WINTER 2026

A GUIDE TO THE Forest Preserves of Cook County



FOREST PRESERVES of Cook County

fpdcc.com



Celebrate
MLK DAY

January 17–18, 2027

Find an event near you:
fpdcc.com/MLK



The Forest Preserves is committed to providing equal, integrated participation for individuals with disabilities. Please contact the Nature Center of your program choice 72 hours in advance to request reasonable accommodations and to obtain more information about site accessibility. To obtain information about accommodations for specific camping and outdoor recreation activities throughout the Forest Preserves, **please contact us at 630.453.7887.**



What will be your best memories of this winter? Will it be an annual tradition or a favorite snowy activity? Or maybe you'll look back with a smile about when you tried something new. At the Forest Preserves of Cook County, you can have both: A cherished time out in nature and something that sparks your curiosity.

You might spend an evening listening for owls, find inspiration for your next painting or learn how to cross-country ski. Our nature centers offer everything from a spot where a few old friends can meet up for a winter walk to a surprise for your kids, where the can visit the animal ambassadors on site—and even write a note to them.

Our winter gatherings bring people together to share traditions and to learn from one another, too. Celebrate Kwanzaa and Lunar New Year with us, explore local connections to the Underground Railroad during Black History Month, or honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. through volunteering.

Here in the Forest Preserves, our staff and community partners have a season of discovery planned for you. Turn the page and find your next, or first, adventure.

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Adam Bianchi
General Superintendent
Forest Preserves of Cook County

FOREST PRESERVES of Cook County

feel free

fpdcc.com

How to use this Guide:

Whether you're looking for cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and sledding locations or fun and educational events or programs at nature centers and sites throughout the County, this guide will help you create your own adventure in the Forest Preserves.

By using the designated zone colors and shapes below, find events and amenities close to home, or explore more than 70,000 acres of wild and wonderful.

Come by yourself, or with your family and friends. There's no better place to feel free.

Seasonal Offerings 4–12
Seasonal Offerings, Hike the Preserves, Bird the Preserves, Volunteer Opportunities, Camping

Northwest Zone 13–17
Crabtree Nature Center

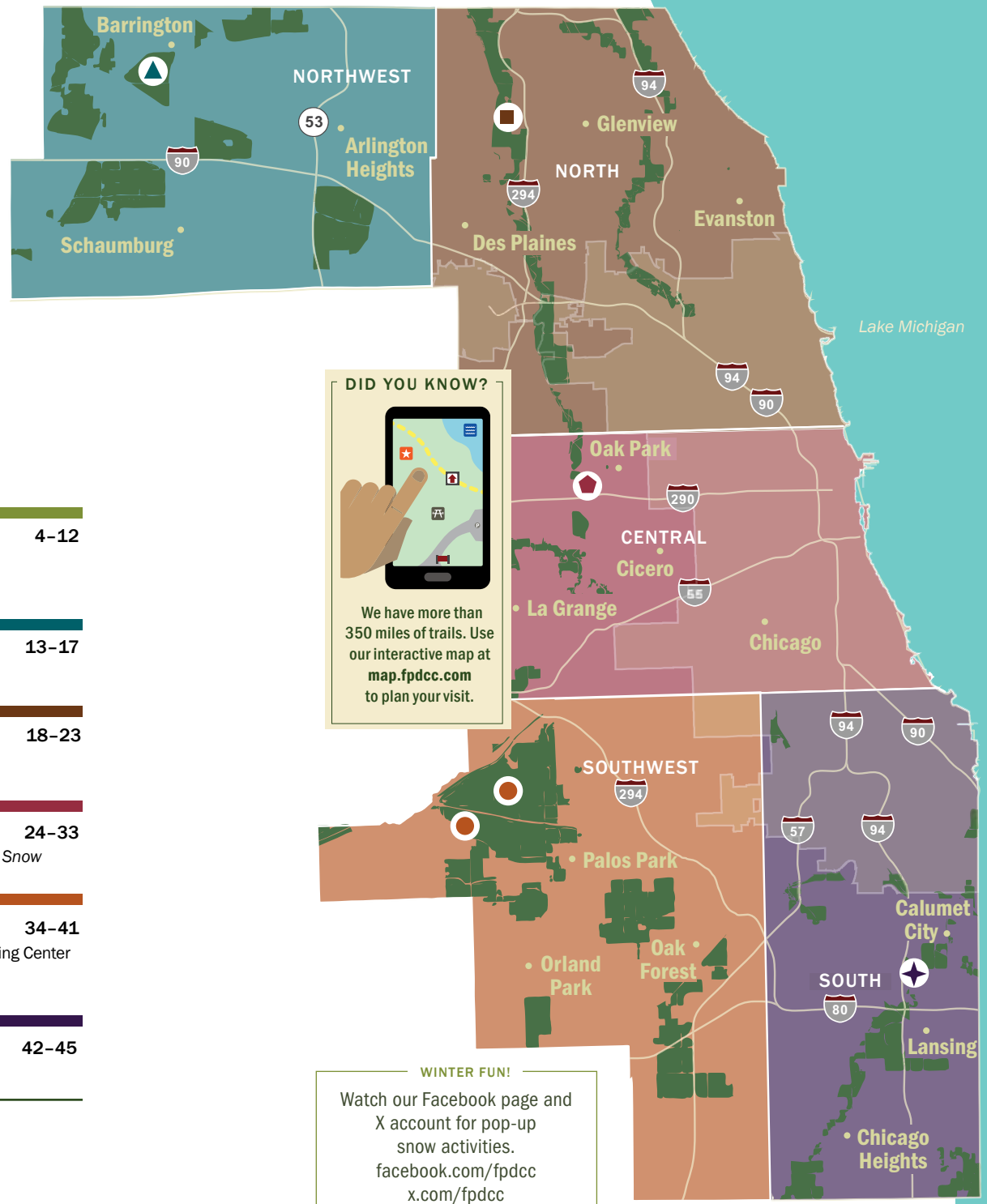
North Zone 18–23
River Trail Nature Center, *Find Your Winter Hideaway*

Central Zone 24–33
Trailside Museum of Natural History, *Follow the Stories Written in the Snow*

Southwest Zone 34–41
Little Red Schoolhouse Nature Center, Sagawau Environmental Learning Center
Telling the Lands Story Through Art

South Zone 42–45
Sand Ridge Nature Center

Entrance to Nature Centers is free; some programs and zone-based activities require a small fee.



DID YOU KNOW?

We have more than 350 miles of trails. Use our interactive map at **map.fpdcc.com** to plan your visit.

WINTER FUN!

Watch our Facebook page and X account for pop-up snow activities.
facebook.com/fpdcc
x.com/fpdcc

Seasonal Offerings

throughout Cook County



2027 Permits on sale now
fpdcc.com/permits

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING & SNOWSHOEING

Visitors can cross-country ski in all parts of the Forest Preserves, except for golf courses and nature centers. All areas are open to snowshoeing.

Sagawau Environmental Learning Center offers a complete Nordic Ski Program, including groomed trails and lessons. Campgrounds offer snowshoes and cross-country skis for rent by campers. Check our website for details on snowshoe rentals at nature centers.

EQUESTRIAN

Horse riders can enjoy miles of trails throughout the Preserves.
fpdcc.com/equestrian

ICE FISHING*

Ice fishing is permitted at 22 designated waterbodies, from 8 am–sunset.*

ICE SKATING*

Visitors can ice skate from 8 am–sunset on six designated lakes.

JUICED BY SHIC

Swallow Cliff
Days/hours are weather dependent.
juicedbyshic.com, 708.827.5344
Calumet Sag Rd/Rte 83, west
of La Grange Rd/96th Ave, Palos Park

OFF-LEASH DOG AREAS

Membership info at fpdcc.com/dogs.

Beck Lake
East River Rd & Central Rd, Des Plaines

Bremen Grove
Oak Park Ave, south of 159th St,
Tinley Park

Miller Meadow-South
1st Ave, south of Roosevelt Rd,
Forest Park

*Fish and skate at your own risk—ice conditions are not monitored by the Forest Preserves. A minimum of 4 inches of solid ice over the entire lake is strongly recommended.

