

Arkansas Audubon Society

2024 - Morrilton Convention Field Trips



Friday, May 3

<p>F1 - Canyon Rim Trail Depart: 1:00 PM (near venue) - Moderate</p> <p>We will meet at Mather Lodge at 1 p.m. and carpool to the Rock House Cave parking area. From the trailhead, we will set off on a leisurely walk along some of the most scenic and overlooked areas in Petit Jean State Park. This section of the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Boy Scout Trail follows the bluff line above the lower canyon of Cedar Creek. Distance: approximately 2.5 miles, covering rolling terrain. Leader: Spencer Weitzel</p>	<p>F2 - Rock House Cave Trail Depart: 1:00 PM (near venue) - Moderate</p> <p>We will meet at Mather Lodge at 1 p.m. and carpool to Meet Park Interpreter Jake Curry at the Rock House Cave parking area. From there, we'll hike to the park's archaeology site, Rock House Cave. We will view American Indian rock art and discover more about these windows into the past that the images provide. We'll look for faint remains of pictographs on the ceiling towards the back of the cave. The "cave" is actually a large rock shelter. On our return, be sure to notice the large "turtle rocks" on whose backs you are walking. Distance: ¼ mile. Leader: Jake Curry, Park Interpreter</p>	<p>F3 - Bug Walk: A Tour of Insects, Spiders, Millipedes, Depart: 1:00 PM (near venue) - Moderate</p> <p>We will carpool from Mather Lodge at 1 p.m., where we'll meet entomologist Dr. Ray Fisher at the Pioneer Cabin. From there, we'll go to the left of the cabin and walk the trail clockwise. It winds beside a scenic section of Cedar Creek. We may complete the loop, or, if the creek is flooded and impassable, we may turn back at that point because the bridge is out. Some steep natural rock steps and bluffs create a few difficult places. We will practice Ento-Sight! Finding and learning about arthropods will unlock a new world, many worlds. Everything will become its own thriving habitat, from rocks, streams, and bark, to the very bugs themselves. Distance: 1 ¼ mile. Leader: Dr. Ray Fisher</p>
<p>F4 - Beginning Birder Walk Depart: 1:00 PM (near venue) - Easy</p> <p>We'll carpool from Mather Lodge at 1 p.m. to the Visitor Center. From there, the group will stroll along the edge of Lake Bailey past the Amphitheater and the yurts to the Overflow Camping Area. Returning, then walk to the Boat House, fishing pier, and picnic area and back to the Visitor Center. Our guide will introduce us to eBird, the Merlin app, and the Arkansas Field Reference Annotated, all tools that both teach and assist community science. This area can be quite birdy with Summer Tanagers, Indigo Buntings, Barn Swallows, and Eastern Kingbirds. Look to the NE for the Bald Eagle nest. The grounds around the Center are level with both paved and grassy sections. Take time to enjoy the informative exhibits at the Visitor Center. Distance: 1/4 mile. Leader: Karen Holliday</p>	<p>F5 - Bird on Your Own -- Visitor Center Walk Depart: 1:00 PM (near venue) - Easy</p> <p>This is a non-guided route you can take any time of day on your own, instead of or after a field trip. Starting at the Visitor Center, stroll along the edge of Lake Bailey past the Amphitheater and the yurts to the Overflow Camping Area. Returning, walk to the Boat House, fishing pier, and picnic area and back to the Visitor Center. The area can be quite birdy with Summer Tanagers, Indigo Buntings, Barn Swallows, and Eastern Kingbirds. Look to the NE for the Bald Eagle nest. The grounds around the Center are level with both paved and grassy sections. Take time to enjoy the informative exhibits at the Visitor Center! Distance: ¼ mile. Leader: Unguided</p>	<p>F6 - Owl Prowl Depart: 8:00 PM (near venue) - Easy</p> <p>Be sure to bring a flashlight to this activity so that afterward you can use it to walk back to your vehicle! We will start at the Visitor Center at 8:00 p.m., after our evening program concludes. Park Interpreter BT Jones will be our guide. The Owl Prowl will start at 8:15 p.m., 15 minutes after sunset. We'll walk to the swimming pool and tennis courts and look for owls along the road. Eastern Screech Owls and Barred Owls are possible. We'll be walking on level pavement. Distance: ¼ mile. Duration: One hour. Leader: BT Jones, Park Interpreter</p>

