





Spring/Summer 2024 Environmental Education Opportunities

All programs with a leaf symbol are located at the Prairie Woods Nature Center
Sign up for programs at siouxcountyparks.org Registration opens approximately 1 month before event.

 **March 16-Fossil, Artifact, Rock and Bone Day** **1:30pm-3:30pm**
Do you have a fossil, artifact or bone you would like identified? How about a ROCK you would like to show us? Bring it to the Prairie Woods Nature Center, and we will attempt to help you identify it anytime between 1:30 and 3:30pm! Dr. James Mahaffey, a retired professor from Dordt University, will be available with his collection and resources to share with you. This is the third year we have held this event and it has been super popular! Don't miss it!


 **March 19 – Senior Environmental Learning and Fellowship (SELF)** **10:00, 12:30 and 2:30pm**
Seniors! Looking for a great place to gather with friends? Enjoy coffee, treats, fellowship and a short presentation. Topic: Medicinal Plants and Uses


 **March 23-Hunter Safety Field Day** **8:30-noon or 1-4:30pm**
Those ages 11 and over are invited to join us for a hunter safety field day. You will need to do two things online: register for class at www.gooutdoorsiowa.com AND take the online portion of the course at www.hunter-ed.com (there is a fee through the Iowa DNR). This half-day class will cover firearm safety, hunter ethics, hunting laws and much more. Final exam will be given at the end of class. Please dress for indoor and outdoor weather.


 **March 27-Wild Child Nature Series** **Choose from 10am or 1pm**
Attention animal and nature lovers ages 2 through 5! Our Wild Child Nature Series is a one-hour nature- based experience that will get your child exploring, moving, playing and using their senses. An adult is required to join child(ren). No fee. Pre-registration required.


April 1-Summer Camp Sign Up Online **8am start**
This is the day to sign your child(ren) up for this year's summer camp season! Topics, dates and times will be posted prior to this date. Registration will open at 8am on April 3 at www.mycountyparks.com.

April 3-Outdoor Skills Day Sign up opens
Event date is June 6th. Sign up through Iowa State Extension and 4H. Link is <https://go.iastate.edu/OUTDOOR2024> or find link on our website. \$5 per participant


 **April 16 – Senior Environmental Learning and Fellowship (SELF)** **10:00, 12:30 and 2:30pm**
Seniors! Looking for a great place to gather with friends? Enjoy coffee, treats, fellowship and a short presentation. Topic: Migration


 **April 20-Falconry Seminar** **3-4pm**
Falconer Eric Harrold will share his experience in the ancient practice known as "the sport of kings". Falconry is the art and practice of hunting with trained birds-of-prey. He has more than 35 years since he began as an apprentice and has enjoyed flying red-tailed hawks, Harris's hawks, Cooper's hawks, and a prairie falcon. The topics covered will be regulations, hawks vs falcons, and the different opportunities in falconry, which is just one of the ways Eric has found to be connected to the natural world. After Eric's presentation, there will be a chance for attendees to ask questions.


 **April 24-Wild Child Nature Series** **Choose from 10am or 1pm**
Attention animal and nature lovers ages 2 through 5! Our Wild Child Nature Series is a one-hour nature- based experience that will get your child exploring, moving, playing and using their senses. An adult is required to join child(ren). No fee. Pre-registration required.


 **April 27-Amie Adams, Author of "The Observer" morning session** **10am-11:30am**
Join Amie Adams, an Iowa Master Naturalist, graduate of Northwestern College of Orange City, and author of *The Observer* to learn about a little-known Iowa naturalist named Olaf Wolden. Born in Emmet County in northwest Iowa in

1886, Olaf lived through a time when the Iowa landscape was changing rapidly. Throughout his lifetime, Olaf studied plants, birds, and the landscape of his home. This session will include a short lesson about naturalists from Iowa's past, a book talk and Q&A about *The Observer*, and a nature walk (feel free to bring your favorite field guide or your binoculars). This session is geared toward adults of all ages. Co-sponsored by Orange City Library.