ZONE KEY

Northwest · North · Central · Southwest · South



SLEDDING

We offer four sledding hills with lighting, open 10 am–7:30 pm, Sunday–Thursday and 10 am–8:30 pm Friday–Saturday:

Dan Ryan Woods-Chicago
Caldwell Woods-Chicago
Westchester Woods-Westchester
Swallow Cliff-Palos Park

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

Pioneer Woods-Willow Springs
Ted Lechowicz Woods-Chicago
Schiller Woods-Schiller Park
Deer Grove, Grove 5-Palatine

Open when there is at least 3 inches of snow on frozen ground.

SNOWBOARDING

Snowboarding is allowed at Dan Ryan Woods on the snowboarding hill only. (At least 6 inches of snow required).

SNOWMOBILING

Snowmobiling is allowed in four designated areas from 10 am–10 pm:

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

Illinois Snowmobile Registration and FPDCC permit required. For details, visit fpdcc.com/snowmobiling.

VOLUNTEER

Join a stewardship volunteer day, Adopt-a-Site or support public safety efforts. fpdcc.com/volunteer.



PAVILION RENTALS

Host your next event with us. Our five affordably priced rental pavilions are ideal venues for weddings, family reunions, birthday parties and much more. Choose from restored historic buildings or new energy-efficient facilities—all located in beautiful natural areas.

Dan Ryan Woods Pavilion
8700 S Western Ave, Chicago

Mathew Bieszczat Volunteer Resource Center
6100 N Central, Chicago

Rolling Knolls
11N260 Rohrssen Rd, Elgin

Swallow Cliff Pavilion
IL Rt 83 & US Rt 45, Palos Park

Thatcher Woods Pavilion
8030 Chicago Ave, River Forest

Reserve your space:
Email info@forestpreserveevents.com or call 773.558.2003.

Learn more at fpdcc.com/pavilions.



Hike the Preserves

Walk & Talk Hikes are for the curious mind who wants to know more about the Forest Preserves and natural areas. These walks will be led at a slower pace with frequent stopping and interpretation.

Fitness Hikes are for those looking to get some exercise outdoors. Fitness hikes will be faster paced with little to no interpretation or stopping.

Walk and Talk:

✦ South Zone

Black History Month

Kickapoo Woods, Halsted St, south of W 144th St, Riverdale

Saturday, Feb 20 • 10 am

Fitness Hike:

⬟ Central Zone

Senior Walks-1 mi

Led by University of Illinois Master Naturalist Roberta Jannsen. Ages 55 & up. Registration required: call 708.366.6530.

Thatcher Woods, Chicago Ave, west of Thatcher Ave, River Forest

Wednesdays, Dec 2, 16; Jan 6, 20; Feb 3, 17 • 9 am

Brezina Woods-6 mi

N La Grange Rd, south of W Cermak Rd, La Grange Park

Wednesday, Jan 20 • 10 am

✦ South Zone

Sauk Trail Woods-Central-3.4 mi

Forest Preserve Dr, south of W 26th St, South Chicago Heights

Wednesday, Jan 6 • 6–8 pm

● Southwest Zone

Orland Grassland-South-1.6 mi

104th Ave, south of 179th St, Orland Park

Saturday, Dec 19 • 10 am

Country Lane Woods-5 mi

95th St, east of Flavin Rd/Willow Springs Rd, Willow Springs

Saturday, Jan 30 • 10 am

Teason's Woods-4 mi

S Willow Springs Rd, south of Calumet Sag Rd/Rte 83, Palos Park

Thursday, Feb 25 • 10 am

ZONE KEY

▲ Northwest ■ North ⬟ Central ● Southwest ✦ South

#birdthepreserves

Bird Walks :

Join a naturalist as we look for local birds. A limited supply of binoculars available for loan at select events.

Dawn Owl Prowl

Listen for owls during the Christmas Bird Count. Led by John Elliot from Chicago Bird Alliance. Ages 10 & up. Registration required: call 708.366.6530.

Trailside Museum of Natural History, 738 Thatcher Ave, River Forest

Sunday, Dec 13 • 5:30 am

Evening Owl Prowl-2 mi

Register: call 312.533.5751 or email CentralZoneProgram@cookcountyil.gov.

Spears Woods, 96th Ave, south of W 87th St, Willow Springs

Saturday, Jan 2 • 5 pm

Evening Owl Hike-3 mi

Register: call 312.533.5751 or email CentralZoneProgram@cookcountyil.gov.

Thatcher Woods, Chicago Ave, west of Thatcher Ave, River Forest

Friday, Jan 8 • 5 pm

Winter Bird Walk

Join a casual walk to observe our local birds and their behavior. Binoculars available to borrow. Registration required: call 708.366.6530.

Trailside Museum of Natural History 738 Thatcher Ave, River Forest

Saturday, Feb 13 • 8 am



BE A BETTER BIRDER

Registration required. The program will be held virtually via Zoom.

Getting Started

Learn how to build a birding kit, how to start birding and where to find resources. Register: tinyurl.com/gettingstarted-0127

Thursday, Jan 21 • 6 pm

How Birds Got Their Names

Learn how scientists name birds and the history of common names for birds. Register: tinyurl.com/birdnames-0127

Thursday, Jan 28 • 6 pm

Backyard Bird Feeding

Discover how to make your home bird friendly. Learn about bird feeders, types of food and more. Register: tinyurl.com/backyard-feeding-0227

Thursday, Feb 18 • 6 pm

Intro to Bird ID

Learn the lingo birders use to describe birds and how to identify birds using size and shape. Register: tinyurl.com/intro-bird-ID-0227

Thursday, Feb 25 • 6 pm

Volunteer Opportunities





NEWTS: Stewardship Days for New Volunteers

Learn how to remove invasive brush to keep our woodlands healthy.

Registration required. Everyone is welcome! Learn more and sign up at: **fpdcc.com/volunteer**

Southwest Zone

Saturday, Jan 16 • 9 am–Noon

Cap Sauers Holdings
S La Grange Rd, south of 119th St
Palos Park

South Zone

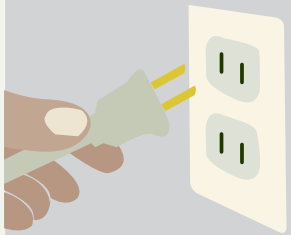
Tuesday, Feb 9 • 9 am–Noon

Sand Ridge Nature Center
15891 Paxton Ave
South Holland

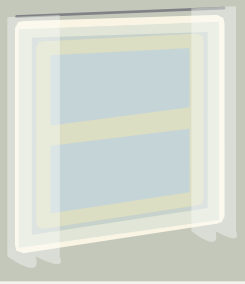
Find volunteer opportunities all winter long at locations across the County: **volunteer-fpdcc.givepulse.com.**

Energy Saving Tips

The Forest Preserves of Cook County committed to a Sustainability and Climate Resiliency Plan in 2018. We are working to reduce emissions and ensure our native landscapes thrive. There are many ways you too can take simple steps to be more sustainable this winter.



Use space heaters only when truly needed. Turn off space heaters and unplug phone chargers and computers when not in use.



Tape clear plastic over the inside of your window frames to reduce heating bills and save energy. Open curtains to allow sun in to heat the room.



Be prepared for colder weather by throwing on a sweater instead of turning up the heat! Bring an extra sweater, throw or scarf to work.

You can help the Forest Preserves and the planet at home and at work this winter.



WINTER BONFIRE

EVENTS

Camp Dan Beard
Saturday, Dec 5 • 4–8 pm

Camp Shabbona
Saturday, Dec 12 • 4–7 pm

FOREST PRESERVES OF COOK COUNTY

CAMPING

Contact campgrounds for information and group site availability. For seasonal rates visit fpdcc.com/camping or call 1-855-YES-CAMP.

