



The Second Chickasaw Bluff (photo from [Rivergator](#))

Chickasaw Bluffs of Western Tennessee with the Tennessee Ornithological Society Saturday Oct 17th, 2015, 9am to 5pm



Top end of Brandywine Island (photo from [Rivergator](#))

A Daytrip down the Chickasaw Bluffs

from Shelby Forest to Mud Island Memphis



Hickman Bar and downtown Memphis (photo from [Rivergator](#))

The best view of Memphis is from the River!

Narrative: Fabulous views of the Chickasaw Bluffs along the Western edge of the state of Tennessee and adjacent bottomland hardwood forests possibly including the bluffs at Meeman-Shelby State Forest (3rd Chickasaw Bluff) and finally the sweeping view of the Memphis skyline, the Memphis Bridge and the Pyramid, and downtown Memphis (which straddles the 4th Chickasaw Bluff). The vista from the river is unparalleled! You've never seen downtown Memphis if you haven't viewed it from the river! Points of interest include the scenic, the spectacular, and some sore spots, starting with beautiful Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park (3rd Chickasaw Bluff), Brandywine Chute, Hickman Bar, Mouth of the Loosahatchie River, Redman Bar, Memphis Wastewater Treatment (sore spot), Mouth of Wolf River, Mud Island, I-40 Bridge, Tom Lee Park, Beale Street Landing, Memphis Harbor, and finally the Pyramid and downtown Memphis (4th Chickasaw Bluff).

Summary: Meet at 9am at Mud Island River Park (secure parking) and shuttle to Shelby Forest. Day trip with stops at islands along the way. Explore back channels & visit gravel bars. Take out at Mud Island opposite the foot of Beale Street in the Memphis Harbor. Total mileage = 18 miles on the Mississippi River.

Itinerary, Sat Oct 17, 2015

9am – Board Shuttle from Mud Island, drive to Shelby Forest Boat Ramp

10am – Load Canoe, start off downstream

11am – Brandywine Chute

12noon - Hickman Bar sandbar stop

12-1pm – lunch

3pm – Loosahatchie Bar sandbar stop

4pm – float past Mud Island

5pm – take-out Boat Ramp at Mud Island River Park

(*Limited Seating available. To join in on this daytrip, please contact Quapaw Canoe Company john@island63.com or call John Ruskey at 662-902-7841)



*Birder's delight: the flooded forests of Lower Brandywine Island
(photo from [Rivergator](#))*

For more photos and reading about this incredible stretch of river, go visit:

[RIVERGATOR: the Paddler's Guide to the Middle & Lower Mississippi River](#)

Third Chickasaw Bluff (Meeman-Shelby Forest SP):

<http://www.rivergator.org/river-log/caruthersville-to-memphis/osceola-to-shelby-forest.cfm/pg/17/>

Fourth Chickasaw Bluff (Memphis):

<http://www.rivergator.org/river-log/caruthersville-to-memphis/shelby-forest-to-memphis.cfm/pg/19/>

General introduction from the RIVERGATOR:

63 miles of the big river from Osceola Arkansas to the thriving metropolis of Memphis Tennessee, the largest city south of St. Louis. Along the way you'll paddle over mud that's over 6,000 feet deep and an entire loess bluff caving into the river. You'll see towboats and fishermen and a few crusty river towns like Osceola and Randolph. You'll camp on beaches the size and feel of Caribbean beaches, and paddle through narrow chutes with lush overhanging willows and cottonwoods. You'll be hemmed in by revetment and dikes in one place, and then released into long sections of the main channel with no levee -- where the floodplain forest/wetlands are still connected directly to the river, creating an incredibly vibrant ecosystem of bayous, sluices, chutes, pools, and back channels overflowing with wildlife. In some places you might think you're in the Amazon jungle for all the mud and trees, in other places you might be overwhelmed by the large agricultural landscapes, or by a couple of sprawling steel plants. In one special location you'll think you've discovered a land of the lost where the Mississippi River meets Utah (at the base of the startling candy-colored ridges and buttes of the 2nd Chickasaw Bluff).

GEOGRAPHY:

The river here rolls out of the Missouri Bootheel and into the wild floodplain below between Tennessee and Arkansas, it's so wild that no levees are needed for 60 miles along the left bank side of the river from Moss Island to Memphis! This section is full of tributary rivers with deep woody bottoms, strange colorful mud slides, and dozens of islands and back channels to explore, many protected within wildlife refuges and state parks. There is some heavy industry along the way, a couple of noisy steel plants and a giant power plant (below Osceola), and some busy grain docks and two harbors -- none of which you'll want to camp near. Nevertheless your hard paddling will be rewarded again and again with fabulous views of the Chickasaw Bluffs along the Western edge of the state of Tennessee and adjacent bottomland hardwood forests, including the colossal cliff-bluffs at Fort Pillow (1st Chickasaw Bluff), the astounding colorful chalky glacier of mud above Richardson's Landing (2nd Chickasaw Bluff), Meeman-Shelby State Forest (3rd Chickasaw Bluff) and finally the sweeping view of the Memphis skyline, including the Memphis Bridge and the Pyramid, and downtown Memphis (which straddles the 4th Chickasaw Bluff). The vista from the river is unparalleled! Points of interest include Obion River, Moss Island Wildlife Management Area, Nucor Yamamoto Steel, Island 30/Osceola Back Channel, Hatchie

River Bottoms, Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park, Hickman Bar, Loosahatchie and Wolf Rivers, the elegant "M" Bridge and finally the eye-popping view of skyscrapers over the Beale Street Harbor and Landing. The vista from the river is unparalleled! You've never seen downtown Memphis if you haven't viewed it from the river!

Chickasaw Bluffs:

http://www.island63.com/expeditions-chickasaw_bluffs.cfm

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