



For your safety and to preserve the features of the park, observe these rules:

1. **Remain on the trail.**
Poison ivy is common.

2. **Children should remain with adults and not run ahead on the trails.**
These trails are maintained in a natural state, and encounters with wildlife (like snakes) should be expected.

3. **Watch your footing.**

4. **Collecting artifacts, fossils, flowers, or animals is prohibited.**
Please leave these objects for other visitors to enjoy.

5. **No pets, ATVs, or bicycles are allowed.**

6. **Hunting or carrying any type of weapon is prohibited.**

7. **Please do not feed or harass wildlife.**
You are a guest in their environment.

8. **Place litter in the containers provided at the Museum or Mayes Lakes.**

CAUTION: The doors to the Museum are locked at 4:45pm. Outside access to the visitors parking lot is by way of a sidewalk on the north side of the Museum. The LeFleur's Bluff State Park gate locks at 5pm. Security assistance is available during Museum hours.



Remember
The Museum gate closes at 5:00,
and the Museum door closes at 4:45.

For Security assistance call
601-576-6000



Preserving Natural Mississippi

2148 Riverside Drive
Jackson, MS 39202-1353
www.mdwfp.com/museum

Mississippi Department of Wildlife,
Fisheries, and Parks'
Museum of Natural Science

Mon-Fri, 8am-5pm
Sat, 9am-5pm
Sun, 1pm-5pm



TRAIL GUIDE

Whatever the season,
experience the Museum's

Nature Trail



Please return these brochures so they may be recycled.

Welcome to the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks' Museum of Natural Science nature trails. These trails meander through wooded bluffs, river bottoms, lakes, and scenic swamplands, offering you opportunities for nature walks, photography, and the study of living things in their environment.

Trail descriptions:

Old Pond Trail (Yellow)
(.16 miles)
Mostly paved, has some sections of boardwalk-type decking.

Overlook Loop (Green)
(.21 miles)
Loops around to the yellow trail, includes the overlook, featuring views from the bluff.

Cypress Swamp Trail (Blue) (.36 miles)
Very steep at the section that connects the Overlook Loop (Green) and Pearl River Trail (Purple). A series of boardwalk steps and platforms lead to the bottom of the bluff.

Old River Run (Red) (.32 miles, one-way)
The section of trail between the slough and Eubanks Creek is alive with paw paws and hardwoods.

Pearl River Trail (Purple) (.81 miles, one-way)
This section may be closed in high water. It connects the upper trails to Mayes Lake, where the trail ends. Return by backtracking the same trail.

NOTE: If hiking the trail from Mayes Lake to the Museum, Museum admission must be paid in order to enter and tour the Museum.



Trails are accessible from any of our lower level doors.

 Handicap accessible areas are limited to the sidewalks and board bridge section of the trail.

1. Overlook

Here you can observe different levels of the forest: the upper canopy, the understory of smaller trees and shrubs, and the forest floor.

2. Boardwalk Bridge

Walk along the boardwalk above the forest floor. Looking down, you'll see plants associated with chalky, lime-rich soils.



3. Woodland Pond

This pond is a remnant of an abandoned farm and provides habitat for small aquatic creatures.

4. Callaway Marker

Placed in honor of Robert Callaway, principal of the Pocahontas Public School in the 1930s. Callaway was instrumental in the development of the original nature trail.

5. Ravine

Here you pass a ravine that drains the bluff. Depending on the season, the ravine may be completely dry, provide seepage from springs, or funnel large volumes of water into the swamp during heavy rainfall.



6. Swamp View

Observe the life of the swamp from the Upper Slough Observation Deck.

7. Fossil Gulch

Thirty-eight million years ago, this tall bluff was part of the floor of an inland sea. This ravine is locally known as "Fossil Gulch" because of the numerous marine invertebrates found here.

8. Old River Run

Here the trail crosses an old channel of the Pearl River. (A gravel pipeline right-of-way road crosses the natural rail and dead ends in both directions.)

9. American Beech

The very large tree on the left of the trail is an American beech, easily recognized by its smooth, bluish gray bark.



10. Pawpaw Patch

Notice the small shrubs and trees with very large leaves? These are pawpaw trees. In summer they produce fruit that is quickly eaten by wildlife.

11. Slough View

Sloughs (pronounced "slews") are areas that were once part of a river channel, but do not retain water year round.

12. Eubanks Creek

Eubanks Creek flows through the city of Jackson before it enters the park. Urbanization along the creek contributes to increased erosion and the murkiness of the water. Litter, another sign of human impact, is unsightly and dangerous to wildlife.

13. Backwater

The backwater alongside the river is an important nursery for aquatic life. Spotted gar, redear sunfish, and blackspotted top minnows are at home in this environment.

14. Pearl River View

Shifting channels erode banks and deposit sandbars used by birds, nesting turtles and mussels. The Pearl River was named for the pearls the once-abundant mussels produced. One of the largest inhabitants of the river is the endangered Gulf Sturgeon, a fish that can weigh up to 500 pounds!

A primitive scout campsite and picnic area can be found at the end of the large trail to your left.



15. Mayes Lakes

Beginning here, the trail is flanked by two oxbow lakes, both old channels of the Pearl River cut off by its changes in course. An observation deck overlooks one lake.

16. Trail End

The trail ends at Mayes Lakes, though you can continue your walk on the one mile looped road that goes around the lake, if you wish.



Keep your eyes open. You never know when you might see a box turtle, or a great egret. The trail also features aquatic and woodland wildflowers. And in the winter, you may see dry goldenrod moving in the breeze.

