

WINTER 2010 / January - March

JANUARY ACTIVITIES

MLK Weekend, Jan. 15-17

NORTH GEORGIA FOOTHILLS DULCIMER ASSOCIATION JAM

Beach House

Musicians from around the state will converge on the Beach House Friday evening with dulcimers, fiddles, banjos, basses, harmonicas—whatever! They'll play all day Saturday beginning at 9 a.m., and continue Sunday morning until the last person leaves.

Augusta's Garden City Strummers invite you to join in! If you don't play, come anyway to enjoy the music. Free dulcimer lessons will be given at 10 a.m. on Saturday, with instruments provided. Everyone is welcome to join in a potluck dinner at 6 p.m.

Don't miss this weekend of fun!

Sunday, Jan. 24

WILD GOURMET DINNER

2 p.m., Beach House

Open to everyone who's willing to try anything at least once!

A menu preview includes pan-seared chicken with elderberry reduction and a dessert of warm persimmon pudding with heavy cream.

For fun, why not search online for "wild recipes," and bring something to share? Please make sure your dish includes at least one wild ingredient.



Native Americans mixed persimmon pulp with corn meal to bake bread. Colonists made puddings, pies, and preserves from this wild native fruit.

FEBRUARY ACTIVITIES

Tuesday, Feb. 9

FRIENDS OF MISTLETOE STATE PARK MEETING

7 p.m., Beach House

Join us for food, fun, and door prizes while you learn the Friends' plans for 2010. *Friends of Mistletoe State Park* is a non-profit organization that assists the park with programming, physical plant development, and maintenance. If you love the park, come see how you can get involved.

Monday, Feb. 15

PIONEER LIFESTYLES

9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Meet at the office.

School is out this day, but kids age 8-12 will get hands-on learning and lots of fun practicing the skills our ancestors needed to survive. In addition to playing games and taking nature hikes, students will learn candle making, learn to build a fire, and try their hands at making a shelter.

Cost is \$20 per child. *Advance registration is required by Jan. 11.*

Saturday, Feb. 27

EARLY SPRING WILDFLOWER WALK

10 a.m. – Noon. Meet at the Nature Center.

Wear comfortable walking shoes and bring a camera for this 2-mile walk on the Cliatt Creek Trail. We'll look for early spring wildflowers such as Jack in the Pulpits, Violets, and Trout Lilies. Open to adults and children age 8 or older with a parent. Leader: Judith Gordon, Ph.D., Associate Professor Emerita of Biology, Augusta State University.

Call the park office for more information and to make your reservation for lunch, provided by the National Senior Service Corps

MARCH ACTIVITIES

Saturday, Mar. 6

WILD TURKEY CALL SEMINAR

1 p.m., Assembly Shelter

Hunters, this is for you. Wild turkey season begins March 20, so use the morning to scout your territory, then grab a bite to eat and head to the park for a seminar you won't want to miss!

Seminar leader Benny Briggs is a Georgia State Champion, Grand American Winner and World Champion Turkey Caller. He'll share his expertise, give tips on tracking, and teach each person attending to cut diaphragm calls to get the sounds you need. Free with your park pass.

Saturday, Mar. 13**VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION AND TRAINING**

10 a.m. – 1 p.m., Nature Center. Lunch provided.

Mistletoe *could* manage without its volunteers. But it wouldn't be able to offer the same service without assistance from volunteers who help build and maintain park facilities, plan and present programs and events, edit its newsletter, staff the Nature Center on weekends, and assist as needed to make your stay a better one.

Why not become a part of our park family as a volunteer in 2010? Come to the orientation to see where you can fit in. And while you're at it, bring a friend! If you'd like to help staff the Nature Center on Saturdays during the park's peak season, please bring a calendar to check and record the days you can work.

FISHING & LAKE REPORT

At 328 feet, the lake is more than 5 feet above average. And the park's recent addition of 50 "recycled" Christmas trees to the lake as fish attractors should make fishing even better!

Stripers are beginning to bite. Fish the "tried and true" method of using live blueback herring and slow trolling. For winter bass fishing, take advantage of these tips from [http:// fishing. about.com](http://fishing.about.com):

- Fish slowly. Bass slow down as the water cools. They are less likely to hit a fast-moving bait, so slow your presentation down and give them time to eat your bait.
- Fish deeper. Bass tend to hold deep in the winter, so look for the ends of long points, steep bluff banks, and creek channels. They hold there until there are several warm days, then they move up into more shallow water.
- Be patient. Don't expect a lot of bites, but the ones you get may be big bass. Take your time and wait on that one big bite.
- Dress for the weather. You can't catch bass if you are miserable or if you can't stay out there. Get warm clothes and layer so you can adjust. Be sure you have something with you that will turn rain and stop the wind, too.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT MISTLETOE?

THE NATURE CENTER will be closed on weekends throughout the winter. However, special accommodations may be made for groups that would like to tour the center on Saturdays or Sunday afternoons. Simply call the park office in advance to schedule a volunteer host for the day of your visit.

A GRANT FROM THE AUDUBON SOCIETY will provide new rubber stamps of animals and plants for use in Nature Center activities when it is open.

FRIENDS MEMBERSHIPS AVAILABLE

Don't forget that *Friends of Mistletoe State Park* benefits from your new membership! And members get their money back several times, with an annual park pass, free camping, discount on gift shop purchases, train tickets, and more! Join in the park office or online, and help *Friends* make a difference in the park!



LOOKING AHEAD

Murder on the Haunted Trail

Begins Friday, Apr 16, 6 p.m.; Ends Saturday, Apr 17, 4:30 p.m. Beach House.

Offered at the request of guests at September's *Murder on Stage*. Following dinner and ghost stories around the campfire, our sleuths will scout the "Haunted Trail." But the mystery they encounter will include more than ghosts, and they're in for the most surprising revelation ever!

Saturday will be spent interviewing suspects, visiting the crime scene, and gathering clues--ending with prizes for those who figure out "whodunit." Wear comfortable shoes and bring a flashlight for a short and easy night walk.

Cost of the weekend is \$39 per person, which includes three meals, program materials, and prizes for the winners. Registration is limited to the first 25 persons to register before April 9. For more information or to request a registration form, call or email park volunteer Marilyn Grau, (706) 868-0120 (M-F 8:30-5), MGrau@SeniorCitizensCouncil.org.

FYI

When the squirrels are in your bird feeder, and the crows are in your trashcan--

Most Georgians can tell you that deer hunting season opens in the fall, and lots of folks even know that wild turkey season comes in early spring. But how many of us know there's a crow season? Or a 'possum season?

Whether you're a hunter or just a gardener trying to keep critters from eating your early sprouts--don't take matters into your own hands until you check the Georgia DNR website at <http://www.georgiawildlife.com/node/1212>. In early January, the following small game are in season: crows, dove, fox, bobcat, grouse, opossum, quail, rabbit, raccoon, squirrels, and woodcock. Did you know that there's no limit on 'possums, crows, foxes, and bobcats, but you can only take 12 squirrels a day? 'Coon hunters in the northern region of Georgia are limited to 1 per day; southerners can take 3.

Check online for hunting license information and regulations. Be smart and be legal.

From the staff and volunteers of
Mistletoe State Park,
have a happy, healthy, and prosperous new year.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

To make sure you get your next newsletter, please remember to contact us if your email address changes.