

NEWS RELEASE * ELACHEE NATURE SCIENCE CENTER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RE: Calendar of Events – March to September 2012

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770/535-1976 – www.elachee.org**

Photos are available in electronic form for the asking

* Family-oriented programming

***Elachee Nature Science Center**, the premier environmental education center in Georgia, is celebrating over 30 years of building environmental literacy through quality educational field trips, museum exhibits, programs for families and children, and resources for schools, groups, and the general public. Elachee was Georgia's first and is currently metro Atlanta's only nature center to be accredited by SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools). Elachee also serves as the natural resource manager of the Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve, a 1,500-acre woodland which surrounds the Center, one of the largest green space areas in North Georgia and an ideal outdoor learning laboratory for Elachee's hands-on programs. Each year over 35,000 students from more than 35 school systems and an additional 30,000 visitors enjoy Elachee's educational programs and hands-on learning experiences. The Museum Center houses three discovery areas where visitors can explore native plants and animals, local archaeological history, astronomy, and displays of live amphibians, reptiles, and hawks. Seasonal museum hours can be found on the website: www.elachee.org. Admission to the Center is \$5 for adults, \$3 for children ages 2-12, and Free for children under 2 and Elachee members. Outside the Center, visitors can tour our rain garden and compost demonstration sites, picnic, or hike on any of the 13 miles of trails through the Nature Preserve. Trails are open every day of the year from 8 am – dusk. Use of the trails is free, although donations are welcome. Elachee is located just south of Gainesville, GA., off I-985 at Exit 17.

Ongoing Programs

***Elachee's Permanent Exhibit: "Waters of Time: The Chicopee Woods Story" – Ongoing.** This exhibit traces the importance of Walnut Creek in the development and preservation of the Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve, highlighting previous eras and inhabitants of Chicopee Woods through the Ice Age, Native American, Colonial, and 20th Century periods. View two authentic fossilized mosasaur skeletons and explore how cultures lived through actual artifacts, dioramas, and hands-on activities. Children will love climbing on a 1-ton petrified log, making pottery rubbings to take home, and using our computer kiosk to explore Chicopee Woods habitats and animals. Seasonal Hours are available on the website www.elachee.org. Admission: \$5 adults, \$3 children, Elachee members and children under 2 free. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

***Elachee's Permanent Exhibit: "Searching for Spaceship Earth" – Ongoing.** Take a voyage to outer space in our astronomy hall filled with an array of displays to acquaint you with our solar system, planet earth, and beyond. See a 100 pound meteorite older than any Earth rock, discover how much you weigh on other planets, make a "moon crater", check out the current moon phase, and make a rubbing of star constellations. Keep up to date with the latest Earth and astronomy discoveries through ViewSpace, a continually updating video display from NASA's Space Science Telescope Institute including views from the Hubble Space Telescope of Earth, other planets, and celestial bodies. Children will enjoy the moonscape and hands-on activities. Seasonal Hours are available on the

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website www.elachee.org. Admission: \$5 adults, \$3 children, Elachee members and children under 2 free. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

***Elachee's Discover Nature Packs – Ongoing.** Check out a free *Discover Nature Pack* and explore nature in the Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve! The daypacks are filled with nature guides, activities, and fun learning games to help parents maximize their family's woodland experience. Pack versions available are animals, plants, bilingual English/Spanish, and GPS/Orienteering for older children. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

***Elachee's Adopt-A-Friend - Ongoing.** Adoption program for Elachee's collection of 30 live animals that is perfect for school classes, scout groups or individuals. Priced by amount of care and food needed, this educational adoption program is complete with adoption certificate, picture of the animal and info sheet, passes to visit your animal, plus a bag of themed goodies. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

Rent Elachee for Your Next Special Event - Ongoing. Our beautiful facilities are available for your next business meeting, wedding, bridal shower, or anniversary party. You can choose from five unique spaces located in a wooded nature preserve with the beauty of wildflowers and the trill of birdsong in the air. Call for details. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

