

# NATURAL AREAS EXPLORER

JUNE-OCTOBER 2022

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[fcgov.com/naturalareas](http://fcgov.com/naturalareas)



**FREE OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES**



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## LANGUAGES AND ACCESSIBILITY

Most Natural Areas activities are delivered in English. If you require interpretation in another language, contact [naturalareas@fcgov.com](mailto:naturalareas@fcgov.com) or 970-416-2815 to request an interpreter.


*La mayoría de las actividades de las Áreas Naturales se realizan en inglés. Si requiere interpretación a otro idioma, comuníquese a [naturalareas@fcgov.com](mailto:naturalareas@fcgov.com) o al tel. 970-416-2815 para pedir un intérprete.*



**Áreas Naturales  
en español**

**ES** Any activities delivered partially in Spanish will be clearly marked with this symbol. *Cualquier actividad ofrecida parcialmente en español se marcará claramente con el símbolo.*

Auxiliary aids and services are available for persons with disabilities. V/TDD: Dial 711 for Relay Colorado

 If you have any questions or concerns about the accessibility of a program, please contact [naturalareas@fcgov.com](mailto:naturalareas@fcgov.com) or call 970-416-2815 for more information. People with disabilities are welcome to participate in all programs and we are happy to make appropriate accommodations. Requests for disability-related services can be made during registration or by calling 970-416-2815 at least 2 weeks prior to the start of the activity.

## DOGS







Dogs are not allowed at any scheduled activities. Please enjoy the natural areas with your dog outside of activity times. As a reminder, dogs must be on leash at all times at natural areas. Dogs are not allowed at Bobcat Ridge, Coyote Ridge, Cottonwood Hollow, Fossil Creek Reservoir, Running Deer, and Soapstone Prairie natural areas.

Service animals trained to assist those with a disability are always welcome at natural areas and at Natural Areas programs.

## SAFETY

The activities and events offered in this guide often take place in natural areas where you are responsible for your own safety. Outdoor activities include the potential for serious injury, death, or property loss. Choose activities that match your abilities. Be prepared for changing weather conditions. Beware of rattlesnakes, lightning, and high water.

## WHAT THE SYMBOLS MEAN

-  Accessible; wheelchairs welcome. Paved or hard-packed trails; distance is 1 mile or less with moderate inclines.
-  This program will be delivered partially in Spanish. *Este programa se ofrecerá parcialmente en español.*
-  Some activities are not suitable for all audiences and have age restrictions.
-  Some activities are specifically designed to be family-friendly and welcome all ages. Children must be accompanied by adults on all activities.
-  This activity is open to all and is specifically noted as a great activity for newcomers to the Fort Collins area.
-  These programs are led by Natural Areas partners and require registration through a partner website.





## REGISTERING AND CANCELLATIONS

Registration is required for most activities and opens 30 days before the activity. Go to [fcgov.com/register](https://fcgov.com/register) to register or call 970-416-2815 for more information on a particular event.

Activities may be canceled due to inclement weather. Check before you go! Naturalist leaders may cancel an activity in progress for safety reasons.



[fcgov.com/register](https://fcgov.com/register)

- > [fcgov.com/register](https://fcgov.com/register) for descriptions, registrations, cancellations, and program updates.
- > [fcgov.com/naturalareas](https://fcgov.com/naturalareas) for trail closures and general information.
- >  Like City of Fort Collins Natural Areas on **Facebook** for news and information.
- >  See photos from your favorite natural areas at [@fcnaturalareas](https://www.instagram.com/fcnaturalareas).
- >  Follow [@FCNaturalAreas](https://twitter.com/FCNaturalAreas) for updates and information.
- >  Visit [trails.colorado.gov](https://trails.colorado.gov) or check the CoTrex app for trail closures.

## ACTIVITY LEADERS

Volunteer Naturalists are highly trained volunteer educators who lead many of the activities in this guide. They love to share their enthusiasm, knowledge, and passion for natural areas. You'll have lots of fun and gain a deeper understanding of your natural areas by attending a Volunteer Naturalist-led activity.

*Continued on next page*

## DISCOVER YOUR NATURAL AREAS!

Natural areas are special places to explore and treasure. The City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Department manages more than 50 natural areas encompassing over 40,000 acres and 100 miles of trails—there's probably a natural area near you! Check the maps on pages 78-81 or visit [fcgov.com/naturalareas](http://fcgov.com/naturalareas).