▲ **Camp Reinberg**
1801 N Quentin Rd
Palatine

● **Camp Bullfrog Lake**
9600 Wolf Rd
Willow Springs

Camp Sullivan
14630 Oak Park Ave
Oak Forest

■ **Camp Dan Beard**
200 Portwine Rd
Northbrook

✦ **Camp Shabbona Woods**
15810 S Torrence Ave
South Holland

CAMP REINBERG • CAMP BULLFROG LAKE
CAMP SULLIVAN

RATES: NOV–MAR		COOK COUNTY RESIDENT	NON-RESIDENT
Type	**Capacity**	**Sat–Sun**	**Sun–Sat**
Tent/RV Electric	6	$30	$40
Tent (Non-Electric)	6	$25	$35
Small Cabin	8	$46	$56
Large Cabin	10	$112	$124
Small Bunkhouse	16	$129	$141
Large Bunkhouse	36	$168	$179

CAMP DAN BEARD

RATES: NOV–MAR		COOK COUNTY RESIDENT	NON-RESIDENT
Type	**Capacity**	**Sun–Sat**	**Sun–Sat**
Tent (Non-Electric)	6	$24	$34
Small Cabin	8	$45	$57
Large Cabin	10	$95	$106
Group Site Pricing	30–60	$24/tent	$34/tent

ZONE KEY

▲ Northwest ■ North ⬟ Central ● Southwest ✦ South

CAMPGROUNDS OFFERINGS

▲ Camp Reinberg

Owl Prowl*

Learn about our local owls and hear who's hooting. Ages 12 & up. Register: call 847.381.6592 or email Crabtree.NatureCenter@cookcountyil.gov.

Friday, Dec 4 • 7 pm

■ Camp Dan Beard

Winter Bonfire*

Celebrate the start of winter with a giant bonfire. Enjoy s'mores and other snacks, games, and stargazing (weather permitting). Register: call 773.758.8899 or email NorthZoneProgram@cookcountyil.gov.

Saturday, Dec 5 • 4–8 pm

● Camp Sullivan

Winter Open Climb

Scale the indoor climbing wall! Adult supervision and waivers required. Participants must be over 40lbs. Accessible climbing equipment available.

Thursdays, Dec 17, Jan 21, Feb 18
4–8 pm

● Camp Sullivan

Crafternoon: Paint & Sip Hot Chocolate

Guided painting and a cup of hot chocolate. Supplies provided.

Friday, Feb 12 • 6–8 pm

● Bullfrog

Full Moon and a Fire*

Observe the "Snow Moon" while staying warm by a fire and enjoying s'mores and hot chocolate. Binoculars and snacks provided.

Saturday, Feb 20 • 5:30–7 pm

✦ For programs at Camp Shabbona Woods, see page 44.

**Registration required. To register, email experience.camping@cookcountyil.gov.*

chicago botanic garden

LIGHTSCAPE



FEEL THE JOY

November 13 – January 3

Come for the glow of lights. Stay for the moments you'll remember together. Around every bend is another reason to pause, look up, and say, "Wow."

Book your preferred time and date now!

The Chicago Botanic Garden is one of the treasures of the Forest Preserves of Cook County.

In partnership with SONY MUSIC

Supported by comed AN EXELON COMPANY DISCOVER NETWORK J.P.Morgan PRIVATE BANK



NORTHWEST ZONE



ROLLING KNOLLS EVENTS

11N260 Rohrssen Rd, Elgin

WINTER WORKSHOPS

Fire Building 101*

Join us outdoors and learn how to build, start and tend to a campfire. Equipment, instructions provided.

Saturday, Dec 12 • 10 am–Noon

Plant Press*

Learn the art and science of botanical preservation! Explore uses for pressed plants and take one home. Materials provided.

Saturday, Jan 9 • 10 am–Noon

Winter Wellness Walk*

Shake off those winter blues and join us for a gentle, moderately paced walk.

Thursday, Feb 18 • 10 am

**Registration required. For more information or registration, call 773.758.8899.*

EXPLORE MORE

PAGES 4–12

Crabtree NATURE CENTER

3 Stover Rd, Barrington, 847.381.6592

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



THROUGHOUT *the* SEASON

Wee Wandering Wednesdays

A special program for little naturalists. Ages 2–6 w/ caregiver. Tickets on a first-come, first-serve basis starting at 9:30 am.

Wednesdays, Dec 2, Jan 6, Feb 3 • 10 am

Meet Our Ambassador Animals

Meet the animals that call Crabtree home.

Saturdays, Dec 5 & Feb 20 • 11 am

Little Sprouts Sound Lab*

Explore nature's soundscape through sensory activities and sound-making. Ages 2–6 w/ adult. Siblings welcome.

Tuesdays, Dec 8, Jan 12, Feb 9 • 10 am

✳

Senior Nature Club*

Discover the natural world with a themed activity. Ages 55 & up.

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

Restoration Workdays*

Remove invasive species. Tools provided. Ages 8 & up w/ adult. High schoolers may earn service hours.

Saturdays, Dec 12, Jan 9, Feb 6; Sundays, Jan 24, Feb 28 • 9:30 am–Noon

2 miles at 2

Join us for a hike around. Ages 18 & up.

Wednesdays, Dec 16; Jan 13, 27; Feb 10, 24 • 2 pm

Baby Buds

Join us for nature-themed interactive songs and stories. Ages 0–23 months w/ adult. Tickets on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Thursdays, Dec 17, Jan 21, Feb 18 • 9:30 am

Animail

Young visitors can create and deliver postcards to our ambassador animals.

Every Day (excluding Fridays), Jan 3–Feb 15 9:30 am–5 pm

DECEMBER

Gall on a Winter's Day

Learn about the history and mysteries of oak galls.

Sunday, Dec 13 • 1 pm

Winter Solstice Night of Lights*

Celebrate the solstice with a campfire and self-guided walk along our candlelit paths.

Friday, Dec 18 • 6–9 pm

Solstice Restoration Workday*

Remove invasives and celebrate the solstice. Ages 8 & up w/ adult. High schoolers may earn service hours.

Sunday, Dec 20 • 3–6 pm

Winter Play Date

Learn by playing at this outdoor/indoor family fun event with unique self-guided activity stations.

Monday, Dec 28; Wednesday, Dec 30 10 am–2 pm

JANUARY

Winter Painting*

Create your own masterpiece inspired by nature with step-by-step instruction. Ages 16 & up.

Sunday, Jan 10 • 10 am or 1 pm

Animal Enrichment Studio

Create new items for our ambassador animals then watch how enrichment is used as an important part of their care.

Monday, Jan 18 • 11 am

Seasonal Science

Explore the wonders of winter weather through hands-on activities and experiments.

Saturday, Jan 23 • 1–3 pm

Crabtree Hygge

Celebrate the Danish tradition of coziness with hot chocolate and relaxing activities.

Sunday, Jan 31 • 10 am–2 pm

FEBRUARY

Black History Month Story Trail

Walk a short trail featuring one family's story from the Great Migration.

Monday, Feb 1–Sunday, Feb 28 8 am–4 pm

Spark in the Dark*

Enjoy a self-guided candlelit walk and warm up by the fire with your special someone. Ages 18 & up.

Friday, Feb 5 • 7–9 pm

Teen Diamond Art

Drop in and create your own craft with diamond art. Ages 13–17.

Sunday, Feb 14 • 10 am–3 pm

CSI: Critter Scene Investigation

Gather clues to learn about wildlife.

Sunday, Feb 21 • 10 am–3 pm

Microsafari: Part 1

Discover the life emerging in early spring waters with the help of a microscope.

Saturday, Feb 27 • 1 pm

Snowshoe Lending

Snowshoes available for use on-site when snow is 4" or more. Available first-come, first-served.

**Registration required. For more information or registration, call*

847.381.6592

OPEN
for Winter

Whether you prefer to be indoors or outdoors
WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED!

Join us in the Forest Preserves for fun activities for everyone, including winter biking or hiking, artmaking, bonfires and more!

Find the perfect outing for YOU.