***Elachee's Birthday Parties for Children - Ongoing.** Leap into nature with Elachee's education-themed birthday parties for children ages 4 and up...bugs, snakes, dinos, amphibians. Party includes a woodland nature hike or craft, animal encounter, party favors, invitations, and admission to Elachee for the birthday child and 12 friends. Weekdays at 3 pm, Saturdays at 10:30 am or 1:30 pm, reservations required. \$125 Elachee members, \$150 non-members. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

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Elachee's Trail Crew Work Day. Saturday, March 10th, 10 am – 3 pm. A good day of exercise, camaraderie, and doing something good for the planet! Join us as we work to improve Elachee's trails. Bring water, lunch, gloves and rain gear. Tools, training, and afternoon refreshments included. Free. Those under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Call to pre-register. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

***First Saturday Hike at Elachee, "Signs of Spring". Saturday, March 3rd, 10 – 11:30 am.** Join a naturalist on a guided hike in the Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve. Great for families, scout groups, and individuals. Program fee: \$5 Adults, \$3 Children ages 2-12. Children under 2 and Elachee members free. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org

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Elachee's "Nights Out for Nature". Night #5: Thursday, March 8th, at The Blue Bicycle in Dawsonville. Elachee is launching a series of dinners, hosted by a different restaurant each month. A portion of the proceeds will go to support Elachee programs. Some restaurants are planning special menus with wine pairings for Elachee's night. Each dinner will be hosted by board members and other friends of Elachee, who will greet diners and thank them and the restaurateurs for their support. Mark your calendar and support Elachee with an enjoyable evening at a great restaurant! Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

Elachee's New Winter Lecture Series, Session 3: March 22nd, 7:00 – 9:00pm. Join us on the 4th Thursday of each winter month (Jan.-Mar. 2012) for a series of talks by guest experts who will share their knowledge in natural history, environmental policy, and other areas of interest regarding the world around us. Session 3 features Jennifer Ceska from the University of Georgia's State Botanical Garden, and her topic is "Endangered Plants of Georgia". Admission Fee: \$5 non-members, Elachee members free. Call for information or to reserve seating at this exciting new event. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

***Elachee's "Trillium Trek". 5k, 10K, ½ marathon, and Kid's Fun Run options. Saturday, March 24th.** Enjoy the beauty of the Chicopee Woods in the spring on single track trails that will lead you to Walnut Creek and Elachee's 140-foot suspension bridge, and provide the challenge of moderately rolling hills. 5K, 10K, and Kids' Fun Run options. Registration includes tech t-shirt, post-race recovery drinks/fruit, and a raffle ticket for a chance to win great prizes. Winners in various categories receive hand-carved, alabaster trillium pendants. More information at www.elachee.org/trilliumtrek. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

Elachee's Backyard Conservation Workshop. Saturday, March 31st, 10am -12 noon. Learn the rudiments of composting, a natural way to dispose of leaves and other yard materials while building rich soil for the garden. Then explore ways to use barrels and cisterns to capture and store rain water for your gardens or create a new rain garden in your yard. These workshops are made possible by a grant from the City of Gainesville and are free to local residents. Call to pre-register. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

***"Stars Over Elachee" at Chicopee Lake. Saturday, March 31st, 7:30-9:30pm.** Learn about astronomy and how to use a telescope to view the night sky. You'll receive an observing log and star chart to assist in seeing constellations, stars, planets, and even Moon craters and Apollo landing sites. **Good time to view Jupiter, Venus and Mars and Saturn.** Suggested for adults and children ages 8 and up. Bring a flashlight and pencil. Space is limited and reservations are required. Call to register and reserve a telescope. Program fee: \$10 Adults, \$5 for children ages 2-12. Elachee members free. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

Elachee's Pre-order Native Plant Sale. Pre-order dates: April 1st – 15th. List available April 1st. Pickup date: Thursday, April 26th, 1-6pm. Pre-order fantastic plants that will create a garden of color later this spring and summer. Selections include high quality drought-resistant wildflowers, perennials, native azaleas, and woody shrubs that attract butterflies, birds and wildlife. Call to receive a list and order form or download the list from our website; order by phone, mail or online. Elachee

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Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976.

www.elachee.org.

