "writing with fire" dating back to the 17th century. Participants in this class will learn the basic techniques of decorative wood burning from artist April Blanks, and will work on their own souvenir ornament designs of scenes in DeSoto State Park and different designs. Practice basic techniques using a pen-like burning tool and paint. This class is for ages 14 to adult.

Date: April 19, 2024

Time: 2 class times available: 10:00-12:00 OR 12:30-2:30 pm (CST)

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

Fee: \$25.00 -includes all supplies. Class space is limited, pre-registration is required for attendance in this class. Sign up here: <https://forms.office.com/g/9mLJVYLm2D>

Email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for more info.

Outdoor Observations Hike

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

Date: Friday, April 19, 2024

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

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

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

Earth Fest 2024

Celebrate Earth Day with the JSU Field School at the JSU Little River Canyon Center. Guided hikes, food, crafts, live animal programs and more! live music from Dad Company & Jess Goggans. All activities are free. Schedule TBA

Date: Saturday, April 20, 2024

Time: 10:00 am—3:00 pm (CST)

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

Fee: Earth Day is free & open to public

For more information on all events, please visit www.jsu.edu/epic/EventCC.html

Third Saturday Sunset Cruise-in

Fort Payne, Alabama

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

Date: Saturday, April 20, 2024

Time: 5:00-9:00 pm

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

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

Enjoy the Moment: Hike & Hammock

Discover a secluded hammock spot and immerse yourself in the tranquility of the great outdoors! Let's unwind and recharge together amidst breathtaking scenery and the soothing sway of hammocks.

Hiking offers the opportunity to connect with nature, explore new trails, and get some exercise, while relaxing in a hammock allows you to unwind and enjoy the peaceful surroundings. DeSoto State Park Assistant Naturalist, Mirandi Watson will lead a short hike to a peaceful hammock spot. Participants will be supplied a hammock to use and shown how to hang it. Afterwards, 30-45 min will be spent relaxing in the hammocks before hiking back out.

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. The April hike will be along the Never-neverland Trail.

Date: April 21, 2024

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

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

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

RSVP here: <https://alapark.itinio.com/register/DSP-Hike-Hammock>

Forest Tales Outdoor Storytime Hike

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

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

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

Date: April 24, 2024

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

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

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

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

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

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

Canyon Kids – Young Explorers - Ages 7 to 12 years old

JSU Field School

Join JSU Field School staff for hands on adventure learning the 4th Thursday of February, March, April, and May of 2024! Children ages 7 to 12 years old will want to attend ALL of these hands-on adventures! To creatively learn about animals, plants, bugs, and more with JSU Field Schools.

Info on Full semester:

Thursday, April 25, 2024 – Things that Fly & Things that Fall Thursday, May 23, 2024 – Birding for Kids

Time: 10:30 am–12:00 pm (CST)

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

What to Bring: Please dress in layers appropriate for the weather and wear footwear suitable for hiking. Free event. Registration required. More info: www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools

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.

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

About the hike: the hike is considered moderate, because of the uneven, rocky terrain. Each month will utilize a different trail in the park, be beginner friendly, and be between 1-3 miles each. We will take our time, so this hike is good for all skill levels. 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: April 29, 2024

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

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

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

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

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

Beginner 101 Hike: Guide for Newbies

If you are new to hiking or just need a refresher, this once-a-month hike series is for you. We will start out with a Hiking 101 Class that covers everything you need to know to plan and have an enjoyable & safe hiking experience. We will touch on trail safety, the 10 hiking essentials, map reading, and Leave No Trace. Afterwards, we will head out on a short, beginner friendly hike to try out some of your new skills.

About the hike: Hikes along any of the trails at DeSoto State Park are considered moderate, because of the uneven, rocky terrain. However, we will be hiking slowly so these are all perfect for beginners. If you would like to bring a hiking stick for stability, you are welcome to do so.

What to bring: Backpack with plenty of water, lunch, snacks. Closed-toed shoes.

