



**FOREST
PRESERVES**
of Cook County

Winter Schedule

2015 • 2016



fpdcc.com



WELCOME FROM THE PRESIDENT

If we have another harsh winter this year, at least we know we can handle it. While it may take our bodies (and minds) some time to adjust, plant and wildlife in the preserves are already preparing for the cooler temperatures. Even though the trees will be losing their leaves as we wait for the inevitable snow to fall, there is still much fun to be had in the preserves.

Throughout the season, Sagawau Environmental Learning Center will be offering cross-country skiing along its groomed trails, weather permitting, as well as lessons for beginners and ski rentals. Snowshoeing is also gaining in popularity throughout our many trails, offering an opportunity to see the preserves blanketed in snow and spot wildlife against the breathtakingly stark backdrop of winter. Designated areas of the preserves also offer ice skating, ice fishing, snowmobiling and sledding when conditions are adequate.

For the first time this season, visitors can camp in our newly built, heated cabins. If you had the chance to experience our new campgrounds this summer, I encourage you to try out camping in the winter months at camps Reinberg, Bullfrog Lake and Sullivan. If you are new to camping altogether, free winter camping workshops are also provided by Forest Preserves staff.

If these outdoor activities already have you thinking about the cold, remember you can still enjoy the “great indoors,” just be sure to do so inside one of the six nature centers, where winter related educational programming will keep you warm and the children entertained.

See you in the preserves!

Sincerely,

Toni Preckwinkle
President,
Forest Preserves of Cook County



Visit our website at fpdcc.com



DISCOVER YOUR FOREST PRESERVES

Use this brochure to learn about the many ways you can have fun in nature. From programs at our six nature centers to special events and programs, there's no shortage of opportunities to get out there and enjoy your forest preserves.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Please note that some programs may require advance registration and/or a small fee where noted.

Crabtree Nature Center (Barrington Hills)	4-7
Little Red Schoolhouse Nature Center (Willow Springs)	8-9
River Trail Nature Center (Northbrook)	10-11
Sagawau Environmental Learning Center (Lemont)	12-13
Sand Ridge Nature Center (South Holland)	14-15
Trailside Museum of Natural History (River Forest)	16-17
Special Events and Snowshoe Trekking	18-19
Ongoing Series (Third Thursdays, Outdoor Adventures, Photo Meet-ups)	20
Snow & Ice	21
Winter Camping	22-23
Volunteer	24

RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS

Our naturalists and nature centers work hand-in-hand with teachers to bring free environmental education to your students, either in the classroom or out in the preserves. Programs may feature almost any aspect of biodiversity or ecology in the region, with an emphasis on the role of people in nature and the health of the natural world. **Contact any of our nature centers for info.**

IT'S COOLER IN THE FOREST

Teachers and youth leaders: *Cooler in the Forest*, is a new field trip opportunity that introduces youth to nature, where they can explore, learn and have fun. Our staff can tailor a program to meet your goals. **Please call 708-771-1010 for more info.**

Crabtree

NATURE CENTER

THROUGHOUT THE WINTER

Snowshoe Lending

Available for use on our property when snow is 4" or deeper. *Free. Equipment is limited and loaned on a first come, first served basis. Driver's license required.*

9 am – 2:30 pm

Nature Play

Build forts and climb a spider web as you explore our three-acre Nature Play area.

Every Day

Wee Wanderer Wednesdays

Join us for a special program for little naturalists. *For children ages 2–6 with a caregiver. If weather permits we'll spend some time outdoors, so dress for the weather.*

Wednesdays, Dec 2 & 16; Jan 6 & 20;
Feb 10 & 24 • 10 am

ART IN NATURE SERIES *Ages 12 & up. Registration required.*

Winter Watercolor

Artist Denise Devereux Peters will show you how to create a winter landscape using watercolors.

Sunday, Dec 13 • 1 pm



Winter Walk

We'll take a hike around the trails to see what's going on during this season. *Dress for the weather.*

Sundays, Dec 6 & Jan 24 • 1 pm

Evening Owl Hike

Listen to a talk about these nocturnal hunters, then join us as we look for these unique predators. *Registration required.*

Fridays, Dec 18 & Jan 8 • 7 pm

Beginning Snowshoeing

Join us for a quick lesson on snowshoeing basics and a naturalist-led trek. If adventurous, continue along on your own. *Requires a minimum 4" snow base. Registration required. Space is limited.*

Saturdays, Dec 19 & 26; Jan 16;
Monday, Jan 18; Saturday, Jan 23 • 1 pm

Figurative Drawing

Let artist Dee Abate teach you the basics of figure drawing using charcoal and crayons.

Sunday, Jan 10 • 1 pm

Playing with Knives

Learn basic techniques for using a palette knife from artist Carol Foster. Then create your own small painting.

