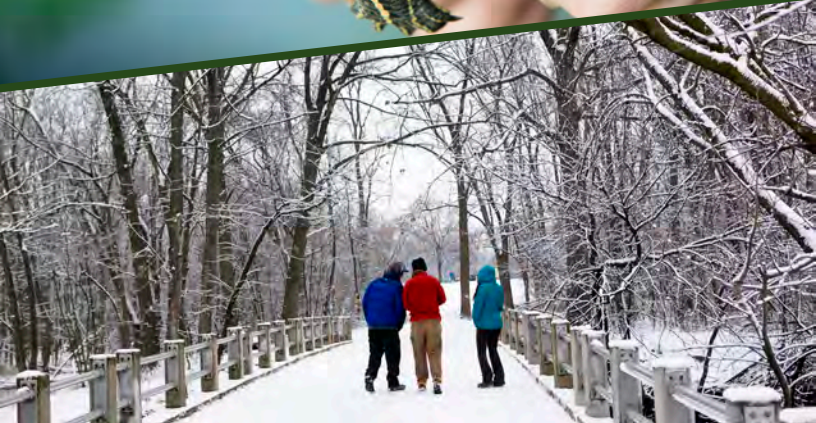




**FOREST
PRESERVES**
of Cook County

Winter Schedule 2016 - 2017





WELCOME FROM THE PRESIDENT



Joni Breckwinkle

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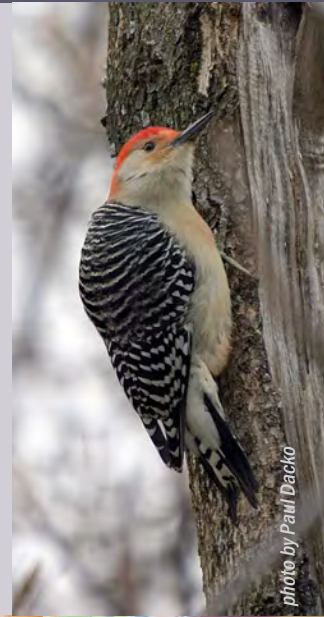


photo by Paul Dacko



WINTER CAMPING



FOREST PRESERVES OF COOK COUNTY

CAMPING

The Forest Preserves of Cook County offer four campgrounds that are open year-round. Whether you're staying in a tent, an RV, a heated cabin or bunkhouse, you'll get an immersive, round-the-clock nature experience: a chance to hear owls, paddle a canoe, stargaze and watch the sun rise over the trees.

Experience your Forest Preserves as never before—sign-up for winter camping today! Visit fpdcc.com/camping or call 855-YES-CAMP.

EVENING PROGRAMS



Join us for evening programs at most of our Nature Centers. You can enjoy a wide range of events, including night hikes, astronomy, and warm campfires. Look for the moon icon on each Nature Center's schedule to learn more about these special night programs.

Crabtree

NATURE CENTER

THROUGHOUT THE WINTER

Snowshoes

Snowshoes are available when snow is 4" or greater. Equipment is limited and is loaned with no charge on a first come, first serve basis. *Driver's license required.*

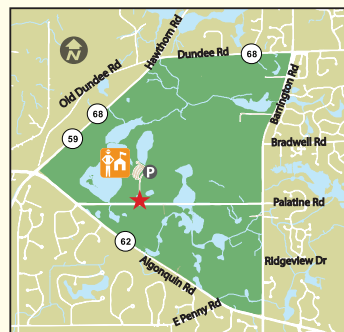
Nature Play

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



Wee Wanderer Wednesdays

Join us on two Wednesday mornings in December for a special outdoor program for your little naturalists. This is a parent/caregiver and tot program for children ages 2-6. *Space is limited; free tickets will be available on a first come, first serve basis starting at 9:30 am for 16 children.* **Wednesdays, Dec 7 & 21; Jan 4 & 18; Feb 1 & 15 • 10 am**



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

Hours

November – February

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

DECEMBER

Botanical Beverages

What do teas, hot cocoa and tequila have in common? Come learn about plant-based beverages. **Saturday, Dec 3 • 1 pm**

Art in Nature: Acrylic Snow Scene

Create a snow scene using acrylic paints with artist Sharron Boxenbaum. *Adults only. Registration required.* **Sunday, Dec 4 • 1 pm**

Tree Essences: Aromas Steeped in Culture and Tradition

We will explore the botanic sources of these unique scents, as well as how the demand for these "essences" impacts trees and plants. **Sunday, Dec 11 • 1 pm**

Evening Owl Hike

Join us for an informative talk about these nocturnal hunters. Afterwards we'll look for these unique predators on our local trail system. *Call to reserve your spot.* **Friday, Dec 16 • 7 pm**

Life Under Ice

Discover how wetland creatures survive as their homes freeze over. Then view winter on the aquatic landscape during a short hike. **Sunday, Dec 18 • 1 pm**

