


# Discover DeGray Lake Resort State Park

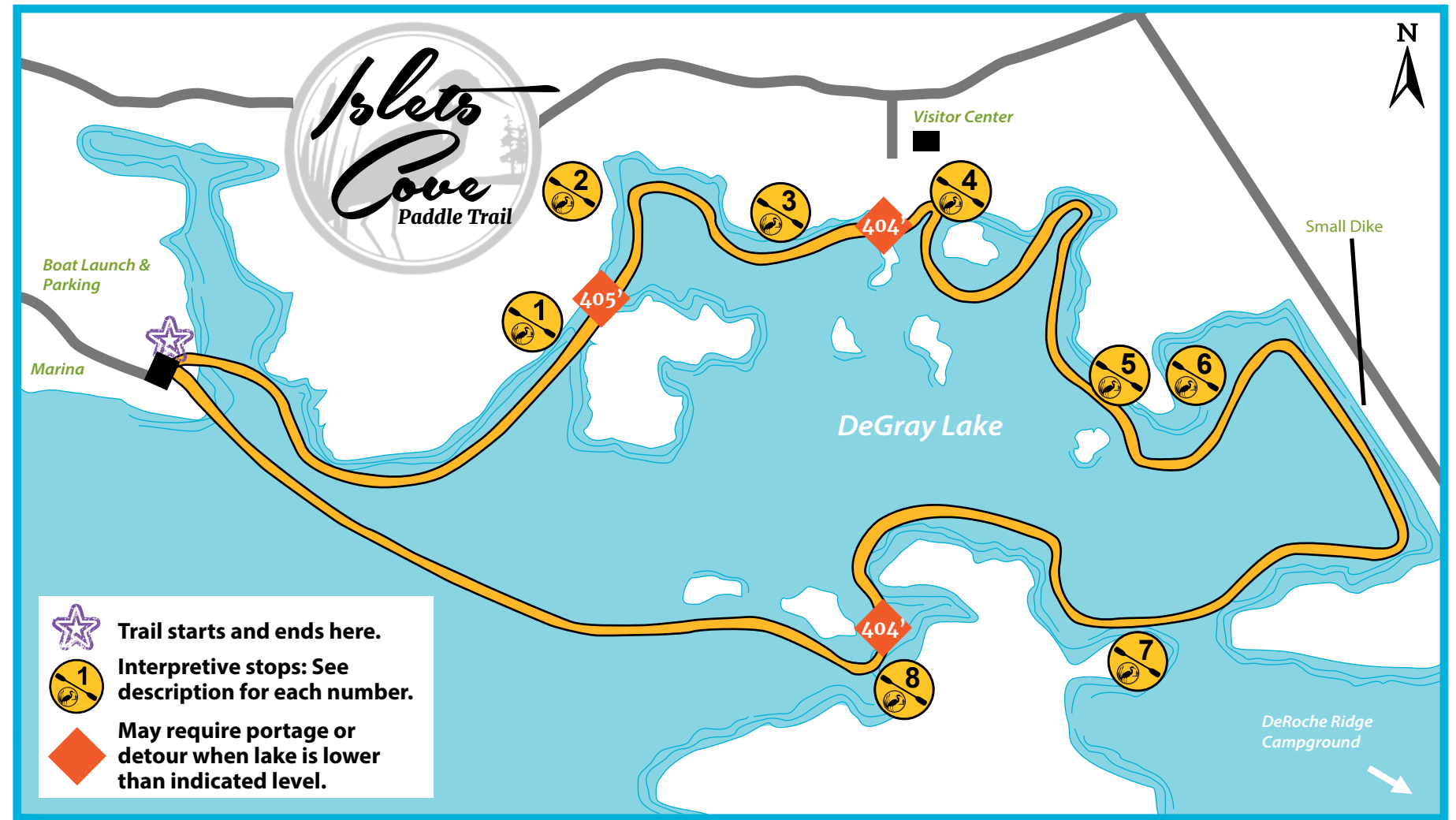
The clear, refreshing water of DeGray Lake is enjoyed each year by thousands of visitors who go fishing, sailing, boating, snorkeling, and more. However, prior to 1960, looking out across what is now a 13,800-acre lake, one would have gazed upon the rugged, rolling foothills of the Ouachita Mountains with the Caddo River winding among them. This land has been marked by the footprints of farmers, loggers, fur trappers, explorers, and American Indians (the Caddo).




While the appearance and uses of this area have changed greatly over the centuries, the ecological value and beauty have not. DeGray Lake is yours to enjoy and preserve.

## To Follow the Trail:

 For an optimal experience, follow the yellow signs posted along the shoreline that are indicated on the map. The trail is approximately 3 miles long. Take as much time as you like; we suggest you allow at least two hours. To check current lake level, visit <http://bit.ly/DeGrayLakeLevel>.

