

December 2022 Park Programs

Venture Parks Education Team



The Venture Park Naturalist Team is stationed throughout the parks to provide learning opportunities for our guests. Naturalists are people who love the outdoors & are passionate about discovering, exploring & sharing the joys of nature with you. It is our goal to inspire appreciation & knowledge of natural & cultural resources while promoting greater understanding, support for & participation in conservation & outdoor recreation. When you see an orange "Nature Program" flag in the park, stop on over to learn something new!

**** Programs are subject to cancellation due to inclement weather, staffing shortages or other unforeseen circumstances. Youth must be accompanied by an adult. Please dress appropriately for the activity & the weather. Programs are free unless a fee is noted.*

Schramm Education Center

Open 10:00-5:00pm Daily *Call ahead for modified holiday hours. Admission: \$10 Adults, \$7 Seniors & Ages 4-12, 3 & Under are free

Christmas Bird Count for Kids Thursday, December 29th, 10 am to noon

Learn all about the annual Christmas Bird Count & practice your birding skills while either doing a feeder count or a birding hike with a naturalist. We'll also have bird-related activities available in our classroom following the hike. While this is for kids, it is also for kids at heart & all beginner birders & anyone interested in this annual community science opportunity. This program meets in the classroom and does not require admission.

Naturalist Programs Daily in December at 10:30 am

Animal Feeding Observe an animal feeding and learn about how our animals are cared for and about some of their unique adaptations. This program is free with your paid admission and will meet in the lobby at 10:30 am daily in the month of December.

Winter Break Days! Friday, December 30th, Monday, January 2nd & Tuesday, January 3, 10 am-2 pm

Join us for Winter Break Days at Schramm! We will have special activities throughout the day! 10:00 Winter Storytime, 10:30 Animal Feeding, 11:00 Phenology and Nature Journaling, 12:00 Meet a Reptile, 1:00 Animal Tracks with a Winter Hike.

E.T. Mahoney State Park

Classic Christmas Saturday, December 10th, 1:30-4:30 at Riverview Lodge

Enjoy this classic Christmas tradition at Crete Carrier Riverview Lodge & enjoy a variety of winter activities like holiday crafts & decorating cookies. Santa plans to stop by too, so be sure to bring your wish list. Check out more details on the outdoor calendar at outdoornebraska.gov.

Naturalist Programs

Thursdays, December 22nd at 10 am & December 29th at 3pm What is there to do on winter break? Meet park naturalists in the lobby of the main lodge to learn all about animal tracks and the signs that critters leave behind, then go on a winter hike to locate tracks around the park.

Sundays, December 4th, 11th and 18th from 11 am to 4 pm Visit with a Naturalist at the Activity Center to learn beginning birding skills and how you can observe them, even when it is cold outside. Discover which birds make a home in Nebraska all year round and which ones have gone south for the winter. Borrow some binoculars to explore on your own in the park and see what birds you can find.

Platte River State Park

Nature Center Saturdays, 9 am to 10:30 am

The Nature Center is located below Mallet Lodge near the Wooden Tower & features a classic nature-nook feel with live reptiles & amphibians. There are hands-on activities to explore and naturalists who are excited to share their knowledge of the outdoors with guests.

Archery on Fire Saturday, December 3rd, 11 am to 4 pm at the Roger G. Sykes Outdoor Heritage Complex

Test your skills in archery & primitive shooting at the range. You'll also find our naturalist tent with many different nature activities to explore.

Yule Log Saturday, December 17th, 11 am to 5:30 pm at the Walter Scott Lodge

Enjoy making pine cone bird feeders, roasting marshmallows, a Yule Log Quest, kindling hunt, hayrack ride, bonfire & more. Meet for festivities at Walter Scott Lodge. Register a Yule Log Quest team by calling 402-234-2217.

Winter Weather Bucket List

- Cross Country Skiing
- Snowshoeing
- Sledding or Tobogganing
- Ice Fishing
- Birding (or shall we say *Brrrrr-ding?*)
- Snow Sculpting or Making Snow Angels
- Wildlife Viewing
- Nature Photography



Wise & Wild

This program is designed for seniors who love the outdoors and want to enjoy time in the parks. We will share a variety of nature-related topics with activities indoors and out. Join us on your own or bring along friends of any age. Free program.

Thursdays from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm

See schedule below for dates, themes and locations!

Date	Theme	Location
December 1	Edible Campfires	Mahoney State Park Meet at Owen Marina
December 8	Mammals & More	Platte River State Park Meet at Mallet Lodge
December 15	Phenology (Nature Observations over time.)	Schramm Education Center Meet at the Classroom
December 22	All About Owls	Schramm Education Center Meet at the Classroom
December 29	No Program	

Plan Ahead: Venture Park Region First Day Hikes! January 1st, 2023



America's State Parks plan First Day Hikes across the country every New Years Day. These free guided hikes are a great way to kick-off the year! Enjoy the beauty of our parks, the health benefits of hiking and the chance to gather with others. Prepare for your winter hike: dress in layers, wear a hat, bring a warm/insulated water bottle and check the forecast. Start a new tradition by inviting some friends along to the parks.

*Programs may be altered depending on the temperature and/or trail conditions. Please call ahead if there are weather advisories in the area.

Platte River State Park 9:00 am

Meet our naturalists at the Walter Scott Lodge for a hike along the falls trail. Following the hike, warm up by the fireplace with hot cocoa or cider and Naturalists will have an activity for the kids.

(402) 234-2217

Schramm Education Center 10:30 am

Join the Schramm Park Naturalists for a short hike along our Catalpa Trail or head down to Schramm Park SRA for a longer hike. We'll have warm beverages and an art activity following the hike in the Education Center Classroom.

(402) 332-3901

E.T. Mahoney State Park 2:30-5:00 pm

Meet at Kountze Memorial Theatre. Hikes will begin at 2:45 & 3:45. We'll have popcorn & hot cocoa for sale & a warm bonfire for gathering out front.

Follow up your hike with a Magic Show at 5 pm, reserve seats early by calling the park (ext. 7122).

(402) 944-2523

Louisville SRA 3:00 pm

Make tracks to Louisville for a Naturalist Program on Animal Tracks & explore the park to see where you can find signs of wildlife. We will meet at the picnic shelter across from the concessions shop.

(402) 234-6855