Solstice Celebration

Learn about the science and mythology surrounding the solstice, and enjoy a hot drink around a campfire. *Call to reserve your spot.* **Wednesday, Dec 21 • 7 pm**

Beginning Snowshoeing

A quick lesson on snowshoeing basics and a short naturalist-led walk. Requires a minimum of 4" snow base. *Registration required.* **Monday, Dec 26 • 1 pm**

Winter Walk

Stroll the trails with a naturalist to see what's happening at Crabtree. **Saturday, Dec 31 • 1 pm**

JANUARY

Coyotes: Chicago's Wild Canines

Learn about our elusive neighbors and the important role they play in maintaining a healthy ecosystem. Then we'll take a short walk outside to look for signs of their presence. **Sunday, Jan 8 • 1 pm**

Evening Owl Hike

Join us for an informative talk about these nocturnal hunters. Afterwards we'll hike our trails to look for these unique predators. *Call to reserve your spot.* **Friday, Jan 13 • 7 pm**

CSI: Critter Scene Investigation

Can you guess what animal neighbors have been visiting from the clues they've left behind? Learn about tracks, scat, and more during this interactive adventure. **Sunday, Jan 15 • 1 pm**

The Science of Snow

Learn about how snowflakes form, how snow can keep you warm, and more through indoor and outdoor snow activities. **Monday, Jan 16 • 1 pm**

Headbangers World

Woodpeckers are vital to the health of woodland ecosystems. Learn basic species identification and anatomy. **Sunday, Jan 22 • 1 pm**

Stories From the Stars

Enjoy the beauty of the stars as we view the night sky and listen to the celestial myths of the constellations around the fire. *Call to register.* **Friday, Jan 27 • 7 pm**

Groundhog's Day

Only one animal has a day named after him! Learn all about this "super sleeper" and make a groundhog craft! **Sunday, Jan 29 • 1 pm**

Art in Nature: To Be Announced

Join us for an art class in January taught by a local artist. Topic, time and date to be announced. *Registration required, age limits will apply.*



FEBRUARY

Evergreens and Winter Trees

Unearth the secrets of the evergreen trees and learn what other trees are doing during these cold months. If weather permits, identify trees of all kinds on a winter stroll. **Sunday, Feb 5 • 1 pm**

Love Is In the Air

Romance is in the air for all kinds of animals. Come hear more and go for a night hike on snowshoes (conditions permitting) and enjoy cocoa by the fire. *Adults only. Registration required.* **Friday, Feb 10 • 7 pm**

Animal Attraction

Learn some of the ways that animals choose their mates and raise their young in this family-friendly program. **Sunday, Feb 12 • 1 pm**

Winter Survival and Spring Arrival

Join a naturalist to learn how animals survive our harsh winters and prepare for the spring season. **Sunday, Feb 19 • 1 pm**

Stargazing

Come out on an almost moonless night to gaze at stars and other celestial bodies. *Registration required.* **Friday, Feb 24 • 7 pm**

This Old Birdhouse

Prepare for the upcoming nesting season by constructing a birdhouse. Plans and placement suggestions will be included. *One birdhouse per family. Ages 10 & up. Registration required and limited / \$5 donation per birdhouse.* **Saturday, Feb 25 • 1 pm**

Art in Nature: Oil Painting Techniques

Have fun manipulating oil paint on canvas using traditional and unique implements to create your own masterpiece. Taught by artist Carol Foster. *Registration required, 12 & up.* **Sunday, Feb 26 • 1 pm**



Little Red Schoolhouse Nature Center



THROUGHOUT THE WINTER

Snowshoe Lending

Snowshoes are available when snow is 4" or greater. Equipment is limited and loaned with no charge on a first come first serve basis. *Driver's license required.*

Mornings with Mother Nature

Children 3-4 years old and their favorite adult are invited to spend their Wednesday mornings exploring and learning through play. *Registration required. Registration includes all four Wednesdays in the month. Limit 15. \$40/month. Wednesdays, Jan 4, 11, 18, 25; Feb 1, 8, 15, 22 • 9:30 – 11:30 am*



DECEMBER

Mother Nature and Me

Children 3-5 years old and their favorite adult will learn more about nature through a nature walk and art activity. *Registration required. Limit 15. Wednesday, Dec 7 (Pine Cones) • 10:30 – 11:30 am*

Winter Solstice Bonfire

The winter solstice has been celebrated for centuries. We will celebrate the shortest day of the year with a short nature walk, singing around the bonfire, and trimming of the wildlife tree. *Register in-person starting December 1. This program is for families only, and requires a \$3 fee per person. Not suitable for groups. Wednesday, Dec 21 • 7 – 8:30 pm*



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 week. *Registration required. Seniors Only. Limit 20. Thursdays, Dec 8, Jan 12, Feb 9 • 10 am*