Sunday, Feb 7 • 1 pm

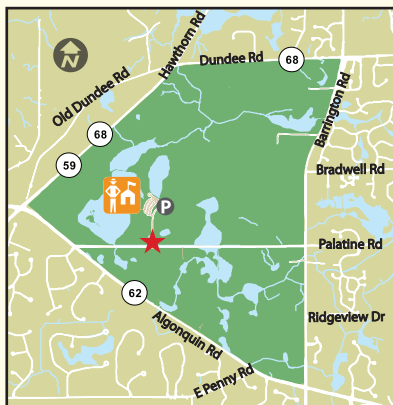
Crabtree Nature Center
3 Stover Road, Barrington Hills
847-381-6592

Winter Hours (through Feb 28)

Building: 9 am–3:30 pm, *closed Fridays*
Grounds: 8 am–4 pm daily

Closed

Christmas Day & New Year's Day



DECEMBER

Propagating Succulents

Gardeners, make use of winter downtime and learn how to propagate your favorite succulents. Instructor: Kim Ellson. *Ages 12 & up. Registration required.*

Saturday, Dec 5 • 10 am

Beginner's Star and Galaxy Gazing

The moon's location in the December sky makes this the best time to observe faint objects such as galaxies and star clusters. *Registration required.*

Friday, Dec 11 • 7 pm

Botanical Beverages

What do teas, hot cocoa and tequila have in common? Learn about these plant based beverages, then sip a few!

Sunday, Dec 20 • 1 pm

JANUARY

Winter Weeds

Weeds in winter have a very different appearance than they do in summer. Sharpen your plant identification skills on a naturalist-led walk.

Sunday, Jan 3 • 1 pm

Winter Survival

Join a naturalist to learn how animals adapt and survive our harsh winters.

Sunday, Jan 17 • 1 pm

Solstice Celebration

Welcome the light back on the shortest day of the year. Discover the science and mythology surrounding the solstice and enjoy a hot drink around a campfire. *Registration required.*

Tuesday, Dec 22 • 7 pm

Sunday Matinee

Sit back and relax with a nature-themed movie and popcorn.

Sunday, Dec 27 • Noon – 3 pm



Forcing Winter Branches

Did you know you can force certain branches to bloom in winter? Learn how and brighten up your home this winter. Instructor: Kim Ellson. *Ages 12 & up. Registration required.*

Saturday, Jan 30 • 1 pm

Groundhog's Day

Only one animal has a day named after him. Learn all about this "super sleeper" and make a groundhog craft to take home.

Sunday, Jan 31 • 1 pm

FEBRUARY

Love Is In the Air

Romance is in the air for all kinds of animals. Learn more, then go for a night hike on snowshoes (conditions permitting) and enjoy cocoa by the fire. *Adults only. Registration required.*

Friday, Feb 12 • 7 pm

Animal Attraction

It may look and feel like winter, but some animal babies are already here or will soon be arriving. Learn how animals choose mates and raise their young in this family-friendly program.

Sunday, Feb 14 • 1 pm

Seed Starting

Despite cold temps, it's time to start planning your garden. Learn when and how to start popular herbs, vegetables and flowers. Instructor: Kim Ellson.

Ages 12 & up. Registration required.

Saturday, Feb 20 • 1 pm

Animal Tracks

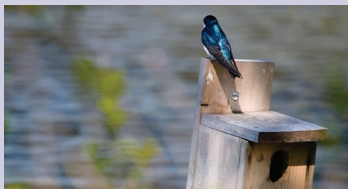
Wildlife is present at Crabtree but not always seen. Learn to identify animals by the signs they've left.

Sunday, Feb 21 • 1 pm

This Old Birdhouse

Prepare for the upcoming nesting season by constructing a birdhouse. Plans and placement suggestions included. *One birdhouse per family. Ages 10 & up. Registration required. Space is limited. \$5 fee.*

Sunday, Feb 28 • 1 pm



Little Red Schoolhouse Nature Center

THROUGHOUT THE WINTER



Mother Nature and Me

Kids ages 3–5 and their favorite adult will learn about nature through a story, nature walk and craft. *Registration required. Limit 15 kids.*

Wednesdays, Dec 2 (Snow) & 16 (Evergreens); Jan 6 (Feeding Birds) & 20 (Owls); Feb 3 (Ice) & 17 (Stars) • 10:30 – 11:30 am

S.E.N.I.O.R.S.

Are you a senior who wants to stay active and remain a lifelong learner? Nature will inspire a different activity each month. *Seniors only. Registration required. Limit 20.*

Thursdays, Dec 10; Jan 14; Feb 11 • 10 – 11 am

Restoration Work Days

Help restore wildlife habitat, and nature will restore you. *Individuals and families welcome. Not suitable for kids ages 9 & under. Kids ages 10–14 must be accompanied by an adult.*

Saturdays, Dec 12; Jan 9; Feb 20 • 10 am – Noon

Animal Encounters

Many animals call our nature center home. Meet one of these animals during a casual afternoon encounter.

Sundays, Dec 13; Jan 10; Feb 28 • 1:30 pm

Chicago Portage – National Historic Site

Join stewardship efforts to care for this historic site. *Groups welcome. Meet at 4800 S. Harlem, Lyons.*

Saturdays, Dec 19; Jan 30; Feb 27 • 9 am – Noon



Little Red Schoolhouse Nature Center
9800 Willow Springs Rd, Willow Springs
708-839-6897

Winter Hours (through Feb 28)
Building: 9 am–3:30 pm, *closed Fridays*
Grounds: 8 am–4 pm daily

Closed
Christmas Day & New Year's Day



DECEMBER

What's not to Like About Lichens?

