



Panola Mountain State Park Trail Map





Welcome

Welcome to Panola Mountain State Park! In this beautiful setting, conservation meets recreation to provide visitors with a variety of unforgettable experiences. Here you will see Panola Mountain, a pristine, 100-acre granite outcrop, and its rare, untouched ecosystem just as Native Americans did centuries ago. It has been designated a National Natural Landmark due to its outstanding condition, rarity, diversity, and value to science and education. It is also a part of the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area, a distinctive partnership among Panola and Arabia Mountains, the Monastery of the Holy Spirit, the Georgia Conservancy, DeKalb, Henry and Rockdale counties, Flat Rock Archives and others. National Heritage Areas are places recognized by Congress for their unique contribution to the nation's history... where history, cultural and natural wonders intersect with everyday places where people live and work. The Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area is one of only 49 around the country.

Park Information & Facilities

Park Hours: Open Daily 7 a.m. to Dusk

Nature Center Hours: Open Daily 8:00 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Fee: \$5 parking. Annual passes available.

NOTE: The Mountain is not open to the general public due to its conservation status. Ranger-led hikes are available. Check website for dates and times. Call to reserve.

Facilities:

- 1,635 Acres
- Playground
- 4 Picnic Shelters
- Nature Center
- Two Fishing Lakes
- Primitive Campsites
- Gift Shop
- Lake Pavilion
- Hiking Trails
- Event Room
- Archery Range

Rules

- Do not litter
- Dogs must be kept on a 6' leash at all times.
- Alcohol prohibited on all state park property.
- A valid ParkPass must be displayed at all times.

Rentals

- Picnic Shelters
- Lake Pavilion
- Event Room
- Bicycles
- Primitive Campsites
- Kayaks and Canoes

Major Areas of the Park

Panola consists of two separate properties: Panola Mountain property and Vaughters Farm located 7 miles away. Most of the park is covered in natural habitats with several core areas where facilities are clustered. Some areas are open to the public and some areas have limited or permitted access. Areas open to the public include: (1) Main Entrance, (2) Lakeside Area, (3) Power-of-Flight Area and (4) Vaughters Farm. Areas with limited or permitted access include: (1) Ranger-led Area, (2) Archery Area, and (3) Bouldering Area.

Main Entrance

Made up of the original land acquired by the state of Georgia in 1974, this side of the park is accessible at the Highway 155 entrance. Here, you will find the nature center, event room, gift shop, hiking trails, picnic shelters and playground. This heavily-wooded area serves to protect the ecology of the mountain and to provide educational opportunities for our visitors. Stop by for a solitary nature hike, or bring the whole family out to play and picnic!

Lakeside Area

Enjoy a hike, bike, paddle or picnic with your family. Take in beautiful views on the paved PATH trail that circles the 45-acre Alexander Lake, connecting to the greater 35-mile trail system that goes through the park. Kayaks and john boats are allowed on the lake. The Alexander Lake Pavilion is available for rent and fits 200 people. On this side of the park, you will also find the archery range and parking for the primitive hike-in campsites. Parking is available at the intersection of Alexander Lake and Flat Bridge Roads.



Power-of-Flight Area

Be sure to bring your binoculars to walk through this restored, native grassland that has been designated as an Important Birding Area by the Audubon Society. Look out for the many birds and butterflies that live here!

Vaughters Farm Area

A beautiful and expansive view of farmland in the midst of an urban landscape, the Vaughters family farm was the last operating dairy in DeKalb County. Its rolling hills and grassy fields have been preserved for everyone's enjoyment and as a glimpse into the past. The Vaughters homestead, which was built from locally-sourced granite, still stands overlooking the fields.

Located just 7 miles away, across from the Arabia Alliance Office. Starting from the main entrance at Panola, turn LEFT onto GA-155 and travel a very short distance (0.1 mi) before taking your first LEFT onto Alexanders Lake Rd for a distance of 1.9 mi, when it will terminate at a stop sign. Turn RIGHT onto Flat Bridge Rd. This road changes its name to Klondike Rd at the bridge. Go across the bridge and continue for 3.5 mi. Once you get to the traffic circle, stay on Klondike Rd by taking the 2nd exit. Continue for 0.6 mi and find the parking area on the RIGHT. If you have already purchased a park pass (daily or annual), there is no need to purchase a second one, just make sure the one you do have is visible. If you do not have one, they can be purchased online or at the Panola Mountain Visitor Center.



Geocaching

Geocaching is like a treasure hunt, played with a GPS capable device. The idea is to locate hidden containers called "caches." You can trade trinkets of equal or greater value along the way, then sign the logbook at each cache before sharing your experiences online. After obtaining coordinates and hints from the website: www.geocaching.com, you can begin searching the 50+ Georgia State Parks & Historic Sites with hidden caches. Geocaching is the ideal activity for families or anyone looking to try a new outdoor activity.



Tree-Climbing

Tree top excursions are all about having fun, safely, while exploring the natural environment and learning about ourselves in the process. With a little help from safety ropes (and staff), you can climb into the canopy of a 100' Southern Red Oak tree. We have different types of climbs, including: 'Introduction Climbs,' 'Group Event Climbs,' 'Wild Climbs' and even overnight camping in the trees! We also offer treetop canopy assistance to those with special needs (please make arrangements in advance).



