



2024 FIELD TRIP GUIDE

JEFFERSON COUNTY GREENWAYS COALITION

“YOU HAVE TO GET THE KIDS INTO THE WOODS, ON THE GROUND, GETTING THEIR HANDS DIRTY, DISCOVERING THINGS FOR THEMSELVES.”

— MAGGIE MEAD CLANCY, "BACK TO NATURE: A HISTORY OF BIRMINGHAM'S RUFFNER MOUNTAIN"

The Jefferson County Greenways Coalition is a conservation education organization that oversees the operations and programs of Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve, Red Mountain Park, and Turkey Creek Nature Preserve. These parks encompass over 3,000 acres of protected forests and waterways and receive more than 320,000 visitors annually. These natural areas are crucial in teaching youth about the natural and cultural history of our area.

Before you book your Field Trip, please review the following information:

Field Trip capacity is three (3) classes maximum per day

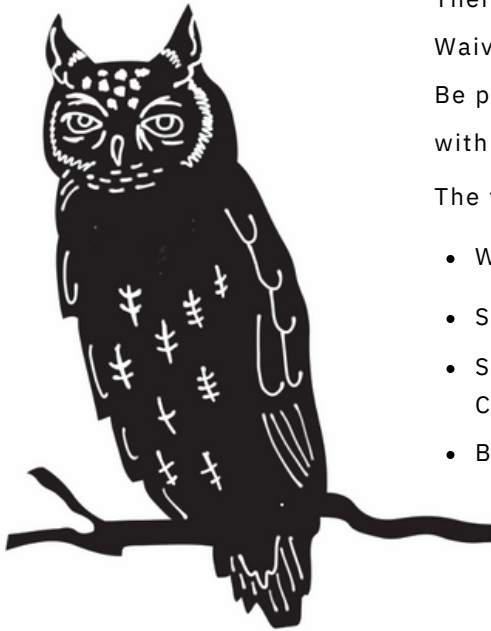
There is a maximum of six (6) chaperones per class

Waivers are required for all participants

Be prepared to spend most of the field trip hiking on trails or in the creek with moderate inclines and varied terrain with rocks and tree roots.

The following are recommended:

- Water bottle
- Suitable clothing for the outdoors and weather
- Sturdy, closed-toe shoes/shoes you don't mind getting wet for Turkey Creek Programs
- Bag lunches (optional)



The Jefferson County Greenways Coalition offers funding assistance for Title I Schools and select community partners. If your school or organization is interested in applying for a scholarship email us at programs@jeffcogreenways.org

TO SCHEDULE YOUR FIELD TRIP, PLEASE VISIT
RUFFNERMOUNTAIN.ORG/FIELDTRIPS,
EMAIL **PROGRAMS@JEFFFCOGREENWAYS.ORG**
OR CALL **205.833.8264**

RUFFNER MOUNTAIN FIELD TRIP OPTIONS

All field trips at Ruffner Mountain include an interactive hike within the Nature Preserve, a visit to our LEED-certified Nature Center, and an interaction with one to two animal ambassadors.

Address: 1214 81st St. S, Birmingham, Alabama 35206

SENSE IT

Grades: Pre-k - K

Duration: 1.5 - 2 hours

~ Mileage: 0.5 miles

What fungus resembles a turkey? While hiking, students can appreciate the tiny treasures of nature by comparing the textures of moss and limestone, listening to the sounds of birds in the forest, smelling the freshness of mountain mint, and observing the different colors and patterns in nature.

FOREST ECOLOGY

Grades: 4 - 5

Duration: 2.5 - 3 hours

~ Mileage: 1.5 - 2 miles

How are plants and wildlife interdependent? Students will study the basics of forest ecology by examining how biotic and abiotic components work together as a healthy ecosystem. Explore the eco-services that plants provide, and learn to identify non-native/invasive plant species that have a negative impact on ecosystem health.

HABITAT EXPLORERS

Grades: 1 - 3

Duration: 2 - 2.5 hours

~ Mileage: 0.5 miles

How do animals survive in the forest? Hike into the deciduous forest habitat and discover the resources native wildlife use for food, water, and shelter. Whether it's acorns, shagbark hickory trees, the nectar of flowers, or a trickling spring, animals rely on their habitat's basic needs to survive.

GEOLOGIC TIME

Grades: 6 - 8

Duration: 2.5 - 3 hours

~ Mileage: 2.5 miles

How old is Ruffner Mountain? Hike to the limestone quarry and discover the geological formations created, including fossils such as brachiopods and crinoids. Compare and contrast today's glade-like and forest canopy ecosystems within the preserve.

TURKEY CREEK FIELD TRIP OPTIONS

All field trips at Turkey Creek start at our outdoor teaching pavilion and include a hike within the Nature Preserve and an activity within the creek. All students and chaperones must be prepared to get wet!

Address: 3906 Turkey Creek Rd, Pinson, AL 35126

LIFE OF A STREAM

Grades: 3 - 8

Duration: 2 - 2.5 hours

~ Mileage: 0.5 miles

For our Life of a Stream program, we introduce concepts associated with stream ecology, freshwater biodiversity, and conservation. We go on a short hike to learn about watersheds and explore how scientists monitor our aquatic systems by conducting a biological survey (i.e. searching for aquatic macroinvertebrates).

CREEK & WATER QUALITY

Grades: 9 - 12

Duration: 2 - 2.5 hours

~ Mileage: 0.5 miles

What is a water cycle? What is an indicator species? What is the difference between point-source/nonpoint-source pollution? Students will observe the creek's health by conducting a stream assessment, monitoring for stream pH, turbidity, and dissolved oxygen, and identifying aquatic macroinvertebrates using a dichotomous key.

RED MOUNTAIN FIELD TRIP OPTIONS

All field trips at Red Mountain Park include an interactive hike within the park.
*Please note - at this time, there are no restrooms available, only porta-potties.
Address: 2011 Frankfurt Drive, Birmingham, Alabama 35211

BIRMINGHAM'S INDUSTRIAL HISTORY

Grades: 9 - 12
Duration: 2.0 - 2.5 hours
~ Mileage: 1.5 miles

How did Birmingham's natural resources help shape our city? See first-hand the environmental impact that mining industries had on the forests of Birmingham, including air quality and forest succession. Look back in time to learn the beginnings of the "Magic City" and how miners once lived and worked as we hike to mine #13 of Red Mountain.

SERVICE LEARNING - FOREST RECLAMATION

Grades: 6- 12
Duration: 2.5 - 3 hours
~ Mileage: 2 miles

What happens after a mountain has been mined? What plants and animals return and what can we do as stewards of the land to preserve biodiversity? Students will have a hands-on experience looking at Red Mountain's second-growth forest. Students will participate in invasive species removal and learn how to identify invasive and native plants.

OFFSITE PROGRAMS

Offsite programs can be requested for library groups, booth events, and up to 30 students. For multiple class visits, a \$100 charge will be added. The limit is three classes per day.

Grades: 1 - 12 | Cost: \$250 | Duration: 45 - 60 minutes

ALABAMA ANIMALS

Discover Alabama's amazing wildlife and biodiversity by meeting three of JCGC's Animal Ambassadors. During this program, we will examine their different roles in the forest ecosystem by discussing unique adaptations, diets, and habitats. Our special team of animals (typically a raptor, turtle, snake, and bugs) will teach the value of conservation and the importance of protecting our environment.



MISSION: TO PRESERVE AND CARE FOR JEFFERSON COUNTY'S PARKS AND PRESERVES AS SANCTUARIES FOR OUR NEIGHBORS, NATIVE PLANTS AND ANIMALS.