

Mound House Upcoming Outdoor Nature & Education Events: February 18 to 27, 2021

By Gary Mooney

thewritestuff25@gmail.com

The historic Mound House on Fort Myers Beach debuts two new family outdoor nature education programs in late February: the “Fishing Rancho Outside Guided Tour” and the “La Florida Kayak Tour!” Another highlight is the “Full Moon Kayak Tour” on Friday, February 26, at 5 p.m.

One of Southwest Florida’s most iconic historic attractions, the Mound House traces its roots back to the ancient Calusa of over 2,000 years ago. The Town of Fort Myers Beach operates the Mound House as a museum complex and cultural and environmental learning center that offers numerous educational programs each month, including for children, with Center for Disease Control (CDC) precautions. For more information on these two new events as well as a complete monthly programs schedule, call 239-765-0865 or see www.moundhouse.org.

The Mound House, the oldest standing structure on Estero Island, is open Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. All visitors must wear masks, with CDC and Social Distancing guidelines in place. It is at 451 Connecticut Street with overflow parking at 216 Connecticut. Admission is \$10 for ages 13 & up, \$8 for students with IDs, \$5 ages 6 to 12, and 5 & under free, with Town residents receiving a 50% discount.

Thursday, February 18: FREE “Newton Beach Park Guided Beach Walk”:

All ages weather permitting at 9 a.m.

This twice-weekly free outdoor nature program is different every single time, as the “Guided Beach Walks” have a simple premise – the groups walk roughly a half-mile down the beach and back, discussing whatever you find that particular morning, with the wind and waves dictating what comes up each day. Meet at the thatched hut closest to the beach, with CDC and Social Distancing in place and face masks mandatory. In addition to your face mask, bring sunscreen, shoes to get wet, sunglasses, and hat. No reservations necessary; while free, parking is \$3-per-hour, with one hour generally enough. Newton Beach Park is mid-island at 4650 Estero Boulevard.

Thursday, February 18: “Shell Mound” Outside Guided Tour, all ages at 11 a.m.

If you dig archaeology, this program is for you! Tour the 2,000-year-old Calusa Indian Shell Mound led by the Mound House Interpretive Staff as you explore the archaeology of the site while unearthing clues about this ancient society. All participants over the age of 6 must wear a mask. \$5-per-person that does not include Mound House admission; Mound House members free.

Thursday, February 18: “Shell Mound” Outside Guided Tour, all ages at 2 p.m.

If you dig archaeology, this program is for you! Tour the 2,000-year-old Calusa Indian Shell Mound led by the Mound House Interpretive Staff as you explore the archaeology of the site while unearthing clues about this ancient society. All participants over the age of 6 must wear a mask. \$5-per-person that does not include Mound House admission; Mound House members free.

Friday, February 19: “Mangroves by Kayak Tour”:

Ages 12 & up weather permitting at 9 a.m.

Explore the winding mangrove creeks and hidden waters of the Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve as only a kayaker can on this Environmental Educator-guided tour of the ancient realm of the Calusa! Witness birds, fish, manatee and dolphins as you paddle through the natural beauty of Estero and Hell Peckney Bays in a tandem kayak. All paddling & safety equipment provided, with kayak tours in accordance with Florida Society of Ethical Ecotourism guidelines. \$45-per-person; Mound House members \$15. Advance reservations necessary; private tours available. CDC and Social Distancing guidelines in place & all participants must wear a mask on land. 8 paddlers per tour.

Saturday, February 20: “Mangroves by Kayak Tour”:

Ages 12 & up weather permitting at 9 a.m.

Explore the winding mangrove creeks and hidden waters of the Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve as only a kayaker can on this Environmental Educator-guided tour of the ancient realm of the Calusa! Witness birds, fish, manatee and dolphins as you paddle through the natural beauty of Estero and Hell Peckney Bays in a tandem kayak. All paddling & safety equipment provided, with kayak tours in accordance with Florida Society of Ethical Ecotourism guidelines. \$45-per-person that includes Mound House admission; Mound House members \$15. Advance reservations necessary; private tours available. CDC and Social Distancing guidelines in place & all participants must wear a mask on land. 8 paddlers per tour.

Saturday, February 20: “Shell Mound” Outside Guided Tour, all ages at 11 a.m.

If you dig archaeology, this program is for you! Tour the 2,000-year-old Calusa Indian Shell Mound led by the Mound House Interpretive Staff as you explore the archaeology of the site while unearthing clues about this ancient society. All participants over the age of 6 must wear a mask. \$5-per-person that does not include Mound House admission; Mound House members free.

Saturday, February 20: “Family Fun Kayak Tour”:

Ages 6 & up weather permitting at 1 p.m.