R.I.P. Workday

Assist us with Removing Invasive Plants. Individuals and families welcome. Not suitable for ages 9 yrs. and younger. Participants 10yrs. – 14yrs. old must be accompanied by an adult. Registration not required. *Saturdays, Dec 10, Jan 14, Feb 11 • 10 am – Noon*

Cook County Critters

Many animals call the nature center home. Meet one of these animals during a casual afternoon encounter. *Sundays, Dec 4, Jan 22, Feb 12 • 1:30 pm*

Winter Adventure Camp

Explore the forest in search of animal tracks and their stories. Then warm up with hot chocolate and try cool winter experiments. *Registration required. Ages 8-10. Limit 15. \$15. Tuesday – Thursday, Dec 27-29 • 9:30 am – Noon*



JANUARY

Winter Nature Hike

Join us for an off-site nature hike as we explore one of the Preserve's hidden gems. Dress and prepare for the weather. *Meeting location at McClaughrey Springs Woods, 11762 Kean Ave, Palos Park. Registration required. Family program. Limit 20. Saturday, Jan 7 • 1:30 pm*

Animal Invaders

Animals get displaced around the world in many ways. Come learn about introduced species in your area and resulting ecological impacts. *Registration required. Ages 10 & up. Limit 25. Sunday, Jan 15 • 1 – 2 pm*

FEBRUARY

Creative Gardening

Can you garden in the winter? Yes. Come make hypertufa pots for your indoor/outdoor gardens and terrariums. *Registration required. Ages 15 & up. Limit 12. \$10 fee per person. Saturday, Feb 4 • 1 – 3 pm*

Sweetheart Hike On a Full Moon Night

Sweethearts are invited to enjoy the Nature Center at their leisure. Enjoy a casual bite to eat, hike a short trail, sit by a campfire, roast marshmallows, or enjoy the exhibits inside. *Registration required. Ages 21 & up. Register by 2/11. Limit 40. \$20 per couple Friday, Feb 10 • 6:30 – 8:30 pm*



Conservation@Home: Rain Gardens

Cook South Suburban Master Gardeners will introduce concepts, plants and construction techniques of a successful rain garden. *Saturday, Feb 18 • 1 – 2:30 pm*

Snowshoe Hike

Learn how to use snowshoes as we explore the wonderful winter world outside. Requires a minimum 4" snow base. *Registration required. Ages 8 & up. Limit 15. Sunday, Feb 19 • 1:30 pm*

Winter Play Date

Put on your hat and gloves and join us as we have fun playing outside with winter-themed nature activities. *Parental supervision required. Dress for the weather. Saturday, Feb 10 • 1:30 pm*

Conservation@Home: Birding in your Garden

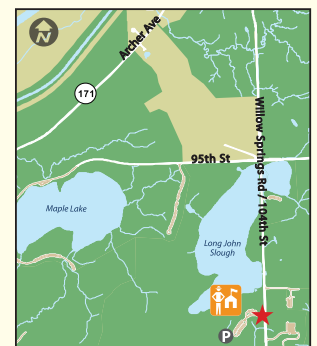
University of Illinois Extension Master Naturalists will share their experience of designing, planting, and caring for two gardens built for the birds! *Saturday, Jan 21 • 1 – 3 pm*

Winter Snowflake Ball

Dress up in your favorite winter character attire while we explore the beautiful world of snowflakes. Science experiments, activities, and a nature walk will delight children of all ages. *Registration required. Limit 15. Saturday, Jan 28 • 1:30 pm*

Photo Meet Ups

Enjoy a naturalist-led walk to view and photograph scenic vistas, interesting plants and wildlife. For all photographer levels and camera types. *Saturdays, Jan 14 & Feb 11 • 10 am*



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

Hours

November – February
Building: 9 am – 4 pm, *closed Fridays*
Grounds: 8 am – 4 pm daily

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 unique habits.

Saturdays and Sundays • 3 pm

Small Serendipity

Nature stories, crafts and activities. For children ages 3-6 with an adult.
Wednesdays, Dec 14 & 28; Jan 11 & 25; Feb 8 & 22 • 10 am

Restoration Workdays

Help us improve wildlife habitat by cutting and collecting invasive plant species, making room for native plants to grow. Materials and tools will be provided. *Ages 10 & up – great as a service project. Registration preferred at least two days prior.*
Saturdays, Dec 10, Jan 14, Feb 11 • 10 am – Noon

JUNIOR NATURALISTS

Winter Season

Jr. Naturalists, children, ages 7-12, work on independent projects and attend special programs to learn about nature through each of the four seasons. Call or visit for more information. *Registration required. Initial fee: \$10. Continuing seasons: \$5 each.*

Beginner Snowshoe Hikes

Join us for a quick lesson on snowshoeing basics and then enjoy a guided winter hike on our trails with snowshoes if there's snow (requires a minimum 4" snow base) or on foot if not. *Limited number of snowshoes available; registration required at least two days prior to reserve snowshoes.*