We'll take a closer look at lichens as we take a late fall hike on our trails. *Ages 13 & up.*

Saturday, Dec 5 • 1:30 pm

Aromatherapy

Various scents can relax and soothe us. Learn about natural aromas and their healing effects. *Ages 21 & up. Registration required. Limit 25.*

Saturday, Dec 19 • 1:30 pm



WINTER SOLSTICE BONFIRE

Celebrate the shortest day of the year with a nature walk, bonfire and trimming of the wildlife tree. *Family program; no organized groups please. In-person registration required starting 12/1. \$3 per person.*

Monday, Dec 21 • 7 – 8:30 pm



JANUARY

Snowshoe Hike

Learn how to use snowshoes as we explore the wonderful winter world outside. *Requires a minimum 4" snow base. Ages 8 & up. Registration required. Limit 20.*

Saturday, Jan 2 • 10 am – Noon

Life Under the Ice

Discover how fish, amphibians and reptiles survive underneath the frozen water. *Indoor/outdoor program. Registration required. Limit 25.*

Saturday, Jan 16 • 1:30 – 3 pm



Raptors in Winter

Learn about Illinois raptors and how they survive in winter. *Ages 12 & up. Registration required. Limit 20.*

Saturday, Jan 23 • 1:30 pm

FEBRUARY

Clues They Leave Behind

Investigate how animal tracks and scat can be used to learn about animal behavior during cold months. *Indoor/outdoor program. Registration required. Limit 25.*

Saturday, Feb 6 • 1:30 – 3 pm



Sweetheart Night Hike

Sweethearts are invited to enjoy the nature center at their leisure. Hike a short trail, roast marshmallows, then warm up inside with refreshments. *Ages 21 & up. Register by 2/11. Limit 40. \$10 per couple.*

Saturday, Feb 13 • 6:30 – 8:30 pm



River Trail

NATURE CENTER

THROUGHOUT THE WINTER

What's on the Menu?

Join us at feeding time to learn about our display animals and their habits.

Saturdays & Sundays • 3 pm

Snowshoe Lending

Available for use on our property when snow is 4" or deeper. *Free. Equipment is limited. Loaned on a first come, first served basis. Driver's license required.*

Every Day

Small Serendipity

Nature stories, crafts and activities.

For kids ages 3–6 with an adult.

Wednesdays, Dec 2, 16, 30; Jan 13 & 27; Feb 10 & 24 • 10 am



Master Gardener Monthly

Master Gardeners from the University of Illinois Extension present programs each month to help you become a better gardener. *Registration preferred.*

Dec 8 (Gardening Smart); Jan 12 (Planting Perennial Peony's); Feb 9 (Perfect Perennials for Perpetual Color) • 7 pm

MASTER GARDENER WORKSHOPS

Hands-on workshops presented by University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener Instructors. *Registration preferred, but not required.*

Propagating Succulents

Gardeners, make use of winter downtime and learn how to propagate your favorite succulents.

Saturday, Dec 19 • 11 am – 1 pm

Forcing Winter Branches

Did you know you can force certain branches to bloom in winter? Learn how and brighten up your home this winter.

Saturday, Jan 23 • 11 am – 1 pm

Seed Starting

Despite cold temperatures it is time to start planning your garden. Learn when and how to start many popular herbs, vegetables and flowers from seed.

8 Saturday, Feb 27 • 11 am – 1 pm

Restoration Workdays

Help us improve wildlife habitat by removing invasives to make room for native plants. *Materials provided. Ages 10 & up. Register at least two days prior.*

Saturdays, Dec 12; Jan 16; Feb 13 • 10 am – Noon

Snowshoe Hikes

Enjoy a guided winter hike on our trails with snowshoes if there's snow (or on foot if not). *Equipment is limited. Register at least two days prior.*

Saturday, Dec 19; Sundays, Jan 3 & Feb 7 • 1:30 pm

Creature Feature

Learn about a nature-themed topic picked by our staff.

Sundays & Mondays, Jan 17 & 18; Feb 14 & 15 • 1:30 pm

NIGHTLIFE SERIES

Join us on a winter night for unique, nature-themed programs. *Registration required at least two days prior. \$2 per person. 6:45 pm check-in, 7 pm start.*

Solstice, Stories & S'mores

Celebrate the beginning of winter with storytelling, snacks around a fire and a hike in the woods. *Register by 12/9.*

Friday, Dec 11 • 7 pm

Family Science Night

Our resident "freeze miser" will guide you in science experiments with ice and snow. *Ages 6 & up. Register by 1/13.*

Friday, Jan 15 • 7 pm

Winter Night Hike

Meet us for a night hike to learn about the nocturnal animals that live at River Trail. Then warm up inside with snacks and hot cocoa. *Register by 2/17.*

Friday, Feb 19 • 7 pm

JUNIOR NATURALISTS: Winter Season

Children ages 7–12 will work on independent projects and attend special programs to learn about nature through the four seasons. *Call or visit for more info. Registration required. Initial fee \$10. Continuing seasons \$5 each.*



DECEMBER

Holiday Hangers

Stop by and make a bird feeder to take home and decorate your yard.

Sundays, Dec 6 & 27 • 1:30 pm

Sit Down with a Skunk

Get up-close and personal with our resident striped skunk and learn about what makes him so unique.

Sunday, Dec 13 • 1:30 pm

JANUARY

Two Owls & a Naturalist

Get up-close and personal with two of River Trail's resident owls.

Sunday, Jan 10 • 1:30 pm

To Snooze or Not To Snooze?

Why do some animals sleep through the winter while others brave the season? We'll explore this mystery while examining wildlife artifacts and behaviors.

Sunday, Dec 20 • 1:30 pm



Wonderful Winter Wildlife

Discover how local wildlife must sleep, move or adapt to survive Chicago winters.

Sunday, Jan 24 • 1:30 pm

Groundhog Day Celebration

Only the shadow knows if winter is over. Learn facts and myths about groundhogs and their shadows.

