

Nature Mixed In

Quarterly News from Elachee Nature Science Center • August 2019

Camp Elachee: 9 Weeks of Adventure

Celebrating 40 years of getting children outdoors during school breaks.

The summer has flown by! From May 28 through July 26, children 3 years to rising 6th graders enjoyed a summer day camp experience. What will they take into the classroom this new school year? All campers made a nature connection; whether their newfound knowledge was about water, creek-life, animals and their habitats, plants, stars, wilderness survival, exploration, Georgia history, creative engineering or how to be a 'mad scientist.'



Along with free play and silly games, Campers also had opportunities to develop problem-solving skills and learned the value of teamwork. They did this while forging new friendships and making memories.

One mom wrote us this message: "My son had a fantastic summer learning about the environment we live in and how to enjoy it each and every day! Camp Elachee is a phenomenal program. The Chicopee Woods is like a gem hidden in the middle of Gainesville! We will most definitely be back next year and the year after that and the years after that."

READ INDIVIDUAL CAMP WEEK HIGHLIGHTS: elachee.org/blog

CAMP ELACHEE 2019
PRESENTED BY


NORTHSIDE
HOSPITAL

In This Issue

- 1 ... Camp Elachee: 9 Weeks of Adventure
- 1 ... Financial Aid for School Field Trips
- 2 ... Test Your Elachee Knowledge
- 2 ... Teaching Children in Nature
- 3 ... University Research in Chicopee Woods
- 3 ... Elachee Programs: 2019 Calendar
- 3 ... Elachee Events: 2020 At a Glance
- 3 ... Elachee's 2020 Sponsorship Program
- 4 ... Elachee Profile: Volunteer Trail Crew and Hiking Trails' Signage Updates

Snake Day

10-3 • September 14

GENERAL ADMISSION \$10 PER PERSON
Elachee Members \$5 Each



PRESENTED BY


NORTHSIDE
HOSPITAL

EVENT SPONSORS

Tipton
JACKSON
Your Power. Your Community.

Book a FIELD TRIP



Is your school eligible for financial assistance with student program fees? Great news! Funding is available for Elachee PreK-12 environmental science education programs (*first-come, first-served through May 2020*) thanks to Cargill, Inc./Cargill Cares Council, the Jackson EMC Foundation, Inc. and the John and Mary Franklin Foundation.

DETAILS: elachee.org/school-programs

All About Elachee

Our Mission

We promote environmental understanding through education and conservation.

Our History

Founded in 1978, Ė-lă-chĕe means 'new green earth.' Today the Elachee campus sits amidst 2,674 acres the Johnson and Johnson Corporation gifted to Gainesville, Georgia in 1980.

Our Campus

Elachee is a woodland refuge, outdoor classroom and exhibit center designed to involve, engage and educate. The Nature Center is nestled in one of Georgia's largest protected green spaces, the 1,440-acre Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve.



Our Conservation Role

Elachee is responsible for land management of this north Georgia forest as its Trustee in perpetuity, under authority of the Chicopee Woods Area Park Commission. Elachee collaborates with community partners and volunteers to build, maintain and preserve a sustainable legacy. This conservation stewardship work restores and protects the health of the forest, its streams and habitats, in addition to ongoing maintenance of the Chicopee Woods' 8-mile hiking trail system (*open year-round to the public*).

Our Nature Education Programs

As the only SACS/AdvancED-accredited nature center in the southeastern U.S., Elachee leads the way in teaching children, families and nature lovers how nature works via school field trips, summer day camps, seasonal public nature events and life-long learning courses.

Our Designations

Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve is part of the *National Old Growth Forest Network* and designated as an *Important Bird Area* by the National Audubon Society.

Our Operations

Elachee is a private, independently owned and operated 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, TAX ID#58-1643768.

Our Future, Your Legacy

Make a lasting impact that will benefit future generations. Name Elachee as a beneficiary of a planned legacy gift. Call us at 770-535-1976 to discuss your wishes.

DETAILS: elachee.org/nature-center

Teaching Children in Nature

The 2019-2020 school year is underway! Our **Elachee Nature Academy (ENA)** teachers are excited to begin an adventure with young students ready to learn, grow and explore the Chicopee Woods. The incoming student body is 42. The **Nature Preschool** welcomes its seventh class and **Nature Kindergarten-1st Grade** its fourth.

"Each child will bring so much to our class," comments Melissa Miner, Elachee Nature K-1 Teacher. "I'm eager to get to know each student and learn about their unique talents and strengths. It's going to be a wonderful year full of new adventures and discoveries."

Summer break magnifies how much ENA students impact their teachers. In preparing her classroom for the new school year, Lead Nature Preschool Teacher Angela Belanger shared, "I sure do miss our adventurous hikes and all the fun conversations we have on the trails. I'm really looking forward to hearing students' summer stories, their outlooks on and experiences with nature, and what these children are most excited to learn."