Sundays, Dec 4, Jan 8, Feb 5 • 1:30 – 3 pm

Snowshoe Lending at River Trail

Snowshoes are available when snow is 4" or more. *For on-site use only. Equipment is limited and loaned with no charge on a first come, first serve basis. Driver's license or State I.D. required. Call for more information.*

WINTER BREAK

Nature Drop In Days

We provide the fun, you bring the kids to explore something new each day.
Tuesday–Thursday, Dec 26–29 & Jan 3–5 • 1 – 3 pm

SAVE THE DATE

45th Annual Maple Syrup Festival

Celebrate the arrival of spring with a special day of activities including crafts, games, tree tapping and maple syrup history.
Sunday, March 19 • 11 am – 3 pm

River Trail Nature Center

3120 Milwaukee Avenue, Northbrook
847-824-8360

Hours

November – February
Building: 9 am – 4 pm, *closed Fridays*
Grounds: 8 am – 4 pm daily



EVENING PROGRAMS

Join us on a winter's night for unique, nature-themed evening programs. *Registration required at least two days prior to each program.*

SUN-day Solstice Fire

Celebrate the beginning of winter with stories, warm snacks and a large fire.
\$2/person
Sunday, Dec 18 • 6 – 8 pm

Winter Night Hike

Use your senses to search for animals active on cold winter evenings while on a guided hike. Afterwards, warm up inside with snacks and hot chocolate.
\$2/person
Fridays, Jan 27 & Feb 24 • 7 pm

Sweetheart Night Hike

Couples are invited to enjoy the Nature Center at their leisure. Hike a short trail under the full moon's sky and roast marshmallows, then warm up inside with refreshments. *Adults only. \$10/couple.*
Friday, Feb 10 • 7 – 9 pm



DECEMBER

Predators of Illinois' Past

Learn about the mega predators that once lived in Illinois.
Sunday, Dec 11 • 1:30 pm

Creature Feature

Get up close and personal with one of the creatures who live at River Trail.
Sunday, Dec 18 • 1:30 pm

JANUARY

Two Owls & a Naturalist

Learn about owls' unique adaptations and get up close and personal with two of River Trail's resident owls.
Sunday, Jan 15 • 1:30 pm

Sunrise Nature Photography

An outdoor workshop combining the skills of both a naturalist and a photographer. Focus on amazing winter scenes. Dress for cold weather. *Adults and teens only. Registration required by 1/18.*
Saturday, Jan 21 • 6 – 9 am



Wonderful Winter Wildlife

Learn how local wildlife must sleep, move or adapt in order to survive Chicago winters.
Sunday, Jan 22 • 1:30 pm

Groundhog Day, Again ...

Only the shadow knows if winter is over. Enjoy facts and myths about groundhogs and their shadows.
Sunday, Jan 29 • 1:30 pm

FEBRUARY

Conservation@Home: Building a Bird Garden

University of Illinois Extension Master Naturalists will share their experience of designing, planting and caring for two gardens built for the birds.
Saturday, Feb 11 • 1 – 3 pm

In Search of the Snow Flea

Hunt for these tiny creatures, and learn about other insects and their winter habits. Dress to be outside.
Sunday, Feb 19 • 1:30 pm

Sit Down With A Skunk

Learn about skunks' unique adaptations and meet River Trail's resident striped skunk.
Sunday, Feb 12 • 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 25 & 26 • 1:30 pm



THROUGHOUT THE WINTER

Cross-Country Ski Trails Open December 17 through March 6

Sagawau Nordic is open daily, 9 am – 4 pm. Trails will be opened and groomed as snow conditions permit and could include an early start or late finish. Watch our Facebook page and call 630-257-2045 for the most up-to-date trail conditions.

Ski Equipment Rental

Rentals available from 9 am to 2 pm every day. Equipment must be returned by 3:45 pm. Rental package includes skis, bindings, boots and poles. Classic and skate skis available. All children and adult sizes. Rates range from \$5 to \$30 per person:

- **Individual:** \$15/person
- **Senior:** \$10/person
- **Family:** \$40/family
- **Group** (10 or more, Mon-Fri only): \$5/person
- **Lesson and Rental:** \$30/person

To Rent Equipment:

- You must supply a valid driver's license or \$100 deposit.
- You must be 18 years or older, or accompanied by parent or guardian.

Equipment is for use at Sagawau only.