FOREST PRESERVES of Cook County

North Zone



Lunar New Year

Celebrate Lunar New Year with an afternoon of family-friendly activities and cultural traditions.
Register: call 847.864.1209.

Sunday, Jan 31 • 1–3 pm

Harms Woods-Central, Harms Rd, south of Old Orchard Rd, Skokie

CALDWELL WOODS WELLNESS CENTER

W Devon Ave & N Nagle Ave, Chicago

THROUGHOUT *the* SEASON

Weekly Programs

Join us for exciting new programs every Thursday! Call 773.758.8899, email NorthZoneProgram@cookcountyil.gov or visit fpdcc.com, for details.



Yoga in the Preserves*

Weekly yoga class for all ages. Led by Kim Weber from Be Lightfooted.

Wednesdays • 9:30–10:45 am



WELLNESS *in the* WOODS

Led by University of Illinois Extension

Nature Arts for Health*

Experience art and wellness in this interactive nature journaling class.

Thursday, Dec 3 • 1:30–3 pm

Ethnobotany & The Power of Plants*

Discover the healing stories of Chicago's landscapes in this immersive indoor-outdoor herbalism workshop.

Thursday, Jan 28 • 10 am–Noon

Nature Arts for Health*

Experience art and wellness in this interactive, rock painting class.

Thursday, Feb 18 • 1:30–3 pm

DECEMBER

Forest Bathing: Celebrate the Season*

Experience the benefits of nature with forest meditation. Presented by Gayle Byck of InTune with Nature. Ages 18 & up.

Thursday, Dec 10 • 10 am–Noon

JANUARY

Winter Tree ID*

Enjoy a guided walk and learn how to identify trees in the winter.

Thursday, Jan 7 • 11 am

Buckthorn Dye Workshop*

Learn the basics of natural dyeing with the invasive common buckthorn. Presented by Katelyn Patton.

Saturday, Jan 9 • 10 am–Noon

Whittling 101

Learn this age-old winter pastime and take home a beginner carving project (weather permitting)! Materials provided. Ages 12 & up.

Thursday, Jan 14 • 5:30–7:30 pm

Celebrate MLK: Winterpalooza

Commemorate MLK with a community litter cleanup and winter activities. Presented with Scouting America. Scouts must register with respective troops

Saturday, Jan 16 • 10 am–Noon

Qi Gong*

Learn to balance the energy in your mind, body and spirit. Presented by Kim Weber from Be Lightfooted.

Thursday, Jan 21 • 6–7 pm

FEBRUARY

Beating the Winter Blues

Reduce stress, learn mindfulness practices and positive psychology strategies in this immersive workshop. Led by University of Illinois Extension.

Thursday, Feb 4 • 10–11:30 am



Winter Workshop: Nature Illustration*

Get inspired on a nature walk before an illustration workshop. Presented by local illustrator Vivian Piña.

Saturday, Feb 6 • 10 am–Noon

Agile Mind & Body: Movement, Breath and Brain Play

Work on your breath, movement and brain breaks to regulate the nervous system. Presented by Kim Weber of Be Lightfooted.

Wednesday, Feb 10 • 11 am–Noon

Stargazing

Join us for a night of wonder by looking at the stars with a warm fire, hot drinks and s'mores.

Thursday, Feb 25 • 6–7:30 pm

Black History Month Celebration

Get outdoors as we honor the joy, resilience and connection between Black communities and nature. Presented with Illinois Black Outside.

Saturday, Feb 27 • 10 am–Noon

**Registration required. For more information or registration, please email NorthZoneProgram@cookcountyil.gov or call 773.758.8899.*

EXPLORE MORE

PAGES 4–12

FOREST PRESERVE FOUNDATION

Your support in 2027 will plant seeds for the future

Thank you!

forestpreservefoundation.org



Black History Month Events

February 2027







Mama Edie

Find an event near you: fpdcc.com/bhm

River Trail
NATURE CENTER

3120 Milwaukee Ave, Northbrook, 847.824.8360

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



SAVE THE DATE

Maple Syrup Festival

Celebrate the arrival of spring with a special day of activities including crafts, games, tree tapping and maple syrup history.

Sunday, Mar 21 • 11 am–3 pm

THROUGHOUT *the* SEASON

Snowshoe Lending

Snowshoes available for use on-site when snow is 4" or more. Limited numbers available on a first-come, first-served basis.

What's on the Menu?

Join us at feeding time to learn about our outdoor ambassador animals.

Saturdays & Sundays • 3 pm

Wildlife Connections

Drop by the visitor center to learn about reptiles, mammals and birds from the residents of Misericordia-Heart of Mercy.

Tuesdays • 10:30 am–Noon

Small Serendipity

Nature stories, crafts, and activities. Children ages 3–6 w/ adult.

Tuesdays, Dec 8, 22; Jan 5, 19; Feb 2, 16 10 am

Volunteer Workdays*

Help make River Trail even better. Ages 10 & up. Ages 10–15 w/ adult.

Saturdays, Dec 12, Jan 16, Feb 6 10 am–Noon

Forest Therapy Walks*

Learn techniques for relaxation and meditation practices. Led by a University of Illinois Extension Master Naturalist Ages 18 & up.

Sundays, Dec 13 & Feb 21 • 1–2:30 pm

DECEMBER

Evening Owl Prowl*

A guided walk on our trails in search for local owls. Ages 8 & up.

Friday, Dec 11 • 7 pm



Guided Wildlife Sketching: Coyote*

Draw with provided materials or BYO. Led by University of Illinois Extension Master Naturalist volunteers. Ages 16 & up.

Sunday, Dec 13 • 11 am–1 pm

Winter Wildlife Walk

Join a guided walk to learn about wildlife while looking for tracks and evidence of animals.

Sunday, Dec 20 • 1:30 pm

Winter Nature Day

Family fun nature activities including pinecone bird feeders, walking sticks and more. Outdoor activities depend on conditions. Drop in.

Sunday, Dec 27 • 11 am–2 pm

JANUARY

Conservation@Home: Seed Swap

Bring seeds or take some home at this free swap. Specialists available for guidance. Ages 13 & up. Drop-in.

Sunday, Jan 10 • Noon–2 pm

Friday in the Field

Discover something new in nature with University of Illinois Extension volunteers.

Friday, Jan 15 • 10 am–Noon

Celebrate MLK: Forest Therapy Walk*

Reflect on the teachings of MLK. Led by a University of Illinois Extension Master Naturalist. Ages 18 & up.

Sunday, Jan 17 • 1–2:30 pm

Conservation@Home: Winter Seed Sowing*

Use native seeds for winter sowing and make your own winter sowing milk jug. Supplies provided. Ages 13 & up.

Sunday, Jan 24 • 1:30 pm

FEBRUARY

Superb Owl Party

Celebrate owls and learn what makes them so unique!

Sunday, Feb 14 • 1:30 pm

Sweetheart Night Hike*

Hike candlelit trails, relax around a campfire and warm up with dinner and drinks. Cost: $30/person. Ages 21 & up. Register by 2/15. Space is limited.

Saturday, Feb 20 • 5:30–9 pm

Sap's Rising*

Walk in the sugar maple forest to learn about the sweet process of making maple syrup.

Saturday & Sunday, Feb 27 & 28 10:30 am & 1:30 pm

**Registration required. For more information or registration, call*

847.824.8360

CENTRAL ZONE



Winter Solstice Day

Celebrate the winter solstice with a bonfire and fun indoor/outdoor activities.

Saturday, Dec 19• 11 am–2 pm

Thatcher Woods Pavilion,
Chicago Ave, west of Thatcher Ave,
River Forest

Paper Snowflake Making:
10 am–Noon

Indigenous Storytelling
& Reflection:
Noon–2 pm

Presented with the
American Indian Center.

THATCHER WOODS EVENTS

Chicago Ave, west of Thatcher Ave, River Forest

Sacred Wanderings

Connect with nature and the energy of the natural world. Provided by Unity Temple of Oak Park. For more info, email mindful@unitytemple.org.

