

VENTURE OUT 2026 SCHEDULE

- Registration required ● Registration preferred
● Paid activity ● Free activity

Friday, May 15

● **Tour de Lake Shelby | 8:30 - 10:30 am | Gulf Oak Ridge parking**

Guided bike ride around Lake Shelby at Gulf State Park. This 5-mile round trip will include some fantastic views and information about Gulf State Park's biodiversity.

● **Seine Net Experience | 9-11 am | Lake Shelby Picnic Area**

Together, we'll drag a seine net through the shallow waters of one of our brackish lakes and discover the unique creatures that call it home! You'll also learn how to identify the critters we find and explore the differences between freshwater lakes and the Gulf. Be sure to wear shoes that can get wet! Learn more and sign up [here](#).

● **Yaupon Holly Tea Workshop | 10-11:30 am | Gulf Coast Eco-Center**

Yaupon Holly is a native shrub that grows wild throughout the Southeastern United States. Prized for its caffeinated leaves, yaupon has a rich cultural history and a promising future as a truly American tea. Participants will learn how to identify this common forest plant, explore its indigenous and colonial history, and enjoy freshly brewed yaupon tea. Cost is \$10. Sign up [here](#).

● **Guided Beach Walk | 1-3 pm | Gulf State Park Beach Pavilion**

Join our naturalist for a guided beach walk and discover what washes up on our shores! Our knowledgeable guide will lead you along the shoreline, highlighting the unique plants, animals, and shells that thrive in this ecosystem. Learn how both nature and humans impact the shoreline, and discover the vital role each plays in maintaining a healthy coastal environment. Learn more and register [here](#). (weather dependent)

● **Interpretive Center Tour | 2-2:30 pm | Interpretive Center**

Tour Alabama's most environmentally friendly building that's pursuing LEED Platinum and full Living Building Challenge certifications.

● **Plein Air Painting | All Day | Parkwide**

Local and regional artists will be painting daily along the trail. View these creatives at work and see the trail and the park through their eyes!

● **Venture Out BioBlitz 2026 | All Day 5/11-18 | Parkwide**

A BioBlitz is a community effort to document as many plant and animal species as possible in a set area. Explore the trails and record your observations by uploading photos through the [iNaturalist app](#). It's free and easy to use; no experience is needed! Be sure to join the "Venture Out BioBlitz 2026" project within the app to have your observations count. Winners will be announced on social media, so be sure to follow LearningCampusGSP on Facebook and Instagram!

Saturday, May 16

Sunday, May 17

●● **"Storm Ready" Workshop | 9 am - 3:30 pm | Gulf Coast Eco Center**

Be STORM READY and join the Alabama Cooperative Extension System for a full day workshop covering hurricane preparedness for homeowners and property managers. Cost is \$10 and lunch is included. Register [here](#).

●● **Gopher Tortoise Get Together | 9-11 am | Lookout Structure, Rosemary Dunes Trail**

Looking for a tort-ally good time? Stop by along the trail to learn why these incredible tortoises are so important to our local ecosystem. Try your hand at burrow scoping using our mock burrow, and don't miss live burrow scoping demonstrations at 9:30 and 10:30 am. Learn more and register [here](#).

●● **"Treetop Trails" Aerial Adventure Course | 9-11 am, 2-5 pm | Gulf Coast Eco Center**

Come explore the Gulf Coast Eco Center, Alabama's newest hub for outdoor learning and adventure. Don a harness and helmet and brave the Lookout Aerial Adventure Course. Rising 28 feet high in the pines, the course features a continuous belay system and 17 elements that vary in difficulty. Participants choose their own route to determine their level of adventure and are rewarded with refreshments upon completing the course. Ages 10 and up. Cost is \$25. Register [here](#) or call (251) 394-0398.

●● **Eagles & Alligators Nature Walk | 1-3 pm | Gulf Oak Ridge Trailhead**

Take a stroll with our park naturalists along Gopher Tortoise Trail, a favorite path for spotting native wildlife such as bald eagles, alligators, turtles, and a variety of birds and insects. This 1.5-mile walk is on fully accessible paved paths and elevated boardwalks. Bring water, wear comfortable shoes, and don't forget your binoculars or camera for possible wildlife sightings! Learn more and register [here](#).

● **Interpretive Center Tour | 3:30-4 pm | Interpretive Center**

Tour Alabama's most environmentally friendly building that's pursuing LEED Platinum and full Living Building Challenge certifications.

● **Plein Air Painting | All Day | Parkwide**

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● **Venture Out BioBlitz 2026 | All Day 5/11-18 | Parkwide**

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● **Venture Out BioBlitz 2026 | All Day | Parkwide**

Compete with other nature lovers to make unique observations in Gulf State Park while also helping park and state biologists better understand the populations and distribution of species. Running from 5/11-5/18.

● **Plein Air Painting | All Day | Parkwide**

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● **Plein Air Art Exhibit | 1-5 pm | The Lodge**

View the Venture Out Plein Air Paintings on display at The Lodge at Gulf State Park. Meet the artists and view their creative interpretations of trail locations.

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