Sunday, Jan 31 • 1:30 pm

FEBRUARY

In Search of the Snow Flea

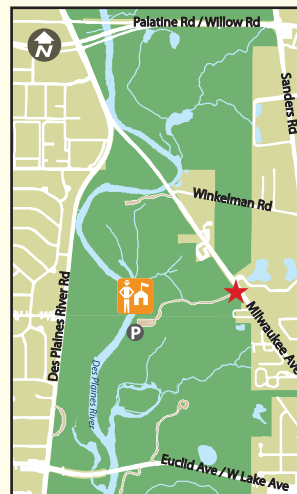
You've probably never noticed snow fleas. Hunt for these tiny creatures and learn about other insects and their winter habits. *Dress for the weather.*

Sunday, Feb 21 • 1:30 pm

Sap's Rising

Walk in the sugar maple forest as winter comes to an end, and learn about the sweet history of maple syrup making.

Saturday & Sunday, Feb 27 & 28 • 1:30 pm



River Trail Nature Center

3120 N Milwaukee, Northbrook
847-824-8360

Winter Hours (through Feb 28)

Building: 9 am–3:30 pm, *closed Fridays*

Trails: 8 am–3:30 pm

Grounds: 8 am–4 pm daily

Closed

Christmas Day & New Year's Day

Sagawau Environmental Learning Center

THROUGHOUT THE WINTER

Cross-Country Ski Trails Open

Trails will be opened and groomed as snow conditions permit. Sagawau Nordic is open daily, 9 am – 4 pm. All skiers must obtain a free trail pass. Rentals available until 2 pm. Rental equipment must be returned by 3:45 pm. Rental Rates: Individual-\$15; Senior-\$10; Family-\$40; Groups-call in advance, reservation only. *Valid driver's license or \$100 deposit required. Ages 18 years & up or accompanied by parent or guardian. Equipment is for use at Sagawau only.* **Saturday, Dec 19 – Monday, Mar 7** *Call for exact opening date.*

Beginner Cross-Country Ski Lessons

Learn to ski with a professional instructor. Lessons cover the basic skills of flatland skiing and getting up and down easy hills. *Ages 12 & up. First come, first served. Limit 12. Reservations not accepted. Please arrive by 9 am for registration and equipment fitting. \$20/person.* **Saturdays & Sundays, Jan 2 – Mar 6** • 9:30 am



Sagawau Environmental Learning Center
12545 W. 111th St.
Lemont
630-257-2045

Winter Hours
9 am – 4 pm daily

Closed
Christmas Day &
New Year's Day



DECEMBER

Cross-Country Ski Seminars

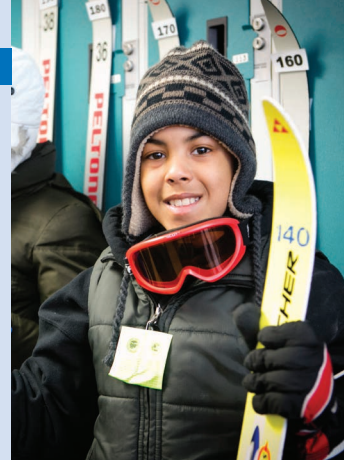
Learn how cross-country ski equipment should fit. We'll cover skis, boots, poles and clothing – including classic, ski skating and telemark equipment – plus winter safety and what to expect from your first cross-country skiing experience.

Saturday, Dec 5 & Sunday, Dec 13
• 1 pm



Wax Clinics

Learn how simple it is to care for your skis. We'll discuss ski maintenance, including useful tips and waxing demonstrations. **Sunday, Dec 6 & Saturday, Dec 12** • 1 pm



JANUARY

Surf the White Winter Wave

Join us for a Polynesian take on winter. After skiing the "frozen wave," relax and enjoy surfing videos and live updates on surf conditions from Oahu's North Shore. Dress Hawaiian and win a prize. **Saturday, Jan 23 • 9 am – 3 pm**



FEBRUARY

Birch Leggings and the Birkie

Bring out your wooden skis and wool knickers. Learn the history of the Birkebeiner Ski Race and how it became the greatest ski race. **Saturday, Feb 13 • 9 am – 3 pm**



All cross-country ski events are weather dependent. Please call for updated trail conditions.

Sand Ridge

NATURE CENTER

THROUGHOUT THE WINTER

Pioneer Living

Have you ever wondered what life was like 200 years ago? Visit our cabins and find out what the pioneers experienced when Illinois was first settled.

Sundays, Dec 13; Jan 3; Feb 7 • 1:30 pm

Live Healthy, Discover Nature! Hike

Join our monthly hiking club. One of our naturalists will lead a vigorous, two-mile hike on our trails.

Saturdays, Dec 5; Jan 2; Feb 6 • 1:30 pm

Wee Wonders Series

Children ages 3-6 are invited to their very own nature program. We'll explore a different seasonal subject each month.

Saturdays, Dec 5 (Fur, Feathers and Scales); Jan 2 (Winter Fun); Feb 6 (Nature Puppet Show) • 10 am



CHRISTMAS PAST

Visit our pioneer cabins as we celebrate this joyous time of year in a simpler way with homemade toys, chestnuts roasting and popcorn popping in the open fire. Everyone is invited to make a craft to take home.

Sunday, Dec 6 • 11 am - 3 pm

BLACK HISTORY MONTH: Underground Railroad Hike

Join us to learn about Black History with an educational display and interactive history hike. An imaginary journey follows an Underground Railroad route used in Illinois in the mid-1800s.

