



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Gulf Islands NS
3500 Park Road
Ocean Springs, MS 39564

228-875-9057 phone
www.nps.gov/guis

Gulf Islands National Seashore News Release

Release Date: 1/15/2011

Contact: Susan Blair or Stacy Speas, 228-875-9057

February Activities at Gulf Islands National Seashore Davis Bayou, Ocean Springs, Mississippi

Ocean Springs, MS:

Superintendent Dan Brown encourages the public to experience one of our free activities during African American History Month. All programs will meet at the William M. Colmer Visitor Center.

Sunday, February 5 – 2:00 p.m. – Burning in the Bayou

Historically, Davis Bayou saw lightning-caused fires every 1-3 years, but in the past fire suppression has changed the landscape. Come to the park to learn more about how fire is necessary for a healthy ecosystem. Discover how fire renews a landscape and leaves open spaces for plants and wildlife. Join us to learn more!

Sunday, February 12 - 2:00 p.m. – Louisiana Native Guards

Did you know that after the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation freed southern slaves that African American soldiers guarded Ship Island for almost three years? Come learn more about this fascinating story during our featured Black History Month program.

Saturday, February 18 – 10:00 a.m. – Marsh Walk

Enjoy an easy stroll through the marshes of Davis Bayou at low tide. Learn about the relationships between plants, animals, and tides in the salt marsh ecosystem. Bring insect repellent and dress for the weather.

Saturday, February 25 – 9:00 a.m. - Birds of Winter

Did you know Gulf Islands has documented over 300 species of birds inside park boundaries? Learn more during the Birds of Winter program! Join a park volunteer naturalist for a walk through the park to observe songbirds, marsh waders, dabblers, and divers that inhabit Davis Bayou during the winter months. Meet at the visitor center at 9:00 am. Bring binoculars if you have them.

Sunday, February 26 – 1:00 and 2:00 p.m. – Marsh Boat Tours

Tour the bayou by boat. Join a park ranger and learn about the interaction between tides and a salt marsh habitat. View wildlife and plants that call the marsh home. This ride has no shade, and the temperature feels colder over the water, so prepare accordingly. This program requires a prior sign-up, and tours fill up fast! Stop by the park or call us at 228-875-9057, ext. 0 beginning February 17, at 8:30 a.m.

About the National Park Service. More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 397 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. Learn more at www.nps.gov.