

Cahaba Lilies



This beautiful flower can only be found in Alabama, Georgia, and some parts of South and North Carolina. | Photo courtesy Alabama Tourism Department and Art Meripol

Of the 69 rare and endangered species that call the Cahaba River National Wildlife Refuge home, none puts on a show quite like the imperiled Cahaba Lily. May through June, the refuge's riverbanks break out in brilliant white starbursts. The aquatic spiderlilies only grow wedged into rocky shoals with fast-moving water and plenty of sunshine. And this Alabama spot is home to the largest-known stand of these idiosyncratic flowers, not to mention 13 other species of flora and fauna found nowhere else on the planet. The rustic refuge may be short on facilities, but there are plenty of spots along River Trace, a dirt road just off County Road 24, to drop a

canoe into the Cahaba River for the best viewing. Locals bring camp chairs and coolers. Everyone brings a camera.