Sunday, Feb 28 • 11 am - 3 pm



Sand Ridge Nature Center
15891 S Paxton, South Holland
708-868-0606

Winter Hours (through Feb 28)
Building: 9 am - 4 pm,
closed Fridays
Grounds: 8 am - 4 pm daily

Closed
Christmas Day & New Year's Day



DECEMBER

Night Hike: Candle Lantern Hike

Walk the trails with us by candlelight. Candle lanterns will be available for adults. We'll search the night sky, listen for owls and enjoy an evening of nature.

Register by 12/9. Weather permitting.
Friday, Dec 11 • 7 pm

What Happened to the Leaves?

Learn about conifers (evergreens), deciduous trees and why some trees keep their leaves during winter.

Program will conclude with a hike.
Please dress for the weather.
Saturday, Dec 12 • 1:30 pm

Birds at the Feeder

One of the easiest ways to learn to identify birds is by watching them at a feeder. Join us as we try to attract various bird species.

Saturday, Dec 19 • 1:30 pm

Animals of the Night

Join us as we explore the habits of nocturnal animals such as the skunk, opossum, raccoon and bat.

Saturday, Dec 26 • 1:30 pm

Winter Nature Camp

Join us for a three-day camp where we'll explore the wonders of nature in winter. *Ages 7-10. Register by 12/21. \$15 per child.*

Monday - Wednesday, Dec 28 - 30 • 9:30 am - Noon



JANUARY

Where Did the Cold-blooded Creatures Go?

Discover the strategies that reptiles and amphibians use to survive in winter. Get a close-up look at our resident animals.

Saturday, Jan 9 • 1:30 pm

Winter Bonfire

Join us as we enjoy an evening around a bonfire telling stories, roasting marshmallows and sipping hot cocoa. *Register by 1/13.*

Friday, Jan 15 • 6 - 8 pm

Tracks & Scat

Investigate how animal tracks and scat can be used to learn about animal behavior during cold months.

Be prepared to hike outside.
Saturday, Jan 16 • 1:30 pm

Winter Tree ID Hike

Learn to identify trees in the winter based on shape, bark and twigs.

Be prepared to hike outside.
Saturday, Jan 23 • 1:30 pm

In Search of Green

Break out of the winter blues by hunting for pine needles, moss and other plant life. *Be prepared to hike outside.*

Saturday, Jan 30 • 1:30 pm

FEBRUARY

Sand Ridge 101

What can you see and do at Sand Ridge Nature Center? Join a naturalist on a guided tour. Live animal presentation and cabin tour included.

Saturday, Feb 13 • 1:30 pm

Holiday Program:

Chicago Megafauna, Past and Present
Learn about the large mammals that were formerly found in our area and that are now making their way back to their historical range. We'll have skins and skulls for you to see and touch.

Monday, Feb 15 • 1:30 pm

Geology of Sand Ridge

Enjoy an indoor interactive presentation on the geology of the local area. *Adults and children ages 12 & up. Register by 2/18.*

Saturday, Feb 20 • 1:30 pm

Calumet Region: Birthplace of Ecology

Enjoy an interactive presentation on the life of Dr. Henry Chandler Cowles and his contributions to the science of ecology. *Adults and children ages 12 & up. Register by 2/25.*

Saturday, Feb 27 • 1:30 pm

TRAILSIDE

Museum of Natural History

THROUGHOUT THE WINTER

Snowshoe Lending

Available for use on our property when snow is 4" or deeper. *Free. Equipment is limited and loaned on a first come, first served basis. Driver's license required.*

E.S.I.

Environmental Scene Investigation
Follow clues throughout the building to discover the mystery animal.
Every Day (building closed Fridays)

FPD 365 Photo Exhibit

View the stunning images that resulted from photographer Kris DaPra's quest to capture the preserves each day for a year.
Every Day (building closed Fridays)



DARWIN CELEBRATION DAYS

Celebrate Charles Darwin's birthday! Join us as we explore adaptation, fitness, selection and survival through activities and displays. *Drop-in program for adults and families.*
Saturday & Sunday, Feb 13 & 14 • 11 am – 3 pm

HOMESCHOOL CONNECTIONS

Join other homeschoolers to learn about local nature. *Register at least two days prior to each session. Space is limited. Must be accompanied by an adult.*

Snow Birding

Learn how to identify our local winter birds at the birdfeeders and on the trails, and make a birdfeeder to take home. *Ages 6–12. Dress for the weather.*
Wednesday, Jan 20 • 2 – 3:30 pm

Restoration Ecology

Learn how invasive plant and animal species disrupt local ecosystems, and ways we can restore native habitats. *Come prepared to work outdoors. Tools and equipment provided. Ages 8–12.*
Wednesday, Feb 17 • 2 – 3:30 pm



Trailside Museum of Natural History
738 Thatcher Ave, River Forest
708-366-6530

Winter Hours (through Feb 28)
Building: 9 am – 3:45 pm, *closed Fridays*
Grounds: 8 am – 4 pm daily

Closed
Christmas Day & New Year's Day

DECEMBER

Winter Birds at Your Feeder

Learn about the winter birds and discuss the foods, feeders and landscape elements to attract them. *Adults only. Register by 12/4.*
Saturday, Dec 5 • 1 pm

"City Creatures" Talk & Book Signing

Join Gavin Van Horn, co-editor of *City Creatures: Animal Encounters in the Chicago Wilderness*, for an author talk about the critters that make Chicago wild.
Sunday, Dec 6 • 1 pm

