

## DAVIDSONVILLE HISTORIC STATE PARK

On the Black River, among stately oaks and colorful maples, visitors discover Davidsonville Historic State Park, the birthplace of Arkansas's current government. In the northeastern foothills of the Ozark Mountains of Randolph County, Davidsonville sits near the confluence of the Black, Eleven Point, and Spring Rivers.

### HISTORY

Davidsonville Historic State Park preserves and protects the site of historic Davidsonville. Established in 1815, it was the seat of Lawrence County which, at that time, comprised roughly the northern third of Arkansas. Davidsonville was the location of Arkansas's first courthouse, post office, and land office. It flourished through trade and travel along local waterways which connected Davidsonville to the Mississippi River, the United States, and the world.

In 1829, the county seat was relocated and the town was abandoned. Today, little is known of Davidsonville's history after 1829 and no above-ground remains are visible. The Davidsonville townsite and surrounding lands were designated a state park in 1957 to preserve the historical remnants and natural environment of the area. Two steel-frame "ghost structures" have been built to reveal the size and location of the two past buildings.

In 1979 and 2004-2009, the Arkansas Archeological Survey conducted excavations of the town site. Archeologists used the original surveyor's plat to locate remains of homes and businesses. These investigations uncovered tens of thousands of artifacts including ceramics, bricks, trash pits, tools, buttons, earrings, coins, and combs. These material remains, along with available documentary sources such as deeds, birth and death certificates, marriage records, and newspaper articles, create a picture of life at Davidsonville and in frontier America in the early 19th century.

### INTERPRETIVE SERVICES

**Programs** ♦ A park interpreter provides programs year-round. Depending upon the season, these include guided history and nature hikes, living history, slide shows, demonstrations, workshops, special events, and weekend evening programs. School, Scout and other groups are encouraged to request special programs year-round.

**Exhibits** ♦ The visitor center exhibit gallery features artifacts found during excavations to help tell the story of Davidsonville. A life-size, fully outfitted flatboat can be explored. In addition, new wayside exhibits interpret the historic townsite and point out locations of businesses and residences. Our brochure, "Davidsonville Discovered," will help you learn more about this historic town and take home a bit of Arkansas history.

### Trails

- **Historic Townsite Trail:** 1/2-mile, easy, paved, barrier-free.
- **Scott Cemetery Trail:** 1/2-mile, easy: walk to this post-Civil War cemetery.
- **Trapper Lake Trail:** 1 mile, easy to moderate: Meanders around the 12-acre lake. A brochure is available.
- **Black River Trail:** 1.5 miles, easy to moderate: Wanders through the woods, along the banks of the Black River, and passes the historic Philips-Reeves Cemetery. A brochure is available.

### RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

**Camping** ♦ The campground has a total of 20 sites. Twelve of the sites have water, 50-amp electric, and sewer. Eight sites have water and 50-amp electric. The primitive tent area has 10 sites which has access to water and the bathhouse but no electric hook-ups. A modern bathhouse and sanitary dump station are in the campground.

**NOTE:** Campers **must** register at the visitor center **before** occupying a campsite. All sites may be reserved up to one year in advance. Please call to check availability.

**Fishing and Boating** ♦ The Black River and nearby Spring and Eleven Point Rivers are noted for a variety of fish. A free launch ramp on the Black River is available. Visitors are welcome to explore the many shoals and eddies along these beautiful rivers. Additionally, an earthen dam forms a 12-acre fishing lake that is stocked with catfish, bass and crappie. Visitors may rent non-motorized fishing boats or pedal boats (seasonal) at the visitor center. A barrier-free fishing pier is on the lake.

(NOTE: There is no launch ramp on the lake.)

**Canoe Rental Service** ♦ Canoes with life jackets and paddles may be rented at the visitor center for floating the Black River or for exploring the in-park 12-acre lake. (Note: River float rental fees include put-in and haul-back service. Please call before

coming to check on river conditions and availability of rentals. 24-hour reservations are required).

**Picnicking** ♦ Davidsonville Historic State Park is one of the largest and most popular picnic spots in the area. Visitors enjoy spreading their picnic fare on tables under the shade of the oaks along the lake. Two screened pavilions are available for reservation, for a nominal fee, for group functions or family affairs. A deposit is required. Two playgrounds are near the picnic area and the pavilions. **Visitor Center** ♦ In addition to the exhibits, the visitor center offers snacks, postcards, t-shirts, state park souvenirs, and camper registration.

**No persons shall excavate or search for artifacts or other material on state park property without written permission of the Director of State Parks.**

### LOCATION

From Pocahontas, travel 2 miles west on U.S. Highway 62 then south on State Hwy. 166 and go 9 miles to the park.

From U.S. Highway 63 at Black Rock, take State Hwy. 361. Travel 5 miles after crossing the bridge to the park.