These natural areas are the traditional lands of the Ute, Cheyenne, and Arapaho Native American tribes and remain important to indigenous peoples living in northern Colorado and the surrounding areas.

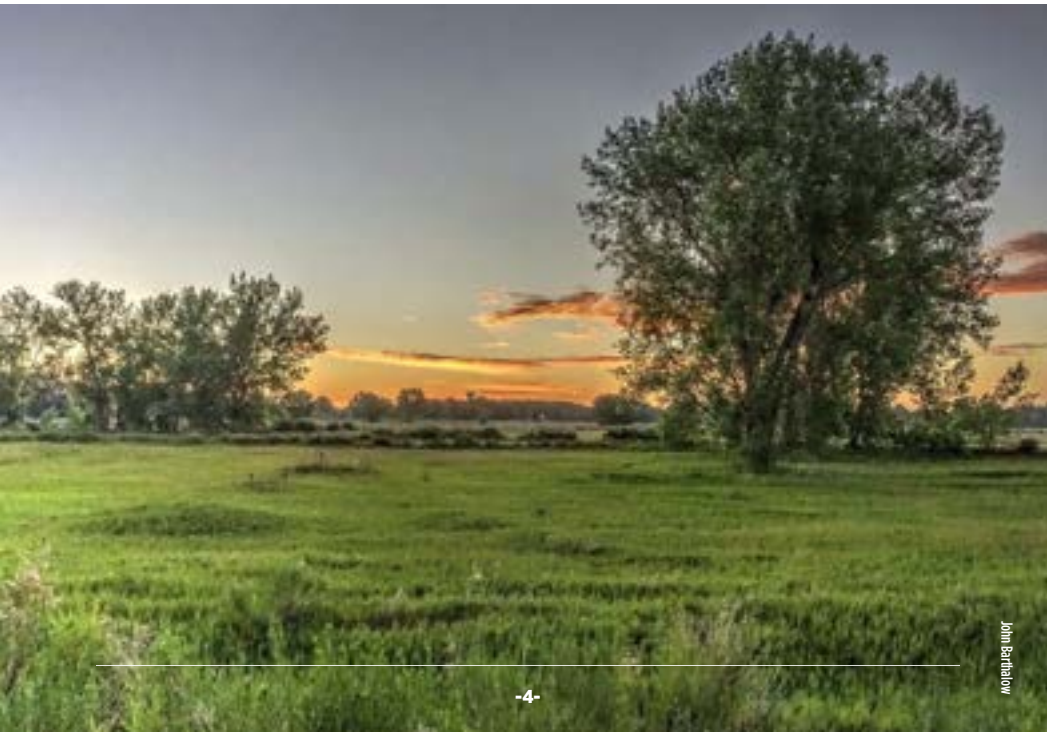
Fort Collins natural areas are open from 5 a.m. until 11 p.m. except for Bobcat Ridge, Gateway, Reservoir Ridge, and Soapstone Prairie natural areas which are open dawn to dusk. Soapstone Prairie is closed December–February.

## STAY INFORMED!

Subscribe to *Natural Areas Enews*, a monthly email newsletter that includes trail recommendations, updates, and volunteer opportunities at [fcgov.com/naturalareas](http://fcgov.com/naturalareas).

## ART

Throughout this publication, you will notice artistic contributions by community members, such as poetry, stories, and visual art. These contributions reflect the viewpoints and opinions of those individuals and their personal connections with nature. We are proud to feature the work of the community in the Natural Areas Explorer!



## Room to Roam

by Erica Reid

*A cento poem borrowing text from interpretive signage at Arapaho Bend and Running Deer natural areas. Cento poems borrow words from other authors to comprise the poem.*

Why do deer love it here?  
It's hard to believe this pond was once a gravel mine.  
Did you know?

Where there's water, there's wildlife.  
The banks of the Poudre provided a natural lushness and bounty,  
allowing cottonwood and willow seedlings to sprout along the shore.

Don't forget the birds!  
Waterfowl rest on the open water, shorebirds probe the shallows  
for tasty treats, and blackbirds sing from cattail perches.

