

GSTA Conference Field Trips: Feb. 11 & 12, 2010

THURSDAY TRIPS for Feb. 11, 2010

Natural Barrier Island Ecology on Wassaw National Wildlife Refuge (via the UGA Marine Extension Service)

Date: Feb. 11, 2010

Time: 9:30 am - 3:30 pm Van transport from conference center at 8:30 with a ~4:30 return

Fee: \$30 per person (box lunch included)

Group Size: 15 - 25

Meet: Conference center field trip table. Includes transportation from the trade center to the UGA Marine Extension Service and back.

Enjoy a boat ride on the UGA Marine Extension Service's open Carolina skiffs to beautiful Wassaw Island National Wildlife Refuge. Hike through the maritime forest and explore one of the most pristine, undeveloped beaches on the U.S. east coast with weathered and engaging naturalists. This trip emphasizes the changing nature of the barrier island environment and the adaptations organisms to this environment.

Blackwater Paddle (via Wilderness Southeast)

Dates: Thursday, Feb. 11 & Friday, Feb. 12, 2010 (may have to combine the two trips if one or the other of the trips does not meet the minimum)

Time: 11:30 - 4:00 pm

Fee: \$55 per person (includes transportation to the river plus canoe and gear and a delicious lunch!)

Group size: 10 - 16 participants

Meet: Conference center main entrance (bus loop)

Our van will pick you up at the Trade Center Main Entrance (bus loop) and drive about 30 minutes to the wilder west side of Savannah. After basic canoeing instruction, your WiSE naturalist will lead the way downstream past stately tupelo and ancient cypress. You'll discuss the river swamp ecosystem, and find why our coastal river swamps have a rather unique ebb and flow. The dark, twisted and tall trunks reflect perfectly in the mirror-dark water, as you watch for turtles, herons, and noisy kingfishers diving for their next meal. If you're lucky with the weather you might spot a shy alligator sunning in the shallows. In every season there's beauty around every bend of this Scenic Waterway. Bring your camera!

Savannah Walking Tour (via Bob Markwalter)

Date: Thursday, Feb. 11, 2010

Time: 1:30 - 3:00/3:30 pm

Fee: \$15 per person

Group Size: 10 - 20

Meet: The Hyatt on River Street (the water taxi is free from the Westin – take the 1:10 pm taxi that goes to the Hyatt to Meet Bob Markwalter)

Savannah is internationally known for its splendid buildings and beautiful surroundings. Enjoy a one and a half to two hour stroll beneath live oaks draped in Spanish moss, past stately mansions and through landscaped squares. Relive the Civil War, King Cotton's reign, the city's earliest days and some of its latest. See Savannah through the eyes of the people who lived here. The walking tour will be led by licensed Savannah tour guide Bob Markwalter, who holds a degree in history and political science and has worked with preservation issues and historic sites for over 35 years.

Guided Plant & Wildlife Walk (via the Oatland Island Wildlife Center)

Date: Thursday, Feb. 11, 2010

Time: 1:00 - 3:00 pm Van transport from conference center at 12:30 with a 3:30 return

Fee: \$10 per person

Group Size: 15 - 60

Meet: Conference Center Field Trip table @ 12:25. Includes transportation from and back to the conference center.

Come and discover the Oatland Island Wildlife Center to learn more about the award winning education programs they have to offer while walking through the pristine habitat where the center is located. Oatland Island occupies over 100 acres of maritime forest and over 50 species of animals. On this walk, you may see wolves, alligators, pelicans, cranes, owls, goats, pigs, sheep, bison, deer, armadillos, and many more fascinating animals in various exhibit areas.

FRIDAY TRIPS for Feb. 12, 2010

Harbor to Refuge (via Wilderness Southeast)

Date: Friday, Feb. 12, 2010

Time: 9:30 am - 1:30 pm

Fee: \$75 per person (includes Coast Guard approved boat and captain, naturalist guide, and a delicious picnic lunch!)