Date: April 25, 2024

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

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

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

RSVP here: <https://alapark.itinio.com/register/DSP-BeginnerHike101>

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

Cherokee Ways of Knowing Ancestral Walk

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

About the hike: We will walk a small portion of the Red Trail to see a shelter that was used by Native Americans. Although the hike is considered moderate (because of the uneven, rocky terrain), we will be taking a slow walk through the woods. Please bring a hiking stick for stability if you wish. This program is perfect for beginners or those just wanting a leisurely stroll through the woods.

Date: April 30, 2024

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

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

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

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

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

MAY

Nature Journey Journal Hike

Join naturalists and artists for this creative nature observation hike, combining art & nature! The focus of this nature walk is to reflect your observations of nature using a personal journaling style.....in many different ways! Learn how to keep your own nature journal while strolling along trails in DeSoto State Park. Will hike about ½ mile to the West Fork of Little River and hang out for a while working on our nature journals with provided materials. For ages 8 to adult, we encourage all ages to join!

About the hike: the hike is considered moderate, because of the uneven, rocky terrain. Total 1 ½ 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: May 1, 2024

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

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

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

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

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

32nd Annual Wildflower Saturday

Weekend of Friday, May 3rd & Saturday 4th, 2024

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

Enjoy the Moment: Hike & Hammock

White Trail

Discover a secluded hammock spot and immerse yourself in the tranquility of the great outdoors! Let's unwind and recharge together amidst breathtaking scenery and the soothing sway of hammocks.

Hiking offers the opportunity to connect with nature, explore new trails, and get some exercise, while relaxing in a hammock allows you to unwind and enjoy the peaceful surroundings. DeSoto State Park Assistant Naturalist, Mirandi Watson will lead a short hike to a peaceful hammock spot. Participants will be supplied a hammock to use and shown how to hang it. Afterwards, 30-45 min will be spent relaxing in the hammocks before hiking back out.

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 use the White trail for this hike.

Date: May 5, 2024

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

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

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

RSVP here: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-Hike-Hammock>

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

Forest Tales Outdoor Storytime Hike

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

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

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

Date: May 8, 2024

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

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

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

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

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

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

Campfire Talk: Discover Alabama's Frogs & Toads!

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

Embark on an adventure into the diverse world of Alabama's amphibians! With over thirty species of frogs and toads inhabiting the state, there's always something new to discover. Join Guest Naturalist Jamie Rogers to learn more about Alabama's frogs and toads, their similarities, and their differences. We will also learn how to identify some of these species. Be sure to join us for our night walk on May 11th!

Date: Friday, May 10, 2024

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

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground (Next to site 93. In case of inclement weather will be located in the CCC Pavilion in picnic area) Campground gates will open 30 minutes before program.

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

#Hike24in24AL Sandstone Glade Hike

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

Date: 5/11/2024

Time: 1:00 p.m.-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

Park After Dark-Night Walk

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

Date: Saturday, May 11, 2024

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

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

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

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: May 16, 2024

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

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

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

MUSIC FOR THE PEOPLE Summer Music Series: Will Dooley & Parker Thomas

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

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

Date: May 17, 2024

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

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

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

Serious Skills Series: Mosaic Bee Watering Station

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

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

Date: Saturday, May 18, 2024

Time: 1:00 pm-5:00 pm

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

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

Beginner 101 Hike: Guide for Newbies

Aqua Loop

If you are new to hiking or just need a refresher, this once-a-month hike series is for you. We will start out with a Hiking 101 Class that covers everything you need to know to plan and have an enjoyable & safe hiking experience. We will touch on trail safety, the 10 hiking essentials, map reading, and Leave No Trace. Afterwards, we will head out on a short, beginner friendly hike to try out some of your new skills.

About the hike: Aqua Loop. Hikes along any of the trails at DeSoto State Park are considered moderate, because of the uneven, rocky terrain. However, we will be hiking slowly so these are all perfect for beginners. If you would like to bring a hiking stick for stability, you are welcome to do so.