Archery Ranges

Want to make use of one of Panola's most unique recreational opportunities? Panola Mountain has both a static range and a 3D range for your shooting pleasure. The static range has targets set at standard competition lengths, ranging from 10 yards to 60 yards. The 3D range has 21 targets at varying distances, with foam targets in the shape of turkeys, boars and even dinosaurs! Range Passes: \$10 adult; \$5 youth, annual passes available.

Panola Mountain does not offer archery rentals, so make sure to bring your own bow and arrows (no broadhead arrows allowed). However, equipment is provided if you sign up for either our beginner or intermediate archery class.



Limited Access Areas

Ranger-Led Area

Because of the rare species of plants that live on Panola Mountain, a guided hike is required to enter the conservation area and go on top of the mountain. While Stone Mountain and Arabia Mountain are both similar geologic features, Panola Mountain has never been quarried, making it one of the most pristine monadnocks in the Southeastern United States. On the mountain you will find solution pits, which are round divots that geologists utilize to understand how life forms on top of this desert-like terrain. To learn more about this unique ecosystem, sign up for a Ranger led hike by calling or visiting the Nature Center.

Bouldering Areas

You must check-in at the nature center and receive a permit to boulder at Panola Mountain

Come and experience one of the only outdoor bouldering areas in the Metro Atlanta Area. There are two boulder fields that are available for climbing at Panola Mountain State Park. The closest to the Alexander Lake Parking Lot is just off the PATH trail headed toward the monastery. Both areas feature granite boulders, and it may require advanced skill to get over some of our mossy top-outs. A comprehensive list of our problems can be found on our page at the Mountain Project. It is highly suggested to bring a crash pad with you in order to pad your falls.

There is no top roping, sport climbing or trad climbing allowed at Panola Mountain.



Trail System

Archery Trail

Easy - Natural surface - About 0.75 miles

Explore the 3D archery range on this short trail, where you will be able to view and shoot at the various foam targets shaped like turkeys, deer, and dinosaurs. The static range is also on this trail, and please be cautious of people shooting when in this area.

Campground Trail

Easy - Natural surface - About 0.25 miles

This trail head is located on the PATH trail, just a short distance west of Alexander Lakes. The dirt-road like trail will carry you through early-successional habitats before turning north toward Scout Lake and the campground itself.

P.A.T.H. Trail

Easy - Paved - About 7 miles on Panola (proper), but 30+ miles, total

Go over the river and through the woods on this 30-mile (and growing!) PATH Foundation paved trail connecting Panola Mountain with Arabia Mountain, Stonecrest Mall and other stops as well! Hike, bike, or skate your way through this beautiful, tranquil trail and enjoy the stunning scenery connecting Panola's conservation area with the Alexander Lake area. Make sure to hike out on the boardwalk that provides a picturesque overlook of the mountain!

Rock Outcrop Trail

Easy - Natural surface - About 0.75 miles

This trail overlooks a granite outcrop typical of many found in Georgia's Piedmont Region. After traversing a second-growth pine-oak forest, the trail brings you to an overlook where you can see evidence of the geologic forces that created the mountain, as well as the erosion shaping its present appearance. Be sure to look to your right to see Panola Mountain itself! Along the way, you will see some of the plants and animals found in this unique ecosystem; many with special adaptations that allow them to survive on the bare rock face.

Vaughters Farm Trail

Easy - Natural surface - About 1.25 miles

Hike back in time to a period when this property was the last working dairy farm in DeKalb County. The trail passes through rolling hills and grasslands that were the grazing fields for horses, mules, chickens, hogs and a 100-head herd of Jersey cows. It now serves a valuable habitat for diverse wildlife. The historic barn has been strengthened and stabilized to ensure it's place in this picturesque setting for decades to come.

Viewing Platform

Easy - Natural surface - About 0.1 miles

Take a break off the PATH and walk down a boardwalk have a view of Panola Mountain. You will also be able to read and learn about various plants and animals on the mountain.

Watershed Trail

Easy - Natural surface - About 1.25 miles

This trail skirts two branches of a small creek draining the Piedmont uplands. A watershed describes an area containing a network of streams, rivers, and the underground water table, all draining into a larger body of water.

On-Going Programs

- Archery Classes (Ages 8+; equipment provided)
- Guided Mountain Hikes (Ages 10+)
- Tree Top Excursions Tree Climbing Program (Ages 8+)
- Educational Programs

Prices, dates, and times are available on our website. Specialty programs offered seasonally. Please call ahead to reserve for pre-scheduled programs.

Safety Tips & Etiquette

- Tell someone your itinerary and expected return time.
- Take a map, water, snacks, first aid kit, flashlight, and whistle. Three short blasts on a whistle are known as a call for help.
- Do not stray from trails. If you become lost, stay in one location and wait for help. This will make it easier for rescuers to find you.
- Don't count on cell phones to work in all areas, but if they do, be able to give details about your location.
- When boating, personal flotation devices should be worn at all times.
- Be prepared for unexpected rain and wind which can lead to hypothermia. Always carry quality rain gear and turn back in bad weather. If you become wet or cold, it is important to get dry and warm as quickly as possible.
- Dress in layers and avoid cotton. Today's hikers can choose from numerous fabrics that wick moisture, dry quickly and conserve heat. Many experienced hikers wear a lightweight shirt that wicks moisture while carrying a fleece pullover and rain jacket.
- Pack out all trash.
- It is a law to have pets leashed at all times. Please clean up after them also.
- Do not pick flowers, disturb wildlife, or take anything from the park.
- Protect the park and help prevent erosion by staying on marked trails and not wandering off the trails or using shortcuts.