***Elachee's Spring Break Camp. Mon. April 2nd – Friday April 6th, 9am – 2pm.** Children learn to appreciate nature and enjoy being outdoors in the beautiful Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve surrounding the Center. This popular day camp for elementary-aged children features exciting nature/science topics with learning activities plus the fun of crafts, songs, woodland and creek hikes, making new friends, and more. Experienced and trained staff, excellent staff-to-child ratios, and a warm, personal atmosphere in a well supervised setting. Before and after camp care is available for an additional fee. Call for details and to register. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

Elachee's Georgia Master Naturalist Program. Weekly sessions: Thursdays, April 5th – June 14th, 1:00-5:30pm. Includes 1 field trip to Elachee's Mountain Education site: Thursday, May 3rd, 8-5pm. Join Elachee staff and invited speakers for a hands-on program that explores habitats and ecosystems in Georgia. After completing this fun and interactive program, certified Georgia Master Naturalists are encouraged to share their knowledge with their communities by volunteering as trail guides or trail stewards at Elachee. Program fee: \$160. Must be 18 or older to participate. For more information or to register call 770/535-1976 or email elachee@elachee.org. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

***First Saturday Hike at Elachee, "Spring Wildflowers". April 7th, 10 – 11:30am.** Join a naturalist on a guided hike in the Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve and learn about Georgia's native spring wildflowers. Great for families, scout groups and individuals. Program fee (includes museum admission): \$5 Adults, \$3 Children ages 2-12. Children under 2 and Elachee members free. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

Elachee's Trail Crew Work Day. Saturday, April 7th, 10am – 3pm. A good day of exercise, camaraderie, and doing something good for the planet. Join us as we work to improve Elachee's trails. Bring water, lunch, gloves and rain gear. Tools, training, and afternoon refreshments provided. Free. Those under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Call to preregister. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

Earth Day 2012 at Elachee. Saturday, April 21st, 10am - 12noon. Celebrate our planet and its wonders by participating in a volunteer service project. Learn about our natural world and help to restore wildlife habitat in the Chicopee Woods. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

***"Stars Over Elachee" at Chicopee Lake. Saturday, April 28th, 7:45-9:45pm.** Learn about astronomy and how to use a telescope to view the night sky. You'll receive an observing log and star chart to assist in seeing constellations, stars, planets, and even Moon craters and Apollo landing sites. **Good time to view Venus, Mars and Saturn.** Suggested for adults and children ages 8 and up. Bring a flashlight and pencil. Space is limited and reservations are required. Call to register and reserve a telescope. Program fee: \$10 Adults, \$5 for children ages 2-12. Elachee members free. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

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***First Saturday Hike at Elachee, “Birds and Migration”. May 5th, 10 – 11:30am.** Join a naturalist on a guided hike in the Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve and learn about avian activity in the north Georgia springtime. Great for families, scout groups and individuals. Program fee: \$5 Adults, \$3 Children ages 2-12. Children under 2 and Elachee members free. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

Elachee’s Trail Crew Work Day. Saturday, May 5th, 10am – 3pm. A good day of exercise, camaraderie, and doing something good for the planet. Join us as we work to improve Elachee’s trails. Bring water, lunch, gloves and rain gear. Tools, training, and afternoon refreshments provided. Free. Those under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Call to preregister. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

Elachee’s Annual “Flights of Fancy” Benefit Auction. Friday, May 11th, 6-9pm. Come for a casual evening featuring hors d’oeuvres, wine and other beverages, jazz music and a unique silent auction of “flighty” garden items, bird houses, and truly unique yard art created by local artists, notables and Elachee friends. Proceeds benefit Elachee’s education programs for children and conservation efforts in the preserve. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

***First Saturday Hike at Elachee, “Reptiles and Amphibians”. June 2nd, 10 – 11:30am.** Join a naturalist on a guided hike in the Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve to look for and learn about these fascinating creatures. Great for families, scout groups and individuals. Program fee: \$5 Adults, \$3 Children ages 2-12. Children under 2 and Elachee members free. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