What Makes Nature-Based Education Unique?

Parents choose this innovative STEAM-based program to prepare their young children for continued academic success. Children get the chance to 'find their place' in the real world, at their own pace. Not only do we teach the fundamentals of primary education, the ENA teaching philosophy fosters understanding, appreciating and valuing our natural world. Students are in and out, up and down all day – NO desks! Unlike the 15-30 minutes recess offered at other schools, our students spend more than three hours of their school day outdoors in guided instruction.

"We explore the 1,440-acre Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve to learn about life cycles, habitats, seasonal changes, to identify plants and much more," explains Ms. Angela. "Students are ready to learn outdoors rain or shine. Curriculum is designed with the whole child in mind. Activities are often child-directed, as there are many stimulating discoveries to be made in the woods."

One example Ms. Melissa shares is a lesson from last fall. "We set out for our morning hike, expecting to see spiderwebs covered in dew. Students were thrilled to discover a spider crawling across the trail carrying its egg-sac. From this observation alone, students learned that not all spiders live in webs, that spiders begin their lives in an egg-sac and they have eight legs."



The Nature Academy is a SACS/AdvancED-accredited school licensed through the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning's *Bright from the Start* offering Preschool and Kindergarten-1st Grade programs, managed and operated by Elachee Nature Science Center. The school year runs August through May and follows the Hall County Schools' calendar. **ABOUT:** ElacheeNatureAcademy.org



Tap into Georgia's Tax Credit Giving Plan

Select **Elachee Nature Academy** when you donate online to www.PayItForwardScholarships.com.





UNG Professor Dr. Katayoun Mobasher examines rock samples in the Chicopee Woods with research assistants Ana Ferreira and Matt Palmer.



University of North Georgia-Gainesville students assess pollinator activity to collect data during a field lab study at Chicopee Lake.

University Research in Chicopee Woods

University of North Georgia researchers, in collaboration with Elachee, are working to provide the first detailed geological investigation of the Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve. Dr. Katayoun Mobasher and Dr. Jerry Allison lead this study. Through geo-chemical and petrographic analyses of rock outcrops the team's findings will add to the understanding of the region's geologic history.

READ: elachee.org/what-rocks-reveal

In another collaborative research study with Elachee, UNG's Biology Plant and Animal Interactions class conducts field study labs to assess seasonal pollinator activity in the Conservation Meadow at Chicopee Woods Aquatic Studies Center at Chicopee Lake. Under the guidance of Dr. Evan Lampert and Dr. Tom Diggs, students collect data to help gauge the health of winged visitors to this meadow.

MORE: elachee.org/blog



Renovated Live Animal Exhibit Opens

Elachee's resident teaching assistants are enjoying their newly constructed habitats. Visitors, too! Elachee's Live Animal Exhibit showcases the special qualities of many Georgia species. Their habitats more closely resemble these creatures' natural environments. This interpretive exhibit, located on the Elachee patio, is one of three on campus featuring live animals. The others are the Pollinator Pass demonstration bee hives in the Elachee Visitor Center and the Red-Tailed Hawk Aviary off the patio.

The finishing touch now underway is construction of a mini-amphitheatre with riser seating. This dedicated teaching area within the Live Animal Exhibit will allow Elachee Instructors to more easily conduct 'show-n-tell-n-touch' with students who are visiting on school field trips, attending Camp Elachee or enrolled in the Elachee Nature Academy's Preschool or Kindergarten-1st Grade programs.

Special thanks to the Boatwright Legacy Foundation, the Junior League of Gainesville-Hall County and Brubaker Designs for making this project possible, along with the many skilled craftsmen who participated in renovating this beloved exhibit.

WHAT TO SEE AT ELACHEE: elachee.org/plan-your-visit

Mark Your Calendar

elachee.org/calendar • 770-535-1976

SEPTEMBER 2019

Home School Annual Program Series

Wednesday, September 4, 1:30-4 p.m. (Session 1)
Kick-off of 9 Monthly Sessions, Sept. 2019-May 2020

ENROLL: elachee.org/school-programs

Stars Over Elachee

Saturday, September 7, 7:45-9:45 p.m.

REGISTER: 770-535-1976

2019-20 SCHEDULE: elachee.org/stars-over-elachee

Elachee Science Night

Tuesday, September 10, 6:30-8 p.m.

MAKE A RESERVATION: 770-535-1976

Snake Day 2019

Saturday, September 14, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

DETAILS: elachee.org/snake-day

OCTOBER 2019

Birding Hike at Chicopee Lake

Saturday, October 5, 8-11 a.m.

DETAILS: <https://bit.ly/2ZIGxrv>

Stars Over Elachee

Saturday, October 5, 7-9 p.m.