Fun for the whole family on a specially-designed Environmental Educator-guided kayak tour! See birds, dolphins, manatee, and other wildlife while paddling through the Estero Bay mangroves. Your family must have children between the ages of 6 to 11 to qualify,

with advance registration necessary. \$25-per-person age 13 & up; \$15-per-person ages 6 to 12 that includes Mound House admission. The Mound House provides all equipment, with CDC and Social Distancing in place; all participants must wear a mask on land. Maximum of 8 people per program.

Saturday, February 20: “Shell Mound” Outside Guided Tour, all ages at 2 p.m.

If you dig archaeology, this program is for you! Tour the 2,000-year-old Calusa Indian Shell Mound led by the Mound House Interpretive Staff as you explore the archaeology of the site while unearthing clues about this ancient society. All participants over the age of 6 must wear a mask. \$5-per-person that does not include Mound House admission; Mound House members free.

Tuesday, February 23: FREE “Newton Beach Park Guided Beach Walk”:

All ages weather permitting at 9 a.m.

This twice-weekly free outdoor nature program is different every single time, as the “Guided Beach Walks” have a simple premise – the groups walk roughly a half-mile down the beach and back, discussing whatever you find that particular morning, with the wind and waves dictating what comes up each day. Meet at the thatched hut closest to the beach, with CDC and Social Distancing in place and face masks mandatory. In addition to your face mask, bring sunscreen, shoes to get wet, sunglasses, and hat. No reservations necessary; while free, parking is \$3-per-hour, with one hour generally enough. Newton Beach Park is mid-island at 4650 Estero Boulevard.

Tuesday, February 23: NEW “La Florida Kayak Tour”:

Ages 12 & up weather permitting at 9 a.m.

From Conquistadors to the Fishing Ranchos, learn about the legacy of Southwest Florida’s Spanish explorers and Latino settlers as we paddle through that history on this Estero Bay kayak tour in accordance with the Florida Society of Ethical Ecotourism guidelines. The Mound House supplies all paddling and safety equipment, with reservations required at www.moundhouse.org. \$45-per-person that includes Mound House admission; members \$15-per-person. CDC and Social Distancing guidelines in place; all participants must wear masks on land. Maximum of 8 paddlers per tour, with private tours available.

Tuesday, February 23: “Shell Mound” Outside Guided Tour, all ages at 11 a.m.

If you dig archaeology, this program is for you! Tour the 2,000-year-old Calusa Indian Shell Mound led by the Mound House Interpretive Staff as you explore the archaeology of the site while unearthing clues about this ancient society. All participants over the age of 6 must wear a mask. \$5-per-person that does not include Mound House admission; Mound House members free.

Tuesday, February 23: NEW “Fishing Rancho Outside Guided Tour,”

All ages at 2 p.m.

The perfect program for Florida history buffs! Learn about the Latino fishing village known as a “Rancho” that existed on the shell mound between the ancient Calusa and Anglo-Pioneer eras. Explore the site’s archaeology and history through the unearthed clues about this multicultural society. All participants over the age of 6 must wear masks and everyone will observe CDC guidelines. \$5-per-person that does not include Mound House admission.

Wednesday, February 24: “Mangroves by Kayak Tour”:

Ages 12 & up weather permitting at 9 a.m.

Explore the winding mangrove creeks and hidden waters of the Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve as only a kayaker can on this Environmental Educator-guided tour of the ancient realm of the Calusa! Witness birds, fish, manatee and dolphins as you paddle through the natural beauty of Estero and Hell Peckney Bays in a tandem kayak. All paddling & safety equipment provided, with kayak tours in accordance with Florida Society of Ethical Ecotourism guidelines. \$45-per-person; Mound House members \$15. Advance reservations necessary; private tours available. CDC and Social Distancing guidelines in place & all participants must wear a mask on land. 8 paddlers per tour.

Wednesday, February 24: “Family Fun Kayak Tour”:

Ages 6 & up weather permitting at 1 p.m.

Fun for the whole family on a specially-designed Environmental Educator-guided kayak tour! See birds, dolphins, manatee, and other wildlife while paddling through the Estero Bay mangroves. Your family must have children between the ages of 6 to 11 to qualify, with advance registration necessary. \$25-per-person age 13 & up; \$15-per-person ages 6 to 12. The Mound House provides all equipment, with CDC and Social Distancing in place; all participants must wear a mask on land. Maximum of 8 people per program.

Thursday, February 25: FREE “Newton Beach Park Guided Beach Walk”:

All ages weather permitting at 9 a.m.