Beginner Cross-Country Ski Lessons

Learn to ski with a certified Professional Ski Instructor of America. \$20/person. *Ages 12 & up. Registration is required by phone or in person only. Registration for each lesson starts the Monday prior to the program date.* **Saturdays & Sundays, Jan 7 – March 5 • 9:30 am**

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

Hours
Building: 9 am – 4 pm
Grounds: 8 am – 4 pm

Ski Trail Maintenance

Skiers, join us for a work day to widen our trails and prepare for ski season. Gloves and tools available for loan. *Registration required.*

Saturday, Dec 3 & Sunday, Dec 4 • 9 am – Noon

SURF THE WHITE WINTER WAVE



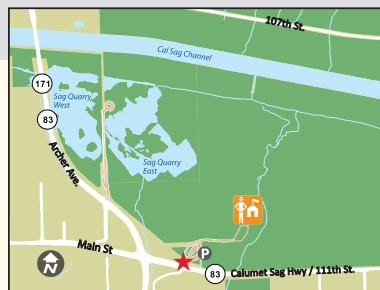
Don't let the weather get you down! Join us for a Polynesian spin on winter by skiing the "frozen wave" our winter storms leave in their wake. After skiing, relax and enjoy surfing videos and live updates on surf conditions from Oahu's North Shore. Dress Hawaiian and win a prize! *Event will take place if ski trails are open.* **Saturday, Jan 21 • 9 am – 3 pm**

BIRCH LEGGINGS AND THE BIRKIE

How did an infant prince from the 12th century inspire the world's most famous Nordic ski race? Learn the history of the Birkebeiner Ski Race and how it became "the greatest show on the snow." Ski with wood skis and wool knickers or dress like a Viking and win a prize! *Event will take place if ski trails are open.* **Saturday, Feb 18 • 9 am – 3 pm**

American Birkebeiner Livestream

Will it be a close finish? How will the skiers who train at Sagawau do? Watch a livestream of the American Birkebeiner race and get race results as they're posted. **Saturday, Feb 25; Livestream will start 9 am, results will be posted throughout the day.**



We are hoping for a great ski season, but if Mother Nature doesn't cooperate we'll have other winter activities. All programs are weather dependent and these programs will not take place if the ski trails are open. Call 630-257-2045 or check our Facebook page for trail conditions.

JANUARY

Drawing Nature I

Learn to draw what you see and develop your skills. Bring your favorite materials or use some of ours. *Adults and teens. Registration required.* **Saturday, Jan 7 • 1 pm**

Drawing Nature 2

Learn to draw animals. Bring your favorite materials or use some of ours. *Adults and teens. Registration required.* **Sunday, Jan 15 • 1 pm**

Winter Ecology Hike

Follow tracks and signs of animal life in winter. *Registration required.* **Saturday, Jan 21 • 1 pm**

Painting Nature

Learn to capture natural history subjects in color. Bring your favorite materials or use some of ours. *Adults and teens. Registration required.* **Sunday, Jan 29 • 1 pm**



FEBRUARY

Winter Insects

Believe it or not, some insects are active through winter. We'll go out and search for these cold-hardy survivors. *Registration required.* **Sunday, Feb 5 • 1 pm**

Winter Tree Identification

Learn to identify trees by bark, bud, and growth habits. *Registration required.* **Saturday, Feb 18 • 1 pm**

Winter Ecology Hike

Follow tracks and signs of animal life in winter. *Registration required.* **Sunday, Feb 19 • 1 pm**

Wax Clinics

Learn how simple it is to care for your skis. We'll discuss ski maintenance for waxable and waxless skis, including useful waxing tips and demonstrations. **Saturdays, Dec 17, Feb 11; Sundays, Dec 11, Jan 22 • 1 pm**

Winter Bird Feeder Watch

What birds are visiting the feeders this winter? We'll help you identify our resident birds and winter migrants and share ways to attract them to your own yard. **Saturdays, Jan 14, 28; Sundays, Feb 12, 26 • 10 am**



Sand Ridge

NATURE CENTER

THROUGHOUT THE WINTER

Wee Wonders Series

Children in preschool and kindergarten are invited to their very own nature program. We'll explore a different subject each month.

Saturdays, Dec 3 (Turtle Time), Jan 7 (Winter Fun), Feb 4 (Groundhogs) • 10 am

Live Healthy, Discover Nature! Hike

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

Saturdays, Dec 3, Jan 7, Feb 4 • 1:30 pm

Pioneer Living

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

Sundays, Dec 4, Jan 8, Feb 5 • 1:30 pm



Sand Ridge 101

What can you see and do at Sand Ridge Nature Center? Join us on a guided tour that includes a live animal presentation and cabin tour.

Sundays, Dec 18, Jan 22, Feb 19 • 1:30 pm

Snowshoes

Snowshoes are available when snow is 4" or greater. Equipment is limited and is loaned with no charge on a first come, first serve basis. *Driver's license required.*

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 12/7. Weather permitting.*
Friday, Dec 9 • 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 10 • 1:30 pm

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 11 • 11 am – 3 pm



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, Dec 17 • 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 12/20. \$15 per child.*

Tuesday–Thursday, Dec 27–29 • 9:30 am – Noon

IRRUPTION!

Every few winters, the Forest Preserves experience a bird invasion. Come learn about Snowy Owls and other birds that you can see and why these avians of the arctic pay us such rare visits.