What to bring: Backpack with plenty of water, lunch, snacks. Closed-toed shoes.

Date: May 18, 2024

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

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

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

RSVP here: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-BeginnerHike101>

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

The Big Art Pop Up

Mentone, Alabama

Hosted by Little River Arts Council & Mentone Inn

This fun event will showcase local artists & makers in a small-festival setting in beautiful Mentone, Alabama. Grab some good eats from the Fontastic Food Truck, enjoy art demonstrations and browse through many original works of art on the grounds of the Mentone Inn.

Date: Saturday, May 18, 2024

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

Where: Mentone Inn in Mentone, AL (within 10 miles of DeSoto State Park)

Address: 6139 AL-117, Mentone, AL 35984

Fee: Free & open to everyone! For artist sign up info, see www.littleriverartscouncil.org/bigartpopup

Third Saturday Sunset Cruise-in

Fort Payne, Alabama

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

Date: Saturday, May 18, 2024

Time: 5:00-9:00 pm

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

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

May's Gulf Songwriter Series IV

Viv & Riley (DUO) & Will Dooley

The May's Gulf Songwriter Series (MGSS) is a "small stage" concert series featuring stellar artists from all different genres and music styles. The concert is set in an intimate atmosphere that provides a unique experience for the artist and listener alike. Seating is extremely limited so buy tickets in advance. The MGSS will give artists an uninterrupted opportunity to share their original music including stories and emotions behind some of their work.

Date: May 19, 2024

Time: 2:00-4:00 p.m.

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

More info:

https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=247&SINGLESTOR E=true

Forest Tales Outdoor Storytime Hike

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

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

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

Date: May 22, 2024

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

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

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

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

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

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

Meandering Moonlight Guided Paddle

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

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

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

Date: Thursday, May 23, 2024

Time: 7:00 pm-10:00 pm

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

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

Pre-registration closes May 19th. Pre-registration: <https://forms.office.com/g/RckcvRCJHD>

Canyon Kids – Young Explorers - Ages 7 to 12 years old

JSU Field School

Join JSU Field School staff for hands on adventure learning the 4th Thursday of February, March, April, and May of 2024! Children ages 7 to 12 years old will want to attend ALL of these hands-on adventures! To creatively learn about animals, plants, bugs, and more with JSU Field Schools.

Info on Full semester:

Thursday, May 23, 2024 – Birding for Kids Time: 10:30 am–12:00 pm (CST)

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

What to Bring: Please dress in layers appropriate for the weather and wear footwear suitable for hiking. Free event. Registration required. More info: www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools

#Hike24in24AL Civilian Conservation Corps History Hike: The 'Unfinished Bridges'

Join DSP Staff on a moderate hike to several Civilian Conservation Corp's 'unfinished' bridges built in the late 1930s.. Learn the history of why the CCC left them standing and see several original structures. About the hike: moderate hike on Gilliam Loop Trail & old CCC roadbed-Approx. 4.5 miles round trip.

Date: 5/25/2024

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

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

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

Cherokee Ways of Knowing Ancestral Walk

Join DeSoto State Park Assistant Naturalist, Mirandi Watson, on her monthly excursions to learn about the Cherokee people and their cultural tie to the environment. Each monthly

excursion will feature a unique topic and a walk in the woods with stops along the way to learn more about the Cherokee Ways of Knowing.

About the hike: We will walk a small portion of the Red Trail to see a shelter that was used by Native Americans. Although the hike is considered moderate (because of the uneven, rocky terrain), we will be taking a slow walk through the woods. Please bring a hiking stick for stability if you wish. This program is perfect for beginners or those just wanting a leisurely stroll through the woods.

Date: May 26, 2024

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

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

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

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

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

Junior Ranger Adventure Series: Water, Water, Everywhere!

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

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

About the hike: the hike is considered moderate, because of the uneven, rocky terrain. Each month will utilize a different trail in the park, be beginner friendly, and be between 1-3 miles each. We will take our time, so this hike is good for all skill levels. We will hike along the West Fork of Little River, investigate the watershed and the critters that live among it.