REGISTER: 770-535-1976

Elachee Science Night

Tuesday, October 8, 6:30-8 p.m.

MAKE A RESERVATION: 770-535-1976

NOVEMBER 2019

Stars Over Elachee 2 Dates in November!

Saturday, November 2, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Saturday, November 30, 5:15-7:15 p.m.

REGISTER: 770-535-1976

Elachee Science Night

Tuesday, November 12, 6:30-8 p.m.

MAKE A RESERVATION: 770-535-1976

2020 at a Glance

Stars Over Elachee elachee.org/stars-over-elachee

Elachee Lifelong Learning Programs

DETAILS: elachee.org/lifelong-learning

- Spring Georgia Master Naturalist Program Series
- Elachee Science Nights: Spring and Fall Semesters

Birding Hike

<https://bit.ly/2ZB010v>

Saturday, February 15, 8 to 11 a.m.

Raptor Fest

elachee.org/raptor-fest

Saturday, March 21, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Trillium Trek Trail Run & Walk

Saturday, April 18, 8 a.m. Race Start

DETAILS: elachee.org/trillium-trek

Flights of Fancy Benefit & Auction

Saturday, April 25, 6 to 9:30 p.m.

DETAILS: elachee.org/flights-of-fancy

Camp Elachee

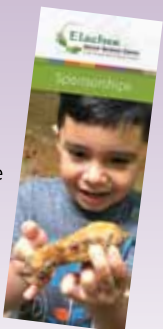
elachee.org/camp-elachee

Snake Day

Saturday, Sept. 12, 2020

2020 Sponsorships

OPPORTUNITIES: elachee.org/support

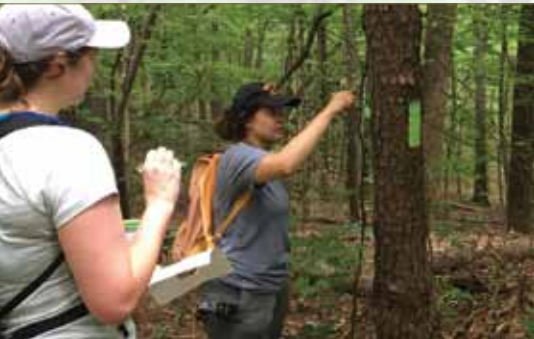




Pictured L-R: Dave Mc Carroll, Julia Johnson, Larry and Connie Murphy, David Scobey, David Gaddy, Joe Meadows, Ken Edwards and Jerry Mason

ELACHEE PROFILE: VOLUNTEER TRAIL CREW

Year-Long Hiking Trails' Signage and Mileage Marker Update Project



Sadie Glasgow and Ana Guimaraes Ferreira paint trail blazes on the Bridge Loop.



Ken Edwards, Becky Hand, Zach Daniels, Joe Meadows and David Gaddy celebrate installation of the last trail sign with popcicles and water, courtesy of Camp Elachee!



Zack Daniels, Ken Edwards, Dave Mc Carroll, Jerry Mason and Melissa Miner remove old materials from the Walnut Creek bridge replacement.



Lee Irminger, Ken Edwards, Melissa Miner and Joe Meadows happy this directional sign installation is complete!



Dave Mc Carroll and Zack Daniels help Elachee Nature Academy teachers post a new book on the Story Book Trail kiosks (Geiger Trail).



Jerry Mason, Joe Meadows and Ken Edwards install the last of the trail signs at the Dodd Loop trailhead.

Enhancing Hiker Navigation

Thanks to skilled efforts from our dedicated Volunteer Trail Crew, Elachee has completed a comprehensive signage and mapping overhaul for the 8-mile hiking trail system in Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve. New wayfinding signs reflect trail blaze color and mileage, and an updated map is now in circulation.

COMMENTS FROM THESE TRAIL BLAZERS

- The hiking trails have been improved to optimize viewing and their scenic qualities – maintaining the Chicopee Woods in its natural, wilderness state.
- From a custodial aspect the hiking trails are clearly marked, accurately measured, color-coded and clean (of trash). It takes everybody to take care of it.
- The trails allow hikers to appreciate the natural beauty unique to this location.
- Conveniently located, in a matter minutes you can be deep in the woods. It's more than a park. The hiking trail system is so large you're not going to run into a lot of people.

MAP/DETAILS: elachee.org/hiking-trails

Elachee President/CEO Andrea Timpone joins Natural Resources Manager Lee Irminger in congratulating David Gaddy, Dave Mc Carroll and David Scobey on a job well done.



David Scobey, Ken Edwards, David Gaddy, Joe Meadows and Zach Daniels show off the newly installed stairway and trail signage.

David Scobey breathes a sign of relief – IT'S DONE!