Saturdays, Dec 5, Jan 2, Feb 6
8:30–10:30 am

Children's Storytime

Listen to a nature-themed children's book, followed by an activity.

Wednesdays, Dec 9, Jan 6, Feb 10 • 9:30 am
(Dec 9: story provided orally & ASL)

Pavilion

DECEMBER

Nature Junk Journaling 101*

Create a junk journal by documenting your observations within nature and using sustainable art materials. Supplies provided, or BYO.

Monday, Dec 21 • 10 am–Noon

JANUARY

Fire Building Basics

Learn safe practices for fire building and containment, make a fire starter, help build a fire, and roast marshmallows.

Wednesday, Jan 13 • 5–7 pm

Indigenous Winter Stories & Songs

Listen to traditional winter stories and songs focusing on themes of survival, resilience and connection. Presented by American Indian Center.

Saturday, Jan 16 • 10 am–Noon

Community Book Swap

Bring in your gently used books and leave with some new-to-you books! Warm beverages provided.

Saturday, Jan 23
10:30 am–12:30 pm

Cheers to Nature: Naturalist's Lecture

Enjoy a relaxing evening with an environment-themed lecture from a naturalist. Building is ADA accessible. BYOB. Ages 21 & up.

Thursday, Jan 28 • 6:30–8 pm

FEBRUARY

Winterpalooza

Join us for winter activities including hikes, broom hockey, shelter building and more. Presented with the Portage Creek Boy Scouts.

Saturday, Feb 6 • 9 am–Noon

Mosaics Workshop*

Join us around an indoor fireplace to create your own mosaic piece. Ages 12 & up. Ages 12–17 w/ adult.

Saturday, Feb 13 • 10 am–Noon

Black History Month Celebration: Poetry

Enjoy live poetry readings and learn about Chicagoland's Black poets. Refreshments provided. Presented with Poets & Patrons.

Sunday, Feb 21 • 10 am–Noon

Weaving Workshop*

Learn how to weave a small wall hanging frame on a loom. Materials provided.

Wednesday, Feb 24 • 9:30–11:30 am



Other Central Zone Events

DECEMBER

Photography Walk

Join us for a guided walk to photograph nature. For all levels and camera types.

Saturday, Dec 5 • 10 am

Evans Field, Grove 1, W Bloomingdale Ave & Thatcher Ave, River Grove

Kid's Owl Pellet Dissection*

Learn about what local owls eat and animal digestion while dissecting a real owl pellet! Register: lsfbrookfieldlibrary.org/

Tuesday, Dec 29 • 5 pm

Brookfield Public Library,
3541 Park Ave, Brookfield

JANUARY

Winter Outdoor Gear Rentals

Grab gear, hit the trail and warm up by a fire. Free rentals with ID. Snowshoes, binoculars, maps and more.

Saturday, Jan 9 • 12:30–2:30 pm

Bemis Woods-South, Grove 7, Ogden Ave, west of Wolf Rd, Western Springs

**Registration required. For more information or registration, please email CentralZoneProgram@cookcountyil.gov or call 312.533.5751.*

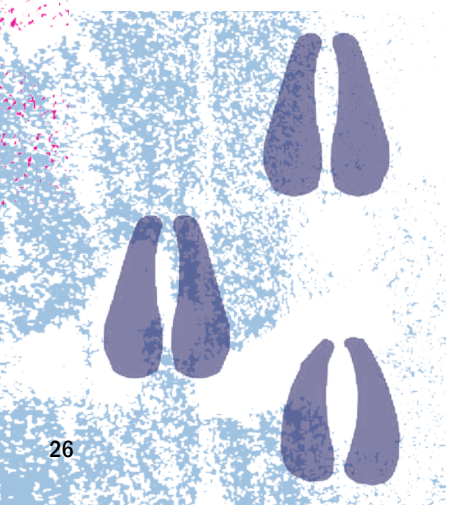
EXPLORE MORE

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Follow the **Stories** *Written in the* **Snow**

A fresh layer of snow can turn the Forest Preserves into a giant field notebook. Across trails, woodlands and brushy areas, native animals leave behind clues to where they went, what they ate and how they are making it through winter. **Here are five tracks to watch for:**



WHITE-TAILED DEER
(*Odocoileus virginianus*)

Look for two symmetrical hoof marks shaped almost like an upside-down heart. The narrow side points in the direction the deer traveled. Deer slow their activity during winter and shift toward eating woody plants as green vegetation disappears. Ragged, torn stems are another clue they have been feeding nearby, while flattened patches of vegetation or melted snow can reveal where a deer rested.



COYOTE
(Canis latrans)

Coyote tracks resemble a dog's, but tend to be narrower and often follow a straighter path. Coyotes stay active all winter, even using their sharp hearing to detect mice and voles moving beneath the snow before pouncing. Winter also brings breeding season, which typically stretches from late January into early March.

EASTERN COTTONTAIL RABBIT
(*Sylvilagus floridanus*)

A rabbit's hopping gait creates a distinctive arrangement of tracks, with its larger hind footprints landing ahead of its front prints. During daylight, cottontails often shelter beneath vegetation or in brush piles, emerging around dusk and at night to forage. Their winter menu expands to woody plant material.

EASTERN GRAY SQUIRREL
(*Sciurus carolinensis*)

Four toes on the front feet and five on the hind feet help identify squirrel tracks. Nearby, watch for chewed nut shells or small holes where squirrels have dug up food they cached before winter. Look up, too. Their leaf nests become easier to spot once deciduous trees are bare.

RACCOON
(*Procyon lotor*)

Five long toes give raccoon tracks an unmistakably hand-like appearance. Raccoons may sleep for several days during bitter cold, then venture from hollow trees or other den sites to forage when temperatures are more moderate. A mild winter day could provide your best chance to find their tracks written across the snow.

TRAILSIDE
Museum of Natural History

738 Thatcher Ave, River Forest, 708.366.6530

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



WINTER GEAR

Snowshoe Lending

Snowshoes available for use on-site when snow is 4" or more. Available first-come, first-served.

Ice Traction Shoe Cover Lending

Ice traction covers go over your shoes to help gain traction on icy surfaces. Available first-come, first-served.

Forest Preserves Staff Art Show

View creations by the artistic talents of Forest Preserves staff, on display at Trailside's Classroom Gallery.

Saturday, Dec 5–Friday, Jan 8 (excl. Fridays)
9 am–4 pm

THROUGHOUT *the* SEASON

Story Trail - "The Snowy Day"

Take a short walk and read the posted children's story. Afterwards, pick up a craft and activity bag.

Friday, Dec 11–Monday, Jan 11 • 9 am–4 pm

Bone Appetit

Join us during feeding time to learn about Trailside's resident ambassador animals.

Saturdays, Dec 19, Jan 23, Feb 27 • 2 pm

Restoration Workdays at Trailside Museum*

Restore local habitat and control invasive species. Equipment provided. Ages 12 & up. Ages 12–17 w/ adult. Register: fpdcc.com/volunteer.

Sundays, Dec 20, Jan 17, Feb 21
9 am–Noon

DECEMBER

Nature Drawing Workshop*

Learn the fundamentals of drawing from nature in a relaxed environment. For all skill levels. Materials provided.

Saturday, Dec 12 • 1–3 pm

Nature Book Club*

Discuss "A World Appears" by Michael Pollan. Presented with the Forest Park Public Library. Ages 18 & up. Register: fppl.org/events.

Thursday, Dec 17 • 7–8:30 pm

DIY Holiday Birdseed Wreath*

Feed our feathered friends with a cute, simple birdseed wreath. Materials provided. Ages 10 & up.

Tuesday, Dec 22 • 1 pm

Animal Enrichment Studio

Learn about animal behavior and craft enrichment items for our ambassador animals! Ages 10 & up.

Wednesday, Dec 30 • 1 pm

New Year's Resolution Walk*

Get active by taking a brisk guided walk on Trailside's trails. Ages 18 & up.