Solar Astronomy

View the sun through a telescope and discuss the coming solstice. *We'll show an indoor presentation if weather is poor.*
Sunday, Dec 20 • 1 pm

Dawn Owl Walk

Owls announce territory and begin courtship in early winter. As part of the 116th annual Christmas Bird Count, we'll search for great horned and screech owls in Thatcher Woods. Led by John Elliott, Chicago Audubon. *Adults and children 10 & up. Registration required.*
Sunday, Dec 20 • 6 am

Here Comes the Sun – Winter Solstice

Celebrate the winter solstice by making a sun dial, cooking snacks in a solar cooker and viewing the sun through a filtered telescope. *Drop-in family program.*
Tuesday, Dec 22 • Noon – 2 pm

JANUARY

Animals in Winter

Ever wonder where animals go in winter? Learn strategies animals use to survive the cold. *Drop-in family program.*
Sunday, Jan 10 • 1 – 2:30 pm

Native Seed Starting Workshop

Learn about seed germination and the benefits of native plants in the landscape. Then take home your future plants. *Adults and teens. Register by 1/14.*
Saturday, Jan 16 • 1 pm

Winter Scavenger Hunt

Enjoy an afternoon seeking signs of animal activity and winter plant life. Then warm up with snacks by a fire. *\$2/person.*
Sunday, Jan 17 • 1 pm

A Closer Look

You'll never know what surprises you'll find as we look at plant, fungi and animal parts using hand lenses and microscopes. *Drop-in family program.*
Monday, Jan 18 • 1 – 2:30 pm

The Legacy of Conservation in the U.S.

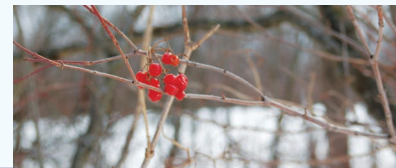
Explore the inspiring history of conservation philosophy and action in the United States. *Adults and older children.*
Sunday, Jan 24 • 1 pm

Junior Girl Scout Badge Day

Have fun with other scouts as you fulfill the requirements to earn the **Animal Habitats** badge. *Register by 1/28.*
Saturday, Jan 30 • 1 – 3 pm

Forcing Winter Branches

Did you know you can force certain branches to bloom in winter? Learn how and brighten up your home this winter. *Ages 12 & up. Registration required at web.extension.illinois.edu/cook*
Sunday, Jan 31 • 1 pm



FEBRUARY

Warm Hearts Hike

Join us for a winter nature walk, as we discuss love in the animal world! *Adult program. Register by 2/12.*
Sunday, Feb 14 • 1 pm

Nature Fun on President's Day

Enjoy nature-related crafts and educational activities. *Drop-in family program.*
Monday, Feb 15 • 1 – 2:30 pm

Owl Secrets

Learn about owls through activities, artifacts and crafts. *Drop-in family program.*
Saturday, Feb 20 • 1 – 2:30 pm

ENTICE Teacher Workshop:

Wildlife Basics for E. C. Educators
IDNR-sponsored workshop for teachers of grades PreK - 3 providing information and resources about local wildlife, for use in classrooms and outdoors. *Prof. Dev. Hours available. Register at www.enticeworkshops.com*
Saturday, Feb 27 • 9 am – 3:30 pm

What's That LBB (Little Brown Bird)?

Identifying birds by sight and sound is delightful, but can be challenging. Join us to learn how. We'll take a short walk weather permitting. *Adults and children 10 & up.*
Sunday, Feb 28 • 1 pm

SPECIAL EVENTS

For special events at our nature centers, please refer to nature center listings, pages 4-15.

Stars, Stories and S'mores

Caldwell Woods, 6350 W Devon Ave, Chicago

Bring the whole family to enjoy an evening in the woods with a fire, storytelling, snacks and other nature activities.

Thursday, Dec 3 • 5 - 8 pm



Winter Breakout Adventures

Camp Reinberg, 1801 N Quentin Road, Palatine

Don't let the chilly winter bring you down—embrace your time off from school and head outdoors. Youth and families, join us for snowshoeing (weather permitting), crafts using wood, winter bird migration, tracking and shelter building. Warm up with a campfire and s'mores. Come for the day or just for an hour. *For more info, call 708-386-4042 ext 26. All activities offered on each day, weather permitting.*

Monday, Dec 21 and Tuesday, Dec 22 • Noon - 4 pm

*Continue the adventure and reserve a 10-person cabin to experience the marvels of winter camping. Overnight activities will include an evening bonfire, night hike and star gazing. The evening program is 7:30-9:30 pm and is open only to registered campers. For reservations, call 312-636-9750.

Winter Exploration Days

Get outside and enjoy winter in the preserves. This is a great opportunity for the whole family to enjoy snowshoe nature hikes, cross-country skiing and sledding (weather permitting). We'll also have winter crafts, a campfire and more. *All ages.*

Saturday, Jan 9 • Noon - 4 pm
Caldwell Woods
6350 W Devon Ave, Chicago

Saturday, Feb 27 • Noon - 4 pm
Rolling Knolls
11N260 Rohrssen Rd, Elgin

Saturday, Feb 6 • Noon - 4 pm
Dan Ryan Woods
87th & Western Ave, Chicago

Saturday, Mar 12 • Noon - 4 pm
Thatcher Woods
8030 W Chicago Ave, River Forest

Winter Wellness in the Woods

Swallow Cliff Stairs

10267 Calumet Sag Rd, Palos Hills

Be well and get active with winter-related activities while enjoying the benefits of nature. Learn how to dress for exercise in the cold, and join us for a brisk hike on the trails.

