



NATIONAL
WILDLIFE
REFUGE SYSTEM



Decatur Morgan County Tourism was proud to collaborate with The Cook Museum of Natural Science and Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge on this new and exciting scavenger hunt. You will find a wonderful opportunity to explore all of the natural wonders.

Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge



Photo: George Lee

Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge is one of 567 national wildlife refuges managed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Wheeler NWR was established in 1938 as a **refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife**. During winter months the refuge is home to thousands of ducks, geese, and cranes. The refuge manages 35,000 acres along the Tennessee River between Decatur and Huntsville and, in addition to its habitat and wildlife conservation work, provides wildlife-based recreational opportunities to the public. For more refuge information, visit **fws.gov/wheeler**.

Cook Museum of Natural Science



The Cook Museum of Natural Science is a **state-of-the-art natural science museum in downtown Decatur, AL**. It provides a hands-on, immersive experience where kids can explore and learn about nature. From a life-like cave to a 15,000-gallon saltwater aquarium, your entire family will be engaged. Many of the Exhibits include live animals and interactive activities, such as a meteorite from outer space, digital seashell generator, kinetic sand table, and a tree with a rope bridge. For tickets and more information, visit **cookmuseum.org**.

3121 VISITOR CENTER ROAD | DECATUR, AL 35603
256.350.6639 | **www.fws.gov/wheeler** | f WheelerNWRComplex

133 FOURTH AVENUE NE | DECATUR, AL 35601 | 256.351.4505
#COOKMUSEUM | **cookmuseum.org** | #LIFEISAMAZING | f y i



NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM

Scavenger Hunt

Question 1 Flint Creek Trail



DRIVING DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of US Hwy 31 and AL Hwy 67 in Decatur, travel east on AL Hwy 67 for 1.8 miles. The Flint Creek Day Use Area is the 2nd driveway on the left (just after the big open field). You'll see the Flint Creek Trail and boardwalk from the parking lot.

YOUR MISSION: Bottomland hardwood forests provide natural foods for wildlife. Bring your smartphone with you on this 1.5 mile double-loop trail so that you can take the Tree ID Quiz. The quiz starts at the beginning of the 2nd loop. Find the tree marked with the letter "X". Its berries and buds are food for many species of birds and small mammals. **What kind of tree is this?**



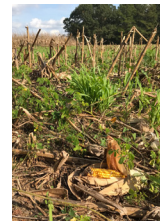
Question 2 Atkeson Trail

DRIVING DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of US Hwy 31 and AL Hwy 67 in Decatur, travel east on AL Hwy 67 for 1.9 miles to the entrance of the Visitor Center on the right. The Atkeson Trail begins from the rear of the Visitor Center parking lot.

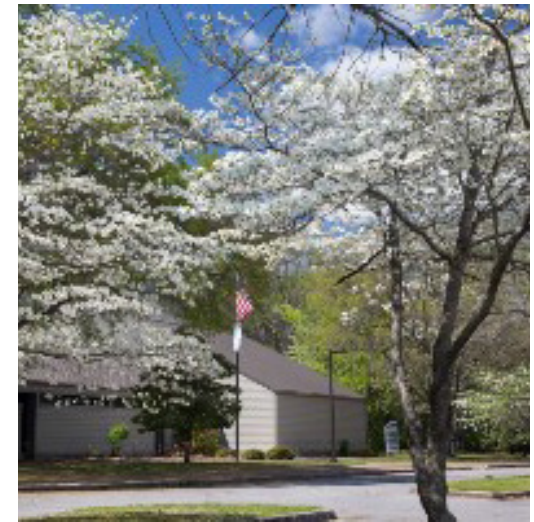
NOTE: The Visitor Center area of the refuge is only open to the public November to February, 7 days/week, 9 am to 5 pm and March to October, Tuesday-Saturday, 9 am to 4 pm. Plan accordingly.



YOUR MISSION: Walk this 0.3 mile trail and look for a small sign titled "Seeds of Cooperation" with a view of a farm field. **What are the 4 crops that are grown to benefit wintering waterfowl and other wildlife on the refuge?**



Question 3 Visitor Center Area



DRIVING DIRECTIONS: Same as Atkeson Trail

YOUR MISSION: To observe the wildlife around you, big and small. **Take at least 10 minutes to carefully look for and listen for wildlife.** Write down the wildlife you can see or hear. If you don't know what it is, describe it. Remember, wildlife doesn't just include large mammals, it also includes birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and insects!



All About Alabama

SCAVENGER HUNT

Explore the Museum to find several **official symbols of the state of Alabama**. Voted on by the state legislature, these animals, plants, and rocks represent Alabama and call the state home.



All hail the queen! The reigning state agricultural insect is the **queen honey bee** – which makes sense! Worker bees that belong to the queen's colony contribute greatly to state agriculture by acting as pollinators for many types of crops. While you cannot see the queen in the hive, she is there, surrounded by the bees of her colony.

DISCOVER



How monumental – **Sylacauga marble**, the Alabama state rock, has been used in construction of monuments and buildings across the country, including the Lincoln Memorial and the United States Capitol. It is valued for its pure white color and crystalline texture.

FOUNDATIONS

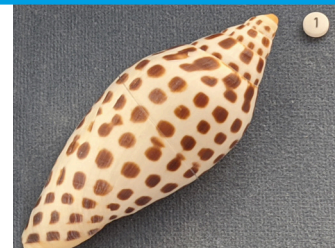
The **black bear**, which averages approximately 250 pounds in weight and 4 to 7 feet in length, is impressive as the state mammal. Once found across the state, the black bear population dwindled and for many years could only be found in southwest Alabama near Mobile. Recently, black bears migrated into northeast Alabama from Georgia. The increasing numbers of this high conservation concern animal excite many state naturalists.

HILLTOP
WOODLANDS



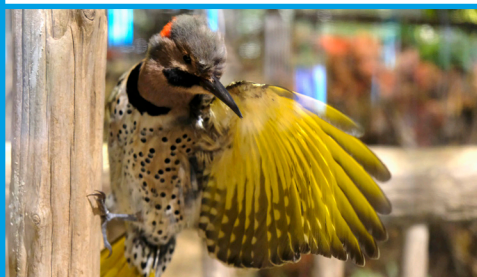
You will need to search through the many different shells on display to find the Alabama state shell called the **Juno Volute**, or **Johnstone's Junonia**. This gastropod is found on the Gulf Coast and named after Kathleen Johnstone from Mobile, who wrote books on collecting seashells.

OCEANS



Can you find the growth stages of the Alabama state tree in the Exhibit? The **longleaf pine** depends on fire for its seeds to root in the soil, grows as a grass for up to seven years, and then quickly shoots up several feet! Once mature, this fire-resistant tree towers up to 120 feet tall.

FORESTS



As this state bird flies, you see a quick flicker of the color yellow from the tips of its wings. The visual of these yellow feathers is how this bird came to be known by its two most recognized names – the **northern flicker** and the **yellow-hammer**.



Explore the insect collection to find the state butterfly – an orange and black **monarch**. Monarch butterflies can be found in every county of Alabama. As they fly south for winter, many stay in south Alabama to roost.

Wonderful
World of
INSECTS!



Admission to the Exhibits is required to participate.