

# Alabama Hiking Trail Society

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## HIKERS AND OUTDOOR LOVERS TO DESCEND ON CHEAHA Hikers from Around the Southeast Set to Converge on Cheaha

Hundreds of hikers from Alabama and surrounding southeastern states will converge atop Cheaha Mountain for the largest hiking and backpacking conference in the state.

The event, scheduled for March 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>, is sponsored by the non-profit Alabama Hiking Trail Society and Cheaha State Park. The weekend will feature something for all outdoor lovers according to AHTS President, Mike Kennedy.

“The weekend will be full of fun and information for everyone who loves to get outside with nature. Whether you want to learn more about the environment, the history of the region, or get backpacking and hiking tips, Cheaha will be the place to be.”

According to Kennedy, the conference is for everyone no matter what your level of hiking or backpacking experience. Some of the guest speakers that will be featured over the weekend include Dr. John Hall from the Alabama Humanities Foundation who will give a presentation on the history of the state from a naturalist’s point of view. Also in attendance will be Caroline Dean speaking on wildflowers of Alabama, Russell Helms author of the book “60 Hikes Within 60 Miles of Birmingham”, Skip Essman with Leave No Trace discussing reducing our impact on the environment, and many more.

The event will also feature a photo contest sponsored by Outdoor Alabama Magazine. Official rules and entry forms are available at the AHTS website.

Throughout the weekend there will be food, raffles, silent auctions, and plenty of entertainment. Saturday night there will be a special program featuring key note speaker Jeffrey Hunter with the American Hiking Society talking about the importance of the hiking trails in Alabama. Entertainment will be provided by Nate Olive who is better known by his hiking moniker, “ThaWookie”. Nate was the first person to hike the Pacific tidal line, the actual coastline of the United States. He retells his adventure through stories and song.

The Alabama Hiking Trail Society is a non-profit organization and Alabama’s statewide hiking organization. Founded in 2001, the AHTS has members from Huntsville to Mobile. The mission of the AHTS is to “promote, protect, maintain, and develop hiking trails throughout Alabama.” This annual conference is their chief fund raising effort for the year so that they can continue to protect not only the trails but Alabama’s environment as well.

For more information about the conference or to register, visit the AHTS online at [HIKEALABAMA.ORG](http://HIKEALABAMA.ORG). You can also call AHTS at (334) 244-1579 or by email [ahts@hikealabama.org](mailto:ahts@hikealabama.org).

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If you would like more information on this topic or to schedule an interview, please contact Joe Cuhaj at (251) 533-1812 or email Joe at [jcuhaj.vppublicity@hikealabma.org](mailto:jcuhaj.vppublicity@hikealabma.org).