Group size: 13 - 24

Meet: Westin dock

Departing right from the Westin Hotel dock (just a 2-minute walk from the Trade Center), you'll join your naturalist guide aboard a motorboat for a journey back in time. You'll experience contrasts of both history and water quality. Beginning amidst the bustle of today's tourism in Savannah, you'll travel upstream through the industrial port, and on to the serene expanse of the Savannah National Wildlife Refuge. Sunning alligators and feeding herons are often seen. Along the way you'll pass the site where Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin. Your guide will describe the history of human uses of the river from the days of rice plantations to the present day industrial landscape, and how these activities have changed the river and its tidal wetlands. You'll also sample salinity as you proceed upriver, revealing the anomaly of our tidal freshwater and easily collecting data that shows the salt water wedge. Dress warmly in layers (hint; rain gear makes a good windbreak layer), bring binoculars if you have them. We'll eat when we find a good place along the route.

Trawling trip aboard the R/V *Sea Dawg* (via the UGA Marine Extension Service)

Date: Friday, Feb. 12, 2010

Time: 9:00 - 11:30 noon Van transport from conference center at 8:15 with a ~12:15 return

Fee: \$40 per person (lunch NOT included)

Group Size: 10 - 20

Meet: Conference Center field trip table. Includes transportation from the center to the UGA Marine Extension Service and back.

Spend a few hours aboard the UGA Marine Extension Service's research vessel, the R/V *Sea Dawg* and explore one method of scientific sampling as an otter trawl net is deployed to gather bottom dwelling organisms in our estuary. The catch will be pulled up on board for participants to learn about the natural history and commercial importance of many vertebrate and invertebrate species, while having the opportunity to see and touch these live animals.

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Ethnobotany of Savannah (via Wilderness Southeast)

Date: Friday, Feb. 12, 2010

Time: 9:30 - 11:30am

Fee: \$25 per person

Group size: 4 - 12

Meet: River Street at the Water Taxi dock near the Hilton (take the 9:10 am water taxi from the Westin)

On this leisurely tour of downtown Savannah you'll stroll from square to square, experiencing both natural and human history. You'll observe and discuss the native plants that greeted and supported Savannah's earliest settlers, as well as horticultural species brought in more recently for their decorative or useful aspects. You'll delve into botany and human history, and see their interconnections, for your guide is a licensed Historic Savannah guide, as well as a botanist and horticulturist. For over 20 years he has worked with both teachers and students, creating programming for field trips that comply with Georgia Performance standards. Wear walking shoes, and dress warmly. Cameras and notebooks are appropriate.

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GHOST TOURS in Savannah can be reserved on an individual basis by calling any of the following tour companies:

CANDLELIGHT WALKING TOURS - 912-604-3007

Haunted History Tour - 90 minute candlelight walking tour of Savannah.

Times: 7:00 pm and 9:00 p.m.

Fees: \$10.00 Adults, \$8.00 Seniors over 55, and \$5.00 children 5-12.

Haunted Pub Crawl – 2 hour candlelight walking tour of pubs. Must be over 21. Alcohol is not provided or required but definitely encouraged.

Times: 8:00 pm and 9:00 pm (2 locations)

Fees: \$10.00 Adults, \$8.00 Seniors over 55.

SAVANNAH GHOST TOURS - SORREL – WEED HOUSE - 912-236-8888

Most Haunted Home in Savannah, plus walk through 2 squares and by the ‘ol Cemetery.

90 minute tours - Real History, Real Activity, Real Creepy.

Times: 6:45 pm and 10:15 pm

Fees: \$18.00 Adults (13 and up), \$10.00 children (7 – 12)

HEARSE GHOST TOURS - 912-695-1578

Ride through cemeteries and historic streets in real hearse that was in service for over 15 years. Raised seats in hearse allow for great viewing. 8 bodies per car. Times: Hearse leaves at 6:00, 7:30, 9:00 and 10:45 pm

Fees: \$15.00 Adults, \$10.00 Children (10 and under)

PIRATE’S HOUSE DINNER GHOST TOUR – 912-234-8128

2 hour tours. Ride the “Haunted Trolley” and fill your imagination with ghoulish stories from the past or the present. The Pirate’ House Dinner completes the tour.

Times: Nightly 7:00 pm

Fees: \$47.00 Adults, Children \$30.00 (12 and under)