Saturday, Jan 16 • 9 - 11 am



Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service

Dan Ryan Woods, 87th & Western, Chicago

Join us for a day of stewardship and service. Help staff remove invasive plants that threaten the health of our forest preserves. Also, enjoy a variety of fun, family-friendly wintertime activities.

Monday, Jan 18 • Noon - 3 pm

SNOWSHOE TREKKING

There's no better way to experience the preserves in the winter than by snowshoe. Come on out and try our snowshoes (conditions permitting) for free. *Open to the public. No registration required. Check facebook.com/campincook for snow conditions & updates. Snow conditions at each campground will be updated by 9 am on these Saturdays.*

Saturday, Jan 16 & 30 • 10 am - 4 pm
Camp Sullivan
14630 Oak Park Ave, Oak Forest
224-501-6631

Saturday, Feb 13 & 27 • 10 am - 4 pm
Camp Bullfrog Lake
9600 Wolf Rd, Willow Springs
224-501-6633

THIRD THURSDAYS

This monthly series explores nature, art and more. *For more information, call 312-415-2970 or email experience.nature@cookcountytill.gov*

Solstice Sunrise Celebration

Cummings Square, 536 N Harlem Ave, River Forest

Help us welcome the sunrise with a fire and celebration as we approach the shortest day of the year. *All ages.*

Thursday, Dec 17 • 6:30 - 8:30 am

A Stroll in the Snow

Thatcher Woods, 8030 Chicago Ave, River Forest

Explore beautiful Thatcher Woods. Learn about plants and animals in winter. Try snow painting. *Snowshoeing activities are weather permitting, and equipment is limited. All ages are welcome, but snowshoes are recommended for ages 6 & up.*

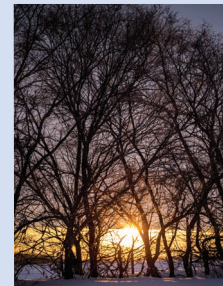
Thursday, Jan 21 • 1 - 4 pm

Animal Tracking: Print, Pattern and Place

Cummings Square, 536 N Harlem Ave, River Forest

Join us as we investigate who's been visiting our local preserve. Learn about the habits and adaptations of animals in winter, and make your own animal track to take home! *All ages.*

Thursday, Feb 18 • 10 am - Noon



OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

Calling all outdoor adventurers: meet up for outdoor skill building, exploring, hiking, nature-based art making and more. *Call 312-533-5751 to reserve your spot. All ages.*

Winter GPS Hunt

Dan Ryan Woods

87th & Western, Chicago

It can be difficult to find your way around a bare winter forest. Learn the benefits of a field GPS unit and how to use one. Then, test your new skills on a coordinate-based scavenger hunt.

Wednesday, Dec 9 • 4:30 - 6:30 pm



Twig-Tac-Toe

Thatcher Woods

8030 W Chicago Ave, River Forest

The forest is full of natural materials you can use to make your own fun. We'll start with an exploratory hike. Then we'll use imagination to create games and activities to try next time you're out in nature.

Wednesday, Jan 27 • 4 - 6 pm

Tracking Nature

Caldwell Woods Warming Shelter
6350 W Devon Ave, Chicago

Join us as we investigate different habitats and look for native animal tracks. We'll play games, go on an investigative hike, and create our 'own' tracks using a print-making process.

Wednesday, Feb 24 • 5 - 7 pm

PHOTO MEET-UPS

This monthly series is led by a naturalist and will highlight a natural area with scenic vistas, interesting plants and wildlife. *For all photographer levels and camera types.*

Saturday, Dec 26 • 10 am
Sand Ridge Nature Center
15891 Paxton, South Holland

Saturday, Jan 17 • 10 am
Sand Ridge Nature Center
15891 Paxton, South Holland

Saturday, Feb 6 • 10 am
Crabtree Nature Center
3 Stover Rd, Barrington Hills



SNOW & ICE

From sledding to cross-country skiing to ice fishing and more, the Forest Preserves offers many options for enjoying the winter months in Cook County.

■ SLEDDING

We offer four sledding hills with lighting, open 10 am – 9 pm:

- Dan Ryan Woods – Chicago
- Caldwell Woods – Chicago
- Deer Grove #5 – Palatine
- Westchester Woods – Westchester

The sledding hill at Swallow Cliff in Palos Park is closed for the 2015–16 season.

We also offer five sledding spots without lighting, open 10 am – sunset:

- Indian Hill Woods – Chicago Heights
- Pioneer Woods – Willow Springs
- Indian Road Woods – Chicago
- Schiller Woods – Schiller Park
- Deer Grove #4 – Palatine

Sledding hills are open when there are at least 3” of snow on frozen ground.

■ CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING & SNOWSHOEING

Visitors can cross-country ski in all parts of the Forest Preserves, except for golf courses and nature centers, from sunrise to sunset. Sagawau Environmental Learning Center in Lemont offers a complete Nordic Ski Program, including groomed trails and lessons. See page 10 for details. All areas are open to snowshoeing. Some nature centers offer snowshoes to use free of charge. Check center listings.

■ ICE FISHING

Ice fishing is permitted at 22 designated waterbodies, from 8 am to sunset. Fish at your own risk—ice conditions are not monitored by the Forest Preserves. A minimum of 4” of solid ice over the entire lake is strongly recommended. Find a complete list of locations at fpdcc.com/recreation/winter.