Saturday, Dec 31 • 1:30 pm

JANUARY

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 14 • 1:30 pm

Winter Bonfire

Join us as we enjoy an evening around a bonfire as we roast marshmallows and sip hot cocoa. *Register by 1/18.*
Friday, Jan 20 • 6 – 8 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 21 • 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 28 • 1:30 pm

Winter Wandering

Put on your winter boots, bundle up and join us for a brisk 4-mile hike along Thorn Creek. Meet at Sweet Woods, Cottage Grove & 183rd Street in Glenwood.

Sunday, Jan 29 • 1:30 pm



FEBRUARY

Build a Beaver

The beaver is especially adapted to life in the water, even in winter. Join us as we learn about their unique adaptations through a fun, interactive activity.

Saturday, Feb 11 • 1:30 pm

Geology of Sand Ridge

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

Sunday, Feb 12 • 1:30 pm

Winter Sunset Stroll

Join us for a leisurely walk to see what surprises Mother Nature may have in store. Dress for the weather and be prepared for a one-hour hike. *Register by 2/15.*
Friday, Feb 17 • 5 – 6 pm



Conservation@Home: Building a Bird Garden

University of Illinois Extension Master Naturalists will share their experience of designing, planting, and caring for two gardens built for the birds!

Saturday, Feb 18 • 1 – 3 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 20 • 1:30 pm

The Calumet Region: Birthplace of Ecology

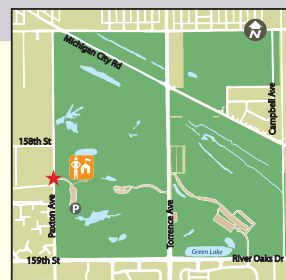
Enjoy an interactive presentation on the life of Dr. Henry Chandler Cowles and his contributions to the science of ecology. *Adults and children ages 12 & up. Register by 2/23.*
Saturday, Feb 25 • 1:30 pm

BLACK HISTORY MONTH:

UNDERGROUND RAILROAD HIKE

Join us to learn about Black History Month 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 26 • 11 am – 3 pm



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

Hours

November – February
Building: 9 am – 4 pm, *closed Fridays*
Grounds: 8 am – 4 pm daily

THROUGHOUT THE WINTER

Snowshoe Lending

Snowshoes are available when snow is 4" or greater. Equipment is limited and is loaned with no charge on a first come, first serve basis. *Driver's license required.*

E.S.I. – Environmental Scene Investigation

Come follow clues throughout the building to discover the mystery animal.

Every day (building closed Fridays)

“Watercolor Birds” Painting Exhibit

View a stunning collection of watercolor paintings by Liita Forsyth.

Every day (building closed Fridays)

Nature Story Time

Nature-inspired stories, followed by a craft and snack. *For children ages 3-6 w/adult.*

Thursdays, Dec 1 & 15; Jan 5 & 19, Feb 2 & 16 • 10:30 am

“Bone” Appétit

Join us during feeding time to learn about Trailside’s outdoor resident animals. *Family program.*

Saturdays, Dec 24, 31; Feb 11 • 1 pm

Snowshoe Hikes

Enjoy a guided nature hike on snowshoes if there’s 4" of snow (or on foot if not.) *Family program. Registration required.*

Sunday, Jan 8; Saturday, Feb 4, Sunday Feb 26 • 1 – 2:30 pm at Thatcher Woods

Makin’ Music Bluegrass Jam

Make a simple musical instrument, then join the fun in a bluegrass jam circle! Or bring your own instrument.

Sundays, Jan 15; Feb 5 • 1 pm at Thatcher Woods

Maker/Nature Holiday Day Camps

Join us for creative art projects and active nature exploration on one-day day camps. For more information visit: thelittlebitsworkshop.com

Mondays, Jan 16; Feb 20

DECEMBER

Winter Birds at Your Feeder

Learn about birds that visit your feeders and how to attract winter birds. *For adults and teens.*

Saturday, Dec 3 • 1 pm

Winter Trees Walk

Join us for a short talk, followed by a walk as learn to identify trees by habitat, bark and bud. *For adults and older children.*

Sunday, Dec 4 • 1 pm

Winter Play Day Drop-In

Come explore our nature play area with special activities, and enjoy a warming campfire, too! *Drop-in family program.*

Saturday, Dec 10 • 1 – 2:30 pm

Birds of Winter

Learn about birds with Chicago Audubon Society representative John Elliott. Includes a short walk, weather permitting. *For adults and teens.*

Sunday, Dec 11 • 1 pm

Winter Wildlife

Learn about the special adaptations of local wildlife for winter. Includes a walk to look for signs of animal activity. *Family program.*

Saturday, Dec 17 • 1 pm

Here Comes the Sun – Winter Solstice Drop-In

Celebrate the winter solstice with a peek at the sun through a telescope by a campfire. *Drop-in family program.*

Sunday, Dec 18 • 1 – 2:30 pm

Turtle Time Drop-In

Learn about local turtles, meet a live turtle and make a turtle craft! *Drop-in family program.*

Wednesday, Dec 28 • 1 – 2:30 pm



JANUARY

New Year’s Resolution Walk

Join us on a long winter walk through the woods. Afterwards, warm up with some hot cider. Dress for the weather!