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

Date: May 29, 2024

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

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

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

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

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

Environmental Education Excursions: Birding 101 Journaling

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

Join DSP Assistant Interpretive Naturalist, Mirandi Watson on a fun exploration hike of avian wonders! Delve into the world of birds with our Birding 101 Journaling session, where you'll discover valuable bird identification tools and sharpen your observation skills. Don't forget to bring along your binoculars, journal, and colored pencils to enhance your experience. While tailored for adults, this program warmly welcomes children to join in and learn alongside you.

Date: May 31, 2024

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

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

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

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

Due to the nature of this hike only thunderstorms will cancel this event. Please dress accordingly. Bring lunch and something to drink

JUNE

#Hike24in24AL

Trail Trekker Hike: DeSoto Scout Trail

The trail follows the West Fork of Little River and traverses a varied terrain of ridges, valleys, fern glades, rock formations, waterfalls, beside deep pools, riffles, through rhododendron tunnels, creek crossings, swimming holes, and sandy stretches. About the hike: Hike is approximately 3.5 miles round trip, moderate to strenuous along rocky mountainous terrain with some slopes. We will go from Gilliam Loop Trailhead down Exit 1 and upstream to Indian Falls and back. Closed toed shoes are preferred.

Date: 6/1/2024

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

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

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

Forest Tales Outdoor Storytime Hike

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

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

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

Date: June 3, 2024

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

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

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

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

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

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

MUSIC FOR THE PEOPLE Summer Music Series: Black Sedan Band

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

BIO: Black Sedan is a Birmingham, Alabama based party/dance band that covers a wide range of songs and genres from the 70s, 80s, 90s, and some current pop tunes. The band is composed of six very talented and professional musicians: lead guitar, bass guitar, percussion, keyboards, saxophone/flute, and a soulful lead vocalist/front man/entertainer whose shows are high energy, interactive and engaging. Bring your own chair or blanket to enjoy the show & enjoy some food from Fontastic Food Truck.

Date: June 8, 2024

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

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

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

<https://blacksedanband.com/about-the-band>

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.

featuring Kelli Johnson & Foggy Hollow

Come out and enjoy some of the south's best BBQ & Bluegrass under the stars.

Date: June 8, 2024

Time: Doors open at 6 p.m., music starts at 7:00 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

Junior Ranger Adventure Series: Secrets of the Forest Floor

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

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

About the hike: the hike is considered moderate, because of the uneven, rocky terrain. Each month will utilize a different trail in the park, be beginner friendly, and be between 1-3 miles

each. We will take our time, so this hike is good for all skill levels. 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: June 12, 2024

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

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

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

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

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

Enjoy the Moment: Hike & Hammock

CCC Trailside Shelter

Discover a secluded hammock spot and immerse yourself in the tranquility of the great outdoors! Let's unwind and recharge together amidst breathtaking scenery and the soothing sway of hammocks.

Hiking offers the opportunity to connect with nature, explore new trails, and get some exercise, while relaxing in a hammock allows you to unwind and enjoy the peaceful surroundings. DeSoto State Park Assistant Naturalist, Mirandi Watson will lead a short hike to a peaceful hammock spot. Participants will be supplied a hammock to use and shown how to hang it. Afterwards, 30-45 min will be spent relaxing in the hammocks before hiking back out.

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 use the Aqua & Yellow trail for this hike.

Date: June 13, 2024

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

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

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

RSVP here: <https://alapark.itinio.com/register/DSP-Hike-Hammock>

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

Environmental Education Excursions: A Journey of Tree Discovery

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

Join DSP Assistant Interpretive Naturalist, Mirandi Watson on an enriching exploration of trees and nature's wonders! Dive into the art of tree identification through leaf pressing, leaf rubbings, and essential tree identification tools and tips.

Don't forget to bring along your journal and colored pencils to enhance your experience.