Elachee’s Trail Crew Work Day. Saturday, June 2nd, 10am – 3pm. A good day of exercise, camaraderie, and doing something good for the planet. Join us as we work to improve Elachee’s trails. Bring water, lunch, gloves and rain gear. Tools, training, and afternoon refreshments provided. Free. Those under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Call to preregister. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

***Camp Elachee Preview Day. Saturday, June 2nd, 11am - 2pm.** Join us for our annual kickoff to Camp Elachee. Meet our professional, friendly and knowledgeable camp staff. Enjoy guided hikes in the Chicopee Woods. Participate in craft making, special animal programs and other activities that make Camp Elachee the area’s best day camp. Bring a picnic lunch and take in the beauty of the Chicopee Woods. Free. Children under 2 and Elachee members free. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

Camp Elachee Summer Day Camp. June 4th through August 3rd. Pre-K Camps, 9am – 12noon; Elementary & Middle School Camps, 9am – 2pm. Morning and afternoon extended care available. Elachee Nature Science Center has hosted quality environmental education camps in the Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve for over 30 years. Each week of camp uniquely blends traditional camp activities and inquiry based learning opportunities set in the beautiful woodland Preserve surrounding the Center. The pace is slow and child-friendly. Our campers study nature while walking

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trails, wading in creeks, creating crafts, and singing songs. Their adventures and experiences at Camp Elachee increase children's knowledge and appreciation of nature, strengthening lifelong connections to the natural world as they make new friends along the way. Themed pre-K, elementary, and middle school camps are available on a week-to-week basis. Call and check our website for details and registration information. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

Elachee's "First Wednesday" Home School Education Program Preview Day. Wed., July 25th, 1:30 – 3:30 pm. Visit Elachee to see what our First Wednesday Home School Series is all about. Tour the buildings, take a guided hike on the trails, visit the live animal room, and talk to the Education Director and Program Manager about the series which begins August 1st. You can register for the first semester on this day. Free. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org

Elachee's Trail Crew Work Day, Saturday, July 7th 10am – 3pm. A good day of exercise, camaraderie, and doing something good for the planet! Join us as we work to improve Elachee's trails. Bring water, lunch, gloves and rain gear. Tools, training, and afternoon refreshments included. Free. Those under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Call to pre-register. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

Elachee's "First Wednesday" Home School Education Program – First Wednesdays of each month, August 1st 2012 through May 1st 2013, 1:30 – 3:30 pm. A series of programs specially designed for home-schooled students and parents. Each session covers a different science topic with hands-on, educational and age-appropriate activities. Program Fees: 10-session program year - \$75 per student, \$35 per parent; 5 session semester - \$50 per student, \$25 per parent. Pre-registration is required. Call to register. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

Elachee's "Junior Master Naturalist" Home School Program for 6th Grade and Older. Wednesday, August 1st 2012 through Wednesday May 1st 2013, 1:30 – 3:30 pm. Created for rising 6th grade to 12th grade home school students. Learn effective teaching skills and audience management while studying a variety of science topics in Chicopee Woods and other sites in northeast Georgia. Elachee staff and visiting experts will provide instruction and additional resources. Each student will receive a certificate at the end of the program. Participants are encouraged to volunteer at Elachee or elsewhere upon completion of the program. Program Fees: 10-session program year - \$75 per student, \$35 per parent; 5 session semester - \$50 per student, \$25 per parent. Pre-registration is required. Call to register. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

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“Elachee Explorers” program for 4-5 year-olds. Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:30 – 12:00pm.