This twice-weekly free outdoor nature program is different every single time, as the “Guided Beach Walks” have a simple premise – the groups walk roughly a half-mile down the beach and back, discussing whatever you find that particular morning, with the wind and waves dictating what comes up each day. Meet at the thatched hut closest to the beach, with CDC and Social Distancing in place and face masks mandatory. In addition to your face mask, bring sunscreen, shoes to get wet, sunglasses, and hat. No reservations necessary; while free, parking is \$3-per-hour, with one hour generally enough. Newton Beach Park is mid-island at 4650 Estero Boulevard.

Thursday, February 25: “Shell Mound” Outside Guided Tour, all ages at 11 a.m.

If you dig archaeology, this program is for you! Tour the 2,000-year-old Calusa Indian Shell Mound led by the Mound House Interpretive Staff as you explore the archaeology

of the site while unearthing clues about this ancient society. All participants over the age of 6 must wear a mask. \$5-per-person that does not include Mound House admission; Mound House members free.

Thursday, February 25: NEW “Fishing Rancho Outside Guided Tour,”

All ages at 2 p.m.

The perfect program for Florida history buffs! Learn about the Latino fishing village known as a “Rancho” that existed on the shell mound between the ancient Calusa and Anglo-Pioneer eras. Explore the site’s archaeology and history through the unearthed clues about this multicultural society. All participants over the age of 6 must wear masks and everyone will observe CDC guidelines. \$5-per-person that does not include Mound House admission.

Friday, February 26: “Mangroves by Kayak Tour”:

Ages 12 & up weather permitting at 9:30 a.m.

Explore the winding mangrove creeks and hidden waters of the Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve as only a kayaker can on this Environmental Educator-guided tour of the ancient realm of the Calusa! Witness birds, fish, manatee and dolphins as you paddle through the natural beauty of Estero and Hell Peckney Bays in a tandem kayak. All paddling & safety equipment provided, with kayak tours in accordance with Florida Society of Ethical Ecotourism guidelines. \$45-per-person; Mound House members \$15. Advance reservations necessary; private tours available. CDC and Social Distancing guidelines in place & all participants must wear a mask on land. 8 paddlers per tour.

Friday, February 26: “Full Moon Kayak Tour,” 5 p.m.

The unique tour offers kayakers the rare opportunity to experience the backwaters of the Estero Bay in the quiet of twilight by the light of the full moon! Participants explore the estuary’s tidal creeks, winding mangroves, and abundant wildlife illuminated by the full moon. Weather permitting and reservations required at www.moundhouse.org; \$45-per-person with Mound House members \$15. The Mound House provides all paddling equipment, with a maximum of 8 people per tour. CDC and Social Distancing guidelines in place, and everyone must wear a mask while on land.

Saturday, February 27: “Mangroves by Kayak Tour”:

Ages 12 & up weather permitting at 9 a.m.

Explore the winding mangrove creeks and hidden waters of the Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve as only a kayaker can on this Environmental Educator-guided tour of the ancient realm of the Calusa! Witness birds, fish, manatee and dolphins as you paddle through the natural beauty of Estero and Hell Peckney Bays in a tandem kayak. All paddling & safety equipment provided, with kayak tours in accordance with Florida Society of Ethical Ecotourism guidelines. \$45-per-person that includes Mound House

admission; Mound House members \$15. Advance reservations necessary; private tours available. CDC and Social Distancing guidelines in place & all participants must wear a mask on land. 8 paddlers per tour.

Saturday, February 27: “Shell Mound” Outside Guided Tour, all ages at 11 a.m.

If you dig archaeology, this program is for you! Tour the 2,000-year-old Calusa Indian Shell Mound led by the Mound House Interpretive Staff as you explore the archaeology of the site while unearthing clues about this ancient society. All participants over the age of 6 must wear a mask. \$5-per-person that does not include Mound House admission; Mound House members free.

Saturday, February 27: “Family Fun Kayak Tour”:

Ages 6 & up weather permitting at 1 p.m.

Fun for the whole family on a specially-designed Environmental Educator-guided kayak tour! See birds, dolphins, manatee, and other wildlife while paddling through the Estero Bay mangroves. Your family must have children between the ages of 6 to 11 to qualify, with advance registration necessary. \$25-per-person age 13 & up; \$15-per-person ages 6 to 12 that includes Mound House admission. The Mound House provides all equipment, with CDC and Social Distancing in place; all participants must wear a mask on land. Maximum of 8 people per program.

Saturday, February 27: NEW “Fishing Rancho Outside Guided Tour,”

All ages at 2 p.m.

The perfect program for Florida history buffs! Learn about the Latino fishing village known as a “Rancho” that existed on the shell mound between the ancient Calusa and Anglo-Pioneer eras. Explore the site’s archaeology and history through the unearthed clues about this multicultural society. All participants over the age of 6 must wear masks and everyone will observe CDC guidelines. \$5-per-person that does not include Mound House admission.