While tailored for adults, this program warmly welcomes children to join in and learn alongside you.

Date: June 14, 2024

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

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

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

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

Due to the nature of this hike only thunderstorms will cancel this event. Please dress accordingly. Bring lunch and something to drink

‘Creek Kids’ Watershed Workshop

Learning about our water....not just for kids! Hosted by DeSoto State Park

Experience a view of Little River’s watershed and how it connects to the rest of Alabama and our oceans. Many species of fish and aquatic invertebrates, including some types of crayfish, mussels, and snails, live only in Alabama. Participants of all ages will have a good chance of observing some species only found in certain Alabama streams & rivers; they will learn about the impacts of dams on waterways, & learn how pollution moves through aquatic environments.

We will take a short walk to Laurel Creek & the West Fork of Little River for a dip to a view native fish & invertebrates such as crayfish, mussels, and snails up close. A VERY fun way to explore and cool down at the same time!

This fun workshop is based on the ‘Creek Kids’ program, a partnership between the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR) Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division (WFF) and Tannehill Ironworks Historical State Park.

Date: Saturday, June 15, 2024

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

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at the DeSoto State Park Nature Center on County Road 89. Participants should bring a lunch/snacks/water, clothes & footwear suitable for the river.

Fee: Free & open to everyone, kids to adults (we welcome all ages, with or without kids!). Pre-registration is required, required by no later than June 12th. Sign up here: <https://forms.office.com/g/edXyjswEfx>
Please email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for any details

Beginner 101 Hike: Guide for Newbies

Aqua Loop

If you are new to hiking or just need a refresher, this once-a-month hike series is for you. We will start out with a Hiking 101 Class that covers everything you need to know to plan and have an enjoyable & safe hiking experience. We will touch on trail safety, the 10 hiking essentials, map reading, and Leave No Trace. Afterwards, we will head out on a short, beginner friendly hike to try out some of your new skills.

About the hike: Aqua Loop. Hikes along any of the trails at DeSoto State Park are considered moderate, because of the uneven, rocky terrain. However, we will be hiking slowly so these are all perfect for beginners. If you would like to bring a hiking stick for stability, you are welcome to do so.

What to bring: Backpack with plenty of water, lunch, snacks. Closed-toed shoes.

Date: June 15, 2024

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

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

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

RSVP here: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-BeginnerHike101>

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

Third Saturday Sunset Cruise-in

Fort Payne, Alabama

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

Date: Saturday, June 15, 2024

Time: 5:00-9:00 pm

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

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

Forest Tales Outdoor Storytime Hike

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

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

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

Date: June 19, 2024

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

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

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

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

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

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

Meandering Moonlight Guided Paddle

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

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

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

Date: Friday, June 21, 2024

Time: 7:00 pm-10:00 pm

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

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

#Hike24in24AL

Park After Dark-Night Hike

Join DeSoto State Park staff to get to know the park after dark! You never know what you can discover during the night; we will be using our senses to discover what can be seen, heard, or even smelled on this fun hike! About the hike: we will hike slowly on the orange trail from the campground, seeing what we can see and hearing what we can hear. Terrain is rocky and moderate, closed toed shoes are preferred.

Approx. 1 mile. More suitable for ages 8 to adult.

Date: 6/22/2024

Time: 9:00 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

Cherokee Ways of Knowing Ancestral Walk

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

About the hike: We will walk a small portion of the Red Trail to see a shelter that was used by Native Americans. Although the hike is considered moderate (because of the uneven, rocky terrain), we will be taking a slow walk through the woods. Please bring a hiking stick for stability if you wish. This program is perfect for beginners or those just wanting a leisurely stroll through the woods.