 **April 27-Sack Lunch with the Author** **11:45-12:45**
This is your opportunity to bring your lunch and picnic with the author at the Prairie Woods Nature Center!


 **April 27-Amie Adams, Author of “The Observer” afternoon session** **1:30-3:00pm**
Join Amie Adams, an Iowa Master Naturalist, graduate of Northwestern College of Orange City, and author of *The Observer* to learn about a little-known Iowa naturalist named Olaf Wolden. Born in Emmet County in northwest Iowa in 1886, Olaf studied plants, birds, and the landscape of his home throughout his lifetime. This session will include a short lesson about naturalists from Iowa's past, a few stories from *The Observer*, and an interactive nature walk where we think about how to tell our own stories about our favorite places (feel free to bring your favorite field guide or your binoculars). This session is geared toward families. Co-sponsored by Orange City Library.


 **May 2- Fly Tying with Donald Mulder** **6pm-8pm**
Do you want to learn to tie your own flies? Don is a local hobbyist who can teach you knots, technique, and give you the know-how to start tying on your own. Then join us on May 4th for fly fishing at Oak Grove Pond!

 **May 4- Fly Fishing with Donald Mulder** **9:30-2:30pm**
Enroll in this fly-fishing session and enjoy free basic instruction from local hobbyist, Donald Mulder of Sioux Center. This course will cover everything from equipment, casting techniques, and presentation. The session includes casting practice and actively fly fishing at Oak Grove Pond. We will be based out of the Prairie Woods Nature Center at Oak Grove Park, and class is geared towards teens and adults, although anyone is welcome. A current valid Iowa fishing license is needed for ages 16 and older. Limited to 20 participants. Bring a sack lunch and equipment if you have it. Attend the whole day or part of the day.


May 11 -Bird Watching at Oak Grove Park **8am-?**
Join area birders at Oak Grove Park to look and listen for migrating songbirds including warblers, vireos, grosbeaks, thrushes, and more! If you have a bird guide or binoculars, you're encouraged to bring those along. Meet at the entrance booth at 8:00 a.m. Leave when you need to.


 **May 11-Landscaping for Wildlife and Native Plant Sale** **10:00-11:00am program, 11am-noon sale**
Inviting wildlife into your yard can be a rewarding experience for you and the wildlife! Learn how and why to bring nature closer to home. This program is presented by Rock Valley's Siouxland Prairie Farms. There will be native plants available for purchase after the program, from 11:00-noon, cash or card accepted.


 **May 21 – Senior Environmental Learning and Fellowship (SELF)** **10:00, 12:30 and 2:30pm**
Seniors! Looking for a great place to gather with friends? Enjoy coffee, treats, fellowship and a short presentation.
Topic: Conservation on the Land

 **Starting at the end of May-Nature Center mural** **Nature Center Hours**
Local K-2nd grade classrooms have been working hard on the mural in the Prairie Woods Nature Center entrance. The picture will come together as classes return their work. It's a must-see and everyone is excited about finding out what the final mural will look like!

June 6- Outdoor Skills Day Sandy Hollow Rec. Area **8:30 am- 4 pm**
All ages welcome! (Ages 8 and under must have an adult present). This is a fun-filled Thursday with sessions that may include: shotgun shooting, air rifles, archery, outdoor cooking, wrist rockets, deer hunting lessons, canoeing, improving outdoor skills, and much more! This event is cosponsored with 4-H Extension and Outreach and Sioux County Sportsmen's Club. Lunch will be provided for participants. Cost is \$5. First 210 kids will be accepted. This is an annual event that kids always look forward to! Sign up at <https://go.iastate.edu/OUTDOOR2024> OR find the link on our website.

 **June 8-Paul Brooke, Walking with Pumas** **10-11:30am**
Come walk with pumas. In the morning program, Dr. Brooke will take you on a journey as he spent deep time with pumas while in Chile. Since he is a photographer, he got very up close and personal with these amazing cats. His guide also took short videos so you could see how close he got to the pumas. He will teach you about their behavior, show you other wildlife in the region (Chilean Flamingos, South American foxes, Darwin's Rhea, Guanacos, etc.), and tell you about photographing in challenging conditions (over 50 mph winds many days).


