

State Natural Areas Schedule of Field Trips and Events for 2008

January

Winter Hike at Walls of Jericho State Natural Area

Location: Meet at the Nashville Target store parking lot off of Bell Road near Hickory Hollow

Date: Saturday, January 26, 2008

Time: 7:00 am Central

Leader: Forrest Evans, Stewardship Ecologist, Tennessee Division of Natural Areas

Reservations required: RSVP by January 24 to Forrest Evans, 615-532-0431, or

Forrest.Evans@state.tn.us.

The first 10 reservations can take advantage of van transportation provided by the Tennessee Natural Areas Program.

Description: Journey through the wintertime beauty of one of Tennessee's newest natural areas, the Walls of Jericho State Natural Area in Franklin County. This will be a strenuous 8-mile hike. This trail descends 600 feet into the Walls and continues along the creek to an amazing canyon of sheer rock bluffs, caves, and waterfalls. We will not go if it is raining or it is predicted to rain. Consult the weather reports before the trip. Dress warmly in layers, wear sturdy boots, and bring plenty of water and lunch. As with any strenuous backcountry hiking trip, please do not attempt this hike unless you are in good condition and able to negotiate difficult trail situations. For more information, including descriptions, directions, and maps, about this as well as any other State Natural Area, visit the Division of Natural Areas web site at: www.tdec.net/na.

February

Winter Hike at Devil's Backbone State Natural Area

Location: Meet at the Devil's Backbone parking lot on Natchez Trace Parkway, 3 miles north of Highway 412

Date: Saturday, February 16, 2008

Time: 10:00 am Central

Leader: Brian Bowen and Allan Trently

Reservations required: RSVP by February 14 to Brian Bowen, 615-532-0436 or

Brian.Bowen@tn.state.us. Please leave your name and a telephone number.

Description: This winter hike will follow the 3-mile easy to moderate loop trail through the natural area which is located on the Natchez Trace Parkway near mile marker 394. The trail follows the dry steep ridges and traverses a hollow. The forest features mixed hardwood and hardwood forest communities found on the Western Highland Rim. Consult the weather forecast; the hike will be cancel in case of bad weather. For more information, including descriptions, directions, and maps, about this as well as any other State Natural Area, visit the Division of Natural Areas web site at: www.tdec.net/na.

March

Day Hike at Virgin Falls State Natural Area

Location: Meet at the Nashville Kroger store parking lot at 5544 Old Hickory Blvd, Hermitage near Summit Medical Center east of town.

Date: Saturday, March 15, 2008

Time: 7:00 am Central

Leader: Forrest Evans, Stewardship Ecologist, Tennessee Division of Natural Areas

Reservations required: RSVP by March 13 to Forrest Evans, 615-532-0431, or

Forrest.Evans@state.tn.us. The first 10 reservations can take advantage of van transportation provided by the Tennessee Natural Areas Program.

Description: Journey through the scenic beauty of one of Tennessee's best-loved hiking trails at Virgin Falls State Natural Area. We will take the strenuous 8-mile trail to the falls. This trail descends off of the Plateau, and meanders along the creek passing caves, sinks, and waterfalls. We will have lunch at the falls, which is remarkable due to the water pouring out of a cave mouth at the top of a bluff then falling over a hundred feet before being swallowed up by a sinkhole at the bottom. The trail then backtracks up and out of the gulf to the parking area. We will not go if it is raining or it is predicted to rain. Consult a weather report before the trip. Dress in layers, wear sturdy boots, and bring plenty of water and lunch. As with any strenuous backcountry hiking trip, please do not attempt this hike unless you are in good condition and able to negotiate difficult trail situations. For more information, including descriptions, directions, and maps, about this as well as any other State Natural Area, visit the Division of Natural Areas web site at: www.tdec.net/na.