Saturday, Jan 2 • 10 am

Family Winter Scavenger Hunt & Campfire

Enjoy a self-guided scavenger hunt and look for signs of animals and plant life. Followed by snacks around a campfire.

Sunday, Jan 3 • 1–2:30 pm

Winter Tree Identification Walk*

Learn to recognize bark, buds and branch patterns for a new appreciation of nature.

Saturday, Jan 16 • 10 am

Celebrate MLK: Restoration Day of Service

Restore habitat. Equipment and refreshments provided. Ages 12 & up. Ages 12–17 w/ adult.

Sunday, Jan 17 • 9 am–Noon

Basket Weaving 101: Double-walled Basket*

Learn how to weave a small basket in a traditional double-walled style. For all skill levels. Materials provided.

Saturday, Jan 23 • 10 am

FEBRUARY

Bird Painting Workshop Step-by-Step: Mourning Dove*

Paint a 9"x12" canvas using acrylics. For all experience levels. Materials provided. Cost: $5/person. Ages 13 & up.

Friday, Feb 12 • 9:30 am–Noon

Nature Walk & Mingle for Singles

Join other singles for a walk and then break the ice over warm beverages and games. Ages 18 & up.

Sunday, Feb 14 • 1:30 pm

Nature Book Club*

Discuss "Only a Little While Here" by Maria Ospina. Presented with the Forest Park Public Library. Ages 18 & up. Register: fppl.org/events.

Thursday, Feb 18 • 7 pm

Forest Park Public Library,
7555 Jackson Blvd, Forest Park

Ambassador Animal Species Spotlight

Visit our ambassador animal room for an opportunity to meet one of our animals and learn about their wild counterparts

Saturday, Feb 20 • 1 pm

**Registration required.*
For more information or registration, call

708.366.6530

Starts Nov. 21

FOREST PRESERVES of Cook County

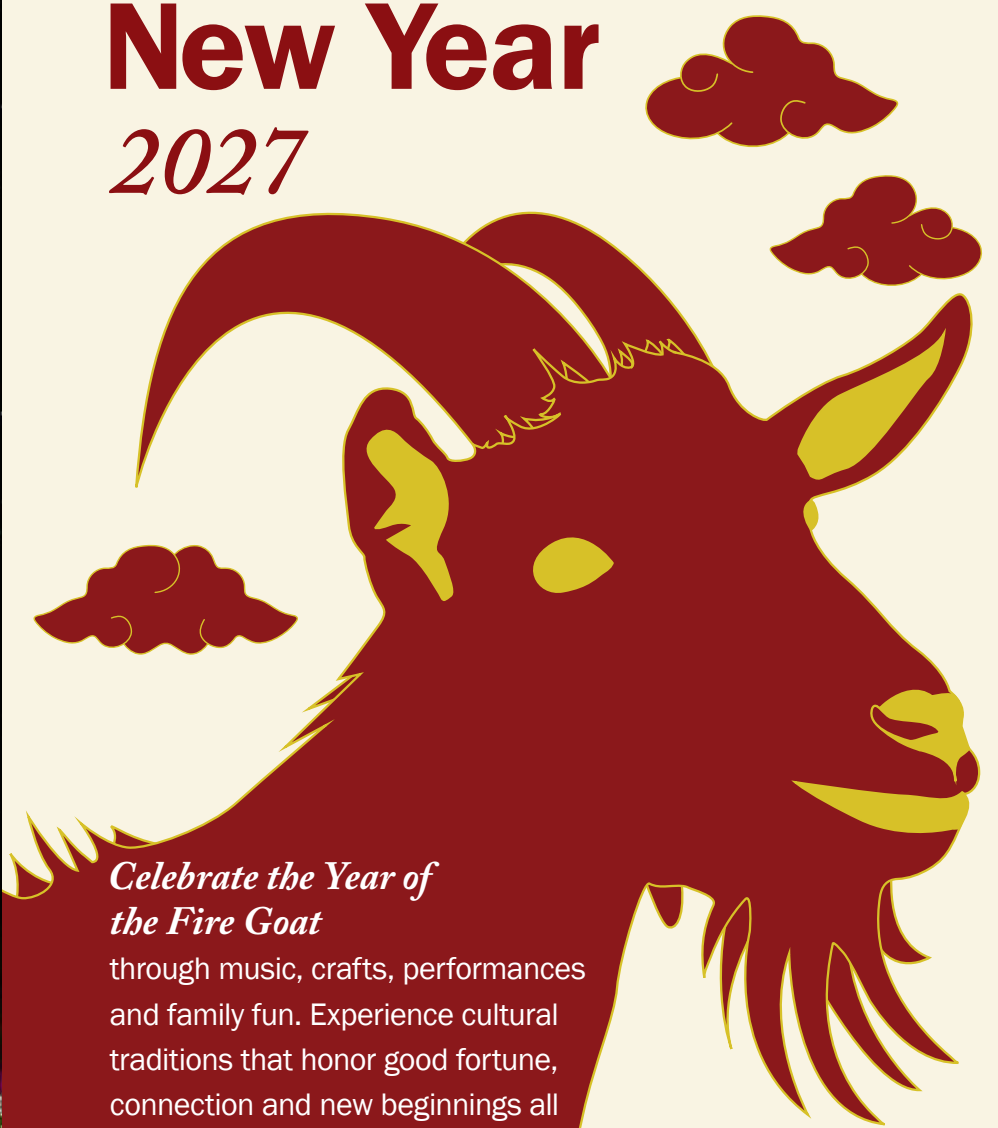
Holiday Magic

BROOKFIELD ZOO CHICAGO

PRESENTED BY:
comed®
AN EXELON COMPANY



LUNAR New Year 2027



Celebrate the Year of the Fire Goat

through music, crafts, performances and family fun. Experience cultural traditions that honor good fortune, connection and new beginnings all set against nature's winter beauty.

Events: January 31, 2027

Find an event near you:
fpdcc.com/lunar

FOREST PRESERVES of Cook County

SOUTHWEST ZONE



SWALLOW CLIFF WOODS PAVILION EVENTS

Calumet Sag Rd/Rte 83, west of La Grange Rd/96th Ave, Palos Park

DECEMBER

Sensory Play & S'mores

Families can enjoy our indoor space while helping your little ones connect with nature. S'mores provided outdoors.

Saturday, Dec 12 • 9:30 am–12:30 pm

Community Book Swap

Bring in your gently used books and leave with some new-to-you books! Books can be any genre/reading level.

Friday, Jan 22 • 4:30–6:30 pm

JANUARY

Winter Outdoor Gear Rentals

Grab gear, hit the trail and warm up by a fire. Free rentals with ID. Snowshoes, binoculars, maps and more.

Saturday, Jan 16 • 12:30–2:30 pm

Cheers to Nature

Enjoy a relaxing evening with an environment-themed lecture from a naturalist. Building is ADA accessible. BYOB (no glass). Ages 21 & up.

Friday, Jan 29 • 7–8:30 pm

FEBRUARY

Mosaics Workshop*

Join us around an indoor fireplace to create your own mosaic piece. Ages 12 & up. Ages 12–17 w/ adult.

Wednesday, Feb 17 • 10 am–Noon

Black History Month Celebration: Poetry

Enjoy live poetry readings and learn about Chicagoland's Black poets. Refreshments provided. Presented with Poets & Patrons.

Saturday, Feb 20 • 10 am–Noon

Nature Junk Journaling 101*

Learn how to combine journaling and art to create a junk journal. Supplies provided, or BYO.

Saturday, Feb 27 • 10 am–Noon

PALOS PARK WOODS-NORTH EVENTS

Kean Ave, south of Calumet Sag Rd/ Rte 83, Palos Park

Photography Walk

Take a guided walk to photograph nature. For all levels and camera types.

Thursday, Dec 17 • 10 am

Adult Night Hike

Explore the trail on this 3.4-mile guided hike. BYOB (no glass). Ages 18 & up.

Thursday, Feb 4 • 6 pm

**Registration required. For more information, unless otherwise noted, please call 312.533.5751.*

EXPLORE MORE

PAGES 4–12



Photography hike.