Date: June 28, 2024

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

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

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

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

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

Nature Journey Journal Hike

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

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

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

Date: June 29, 2024

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

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

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

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

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

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 5th-6th

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 4th 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 6th to be judged. (Turn in flags at DeSoto's Nature Center) Winners will be announced on DeSoto's facebook page on Saturday July the 6th (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 11th 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 5, 2024 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 6th, 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

MUSIC FOR THE PEOPLE Summer Music Series: The Locals

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

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

Date: July 4, 2024

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

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

Forest Tales Outdoor Storytime Hike

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

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

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

Date: July 10, 2024

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

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

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

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

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

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

Think Like a Naturalist-iNaturalist Walk

Want to learn what app naturalists use for identifying things in the Great Outdoors? Want to try to ID things in your own backyard?

Join DeSoto State Park Naturalist Brittney Hughes for an easy walk along the ADA-accessible Talmadge Butler Boardwalk Trail. Discover what can be observed & recorded using iNaturalist, a free app that can be used to record observations of all sorts of things — plants, animals, and even fungi. Learn how to use the simple app to help contribute to park species lists and about species seen in the park.

What is iNaturalist?-It is a way for people that are interested in nature to share what they see with others, as well as gaining identifications on species that they may not be familiar with. The app also helps to collect data, collaborating with others to gather information for a common project or purpose (i.e. species lists, bioblitzes, etc.) Users can also access the observational data collected by other iNaturalist users. If you've ever wanted to learn more about the plants and animals around you but you didn't have someone along for your hike or walk to ask, you'll want to download iNaturalist. And you can even make observations in your backyard or on the street walking in your neighborhood. Bottom line: this app gives you the opportunity to have your own personal naturalist resource whenever you decide to go, as long as your battery is charged!

Date: Friday, July 19, 2024

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

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

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

Third Saturday Sunset Cruise-in

Fort Payne, Alabama

The Third Saturday Sunset Cruise-In is a great car show, featuring over 200+ classic vehicles on display in Fort Payne's historic downtown district. This is a monthly event starting in April and ending in October

(skipping September for Boom Days Festival). Music across the street from DeKalb Theatre and food vendors.

Date: Saturday, July 20, 2024

Time: 5:00-9:00 pm

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

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

Meandering Moonlight Guided Paddle

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

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

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

Date: Saturday, July 20, 2024

Time: 7:00 pm-10:00 pm

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

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

Pre-registration closes July 16th. Pre-registration: <https://forms.office.com/g/pF4Td672Ks>

#Hike24in24AL

Park After Dark-Night Walk

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

Date: 7/20/2024

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

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

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

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.

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

Date: July 13, 2024

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)

Pre-registration closes July 9, 2024 – at 5:00 p.m. Pre-registration form:
<https://forms.office.com/g/9XRO4tTLnd>

#Hike24in24AL

Civilian Conservation Corps History Hike: Trailside Shelter Along Little River

Join DeSoto State Park Staff on a moderate hike to the trailside shelter located on the West Fork of Little River. Learn how the Civilian Conservation Corps constructed the original structures built in the mid 1930s that you can still see in the park today. About the hike: moderate hike along rocky terrain.

Approximately 1.10 miles round trip. Meet at DeSoto's Country Store on County Road 89.

Date: 7/20/2024

Time: 12:00-2:30 p.m. (CST)

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

Forest Tales Outdoor Storytime Hike

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

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

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

Date: July 24, 2024

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

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

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

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

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

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

Windows to Nature: Fairy Houses

“Build them and the fairies will come!”

Join Renee S. Raney, Alabama State Parks Chief of Interpretation, and the author of the book *Hairy, Scary, but Mostly Merry Fairies: Curing Nature-Deficit Disorder through Folklore, Imagination, and Creative Activities* for a workshop filled with fairy stories and “leave in the woods” natural fairy house building.

Building fairy houses gives children, ages 7 to 107, an opportunity to balance their play time away from the world of technology. A daily dose of nature will improve attention, focus and memory. Nature also has a healing power, improving children's cognitive development. Creative play in nature nurtures language and collaborative skills, awareness, reasoning, and observational skills. Creative nature play helps to instill a sense of place and connectivity through observation.

All children must be accompanied by an adult. Space is limited.