■ SNOWMOBILING

Snowmobiling is allowed in five designated areas, 10 am – 10 pm:

- Ned Brown Meadow – Rolling Meadows
- Miller Meadow – Maywood
- Morrill Meadow – Palos Hills
- Turtlehead Lake – Orland Park
- North Creek Meadow – Lansing

Snowmobile areas are opened with a 4” snow base on frozen turf. Snowmobiles must be registered with the State of Illinois and the Forest Preserves of Cook County. Proof of insurance is required. Permits can be obtained at General Headquarters in River Forest or online. Fee applies.

■ ICE SKATING

Visitors can ice skate from 8 am to sunset on six designated lakes:

- Barrington Road Pond – Hoffman Estates
- Buffalo Woods Pond – Lyons
- Busse Lake North Pool – Elk Grove Village
- Crawdad Slough – Willow Springs
- Deer Grove Lake – Palatine
- Hidden Pond – Hickory Hills

Visitors skate at their own risk—ice conditions are not monitored by the Forest Preserves. A minimum of 4” of solid ice over the entire lake is strongly recommended.

For a complete list of winter activities, locations and rules, visit fpdcc.com/recreation/winter.



FOREST PRESERVES OF COOK COUNTY

CAMPING

Experience winter camping and all of its marvels! Families, individuals and groups: create lasting memories at one of the Forest Preserves of Cook County's five new campgrounds!

Reserve your spot at fpdcc.com/camping or call 1-855-YES-CAMP

RATES: NOVEMBER – MARCH

TYPE	CAPACITY	NIGHTS	COOK COUNTY	
			RESIDENT	NON-RES
Tent/RV Electric	6	Sun – Sat	\$25	\$35
Tent (Non-Electric)	6	Sun – Sat	\$20	\$30
Small Cabin	8	Sun – Sat	\$40	\$50
Large Cabin	10	Sun – Sat	\$65	\$75
Small Bunkhouse	16	Sun – Sat	\$75	\$85
Large Bunkhouse	36	Sun – Sat	\$90	\$100
Group Sites	30–60	Sun – Sat	\$20/tent	\$30/tent

Camp Dan Beard	Camp Bullfrog Lake	Camp Reinberg	Camp Sullivan
200 Portwine Rd Northbrook	9600 Wolf Rd Willow Springs	1801 N Quentin Palatine	14630 Oak Park Ave Oak Forest

Camp Bullfrog Lake, Camp Reinberg and Camp Sullivan feature four-season heated cabins and are open 362 days a year. Camp Dan Beard is available for groups (phone reservations only). Campgrounds are closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day.

WINTER CAMPING WORKSHOPS

Curious about winter camping? Want to try something different and develop new skills? Bring your family and friends out to learn the basics of winter camping. Activities include winter weather safety and layering, winter fire building, snow shelter building, winter nature activities and snowshoeing (conditions permitting). Free. No registration required.

Wednesday, Jan 13 • 5:30 – 7:30 pm

Camp Reinberg – Dining Hall
1801 N Quentin, Palatine

Wednesday, Feb 10 • 5:30 – 7:30 pm

Camp Sullivan – Bunkhouse #2
14630 Oak Park Ave, Oak Forest

2016 CAMPING LEADERSHIP IMMERSION COURSE

Attention leaders of community and school groups, Scouts and youth groups: this overnight training course teaches equipment use and care, campground cooking, outdoor activities, teamwork and nature-based education. After completing this training, you and your group of up to 30 are eligible to borrow tents, sleeping bags, sleeping pads and cookware for an overnight campout. For info on spring dates, email experiencecamping@cookcountyil.gov



FOREST PRESERVES

of Cook County

ABOUT THE FOREST PRESERVES OF COOK COUNTY

The Forest Preserves of Cook County is one of the oldest forest preserve system in the nation, maintaining more than 69,000 acres of open land for the education, pleasure and recreation of the public. We strive to protect and restore the county's diverse ecosystems, so all our unique native plants and animals can live and thrive. Each year, millions of people use these lands and facilities to enjoy or study nature, bicycle, hike, fish, cross-country ski, picnic, golf, canoe or simply relax in a large preserve that leaves urban life behind.

Forest Preserves of Cook County

General Headquarters, 536 N Harlem, River Forest, IL 60305

Toni Preckwinkle, President

Forest Preserve District Board of Commissioners

Richard Boykin, 1st District	Peter N. Silvestri, 9th District
Robert B. Steele, 2nd District	Bridget Gainer, 10th District
Jerry Butler, 3rd District	John P. Daley, 11th District
Stanley Moore, 4th District	John A. Fritchey, 12th District
Deborah Sims, 5th District	Larry Suffredin, 13th District
Joan Patricia Murphy, 6th District	Gregg Goslin, 14th District
Jesus G. Garcia, 7th District	Timothy O. Schneider, 15th District
Luis Arroyo, Jr., 8th District	Jeffrey R. Tobolski, 16th District
	Sean M. Morrison, 17th District

**fpdcc.com
800-870-3666**

VOLUNTEER!

If you have time, skills and enthusiasm to give, consider volunteering with the Forest Preserves. Our thousands of acres provide endless opportunities for individuals and groups to get involved. From removing invasive species to picking up litter to monitoring birds and other animals, volunteering is fun and meaningful.

To find out more, visit fpdcc.com/volunteer.