**For further information on park fees, services or reservations, contact:**

**Davidsonville Historic State Park**  
8047 Hwy. 166 South  
Pocahontas, AR 72455  
(870) 892-4708  
e-mail: [Davidsonville@Arkansas.com](mailto:Davidsonville@Arkansas.com)

For information on Arkansas's other fine state parks, contact:

Arkansas State Parks  
One Capitol Mall, 4A-900  
Little Rock, AR 72201  
(501) 682-1191  
[ArkansasStateParks.com](http://ArkansasStateParks.com)



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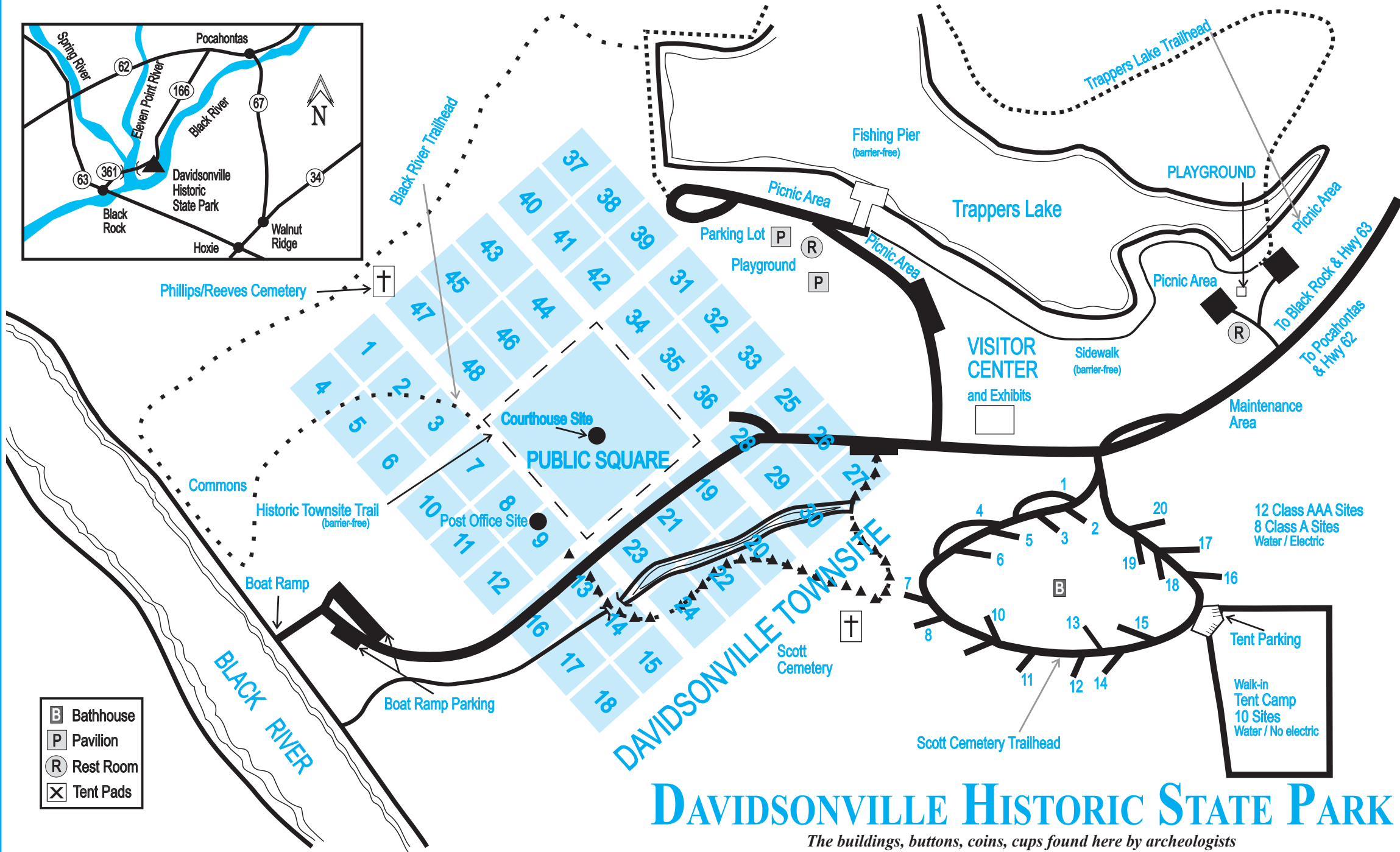
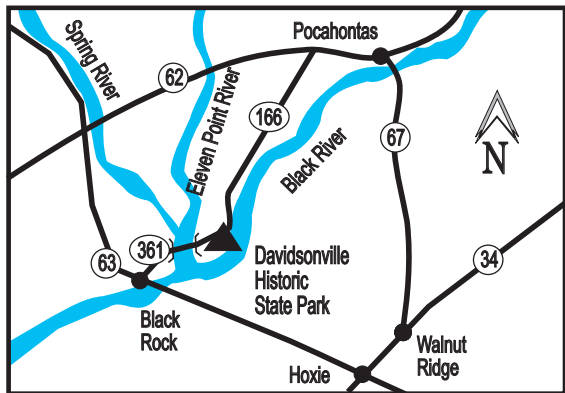
# DAVIDSONVILLE HISTORIC STATE PARK



ARKANSAS  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & TOURISM



EXPLORE THE BEAUTY & HISTORY OF ARKANSAS!



- B** Bathhouse
- P** Pavilion
- R** Rest Room
- X** Tent Pads

# DAVIDSONVILLE HISTORIC STATE PARK

*The buildings, buttons, coins, cups found here by archeologists reveal the same desire for quality of life that we have today.*

12 Class AAA Sites  
8 Class A Sites  
Water / Electric

Tent Parking  
Walk-in Tent Camp  
10 Sites  
Water / No electric