Date: Friday, July 26, 2024

Time: 10:00 am – Noon (CST)

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

Fee: \$10 per participant. Ages 7 to 107. Pre-registration is required, as space is limited.

Info: <https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-Fairy-Houses>

Plant Discovery Walk-July Blooms

In the H. Stanley Sims Native Plant Area

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

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

Date: Friday, July 26, 2024

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

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

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

Creek Kids' Watershed Workshop

Learning about our water....not just for kids! Hosted by DeSoto State Park

Experience a view of Little River's watershed and how it connects to the rest of Alabama and our oceans. Many species of fish and aquatic invertebrates, including some types of crayfish, mussels, and snails, live only in Alabama. Participants of all ages will have a good chance of observing some species only found in certain Alabama streams & rivers; they will learn about the impacts of dams on waterways, & learn how pollution moves through aquatic environments.

We will take a short walk to Laurel Creek & the West Fork of Little River for a dip to a view native fish & invertebrates such as crayfish, mussels, and snails up close. A VERY fun way to explore and cool down at the same time!

This fun workshop is based on the 'Creek Kids' program, a partnership between the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR) Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division (WFF) and Tannehill Ironworks Historical State Park.

Date: Saturday, July 27, 2024

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

Where: DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Meet at the DeSoto State Park Nature Center on County Road 89. Participants should bring a lunch/snacks/water, clothes & footwear suitable for the river.

Fee: Free & open to everyone, kids to adults (we welcome all ages, with or without kids!). Pre-registration is required, required by no later than July 24th. Pre-register here:

<https://forms.office.com/g/hA314KLnWE>

AUGUST

World's Longest Yard Sale

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

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

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

Dates: August 1-4, 2024

For more info, see: www.discoverlookoutmountain.com/yardsale.shtml OR www.127yardsale.com

#Hike24in24AL

Birding 101 Walk

Have you always wanted to learn more of the basics of bird identification? Birding is an excellent way to explore and connect to nature in a new and different way. It is a great skill, a fun activity, and easy to learn. Join DeSoto State Park staff for an early morning walk on the boardwalk and along some of the trails around Azalea Cascade. Easy, staying on and near the boardwalk. ½ mile total.

Date: 8/3/2024

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

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

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

Forest Tales Outdoor Storytime Hike

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

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

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

Date: August 7, 2024

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sunset Simmer-Down Paddle Trip

DeSoto Falls Picnic Area-Alabama

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

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

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

Date: Saturday, August 10, 2024

Time: 4:00 pm-8:00 pm

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

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

Pre-registration closes August 6th. Pre-registration: <https://forms.office.com/g/vE4EV6xLAb>