 **June 8-Sack Lunch with the Artist/Author Paul Brooke** **11:30am**
This is your opportunity to bring your lunch and picnic with the artist/author at the Prairie Woods Nature Center! Brooke is the author of seven books including *Jaguars of the Northern Pantanal*, *Sirens and Seriemas: Photographs and Poems of the Amazon and Pantanal*, *The Skáld and the Drukkin Tröllaukin: Photographs and Poems of Iceland*, and *Light and Matter: Photographs and Poems of Iowa*. His photographs have been featured in nine exhibits across North America and in *Audubon* and *Wild Planet* magazines. Please check out his website for more information and images.

 **June 8-Paul Brooke, Jaguars of the Pantanal** **12:30-2pm**
Dr. Brooke with his co-author Paul Donahue wrote a definitive book on jaguars. This 350-page book, *Jaguars of the Pantanal*, is considered a foundation of understanding about jaguar behavior and family lineage. He will share stories and photographs, teaching you how to identify these cats from their spot patterns. He will also share some of the prey items and images from photographers from all over the world who shared in creating this project.


June 15- Rock Valley Father's Day Special: Pancakes and Panfish 2024 **10am-11:30am**
River's Bend Campground


This morning is cosponsored with the City of Rock Valley and Rock Valley Ambulance Association. Pancake feed starts at 8:30 with a free will donation. Proceeds benefit local ambulance association. Then walk over to the pond to start fishing for panfish (and others) starting at 10. Fishing pre-registration is required with the City of Rock Valley at 712/476-6065. No cost, entrance fee waived to participants during program.

Fishing pre-registration is required so please call Rivers Bend Campground at 712-476-6065. Registration numbers helps determine amounts for bait and prizes that are sometime provided by local supporters.

 **June 18- Senior Environmental Learning and Fellowship (SELF)** **10:00, 12:30 and 2:30pm**
Seniors! Looking for a great place to gather with friends? Enjoy coffee, treats, fellowship and a short presentation.
Topic: Iowa Rocks

June 22- Family Fishing Clinic Sandy Hollow Rec. Area **9am- 12:30 pm**
All ages welcome! (Ages 8 and under must have an adult present). Join us at the shade shelter for a fun filled morning. Program will include fishing instruction, casting contest, fishing, lunch and giveaways. Fishing poles and bait provided or bring your own. No cost, entry fee to park waved for participants during event hours. Event is cosponsored with Sioux Center Library and Sioux County Sportsmen's Club. Those 16 year of age and older must have a valid fishing license to actively fish.

 **June 22-100 Year Anniversary Celebration of Oak Grove Park** **afternoon/evening**
Activities we are currently planning include classic car Show and Shine, historic displays at the Prairie Woods Nature Center, live music by "Singer Family Band", outdoor movie (room for blankets and drive in). Watch our website and Facebook for updates and details.

 **June 29-Gourd Painting** **9am-4pm**
This class will teach you how to create works of art with gourds while enjoying the view from the Prairie Woods Nature Center in Oak Grove Park! Instructor Dave Opegard will provide all instruction and supplies to make a beautiful southwest style gourd bowl. This year's design is animals such as turtle, bison, salamander, bear. Beads, leather, woodburning, stones and pine needles will be available, too. This class is limited to 14 people ages teen through adult and cost is \$20 per person to be paid at the door. Gourds are supplied. Class time is 9am-4pm. Please bring your own sack lunch and snacks. No red liquid allowed in the nature center. Sign up online at siouxcountyparks.org. For questions call 712/552-3057.

Month of July-Travelling Photography Exhibit by Paul Brooke

This art exhibition highlights the work of photographer and poet, Paul Brooke.

