

Mound House Upcoming Outdoor Nature & Education Events: July 15 to 24, 2021

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While we are in-between tropical storms and hurricanes, mid-July is the perfect time to travel to the iconic Mound House on Fort Myers Beach! 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 oldest standing structure on Estero Island, the Mound House is open Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. It practices Social Distancing and encourages all nonvaccinated guests to wear masks.

On Friday, July 16, the Mound House hosts the new program, "Build & Brew," for \$40-per-person and Mound House members \$30, with advance registration necessary at 239-765-0865. This fun Summer evening of arts & crafts includes Mound House admission, one craft beer and tastings from the Palm City Brewing Company, and a one-hour class on how to build and throw your own spear, with a limit of 20 people.

New in July is "Cool Calusa Tools" for families with children ages 6 & older on Saturday afternoons, July 17 & 24, where you learn to hunt, fish, and make masks and pottery, just like the Calusa! The Mound House continues its exciting new program, "Junior Explorers," for children 2 to 5 and their adult guardians at Newton Beach Park on Wednesday, July 21, at 1 p.m. Junior Explorers learn about the environment, culture, and early life skills such as language, numbers, fine motor, and socializing. There are two different kayak programs this week, as well as presenting the Mound House's signature event, the "Shell Mound Outside Guided Tour," eight times.

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. 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 Social Distancing in place. 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, July 15, at 11 a.m. & 2 p.m.; Saturday, July 17, at 1 p.m.; Tuesday, July 20 & Thursday, July 22, at 1 & 2 p.m.; and Saturday, July 24, at 2 p.m.

If you dig archaeology, the Mound House’s signature program 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. \$5-per-person that does not include Mound House admission; Mound House members free, with Social Distancing guidelines in place.

“Garden Outside Guided Tour”

For all ages on Thursday, July 15, at 1 p.m.; Tuesday, July 20, at 11 a.m.; and Thursday, July 22, at 1 p.m.

Stroll through the Mound House gardens to discover how its unique plants conserve water and protect wildlife, while learning how the Calusa and other Native Americans used them in their daily lives. \$5-per-person that does not include Mound House admission; Mound House members free, with Social Distancing guidelines in place.

“Mangroves by Kayak Tour”

For ages 12 & up weather permitting on Friday, July 16; Wednesday, July 21, and Friday, July 23, 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, with Social Distancing guidelines in place.

NEW: “Build & Brew!”

Friday, July 16: \$40-per-person; Mound House members \$30, with advance registration necessary at 239-765-0865.

Join the Mound House for a fun Summer evening of arts & crafts, along with local craft beer from the Palm City Brewing Company! Each “Build & Brew” ticket includes Mound House admission, one craft beer and tastings, and a one-hour class on how to build and throw your own spear! The Mound House will Social Distance guests and it encourages all nonvaccinated visitors to wear masks, with a limit of 20 people.

“Family Fun Kayak Tour”

For ages 6 & up weather permitting on Saturdays, July 17 & 24, at 9 a.m.

Fun for the whole family on a specially-designed Environmental Educator-guided kayak tour for families with children age 6 & up! See birds, dolphins, manatee, and other wildlife while paddling through the Estero Bay mangroves. \$25-per-person ages 13 & up; \$15-per-person ages 6 to 12 that includes Mound House admission, with advance registrations necessary. The Mound House provides all equipment, with Social Distancing in place.

NEW “Cool Calusa Tools”

For families with children ages 6 & older on Saturday, July 17, at 2 p.m.; and Saturday, July 24, at 1 p.m.

Learn to hunt, fish, and make masks and pottery, just like the Calusa! The Mound House interpretive staff leads the exciting and hands-on tour of the Mound House grounds where they demonstrate Calusa tools and artifacts, then help you make Calusa-inspired artwork where your imagination runs wild! \$2-per-person that does not include Mound House admission. The Mound House enforces Social Distancing guidelines and recommends that all unvaccinated visitors wear masks.

NEW: “Junior Explorers” at Newton Beach Park

For children 2 to 5 with their adult guardians on Wednesday, July 21, at 1 p.m.

Your Junior Explorer will investigate Newton Beach Park to learn about the natural environment, culture, and early life skills such as language, numbers, fine motor, and socializing during this 30-minute program, featuring topics like “Counting With Nature,” “Animals of The Estuary,” “Paint Making,” “Calusa Masks,” “Calusa Pottery,” and “Sorting Shells.” \$2-per-child, with adult guardians and Mound House members free; no reservations necessary. Newton Beach Park is mid-island at 4650 Estero Boulevard.