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

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

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

Date: August 10, 2024

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

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

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

#Hike24in24AL

Park After Dark-Night Walk

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

Date: 8/17/2024

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

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

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

Third Saturday Sunset Cruise-in

Fort Payne, Alabama

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

Date: Saturday, August 17, 2024

Time: 5:00-9:00 pm

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

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

Meandering Moonlight Guided Paddle

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

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

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

Date: Tuesday, August 20, 2024

Time: 7:00 pm-10:00 pm

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

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

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

Forest Tales Outdoor Storytime Hike

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

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

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

Date: August 21, 2024

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

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

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

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

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

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

Follow Your Art

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

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

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

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

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

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

Date: Saturday, August 31, 2024

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

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

More Info: www.littleriverartscouncil.org/fya

SEPTEMBER

Forest Tales Outdoor Storytime Hike

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

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

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

Date: September 11, 2024

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

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

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

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

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

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

Girl Scouts Love State Parks Weekend

Alabama State Parks

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

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

Dates: September 13-15, 2024

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

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

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

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

Outdoor Observations Hike

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

Date: Saturday, September 14, 2024

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

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

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

Meandering Moonlight Guided Paddle

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

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

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

Date: Wednesday, September 18, 2024

Time: 7:00 pm-10:00 pm

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

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

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

Boom Days Heritage Celebration

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

Dates: September 20-21 2024

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

For more info, see www.boomdays.com

www.facebook.com/boomdays

Forest Tales Outdoor Storytime Hike

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

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

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

Date: September 25, 2024

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

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

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

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

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

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

#Hike24in24AL

Plant Discovery Hike-Fall Blooms

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

Date: 9/27/2024

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

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

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

#Hike24in24AL

National Public Lands Day: DeSoto Scout Trail

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

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

Date: 9/28/2024

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

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

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

OCTOBER

#Hike24in24AL

Civilian Conservation Corps History Hike: The CCC Quarry

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

Date: 10/5/2024

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

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

Canyon Half Marathon

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

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

Date: October 12, 2024

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

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

Info: https://www.active.com/fort-payne-al/running/distance-running-races/11th-annual-canyon-half-marathon-2024?fbclid=IwARogdC8MoVJgCI_TvjmF_RIVEYFNCQ7P6mKeHS5x8mNz9oM-HCedjw_Mnno_aem_ARdrqhlSWT33iDPG2RIFG-E_zBEWV8vGRbuCzsF0x0MEYnx187eDmW5a7xJ9iNy6YGsGs_WhV1QsClBadkFc7bxd

#Hike24in24AL

Trail Trekker Hike: Gilliam Loop

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

Date: 10/12/2024

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

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

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

Third Saturday Sunset Cruise-in

Fort Payne, Alabama

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

Date: Saturday, October 19, 2024

Time: 5:00-9:00 pm

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

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

Spookapalooza Pumpkin Carving Contest 2024

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

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

Where: DeSoto State Park in Fort Payne, Alabama.

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

Spookapalooza Spooktacular Campsite Contest 2024

Campers in DeSoto State Park have been decorating their campsites with Halloween decorations for years.....now there is a campsite decorating contest! Decorate your site with the most original and

creative Halloween décor you can find ... you might win a prize! The best decorated sites will win great prizes like free camping and more-there will be a 1st, 2nd, & 3rd place winner, as well as Most Creative to boost that competitive spark!

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

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

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

Date: Halloween Weekend 2024

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

NOVEMBER

#Hike24in24AL

Outdoor Observations Hike

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

Date: 11/2/2024

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

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

CanyonFest

JSU's Little River Canyon Center

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

Date: Saturday, November 2, 2024

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

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

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

9th Annual Creative Spirit Market

Hosted by DeSoto State Park & Little River Arts Council

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

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

The market is held near DeSoto State Park's picnic area across from the Country Store on County Road 89. If the weather is chilly, market-goers can enjoy a blazing fire in the stone fireplace in the CCC pavilion. Bring your own camp chair to hang out a while and listen to the music. Dogs on a leash are allowed in the park.

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

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

#Hike24in24AL

Discovery Hike: Unveiling the Geological Wonders

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

Date: 11/23/2024

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

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

DECEMBER

#Hike24in24AL

Civilian Conservation Corps History Hike: Morris Branch Bridge

This incomplete bridge stands as a powerful testament to the commitment of the CCC in advancing the development of DeSoto State Park. Between the mid-1930s and early 1940s, the CCC undertook various stone projects in the park, including the construction of this bridge over Morris Branch. Their ambitious goal was to establish a direct highway connecting DeSoto State Park to May's Gulf, which is today recognized as Little River Canyon. Regrettably, their honorable mission was left unfinished when the CCC disbanded in 1942. Take the opportunity to accompany DeSoto State Park staff as they delve into the history and significance of this remarkable endeavor. About the hike: the trail will be moderate, no major inclines, approx. 2 1/2 miles total. Meet at DeSoto State Park Lodge and car caravan to the trailhead in the Little River WMA.

Date: 12/7/2024

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

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

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

#Hike24in24AL

Adventure Hike-DeSoto Falls Basin

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

Date: 12/14/2024

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

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

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



For even more fun events, see

www.Alapark.com/Events

DeSoto State Park~Fort Payne, Alabama

#desotostatepark



Contacts for event planning/programs:

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