Paul Brooke is a professor, poet, and photographer. He teaches at Grand View University in Des Moines, Iowa. This exhibit was taken during a week-long visit to Torres del Paine National Park, where Brooke photographed 12 different pumas. Some days he spent up to 9 hours with one animal (the big male) or walked along with Blinca (female) as she hunted for her two cubs. The wind was exhausting as it often roared through the region at 50 mph. His book, *Pantagruelian: Photographs of Torres del Paine*, will be released in mid-January and will be for sale. It features most of these photos.

July 16- Senior Environmental Learning and Fellowship (SELF)

Field Trip Outing

More information and details coming up. Visit our website or call 712/552-3057 for updates

July 20-Erickson Brothers Outdoor Concert at Sandy Hollow

6-8pm

Rain Date July 27

These local artists will perform acoustic duo, rock, oldies, classic country. Bring your family and friends, blankets and lawn chairs, and join us in the lawn at the open shelter for a free evening concert.

EBB or The Erickson Brothers Band consist of Eric on percussion and vocals and Lucas on guitar and vocals. Eric is a Senior at Unity Christian and Lucas is a Junior. The boys started performing with their family around 9 years ago and decided to start performing on their own as an acoustic duo after seeing buskers or street musicians performing in Omaha's Old Market 7 years ago. Eric is playing a Latin percussion instrument called a Cajon (K-uh Hone), outfitted with some special accessories. For full-band performances, Eric either plays an electric drum kit or his favorite DW Collectors Acoustic Drum Kit...but for acoustic duo performances, the cajon has a great sound and he can sit on it while he plays it!

August 3- Ringneck Rendezvous Rock Valley Gun Club

4- 8:30 pm

Archery, live animals, outdoor obstacle races, tossing games, water guns, bb guns, trapping, dog training, LOTS OF PRIZES and more can be found at this annual event in Rock Valley. We are welcoming a live raptor demonstration, "Regalia International Birds of Prey" from Oklahoma to the event. A \$10 registration fee for all youth and adults attending. Must register by July 26th by following the link on our website. Pre-registration includes merchandise and chances at door prizes. First 400 kids will be accepted. Event cosponsored by Sioux County Conservation Board, Sioux Prairie Pheasants Forever and Rock Valley Gun Club, Iowa DNR.

August 13- Hunter Education Classroom Course

9 am- 7 pm

All ages 11 and over are invited to join us for this course. Participants must attend full length of class. Must register for course online at www.gooutdoorsiowa.com. Once you have registered you will receive an email with the Hunter Safety Manual. You will need to complete the review questions and bring them to class. Class will cover firearm safety, hunting ethics, first aid, hunting laws and much more. Students will need a sack lunch and snacks for the day, supper will be provided.

August 15-Book Discussion "The Seed Keeper" by Diane Wilson

6-7pm

On a winter's day many years later, Rosalie returns to her childhood home. A widow and mother, she has spent the previous two decades on her white husband's farm, finding solace in her garden even as the farm is threatened first by drought and then by a predatory chemical company. Now, grieving, Rosalie begins to confront the past, on a search for family, identity, and a community where she can finally belong. In the process, she learns what it means to be descended from women with souls of iron—women who have protected their families, their traditions, and a precious cache of seeds through generations of hardship and loss, through war and the insidious trauma of boarding schools. Co-sponsored by Hawarden Library. Do not have to read book to participate, but encouraged to do so. The Hawarden Library will have copies available for check out.

August 20- Senior Environmental Learning and Fellowship (SELF)

10:00, 12:30 and 2:30pm

Seniors! Looking for a great place to gather with friends? Enjoy coffee, treats, fellowship and a short presentation.

Topic: Grasses

August 28-Dutch Oven Class at Sandy Hollow Rec. Area

6-8:30pm

This is an intro to Dutch Oven class that includes preparing dishes and as a reward, eating them! Cost is \$15 a person, class size is limited. Cosponsored by Sioux Center Library. Please look for sign up on their website at siouxcenterlibrary.org.

Mark your calendar for our upcoming events: ...

September 14-Dutch Oven Gathering

September 17-SELF

October 12-Trick or Treat Hike

October 19-Youth Pheasant Hunt