April

April 7 through 13: State Natural Areas Week

(Watch for information on the Tennessee State Natural Areas Web Site at: www.tdec.net/na)

April 19: Earth Day Events

(Watch for information on the Tennessee State Natural Areas Web Site at: www.tdec.net/na)

Savage Gulf State Natural Area – Earth Day Hike – Collins Gulf Guided Nature Hike

Location: From Manchester, take Interstate 24 East toward Chattanooga. Use the Pelham/Winchester exit, the last exit before scaling Monteagle Mountain. Turn left on State Route 50 and drive through Pelham. Cross U.S. 41. Drive up the mountain and turn right on State Route 108. You will pass Grundy County High School on your right. Travel straight through the light at State Route 56. Pass through Gruetli-Laager on State Route 108 and pass the Piggly Wiggly. Take a left at 55th Avenue (Collins West sign), and go a few miles until you see a marked gravel lot that says, "Savage Gulf State Natural Area: Collins Gulf Access." Park and check in. A brief connecting trail leads to the Collins Gulf access point. The driving distance from Manchester to Gruetli-Laager is approximately 38 miles.

Date: Sunday, April 27

Time: 10:00 a.m. CST

Leaders: Kevin Fitch, Science Director – Natural Areas Program, Mike Frederick – Environmentalist – Arnold Air Force Base

Reservations required: RSVP by April 24th to Kevin Fitch, 615-532-0431 or Kevin.fitch@state.tn.us and Mike Frederick (931-454-3626)

Description: An Earth Day nature hike will provide an opportunity to enjoy one of Tennessee's most scenic natural areas. The hike will be along the Collins Gulf trail to Horsepound Falls in the South Cumberland Recreation Area. The Collins Gulf area is noted for its spectacular display of spring wildflowers, and has one of the most beautiful waterfalls in the area, Sutter Falls. However, the descent to the falls and indeed much of the trail is rocky, **steep and difficult**. The trail is approximately 2.5 miles (5 miles round trip), with a 400-500 elevation drop--down hill all the way. Yes, that means it is uphill on the way out! For more information, including descriptions, directions, and maps, about this as well as any other State Natural Area, visit the Division of Natural Areas web site at: www.tdec.net/na . Additional information is available from the Tennessee State Parks web-site at: <http://state.tn.us/environment/parks/SouthCumberland/> .

Recommended items: Water, Food/snacks, Hiking stick, Sturdy high top boots or shoes with good traction, rain gear, personal items (first-aid kit, medications, etc), and other (camera, binoculars, botanist lenses, manuals/field guides, etc.)

May

Canoe Float on the Harpeth River

Location: Meet at Kingston Springs City Park, Old Pinnacle Road, just east of the Kingston Springs Town Center.

<http://mapper.acme.com/?ll=36.10147,-87.10553&z=15&t=M&marker0=36.09361%2C-87.09341%2CKingston%20springs%5C%2C%20tennessee>
or <http://www.tennessee.gov/environment/parks/HarpethRiver/images/parkmap.pdf>

Date: Saturday, May 3, 2008

Time: 8:00 am Central

Leaders: Roger McCoy, Tennessee Division of Natural Areas and Jane Polansky, Tennessee State Parks

Reservations required: Space is limited; RSVP by Monday, April 28, 615-532-0431. Participants are welcome to bring their own canoe or kayak, but canoe rentals are available at a cost of \$25 per canoe.

Description: Begin the first weekend in May with a 3.5-hour float along one of Middle Tennessee's most popular rivers. Participants are sure to enjoy the native flora and fauna associated with this Eastern Highland Rim waterway. The float will begin at Kingston Springs and end at the state-owned Gossett Tract, just north of U.S. Highway 70 along Cedar Hill Road. At the Gossett Tract, we can enjoy our lunches at the picnic facilities. Shuttles will be arranged back to Kingston Springs Park. Be sure to bring only items/clothing you won't mind getting wet, water to drink, snacks, and a lunch. For more information about the Harpeth River State Park visit: <http://state.tn.us/environment/parks/HarpethRiver/>

Dragonflies and Wildflowers at Walker Branch State Natural Area

Location: Walker Branch State Natural Area, near Savannah, Hardin County. Meet at the old Wal-Mart parking lot in Savannah (195 Water Street- Tractor Supply is there now). We will caravan to the site from there.