Saturday, May 4

<p>S1 - CCC Hike & Bike Trail Depart: 7:00 AM (near venue) - Easy</p> <p>We'll leave from Mather Lodge at 7 a.m. to take this easy-paced walk along a level, paved trail through wooded areas to the Visitor Center and back. The wooded areas are good for spring warblers such as Black-and-white, Magnolia, Bay-breasted, Chestnut-sided, and Redstarts, plus Scarlet and Summer Tanagers. Possible lower canopy birds are Ovenbirds, Hooded and Kentucky Warblers, Swainson's and Gray-cheeked Thrushes, and more. Distance: ¼ mile. Leader: Allan Mueller</p>	<p>S2 - Cedar Creek Trail Depart: 7:00 AM (near venue) - Moderate</p> <p>We will carpool from Mather Lodge at 7 a.m. and meet at the Pioneer Cabin. From there, we'll go to the left of the cabin and walk the trail clockwise. It winds beside a scenic section of Cedar Creek. We may complete the loop, or, if the creek is flooded and impassable, we may turn back at that point because the bridge is out. Some steep natural rock steps and bluffs create a few difficult places. The rocky stream, high bluffs, and thick vegetation make this trail perfect for experiencing insects, plants, and bird life, including Louisiana Waterthrushes, Acadian and Great-crested Flycatchers, and more. Distance: 1 ¼ mile. Difficulty: Moderate. Leader: Arianna Rimmel</p>	<p>S3 - Cedar Falls Trail Depart: 7:00 AM (near venue) - Strenuous</p> <p>We will meet at the trailhead, at the historic Mather Lodge, at 7 a.m. The majestic view from the lodge looks down on canopy birds like orioles, tanagers, and Broad-winged Hawks. The Cedar Falls Trail descends into the canyon through various habitats. Tennessee, Hooded, Worm-eating, and Black-and-white Warblers can all be found as well as a collection of interesting forest wildflowers and butterflies. The trail ends 1 mile later at the 95-foot-tall Cedar Falls, one of the largest year-round waterfalls between the Appalachians and the Rockies. Distance: 2 miles round trip. Difficulty: Moderate on the way down, but the walk back up to the lodge is strenuous and participants may wish to take their time on the way back, following the orange blazes. Duration: Two hours at a minimum. Leader: Ragan Sutterfield & Matthew Matlock</p>
<p>S4 - Bear Cave Trail Depart: 10:30 AM (near venue) - Easy</p> <p>Please note the start time! For those who prefer a leisurely morning or have finished an earlier trail and still want to keep going, this trip is for you! Join Park Interpreter Jake Curry at the Bear Cave parking area for an interesting walk among giant sandstone boulders and slot canyons and learn about the Park's early history, its many legends and geology, plus more. Distance: ¼ miles. Difficulty: Easy. Leader: Jake Curry, Park Interpreter</p>	<p>S5 - Bird on Your Own -- Seven Hollows Trail Depart: 7:00 AM (near venue) - Strenuous</p> <p>This is a non-guided route you can take any time of day on your own. If you plan to hike the entire trail, make sure you allow sufficient time. This long loop trail marked by light blue blazes explores a diversity of habitats including forested hollows and open rocky glades. Some glades are home to one of central Arkansas's few populations of Eastern Collared Lizards. If you want to walk only a portion of the trail, go left at the first fork and the upper part of the trail is easy walking with a gentle slope. This portion of the trail can be good for Prairie Warblers, chats, grosbeaks, and woodpeckers. The rest of the trail is uneven with scattered rocky areas. The trail is moderately strenuous and can take several hours. Distance: 4.5 miles. Leader: Nonguided</p>	<p>S6 - Bird on Your Own -- Visitor Center or Lodge Walk Depart: 7:00 AM (near venue) - Easy</p> <p>These are two non-guided routes you can take any time of day on your own. See the F4 trip around the Visitor Center grounds. Another option is to walk a portion of the S1 CCC trail from the Lodge to the Visitor Center and back. Easy walking on a level, paved trail through wooded areas along the way. 1.3 miles one way. See S1 for more information. Leader: Nonguided</p>

<p>SU1 - Stout's Point Sunrise (Petit Jean Gravesite Overlook) Depart: 6:00 AM (near venue) - Easy</p> <p>We will carpool from Mather Lodge to meet Park Interpreter BT Jones at Stout's Point (Petit Jean Gravesite Overlook) at 6:00 a.m. Sunrise occurs around 6:17 a.m. We'll watch the sun rise above the beautiful Arkansas River Valley spread out below, listen to the birds waking up, and watch them forage for breakfast. We can walk the cliff edge and boardwalk towards the old YMCA building for sparrows and other species in the low shrubs. As the sun warms the air, thermals begin to form, attracting soaring vultures and raptors. Remember—the Early Birder gets the birds! Grab n go breakfast will be available after this trip, should you select it. Leader: BT Jones, Park Interpreter</p>	<p>SU2 - Holla Bend National Wildlife Refuge Depart: 8:30 AM (45 minutes) - Easy</p> <p>We will leave from Mather Lodge at 8:30 a.m. and drive to the entrance to the Refuge, GPS 35.139757, -93.054194. Once there, we'll consolidate ourselves into fewer cars and carpool. Holla Bend is a globally significant Important Bird Area on an old bend of the Arkansas River eight miles downriver from Dardanelle. The USFWS manages over 7,000 acres here to benefit migrating waterfowl and neotropical songbirds like Blue Grosbeaks, Northern Bobwhite, Bobolinks, and Bell's Vireos. The trip will be a combination of driving, with frequent stops, and very little walking. Drive time from the Park to the NWR is approximately 45 minutes. Leader: Karen Holliday</p>	
---	--	--