- **Session 1: August 14th – October 11th**
- **Session 2: October 16th – December 13th (No classes Nov. 19th – 23, Thanksgiving week)**

Families have an option to enroll their children for the 2-day program ((Tuesdays & Thursdays) or the 1-day program (Tuesdays only.) 2-day: 18-session program \$280.00 (\$15.55 per day)

1-day, 9-session program \$175.00 (\$19.44 per day)

This new series for Pre-K students immerses 4 and 5 year-olds in nature-based discovery and experiential learning in the Chicopee Woods. The program will feature high quality, developmentally appropriate activities including readiness activities for fine and gross motor development, dramatic play, language arts and story time, and of course, guided outdoor exploration and nature walks. Children will learn with their senses under the guidance of an experienced, knowledgeable and child-friendly staff. Your child will walk trails, learn to identify animals and plants, act out their favorite animal during creative movement, learn new songs about wildlife and create nature art using found or recycled materials. Your child will find inspiration and adventure around every rock, tree and bend of the creek in northeast Georgia’s most beautiful green space. Great staff -to-child ratios ensure a safe and warm environment where every child receives the attention and adult time they need. Call for details and to register or register online. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

***First Saturday Hike at Elachee. “Stream Life”, Saturday, August 4th, 10 – 11:30 am.** Join a naturalist on a guided hike in the Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve and discover the variety of creatures that inhabit the streams that flow through Chicopee Woods. Aided by a trained naturalist, this is a great opportunity for families, scout groups and individuals. Program fee: \$5 Adults, \$3 Children ages 2-12. Children under 2 and Elachee members free. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org

Elachee’s Trail Crew Work Day, Saturday, August 4th 9:00am – 1:00 pm. Annual Tool Cleanup and Cookout. A good day of exercise, camaraderie, and doing something good for the planet! Join us as we work to improve Elachee’s trails. Bring water, lunch, gloves and rain gear. Tools, training, and afternoon refreshments included. Free. Those under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Call to pre-register. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

Elachee’s Pre-order Native Plant Sale. List available in late August/early September. Pickup date: TBA when plant list issued. Pre-order fantastic plants that will create a garden of color later this fall and next spring. Selections include high quality, drought resistant wildflowers, perennials, native azaleas, and woody shrubs that attract butterflies, birds and wildlife. Call (770) 535-1976 to receive a list and order form or download from our website. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

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Elachee's "Georgia Master Naturalist" Program. August 23rd through November 1st. Weekly Thursdays 1:00 – 5:30 pm with 1 field trip, TBA. Join Elachee staff and invited speakers for a hands-on program that explores habitats and ecosystems in Georgia. The program is a combination of lectures and outside learning in the Chicopee Woods plus a field trip to another location. Topics include: geology, stream life, wildflowers, vertebrate animals, natural resource management, and much more! After completing this fun and interactive program, the Georgia Master Naturalists are encouraged to share their knowledge with their communities by volunteering as trail guides or trail stewards at Elachee. Program fee: \$160 for all ten sessions plus one field trip. Must be 18 or older to participate. Call for more information and to register. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org

***"Stars Over Elachee" at Chicopee Lake, Saturday, August 25th, 7:45 – 9:45pm.** Learn about astronomy and how to use a telescope to view the night sky. You'll receive an observing log and star chart to assist in seeing constellations, stars, planets, and possibly Moon craters and Apollo landing sites. Suggested for adults and children ages 8 and up. Bring a flashlight and pencil. Space is limited and reservations are required. Call to register and reserve a telescope. Program fee: \$10 Adults, \$5 for children ages 2-12. Elachee members free. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

***First Saturday Hike at Elachee. "Reptiles and Amphibians", Saturday, September 1st, 10 – 11:30 am.** Join a naturalist on a guided hike in the Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve and discover the variety of ectotherms that inhabit Chicopee Woods. Aided by a trained naturalist, this is a great opportunity for families, scout groups and individuals. Program fee: \$5 Adults, \$3 Children ages 2-12. Children under 2 and Elachee members free. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

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***Elachee's Annual "Snake Day". Saturday, September 8th, 10:00am – 4:00pm.** See a wide variety of live native and exotic snakes and reptiles at our most popular public program! Dispel your myths and fears about reptiles and learn why they are important to our world from our expert exhibitors. Children can also enjoy crafts and activities. Sponsored by Tipton Construction Company. Program fee: Adults & Children 2–12: \$5, Members & under 2: Free. Elachee Nature Science Center, 2125 Elachee Drive, Gainesville, GA 30504. 770/535-1976. www.elachee.org.

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