Family program.
Tuesday, Jan 3 • 1 pm

Hawk Tales

Enjoy learning about the different species of hawks that live in the Forest Preserves, and meet a live red-tailed hawk. *Family program.*

Wednesday, Jan 4 • 1 pm

Winter Animal Tracking

Learn to read clues left by local wildlife on a naturalist-guided walk. *Family program.*

Saturday, Jan 7 • 1 pm

Flint Knapping Workshop

Learn the basics of the ancient art of making stone tools! We will be using traditional flint knapping tools, as well as contemporary copper boppers. *Adult program. Registration required by 1/12.*

Saturday, Jan 14 • 1 pm

Owl Prowl at Thatcher Woods

Join Steve Bailey, ornithologist from the Illinois Natural History Survey for a captivating night exploring the mystery of owls. In partnership with the Chicago Botanic Gardens. \$49/\$39.20 member. To register, call 847-835-8261 or visit chicagobotanic.org/education

Friday, Jan 20 • 7 – 9 pm



FEBRUARY

Warm Hearts Hike

Join us for an adults-only winter nature walk through Thatcher Woods, as we discuss love in the animal world! *Adult program. Register by 2/11.*

Sunday, Feb 12 • 1 pm

Hibernation Happens

With the end of winter nears, we’ll learn about the local animals that will be waking up soon. *Family program.*

Saturday, Feb 18 • 1 pm

Trailside Museum of Natural History

738 Thatcher Ave, River Forest
708-366-6530

Hours

November – February
Building: 9 am – 4 pm, *closed Fridays*
Grounds: 8 am – 4 pm daily

Snow Day

Is it true no two snowflakes are alike? Join us to find out! Make a snow catcher, read a story and take a closer look at snow. *Family program.*

Saturday, Jan 21 • 1 pm



Conservation@Home: Easy Care Native Gardening

Learn how to landscape using easy-care native plants that support pollinators. Presented by U of I Extension Master Gardener Pete Landwehr. *Adult program. Registration required by 1/20.*

Sunday Jan 22 • 1 pm

Winter Scavenger Hunt

Enjoy an afternoon outdoors on a hunt for signs of animal activity and winter plant life. Warm up afterwards with snacks and a hot drink by a campfire.

Family program. \$2/person.
Saturday, Jan 28 • 1 pm

Nature Sketching

Explore line, value, shading and form as we practice sketching plants and animals from life. *For adults and older children w/adult. Register by 1/26. \$5 fee includes take-home artist's tools.*

Sunday, Jan 29 • 1 – 3 pm

The Ghosts of Conservation

Take a virtual trip to the iconic places that some of our heroes and heroines of conservation lived and worked. A few surprises might be on the itinerary. Presented by Chicago Audubon Society representative John Elliott. *For adults and teens.*

Sunday, Feb 19 • 1 pm

The Birds Think It Is Spring

Our calendars say it is still winter, but our resident birds have been courting and establishing territories for weeks. Join Chicago Audubon Society representative John Elliott on a walk to see what resident birds are up to. *For adults and older children.*

Saturday, Feb 25 • 8 am

WINTER BREAKOUT ADVENTURE

Dash through the snow and have fun during the winter holiday season. Embrace your time off from school and head out to the Forest Preserves campgrounds for an exciting day of winter games and activities. Sledding and snowshoeing is a definite must—snowfall permitting.



Call 708-386-4042 for details. Continue the adventure and reserve a cabin or bunkhouse to experience winter camping. Overnight campers will have the opportunity to enjoy an evening campfire, hike and star gazing. For campground reservations, please call 1-855-YES-CAMP or visit fpdcc.com/camping

Wednesday, Jan 4 • Noon – 5 pm
Camp Sullivan
14630 Oak Park Aveune, Oak Forest

Thursday, Jan 5 • Noon – 5 pm
Camp Reinberg
1801 N. Quentin Road, Palatine

WINTER EXPLORATION DAYS

Get out to your local Forest Preserve and explore the natural beauty of winter! Each special event offers activities to prepare you for a delightful winter time experience. Learn how to navigate using new-found orienteering skills, create snowshoes and backpacks from natural materials and track animals that make the Preserves their home during winter. Snowshoeing and sledding will be available, should weather conditions permit. Please join us for one or all events! For further details call 708-386-4042.

