

Wetumpka Impact Crater



Alabama's only impact crater, Wetumpka Crater is recognized as a historical landmark. | Photo courtesy Alabama Tourism Department and Barry Chrietzberg

Just east of downtown Wetumpka lies the site of more drama than an entire season of *The Real Housewives*. Picture a massive meteor blasting to Earth with 175,000 times the energy of a nuclear bomb. The impact snuffed out life within a 40-mile radius and—because the area was underwater at the time—unleashed a towering tsunami. About 85 million years later, life inside the 5-mile-wide Wetumpka Crater has settled down a bit, but its rocky rim jutting through the pines still hints at past chaos. A self-guided driving tour leads visitors through seven educational stops that explain the crater's most notable formations, like the iconic Bald

Knob, a ridge of ancient metamorphic rock protruding 587 feet. Plan to spend about an hour.