

WASHINGTON, Ark. — Nearly a year after it began here, the COVID-19 pandemic has again cancelled a spring festival with Historic Washington State Park announcing the Jonquil Festival is canceled.

The annual March festival is typically a harbinger of spring as jonquils begin to bloom across Southwest Arkansas.

This is the second year in a row the festival has been canceled, but organizers hope it can return in 2022, according to a news release. The popular event has drawn thousands of visitors annually since the 1970s, and it began in 1968 even before the state park was established.

Still, visitors can walk the grounds of Historic Washington, visit the 1874 Hempstead County Courthouse Visitor Center and dine at Williams' Tavern Restaurant, which serves a daily lunch.

Shelia Little, sales and promotions at the state park, said park staff were notified Monday by the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism that the festival could not take place this year. However, visitors are still enjoying the park.

There's no charge to walk the park grounds. Additionally, the visitor's center has a few exhibits to see.

If the coronavirus pandemic had not canceled last year's Jonquil Festival and this year's event, this would have been the 53rd annual jonquil celebration. The Valentine's dinner at Historic Washington State Park has also been canceled this year.

(For more information: 870-983-2684.)