Saturday, Jan 14 • Noon – 4 pm
Caldwell Woods Warming Shelter
6350 W Devon Ave, Chicago

Saturday, Jan 28 • Noon – 4 pm
Dan Ryan Woods Pavilion
87th & Western Ave, Chicago

Saturday, Feb 11 • Noon – 4pm
Thatcher Woods Pavilion
8030 W Chicago Ave, River Forest

Saturday, Feb 25 • Noon – 4 pm
Rolling Knolls Forest Preserve
11N260 Rohrssen Rd, Elgin



FOREST PRESERVES OF COOK COUNTY CAMPING

SNOWSHOE TREKKING PLUS



No better way to experience the Preserves in winter than by snowshoe. Come on out to these campgrounds (snow conditions permitting) and try our snowshoes, for FREE! Open to the public, no registration required. There must be at least 4" of hard snow on the ground in order to snowshoe. Call the campground for snow conditions, but if there isn't enough snow, we'll still be out with hikes, games, fire and other outdoor fun. All programs are from **12 – 3 pm**.

Saturday, December 17th – Sullivan
312.636.0041

Saturday January 21st – Reinberg
312.636.9750

Saturday February 18th – Bullfrog
312.636.9785

Each Campground has snowshoes and cross country skis for rent.

CLIC TRAINING

2017 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 more info on spring dates, email experiencecamping@cookcountylil.gov.

CAMPING ADVENTURE BACKPACKS

At our campgrounds, check out a pack filled with gear that enhances self-guided nature exploration. Includes binoculars, field guide, compass and more.

*Available for loan.
Supplies are limited.*

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 campgrounds!

CAMP AND CLIMB PARTY

Camp Sullivan, Oak Forest
Enjoy exclusive use of the Camp Sullivan upper level barn and Climbing Wall during a Camp & Climb Party! This two-hour adventure includes tables and chairs, use of the attached kitchen and upper deck, as well as equipment and staff to facilitate the Climbing Wall. Party prices range \$310 to \$500 based on number of climbers.

Camp and Climb available times:
Monday, Tuesday, Thursdays:
By appointment
Friday: 11:30 am – 1:30 pm and 2 – 4 pm
Saturday: 10 am – Noon
Sunday: Noon – 2 pm; 3 – 5 pm

CLIMBING WALL

The indoor rock climbing wall is now open at Camp Sullivan. Open to registered campers – first come first serve. Reserve a time slot at check-in. Hours of operation vary. Signed waiver required for all climbers, minors require parent signature. Waiver available at fpdcc.com/camping/camp-sullivan. Contact Camp Sullivan for more details: 312-636-0041. Please note: the climbing wall will be closed the month of December for routine maintenance.





WINTER RECREATION

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
- Swallow Cliff – Palos Park

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 for details.

ICE FISHING

Ice fishing is permitted at 22 designated waterbodies, from 8am – 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 from 10 am – 10 pm, in designated areas including:

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

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 – 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.

OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

Calling all outdoor adventurers! Meet up for wilderness skill building, hiking, exploring, nature-based art making and more. Drop in programs. Call 312-533-5751 for more information.

Survivor!

Thatcher Woods Pavilion

Great for families! Test your skills in our scenario-based game that will lead you on a hike throughout the preserve and face you with challenging questions and situations that will help teach you about making the right decisions in outdoor survival situations.

Wednesday, Dec 7 • 4:30 – 6:30 pm



BIRD THE PRESERVES

Christmas Bird Count

Preserves throughout the county

The Christmas Bird Count is an annual tradition. Small groups search sections of an established bird circle. Results become part of one of the nation's oldest volunteer biological surveys. New birders are welcome. Map of the count areas and contact information for the compilers: audubon.org/conservation/join-christmas-bird-count
Various days from Dec 14 through Jan 5 • various times

Cold Weather Creations

Swallow Cliff Stairs—Pavilion

Join us we celebrate the winter season through art making. We will be inspired by the winter weather and landscape to create various art and craft pieces. Hot cocoa and other refreshments will be served. *All ages.*
Wednesday, Jan 11 • Noon – 5:30 pm

Snowy Scavenger Hunt

Rolling Knolls Pavilion

Let's go on a scavenger hunt! Make some interesting winter observations as you hike through the woods. Record your findings as you go. Dress for the weather. Come any time between 2:30 pm and 6 pm.
Wednesday, Feb 8 • 2:30 – 6 pm

Birding with the Field

Museum at Eggers Grove 11201 S Ave B, Chicago

Meet at the comfort station building for our final #birdthepreserves field trip to look for winter birds. More information: fieldmuseum.org/at-the-field/programs/birding-field.
Saturday, Dec 17 • 8 am

Chicago Audubon Society Big Year Birding Field Trip at Skokie Lagoons Erickson Woods, 1651 Willow Rd, Winnetka

Walk lasts two hours, but leave early if you need to. Updates: chicagoaudubon.org. Walk Leader: Dave Willard, dwillard@fieldmuseum.org, 312-665-7731.
Tuesday, Dec 20 • 7 am



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



Established one hundred years ago, the Forest Preserves of Cook County is one of the oldest forest preserve systems in the nation, maintaining nearly 70,000 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.

Toni Preckwinkle, President

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- | | |
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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.**

General Headquarters, 536 N Harlem, River Forest, IL 60305 • 800-870-3666

fpdcc.com