Date: Saturday, May 17, 2008

Time: 9:00 am Central

Leaders: Allan Trently, Tennessee Division of Natural Areas, Natural Areas Program
David Withers, Tennessee Division of Natural Areas, Natural Heritage Program
Richard Connors, Tennessee State Parks, All Taxa Biotic Inventory

Reservations: Required: RSVP to David Withers by May 15 at (615) 532-0441 or david.withers@state.tn.us.

Description: Join naturalists from State Parks & State Natural Areas for a moderately strenuous (but slow) hike through the hills, seeps, and springs of Walker Branch SNA in Hardin County, where we will search out crayfish, birds, spring flora, and most especially the myriad of dragonflies that live here. Come ready to get wet (seeps go squish!) and wear appropriate footwear and long pants. Come rain or shine, and bring water and a bag lunch. Cameras & guidebooks are welcomed. We anticipate a 3-4 hour tour. For more information, including descriptions, directions, and maps, about this as well as any other State Natural Area, visit the Division of Natural Areas web site at: www.tdec.net/na .

June

June 7 Annual National Trails Day

(Watch for information on the Tennessee State Natural Areas Web Site at: www.tdec.net/na)

Day Hike at Vesta Cedar Glade State Natural Area

Location: Meet at the Cedars of Lebanon State Park Office on US 231 south of Lebanon.

Date: Saturday, June 14, 2008

Time: 10:00 am Central

Leader: Andrea Shea Bishop and David Lincicome, Tennessee Division of Natural Areas

Reservations required: RSVP by June 12 to Andrea Bishop 615-532-0431 (secretary's desk) or if by email, please verify that we have received it. The trip is limited to 25 people and we can carpool to Vesta Glade from the park. Andrea.Bishop@state.tn.us or David.Lincicome@state.tn.us

Description: Vesta Cedar Glade is in Cedars of Lebanon State Forest, Wilson County. Vesta is one of the premier sites for the endangered Tennessee coneflower. Many other rare plants grow in this unique cedar glade and grassy barrens ecosystem that occurs in the Central Basin of middle Tennessee. Other cedar glade plants to see at this time include Tennessee milk-vetch, southern prairie dock, purple prairie clover, Gattinger's prairie clover, prairie tea, glade privet, fragrant sumac, and several species of native grasses. Consult the weather reports before the trip, in case of thunderstorms. The site is open, flat and rocky but the walking will be easy. Boots are recommended but sturdy shoes will work. Bring plenty of water, lunch, sunscreen, a hat and insect spray for potential ticks and chiggers. For more information, including descriptions, directions, and maps, about this as well as any other State Natural Area, visit the Division of Natural Areas web site at: www.tdec.net/na .

July

Picnic and Creek Play at Stinging Fork Falls State Natural Area

Location: Stinging Fork Falls State Natural Area

Date: Saturday, July 12, 2008

Time: 11:00 a.m. Eastern

Leader: Lisa Huff, Tennessee Division of Natural Areas, Natural Areas Program

Sponsors: Tennessee Division of Natural Areas, Natural Areas Program

Reservations: Required. RSVP to Lisa Huff by July 10 at (865) 594-5601 or E-mail at Lisa.Huff@state.tn.us.

Description: Let's cool off in the deep pocket wilderness of Stinging Fork Creek, play in the pool and creek with us and eat lunch at the falls. Bring a float! This hike is a very short 2.0 miles round trip, but part of it is very steep. We'll take our time though to accommodate novice hikers. This will be a leisure trip to enjoy the cool water in the heat of the summer. Anyone who would like additional hiking

afterward can join Lisa at Piney Falls. Wear sturdy boots and bring lunch and water and be prepared to get wet in the creek (assuming the drought has broken!). If it rains (thunderstorms), we won't go, so you must contact Lisa to reserve a space and provide a way to contact you in case of cancellation. There is no rain date. For more information, including descriptions, directions, and maps, about this as well as any other State Natural Area, visit the Division of Natural Areas web site at: www.tdec.net/na .

