



## Valentine's Day Fun at Georgia State Parks

Jan 31, 2017 | Mandy Holm



Fall in love with Georgia's natural history this Valentine's Day; Georgia State Parks have plenty of events to choose from, from paddling and exploring suspension bridges under the moonlight, to dinner and dancing or a haunting history tour.

### North Georgia

In mountainous northeast Georgia, Tallulah Gorge State Park is offering a short moonlit hike to the suspension bridge on the edge of the gorge. Enjoy a hike in the moonlight Friday, February 10 through Sunday, February 12. The cost is \$5 to attend plus \$5 for parking, and participants will need to register in advance. Call 706-754-7981 to register.

West of Tallulah Gorge near Chatsworth is Fort Mountain State Park. On Valentine's Day, the park is hosting the Hidden Heart Valentine's Day Hike from 3p.m. to 4:30 p.m. When the Civilian Conservation Corps built the 38-foot fire tower at Fort Mountain in the 1930s, a young mason working on the project carved a heart out of stone and left it in the tower to remind him of his love back home. Hike participants will see the stone and learn about the love story behind this romantic gesture. The cost of attendance is \$5 and participants can register by calling 706-422-1932.

In Newnan, Chattahoochee Bend State Park is holding its Valentine's Day Luminary Riverside Stroll from 6 to 8 p.m. on Saturday, February 11. The stroll is a quiet, self-guided sunset hike along the riverside just for you and your other half. Luminaries will lead the trail to the Observation Tower and bonfire. Participants are asked to pre-register, bring a flashlight and sturdy shoes and arrive by 7:25 p.m., as no couples will be admitted after this point. The cost of attendance is \$10 per couple and \$5 to park. Register by calling 770-254-7271.

### Middle Georgia

Middle Georgians can enjoy a number of events hosted by Panola Mountain State Park in Stockbridge. Valentine's Day Singles Archery will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. on Friday, February 10. Additionally, Panola Mountain State Park offers archery for couples during its Valentine's Day Cupid Shoot on Saturday, February 11 from 6 to 8 p.m. These are open to people ages 18 and up, and participants must register in advance by calling 770-389-7801. Both events are priced at \$25 and parking is \$5.

For couples who would rather not handle bows and arrows, the park is hosting its Valentine's Day Couples Hike from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, February 11. During this one-mile sunset hike, a series of team-building games will determine who among the participants are the King and Queen of Love. Space is limited, so call 770-389-7801 to reserve your spot. Bring sturdy shoes, water and a flashlight. The cost to attend is \$20 plus \$5 to park.

In Millen, Georgia, Magnolia Springs State Park's signature Valentine's Day event is its Love is in the "Scare" Valentine's Tour, taking place on Saturday, February 11 from 2 to 10 p.m. This History and Haunts tour is not for the faint of heart! Participants will enjoy a hot dog and chili dinner and learn about the history of Camp Lawton, the world's largest prison for six weeks during the Civil War. Then, guests will hear from experts in paranormal activities and the bravest at heart will hike the Camp Lawton trails in the dark. Everyone is asked to wear good walking shoes and no one under 13 will be allowed. Space is limited, so call 478-982-1660 to reserve non-refundable tickets. Tickets are \$29 for individuals and \$49 for couples plus \$5 to park.

### **South Georgia**

Nature lovers in the South Georgia region can enjoy a romantic paddle tour in the moonlight on Friday, February 10 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Laura S. Walker State Park in Waycross. The park's Valentine's Full Moon Paddle is a ranger-led paddle on the lake where participants will likely witness a large mixture of nocturnal wildlife. Tickets, purchased in advance, are \$25 for a single paddleboard and \$35 for a tandem paddleboard. Guests are required to be able to swim and to bring closed-toe shoes, bug spray, water and snacks, if desired. Additionally, guests are reminded that there is a possibility of alligator sightings. Call 912-287-4900 to register.

Couples who would prefer a land excursion can join in on the Couple's Hike at Reed Bingham State Park in Adel. On this hike, guests will still be able to see both everyday and nocturnal wildlife. The hike will be held on Friday, February 10 from 6 to 8 p.m. Don't forget to bring a flashlight and bug spray. Tickets are \$2 for the hike and \$5 to park. Register by calling 229-896-3551.

History lovers can enjoy the Valentine's Civil War Dinner and Dance at Fort McAllister State Park in Richmond Hill. On Saturday, February 11 from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m., guests will enjoy a candlelit dinner for two, tour of Fort McAllister, period singing and dancing and a cannon firing. Required reservations can be made by calling 912-727-2339. Tickets are \$100.

Finally, couples or double-daters can enjoy a romantic train ride dinner on Valentine's Day from 5:30 to 7 p.m. on the SAM Shortline Train at Georgia Veterans State Park in Cordele. At 4:45 p.m., guests will board the train before departing for a 45-minute train ride to stunning Lake Blackshear. On arrival, guests will enjoy a romantic Italian dinner on the train with a breathtaking view of the lake. The Lake Blackshear Resort will host a cash bar serving beer and wine on the train. After dinner, the train will take guests back to Georgia Veterans State Park by 7 p.m. Reservations are required and cost \$129 per couple plus sales tax and \$229 for a table of four plus sales tax. Register by calling 229-276-0755.

Fall in love with nature this Valentine's Day at one of Georgia's 63 beautiful and historic state parks. For more ideas on having fun at a state park near you, visit [GAStateParks.org](http://GAStateParks.org).