

Caddo Lake paddling regatta set for Saturday

Jimmy Watson, Shreveport Times.com
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(Photo: File/The Times)

The 4th Annual Caddo Lake Earth Day Paddling Regatta, featuring a trio of paddling trails on the venue, is slated for Saturday with registration beginning at 7:30 a.m.

The event will launch out of Shady Glade Marina in Uncertain, Texas. Also on tap are refreshments and raffle prizes.

Attendees will be able to launch their canoe or kayak out of Shady Glade, Johnson's Ranch or Crip's Camp, located on Caddo Lake. Bird watching and photography of the stunning area around each of the launch sites are among the unique features available during the morning.

Kayaks or canoes are expected to be available for public use, but you must email 2015earthdayregatta@gmail.com.

The trails available for paddling include:

1. Old Folk's Playground: 4.7 mile loop that begins and ends at Crip's Camp in Uncertain. It passes by the National Wildlife Refuge.

2. Turtle Shell: 4.4 mile loop that launches and ends at Johnson's Ranch Marina in Uncertain. Spectacular lotus blooms in mid to late summer.

3. Cathedral: 4 miles up-and-back trail that begins at Shady Glade Resort in Uncertain. It makes its way through towering, Spanish moss-covered cypress trees.

The registration fee is \$17 per person or \$5 for paddlers 13 and younger. Interested parties can register online at Eventbrite.com (search Caddo Lake in the event or location fields), or register in person at Shady Glade Marina, 449 Cypress Drive in Uncertain begin on Saturday. Only cash or checks accepted the day of the event. Registration includes T-shirt, light refreshments, two raffle tickets and launch fees. Hot dogs and other foods will be available for purchase with all profits funding the maintenance of the paddling trails on Caddo Lake and the Big Cypress Bayou.

Raffle tickets will be drawn at noon in the registration tent at Shady Glade and you must be present to win. Prizes include a hand-painted canoe paddle by local artists, T-shirts and books. The silent auction closes at 12:30 p.m. and items include two nights at Caddo Lake Cabins, a new kayak and several items from Bass Pro Shops.

Caddo Lake, located on the border of Texas and Louisiana, is one of the best examples in the southern United States of a mature bald cypress forest. The area is known for its exceptional wildlife diversity. It's a maze of bayous and sloughs covering 26,810 acres. The Caddo Lake area has 10 trails designated as part of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Texas Paddling Trails system.

For more information visit Caddo Lake Earth Day Paddling Regatta page on Facebook, call (903) 672-5524 or (903) 679-9817 or email 2015earthdayregatta@gmail.com.

Sponsors include Cypress Basin Chapter of Texas Master Naturalists, Texas Parks and Wildlife and Greater Caddo Lake.

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