Day Hike at Flat Rock Cedar Glades and Barrens State Natural Area

Location: Meet at the Target store parking lot off of Bell Road near Hickory Hollow at 8:00 AM. Transportation for the first 10 people to sign up will be provided. Alternatively, meet at the Flat Rock Parking Area at 9:00 am.

Date: Saturday, July 19, 2008

Time: Hike Begins at 9:00 am Central

Leader: Silas Mathes, Tennessee Division of Natural Areas, Natural Heritage Program

Sponsors: Tennessee Division of Natural Areas, Natural Areas Program

Reservations: Required. RSVP to Silas Mathes by July 17 at (615) 532-0431 or E-mail at Silas.Mathes@state.tn.us.

Description: Join us for a hike at Flat Rock State Natural Area to observe Middle Tennessee's unique cedar glade habitats in one of Tennessee's most ecologically significant preserves, just a few miles from Murfreesboro. We will traverse flat rocky limestone outcrops, oak and grassland barrens, and oak-cedar-hickory forest areas. Along the way, we'll try to identify some of Flat Rock's plants, including native grasses, goat's rue, southern prairie dock, wavy leaf purple coneflower, wild quinine, aromatic sumac, and others. The hike should be easy to moderate and will cover approximately four miles. Boots are recommended but sturdy shoes will work. Bring plenty of water, lunch, sunscreen, a hat, and insect spray. For more information, including descriptions, directions, and maps, about this as well as any other State Natural Area, visit the Division of Natural Areas web site at: www.tdec.net/na .

August

Walking Tour of Morrison Meadow and May Prairie State Natural Areas

Location: Meet at the Target store parking lot off of Bell Road near Hickory Hollow

Date: Saturday, August 23, 2008

Time: 8:00 am Central

Leaders: Todd Crabtree; Botanist Natural Heritage Program and Kevin Fitch; Science Director Natural Areas Program

Reservations required: RSVP by August 21 to Todd Crabtree or Kevin Fitch (615) 532-0431 or Todd.Crabtree@state.tn.us and Kevin.fitch@state.tn.us. The first ten reservations can take advantage of free van transportation provided by the Tennessee Division of Natural Areas.

Sponsor: Division of Natural Areas

Description: Join Tennessee's Natural Areas Staff for an outstanding wildflower hike to one of our newest Natural Areas, Morrison Meadow is renowned for its summer/fall flora, this is a moderate to easy hike. We will also be stopping by May Prairie. Recommended items: Water, Food/snacks, Sturdy high top boots or shoes with good traction, Rain gear, Personal items (first-aid kit, medications, etc), Other (camera, binoculars, botanist lenses, manuals/field guides, etc.). For more information, including descriptions, directions, and maps, about this as well as any other State Natural Area, visit the Division of Natural Areas web site at: www.tdec.net/na .

Canoe Float on the Duck River State Scenic River

Location: Meet at the Target parking area at Old Hickory Blvd. and I-65 in Brentwood. Transportation for the first 10 people to sign up will be provided.

Date: Saturday, August 30, 2008

Time: 9:00 am Central

Leader: Forrest Evans, Stewardship Ecologist, Tennessee Division of Natural Areas.

Reservations required: RSVP by August 28 to Forrest Evans, 615-532-0431 or

forrest.evans@state.tn.us.

The first 10 reservations can take advantage of free van transportation provided by the Tennessee Natural Areas Program.

Description: Come join us as we enjoy the cool waters of the Duck River on a warm summer day. We will be on a very flat and easy stretch of river from Leftwich Bridge to the new TWRA take out at Howard Bridge. This stretch of the river has a gentle current and no real rapids, and will take about 4 hours to float. This is an excellent opportunity for beginners to canoe. Participants are welcome to bring their own canoe or kayak, but will have to provide their own transportation if they do. Canoes can be rented at a special discount of \$10 per person or \$20 per canoe through a local canoe vendor. Our put in point is about a 45-minute drive south of Nashville on I-65. Bring lunch and water and maybe a change of clothes. For more information about this as well as any other State Scenic River, visit the Division of Natural Areas web site at: www.tdec.net/na.

