

## **Mound House Upcoming Outdoor Nature & Education Events: March 25 to April 3, 2021**

By Gary Mooney  
[thewritestuff25@gmail.com](mailto:thewritestuff25@gmail.com)

With Easter right around the corner, hop on over to the historical eggs-travaganza that is the iconic Mound House on Fort Myers Beach! If you have company in town, especially grandchildren, bring them to the Mound House to enjoy eggs-cellent historical and nature education programs and events. Highlights this upcoming week include two new programs, the “Fishing Rancho Outside Guided Tour” for all ages as well as the “Advanced Kayak Tour” for ages 12 & up weather permitting. A feature event is the always-popular “Full Moon Kayak Tour” on Friday evening, March 26.

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 all visitors wearing mask and Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Social Distancing precautions. The Mound House, the oldest standing structure on Estero Island, is open Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. 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. For more information and a complete monthly programs schedule, call 239-765-0865 or see [www.moundhouse.org](http://www.moundhouse.org).

### **FREE “Newton Beach Park Guided Beach Walk”**

Every Tuesday and Thursday for 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. Meet at the thatched hut closest to the beach, with CDC and Social Distancing in place and face masks mandatory. 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.

### **“Shell Mound” Outside Guided Tour**

For all ages on Thursday, March 25; Saturday, March 27; & Tuesday, March 30, all at 11 a.m.; Thursday, April 1, at 11 a.m. & 2 p.m.; & Saturday, April 3, at 11 a.m. & 2 p.m.

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

### **NEW “Fishing Rancho Outside Guided Tour,”**

For all ages on Thursday, March 25; Saturday, March 27; and Tuesday, March 30, all 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 to unearth clues about this multicultural society. All participants over 6 must wear masks and everyone will observe CDC guidelines. \$5-per-person that does not include Mound House admission.

### **“Mangroves by Kayak Tour”**

For ages 12 & up weather permitting on Friday, March 26 at 9:30 a.m.; and Saturday, March 27; Wednesday, March 31; and Friday, April 2, all 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 in place, with all participants wearing a mask on land.

### **“Full Moon Kayak Tour”**

Friday, March 26

This 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 necessary at [www.moundhouse.org](http://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 in place, with everyone wearing a mask on land.

### **NEW “Advanced Kayak Tour”**

For ages 12 & up weather permitting on Saturday, March 27, at 1 p.m.

For kayakers who want a new 3-hour challenge of exploring areas of the Estero Bay where few get to venture, including the Hell Peckney Bay’s mangrove isles! \$55-per-person; Mound House members \$25 that includes Mound House admission and all

paddling & safety equipment. Advance reservations necessary, with CDC and Social Distancing in place and all participants wearing a mask on land.

### **“Family Fun Kayak Tour”**

For ages 6 & up weather permitting on Wednesday, March 31, at 1 p.m.; and Saturday, April 3, at 9 a.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 and all participants wearing a mask on land.

### **“Family Outside Adventures”**

Adults & children age 6 & older weather permitting on Thursday, April 1, and Saturday, April 3, at 10 a.m.

Explore everything fun at the Mound House on this outdoor activity, as the Interpretive Staff leads families through entertaining and educational experiences you will remember for a lifetime! All participants must wear a mask with CDC and Social Distancing in place. \$2-per-person that does not include Mound House admission; Mound House members free.