

Mound House Upcoming Outdoor Nature & Education Events: April 8 Through 17, 2021

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Now that Spring Break is done, Spring Training is over, and Easter is our collective rearview mirrors, traffic on Fort Myers Beach is much lighter, making this the perfect time to visit the iconic Mound House on Fort Myers Beach!

The Mound House offers the new program, the “Fishing Rancho Outside Guided Tour” for all ages on Thursday, April 8, at 2 p.m. It hosts four different kayak tours including the always-popular “Sunset Kayak Tour” for ages 12 & up weather permitting on Friday, April 9; and the new “Advanced Kayak Tour” for ages 12 & up weather permitting on Friday, April 16, at 1 p.m. The Mound House presents its signature event, the “Shell Mound Outside Guided Tour,” on 9 different occasions over the upcoming week.

One of Southwest Florida’s most-beloved 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 it as a museum complex and cultural and environmental learning center that offers numerous educational programs each month, including for children, with all visitors wearing masks while adhering to 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 information, reservations, and a monthly programs schedule, call 239-765-0865 or see www.moundhouse.org.

FREE “Newton Beach Park Guided Beach Walk”

For all ages every Tuesday and Thursday 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, April 8, at 11 a.m.; and Saturday, April 10; Tuesday, April 13; Thursday, April 15; & Saturday, April 17, all 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, April 8, at 2 p.m.

Perfect 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 unearthed 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.

"Family Outside Adventures"

For adults & children age 6 & older weather permitting on Thursday, April 8, at 2 p.m.; and Saturday, April 10; Tuesday, April 13; Thursday, April 15; & Saturday, April 17, all 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 guidelines in place. \$2-per-person that does not include Mound House admission; Mound House members free.

"Mangroves by Kayak Tour"

For ages 12 & up weather permitting on Friday, April 9; Wednesday, April 14; and Friday, April 16, 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 guidelines in place & all participants must wear a mask on land.

"Sunset Kayak Tour"

For ages 12 & up weather permitting on Friday, April 9.

People travel from all over the nation and world to marvel at Fort Myers Beach sunsets, but not many get to do so by kayak! In addition to catching a breathtaking sunset, explore the tidal creeks and winding mangrove tunnels that extend into the hidden backwaters of Estero Bay while experiencing the estuary's abundant wildlife in the quiet of twilight in accordance with the Florida Society for Ethical Ecotourism guidelines. The Mound House provides all paddling and safety equipment, with CDC and Social Distancing in place; all participants must wear masks on land. \$45-per-person; Mound House Members \$15, with private tours available.

“Family Fun Kayak Tour”

For ages 6 & up weather permitting on Saturday, April 10 and Wednesday, April 14, at 1 p.m.; & Saturday, April 17, 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; all participants must wear a mask on land.

NEW “Advanced Kayak Tour”

For ages 12 & up weather permitting on Friday, April 16, 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 all paddling & safety equipment. Advance reservations necessary, with CDC and Social Distancing guidelines in place and all participants must wear a mask on land.