September

John Muir Trail Hike at the Hiwassee State Scenic River

Location: Hiwassee/Ocoee State Scenic River State Park, Gee Creek Campground Park Office

Date: Saturday, September 20, 2008

Time: 10:00 am Eastern

Leader: David Lincicome and Andrea Bishop, Tennessee Division of Natural Areas

Sponsors: Tennessee Division of Natural Areas and Tennessee State Parks

Reservations: Required. RSVP by September 18 to David Lincicome at (615) 532-0439 or E-mail at david.lincicome@state.tn.us, or Andrea Bishop at (615) 741-9141 or e-mail at andrea.bishop@state.tn.us

Description: Come enjoy an easy to moderate hike on the John Muir Trail along the Hiwassee State Scenic River. After a short caravan ride from the Park Office at Gee Creek Campground to the Appalachia Powerhouse we will hike upstream through the Hiwassee River gorge as far as the Coker Creek confluence, and back to the powerhouse. We will hike through The Narrows and hopefully be able to visit the phyllite boulders along the stream where populations of the endangered Ruth's golden-aster can be found. If it rains, the hike will be canceled, so you must contact David or Andrea to reserve a space and provide a way to contact you in case of cancellation. There is no rain date. Please wear sturdy boots, bring plenty of water and a sack lunch. The hike is approximately 5-6 miles round-trip. For more information about this as well as any other State Scenic River, visit the Division of Natural Areas web site at: www.tdec.net/na, or visit Tennessee State parks web site at: <http://state.tn.us/environment/parks/Hiwassee/>.

September 27 Annual National Public Lands Day

(Watch for information on the Tennessee State Natural Areas Web Site at: www.tdec.net/na)

October

October 14 through 18: 2008 Natural Areas Association Annual Conference

(Watch for information on the Tennessee State Natural Areas Web Site at: www.tdec.net/na)

November

Canoe Float at the Ghost River State Natural Area on the Wolf River

Location: Ghost River State Natural Area

Date: Saturday, November 1, 2008

Time: Meet at the LaGrange boat ramp at 9:00 am Central

Leader: Allen Trently, Tennessee Division of Natural Areas, Natural Areas Program

Reservations: Required: RSVP by October 30 to Allan Trently at (731) 512-1369 or E-mail at Allan.Trently@state.tn.us

Description: Join us for an early winters float on the “Ghost” section of the Wolf River and find out why it is named such. The trip is about a 5-hour float, so bring lunch, and plenty to drink. Participants will also need to provide their own canoes/kayaks. If weather conditions are unfavorable, the event will be cancelled. For more information, including descriptions, directions, and maps, about this as well as any other State Natural Area, visit the Division of Natural Areas web site at: www.tdec.net/na .

December

Woodland Weeding at Rugby State Natural Area

Location: Meet at the Harrow Road Cafe

Date: Saturday, December 6, 2008

Time: 9:00 am Eastern

Leader: Lisa Huff, Tennessee Division of Natural Areas, Natural Areas Program

Sponsors: Tennessee Division of Natural Areas, Natural Areas Program and the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy

Reservations: Required. RSVP to Lisa Huff by December 4 at (865) 594-5601 or E-mail at Lisa.Huff@state.tn.us.

Description: Come out with a pair of leather work gloves, layered clothes, good shoes, water, and food and spend a few hours helping pull up the dread Japanese spiraea from the woodlands of the Rugby State Natural Area. This will be our second spiraea pull. Our first pull was quite successful and we will just continue downstream from where we left off last time, including looking over our previous work to pull any plants we missed. We'll only work about three hours, so we promise not to wear you out! Go Rugby! Don't forget to contact Lisa to make your reservation and leave her a phone number or E-mail to contact you in case we have to cancel the event on account of rain or extreme cold. For more information, including descriptions, directions, and maps, about this as well as any other State Natural Area, visit the Division of Natural Areas web site at: www.tdec.net/na .