Find Your Winter Hideaway

in the Forest Preserves' Nature Centers

Winter doesn't always have to mean bundling up.

Sometimes visiting the Forest Preserves of Cook County is about finding a comfortable chair beside a window, watching your child laughing in a world of nature-themed play or warming up by a fireplace after a walk outside. At the Forest Preserves' nature centers, a winter visit can be as active or leisurely as you want it to be.

For families with young children, River Trail Nature Center and Little Red Schoolhouse offer room to play and explore. River Trail's indoor Nature Play Zone features books, puzzles, games, puppets and hands-on activities, while Little Red has an early childhood room with nature-themed books, natural loose parts for play and a chalkboard. Kids can stay busy discovering while parents settle in nearby with coffee or cocoa and enjoy a change of scenery on a cold day.

Winter is also a chance to get acquainted with some of the animals that call the nature centers home. River Trail's amphibians like Bluey the blue-spotted salamander, Crabtree's birds like Rufous the eastern screech owl, Trailside's snakes like Checkers the eastern fox snake, Sand Ridge's turtles like Scooter the red-eared slider and Little Red's fish like Bubble Fett the green sunfish offer an up-close look at local wildlife.

Looking for something cozy? Browse nature-inspired artwork at Crabtree's gallery or see paintings of native wildlife by a local artist at Little Red. At Sagawau Environmental Learning Center, some may want to experience the thrill of cross-country skiing, but others may just want to settle beside the fireplace and explore a seasonal exhibit highlighting snow sports and athletes from around the world.

Sand Ridge offers one of the most personal ways to spend a few minutes indoors: Write a letter to nature. Thank your favorite animal. Share a winter memory. Tell the squirrels, snow, trees or birds what you appreciate about them. Visitors can leave a note for nature center staff, too.

And you don't even have to be outdoors for some winter wildlife watching. Several nature centers offer views of bird feeders from the warmth indoors, including River Trail, Little Red Schoolhouse, Trailside Museum of Natural History and Crabtree. At Sand Ridge and at other nature centers, grab binoculars and scan for wildlife through the classroom window.

Come for an afternoon with the kids, a quiet hour to yourself or a warm break during a winter adventure. There's no need to hurry back out into the cold.



Sagawau Environmental Learning Center

12545 W 111th St, Lemont, 630.257.2045

Building: 9 am–4 pm, Grounds: 8 am–4 pm daily, Free Admission



THROUGHOUT *the* SEASON

Beginner Cross-Country Ski Lessons*

Learn to ski with a certified Professional Ski Instructor of America. Cost: $20/person. Ages 12 & up.

Saturdays & Sundays, Jan 2–Feb 28 • 9 am

Moonlight Ski*

Ski under the stars. Ski rentals limited. Skiers with own equipment must wear a free trail pass.

Fridays, Jan 22 & Feb 19 • 4–9 pm

Ecological Restoration*

Help restore Sagawau's diverse ecosystems by removing invasive plant species. Register: volunteer-fpdcc.givepulse.com/group/1001534-ecological-stewardship

Saturdays, Dec 26, Jan 30, Feb 27 9:30–11:30 am

DECEMBER

Beyond Our Senses: Bank Swallows*

Enjoy a captivating documentary about a colony of bank swallows along Lake Michigan and a discussion with the film maker.

Saturday, Dec 5 • 1 pm

Ski Seminar*

Learn about cross-country skiing, the equipment needed and how to prepare for your first cross-country skiing experience.

Sunday, Dec 6 • 1 pm

Wax Clinic*

Learn simple care and maintenance for your cross-country skis. Bring your own to work on!

Saturday, Dec 12 • 1 pm

Winter Bird Feeding*

Enjoy watching the bird feeding station and learn about their preferred winter diet.

Sunday, Dec 13 • 10 am

Clear the Trails*

Join a naturalist and clear the trails in preparation for ski season.

Sunday, Dec 20 • 9:30–11:30 am

Express Yourself Watercolors*

Create art with watercolor and words. Materials provided. Ages 13–19.

Tuesday, Dec 29 • 1 pm

JANUARY

New Year Nature Hike*

Join us for a hike to start the new year in nature!

Saturday, Jan 2 • 7 am

New Year Nature Journaling*

Enjoy a fresh start to the new year by practicing mindfulness with journal writing.

Sunday, Jan 3 • 1 pm

Winter Insects*

Learn how bugs survive the winter and how we can help.

Saturday, Jan 9 • 1 pm

Feathers, Flight and Fancy*

Feathers are more than beautiful plumage. Dive deep into the wonders of bird feathers.

Sunday, Jan 10 • 1 pm

Coyotes*

Learn about Cook County's urban coyote population. Ages 14 & up.

Saturday, Jan 16 • 1 pm

Winter Tree ID*

Join a naturalist and discover the field characteristics of twigs in winter.

Sunday, Jan 17 • 1 pm

Cross-country skiing starts Dec 19, as soon as conditions are skiable (frozen ground and 5" of snow).

Sagawau Nordic

Open daily, 9 am–4 pm.

Trails will be open and groomed as snow conditions permit and could include a late start or an early finish. Watch our Facebook page or call 630.257.2045 for the most up-to-date trail conditions. All skiers must obtain a free trail pass from the Nordic Center.

Rentals run 9 am–2 pm

Equipment must be returned by **3:45 pm.** Reservations for rentals must be made via SignUpGenius.com. The reservation link can be found at fpdcc.com and on Sagawau's Facebook page. Reservation link will only be available when snow conditions are skiable.

For information on ski rental prices, visit fpdcc.com/cross-country-skiing.

Please note programs are dependent on if we are open for skiing.

- Ski programs will run only if we have snow.
- Non-ski programs will run if we do not have snow.

Continued on page 39.



DON'T TRASH THE PRESERVES

Each year the Forest Preserves of Cook County spends resources cleaning up waste from contractors and residents who dump in the preserves!

- **Dumping waste here hurts plants and wildlife**
- **Chemicals can contaminate our water supply**
- **Clean-up costs the Forest Preserves (taxpayers) time and money**

Not convinced?

Violaters are liable for the cost of repair, replacement and the cost of restoring the land.

Call 708.771.1000 if you see suspicious behavior

Continued from page 37.



Mallard duck, by Leonardo Estrada

Drawing Nature*

Draw what you really see instead of guessing how things look using specimens.

Sunday, Jan 31 • 1 pm

FEBRUARY

Black History Month Exhibit

Learn about Black Americans who ski and their contributions in winter sports.

Monday, Feb 1-Sunday, Feb 28 • 9 am–4 pm

Extreme Winter Weather*

Learn how a warming planet can lead to more extreme cold waves.

Saturday, Feb 6 • 1–3 pm

Winter Wonders*

Join a naturalist on a short walk to see what mother nature has on display in winter.

Sunday, Feb 7 • 1 pm

Charles Henry Turner: Father of Insect Cognition*

Learn about civil rights advocate and pioneer in insect behavior, Charles Henry Turner.

Saturday, Feb 13 • 1 pm

Waterfowl Workshop*

Learn to identify waterfowl during an indoor presentation with tips from a naturalist. Ages 14 & up.

Saturday, Feb 20 • 1–3 pm

Invasive Origins*

Learn about invasive species and their impact on natural areas.