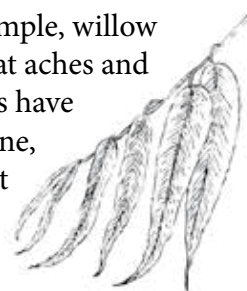
Practice safe paddling and always wear a lifejacket. Please dispose of any trash in proper receptacles and help us keep “my park, your park, our park” clean. Kayak, canoe, and stand up paddleboard rentals are available at the marina, (501) 865-5840.



-  Trail starts and ends here.
-  Interpretive stops: See description for each number.
-  May require portage or detour when lake is lower than indicated level.

## Aspirin

Many of the drooping trees you see before you are black willows. American Indians and other early settlers were the first to discover that willow trees possess certain medicinal properties. For example, willow bark tea was often used to treat aches and pains. Since 1899, willow trees have been harvested for their salicine, the chief ingredient in the first plant-derived synthetic drug commonly known as aspirin.



## Beaver Lodge

Once prized for their thick, furry pelts and fatty tails, beavers played a role in leading early explorers to settle this area. Using their teeth and forepaws to gather sticks, mud, and grass, beavers construct lodges like the one you see here. Interior tunnels and cavities are dug out from the bottom up to prohibit entry by predators. Please observe from a distance and do not disturb.



## Wood Duck Box

These artificial habitats represent a cooperative effort by the state park and the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers to preserve one of the lake's resources in response to dwindling natural tree cavities. This is one of the many conservation efforts in place at the state park, including habitat boxes for Eastern bluebirds, owls, and bats.



#### **4 Visitor Center**

Don't forget to stay hydrated and protect yourself from the sun while enjoying the lake! Our park store is here to meet all your basic needs, from drinks and snacks to sunscreen and bug repellent. Feel free to park your kayak on the shore and stop in to cool down with ice cream or refill your water bottle. While inside be sure to check out a few of our resident reptiles and our taxidermy bird collection! Restrooms are also available here.

#### **5 Wildlife Viewing Station**

This wildlife viewing station offers a concealed vantage point for guests to observe the animal species that can be found on and around DeGray Lake. Birds to look for include great blue herons, green herons, Canada geese, common loons, coots, pied-billed grebes, and bald eagles.



*green heron*

#### **6 Dairy Farm**

When the lake level is at its lowest late in the year, a distinct pond emerges near this spot. Prior to the filling of DeGray Lake in 1972, there was a dairy farm here. This pond served as a drinking hole for cattle. Today, the small dike you see before you works with the Highway 7 large dike and the DeGray Dam to contain the waters of this reservoir. For your safety, climbing on any of these structures is strictly prohibited.

#### **7 State Park Boundaries?**

A large portion of the lake, islands, and surrounding federal land is open to hunting during the appropriate seasons with a license. However, firearms of any sort are not permitted within state park borders. This can become a bit ambiguous in regard to nearby islands, as some become extensions of the park when the lake is low. This is something to keep in mind when duck hunting around these islands near the state park.

#### **8 Highs and Lows**

As a flood control project of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, the level of DeGray Lake may fluctuate by as much as 20 feet each year. The lake is fed by the Caddo River and surrounding watershed. Water is released at varying rates through the dam for generating hydroelectric power, maintaining flow of the lower Caddo River, and controlling the lake level. Generally the lake is highest around early to midsummer following spring showers, and is lowest in late fall. The white line seen on the tree before you marks the height of the lake in spring 2018 when record rainfall caused the lake to rise 20.5 feet in just 9 days.

#### **Return to Launch Area**

As you conclude your outing, we hope you feel a stronger sense of place here. Shaped by place and purpose, Arkansas's resort state park on the clear waters of the Ouachita Mountains is yours to experience. If you enjoyed this trail, talk with a park interpreter about other opportunities for exploring by boat around the lake.



### **DeGray Lake Resort State Park**

2027 State Park Entrance Road

Bismark, AR 71929

**PHONE: (501) 865-5810**

**E-MAIL: [DeGray@Arkansas.com](mailto:DeGray@Arkansas.com)**

**or visit us and other state parks at**

**[www.ArkansasStateParks.com](http://www.ArkansasStateParks.com)**



Arkansas Department of Parks  
& Tourism

#1 Capitol Mall

Little Rock, AR 72201

1-888-AT-PARKS

**NOTICE: To preserve scenic beauty and ecology, fences and warning signs have not been installed in some park locations. Caution and supervision of your children are required while visiting those areas.**

Nov. 2018

# **Islets Cove Paddle Trail**



**DeGray Lake Resort  
State Park**