Sunday, Feb 21 • 1 pm

**Registration required. For more information or registration, call*

630.257.2045

Little Red Schoolhouse
Nature Center

9800 Willow Springs Rd, Willow Springs, 708.839.6897
Building: 9 am–4 pm, *closed Fridays*, Grounds: 8 am–4 pm daily, Free Admission



Lunar New Year
Celebrate 2027's Year of the Fire Goat with crafts, performances and festivities.
Sunday, Jan 31 • 11 am–2 pm

THROUGHOUT *the* SEASON

R.I.P. Stewardship*
Help remove invasive plants. Tools, gloves, snacks and teamwork included! Ages 15 & under w/ adult.
Saturdays, Dec 12, Jan 9, Feb 13, 10 am–Noon

Sunrise Hike
Sundays, Dec 13 & Jan 10 • 7 am & Feb 14, 6:30 am

S.E.N.I.O.R.S.
Seniors Enjoying Nature Inside/Outside Rain or Shine! Ages 55 & up.
Thursdays, Dec 17, Jan 14, Feb 11 • 10 am

Nature's Art Box*
Nature art fun. Ages 3–6 w/ adult! Supplies provided.
Thursdays, Dec 31, Jan 21, Feb 18 • 10:30 am

Yoga*
Bring a yoga mat and towel. Ages 18 & up.
Saturdays, Jan 30 & Feb 27 • 10–11 am

DECEMBER

Teen Winter Adventure Hike
Explore snowy trails. Snowshoes provided with 4" inches of snow. Ages 13-19.
Saturday, Dec 5 • 11 am

Yoga and Storytime*
Join the Bridgeview Library for a short nature story followed by kids' yoga activities. Ages 3–6 w/ adult.
Monday, Dec 7 • 11 am

Serenity Hike Under a New Moon*
Hike 2 miles in an Urban Night Sky Place. Subject to trail conditions. Ages 10 & up.
Tuesday, Dec 8 • 5 pm

Bald Eagle Watch
Discover the fascinating story of our national bird of prey before searching for them outdoors.
Saturday, Dec 19 • 1 pm

Winter Solstice Celebration*
Celebrate the longest night of the year with a bonfire, self-guided walk, s'mores and cocoa. BYO mug!
Monday, Dec 21 • 5–7 pm

Snow Globes*
Celebrate winter by learning about snow and creating your own snow globe.
Wednesday, Dec 30 • 11 am

Hygge Hangout
Ring in the new year indoors with activities, games and refreshments inspired by the Danish practice.
Thursday, Dec 31 • 11 am–1 pm

JANUARY

Celestial Stroll*
Walk and observe stars, planets and other celestial sights.
Tuesday, Jan 5 • 6 pm

Feeding Time
Feeding demonstration.
Saturday, Jan 16 • 11 am

MLK Winter Walk
Sunday, Jan 17 • 11 am

Mount Forest Island
Come appreciate the local history and stories of the area known as Mount Forest Island.
Saturday, Jan 23 • 11 am

FEBRUARY

Everyone in Nature*
Join us for a sensory class where individuals with disabilities and homeschoolers can learn about nature. All ages w/ caregiver.
Wednesday, Feb 10 • 1 pm

Fridays in the Field
Discover something new in nature with University of Illinois Extension Master Naturalists.
Friday, Feb 12 • 10 am–Noon

Fire & Ice*
Investigate rocks formed by fire and take a hike to see those deposited from the Ice Age.
Saturday, Feb 20 • 11 am

Night Owl*
Walk and listen for owls.
Wednesday, Feb 24 • 6 pm

Snowshoe Lending
Snowshoes available for use on-site when snow is 4" or more. Limited numbers available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

**Registration required. For more information or registration, call*
708.839.6897



Kwanzaa Celebration

Celebrate Ujamaa, cooperative economics, honor Pan-African Heritage and embrace the seven principles of Kwanzaa. Presented with Light of Loving Kindness.

Tuesday, Dec 29 • 4–8 pm

SOUTH ZONE

DAN RYAN WOODS VISITOR CENTER & PAVILION EVENTS

S Western Ave & W 87th St, Chicago



Wellness in the Woods: Yoga

Join a 1-hour yoga class. Dress in active wear and bring a yoga mat.

Saturdays, Dec 12, Jan 23, Feb 20
11 am–Noon

DECEMBER

Winter Exploration Day

Families, enjoy snowshoeing (weather permitting), nature hikes, art making, campfires and more!

Wednesday, Dec 23 • 11 am–2 pm

JANUARY

Seed, Sip, and Sow

Try out winter seed sowing for your summer garden. Bring seeds to swap and watch presentations. Light refreshments will be offered.

Saturday, Jan 9 • 10 am–2 pm

Crafternoon: Snow Inspired Art

Try your hand at different crafts suitable for people of all abilities. Building is ADA accessible.

Thursday, Jan 14 • 11 am–2 pm

Winter Wellness Through Art

Make a wreath and frosted candle holder. Suitable for people of all abilities. This is an accessible site.
tinyurl.com/bdfm34bb

Saturday Jan 16 • 10–11:30 am

FEBRUARY

Black History Month Story Trails

Follow a self-guided story featuring a prominent Black figure.

Wednesdays, Feb 3, 10, 17, 24 • Noon–4 pm

Beat the Winter Blues

Join us for mindfulness and positive practices. In partnership with Illinois Extension. Registration required. Register: tinyurl.com/4vzpfbxj

Saturday, Feb 20 • 12:30–2 pm

Additional South Zone Events

Winter Wellness Hike

Bundle up and experience a brisk 3.4-mile hike and the health benefits nature provides.

Saturday, Dec 12 • 8 am

Sauk Trail Woods-Central, Forest Preserve Dr, south of W 26th St, South Chicago Heights



We Are One: Celebrating Beloved Community

Join us and other community organizations for a day of service on Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Monday, Jan 18 • 10 am–4 pm

DuSable Black History Museum & Education Center, 740 E 56th Pl, Chicago

**Registration required. Please email SouthZoneProgram@cookcountyil.gov or call 708.771.9632 for more information and to register.*

EXPLORE MORE
PAGES 4–12



Sand Ridge
NATURE CENTER

15891 Paxton, South Holland, 708.868.0606
Building: 9 am – 4 pm, *Exihibit room closed Fridays,* Grounds: 8 am – 4 pm daily
Free Admission



Winter Bonfire
Celebrate winter around a bonfire. Enjoy guided walks, s'mores and nighttime activities at the campground.

Saturday, Dec 12 • 4–7 pm

Camp Shabbona Woods
15810 S Torrence Ave, South Holland

Snowshoe Lending
Snowshoes available for use on-site when snow is 4" or more. Limited numbers available on a first-come, first-serve basis.



THROUGHOUT *the* SEASON

Live Healthy, Discover Nature! Walk*
Venture out on our scenic trails for a 3- to 4-mile guided walk.

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

Wee Wonders*
From building a den to cocoa and crafts, learn about nature through sensory experiences, stories and age appropriate artmaking. Ages 2–5 w/ adult.

Sundays • 1 pm

Dec 13: Hibernation
Jan 10: Snow
Feb 14: Love in Nature

Build a Birdhouse*
Learn the basics of backyard avian husbandry, build a birdhouse and participate in the Q&A.

Saturday, Jan 23 • 10 am–Noon &
Sunday, Feb 21 • 1–3 pm

Winter Brr-ding*
Join us for an early morning walk to see our brave winter residents followed by hot chocolate.

Saturday, Dec 26 • 8–10 am



Celebrate MLK: Day of Service
Stop by the nature center to participate in a self-led litter pick-up. Garbage bags and disposable gloves available.

Monday, Jan 18 • 10 am–Noon

**Registration required. For more information or registration, call*

708.868.0606

BLACK HISTORY MONTH
EVENTS

Registration required: call 708.868.0606.



Underground Railroad: Self-Guided Walks
Join us for self-guided historical walks during Black History Month.

Monday, Feb 1–Sunday, Feb 28
9 am–4 pm

Underground Railroad: If Trees Could Talk
Learn how inventive agriculture products from African descendants and First Nations people helped Africans escape slavery.

Saturday, Feb 20 • 1 pm

Presented by Mama Edie

Underground Railroad: Local Stories
Explore significant stories that shaped the Underground Railroad south of Chicago.

Saturday, Feb 27 • 1–2 pm

Presented by the Midwest Underground Railroad Network.



Explore Even More in *Nature*

Plan a Visit to Brookfield Zoo Chicago or the Chicago Botanic Garden!

Looking for *free* admission days?

Visit **fpdcc.com** to learn about free admission opportunities at both the Zoo and the Garden, ranging from free days for all, tickets through Commissioners' offices, library and museum pass programs, and more.