Look for American white pelicans in the summer and bald eagles in the winter.  
Pelicans in Colorado? Yes!  
Use binoculars to get a closer look.

You'll know an American avocet by its pencil-thin legs.  
You might be surprised at how many different kinds of birds you see and hear.  
Don't forget to check the sky!

Bait up for bluegill, sunfish, bass, or yellow perch.  
Keep your eyes and ears alert for foxes, beaver, coyotes, and  
both mule deer and white-tailed deer.

Look for the signs they leave behind.  
Along the trail, look for tracks, burrows, droppings (scat), chewed plants,  
scrapes, trails, feathers, bones and more!

The Northern Arapaho People gathered here with other Tribes  
to socialize, share special ceremonies, and conduct business.  
Please visit with respect.

Thanks for helping keep this area quiet for our animal friends.  
Treat this area like you would your own backyard.  
Encourage others to do so, too.

Long after you leave here,  
watch where you step.  
Good luck!




# JUNE

## NATURAL AREA ACTIVITIES



*Quiet Time at the Lake* by Lynn Rizzotto

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
 <p><b>Registration is required</b> for most programs and opens 30 days prior to the activity date at <a href="https://fcgov.com/register">fcgov.com/register</a> or 970-416-2815. <b>Check for cancellations</b> at <a href="https://fcgov.com/naturalareas">fcgov.com/naturalareas</a> before you go!</p>						
<b>5</b> Just Be Yoga and Meditation Series, p. 60	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> Cover to Cover: Reading the Rocks of the Front Range Foothills, p. 70	<b>8</b> Nature's Morning Greeting, p. 66	<b>9</b> Out and About: Pollinators, p. 49	<b>10</b> The Arts and the Great Outdoors, p. 27	<b>11</b> NATIONAL TRAILS DAY
<b>12</b> Yoga in Nature, p. 60	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> Sights and Sounds of Gateway, p. 66	<b>15</b> Searching for Baird's Sparrow, p. 49 LGBTQ+ Hike, p. 66	<b>16</b> Junior Naturalist: Birds, p. 28	<b>17</b> Toddler Tracks, p. 27	<b>18</b> Searching for Baird's Sparrow, p. 49
<b>19</b> JUNETEENTH	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> Just Be Yoga and Meditation Series, p. 60	<b>22</b> Hiding in Plain Sight, p. 67 Forest Therapy, p. 61	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> The Arts and the Great Outdoors, p. 27 Light Up the Night, p. 38	<b>25</b> Real Colorado Roots, p. 70
POLLINATOR WEEK: JUNE 20-26						
<b>26</b> Bugs and Blooms, p. 56	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> Introduction to Nature Journaling, p. 56	<b>30</b> Junior Naturalist: Light Up the Night, p. 28		




# JULY

## NATURAL AREA ACTIVITIES



*Larkspur on the Ridge by Rick Rizzotto*

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<div></div> <p><b>Registration is required</b> for most programs and opens 30 days prior to the activity date at <a href="https://fcgov.com/register">fcgov.com/register</a> or 970-416-2815. <b>Check for cancellations</b> at <a href="https://fcgov.com/naturalareas">fcgov.com/naturalareas</a> before you go!</p>						
<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> INDEPENDENCE DAY	<b>5</b> Light Up the Night, p. 38	<b>6</b> Journaling the Nature Experience, p. 56	<b>7</b> Junior Naturalist: Hiding in Plain Sight, p. 28	<b>8</b> The Arts and the Great Outdoors, p. 27 Campfire at Coyote Ridge, p. 41	<b>9</b> Smithsonian at Lindenmeier, p. 53 Wild Fest!, p. 70
<b>10</b> Just Be Yoga and Meditation Series, p. 60	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> Wade the River, p. 67 Evening Nature Journaling, p. 56	<b>14</b> Out and About: Restoration, p. 49	<b>15</b> Toddler Tracks, p. 27 Bats!, p. 49	<b>16</b> Skygazing at Fossil Creek Reservoir, p. 45
<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> The Water We Use, p. 50	<b>21</b> Junior Naturalist: Waterwise, p. 28 Raptors and Nature: Explore and Share, p. 65	<b>22</b> The Arts and the Great Outdoors, p. 27	<b>23</b> Campfire at Nix, p. 41
LATINO CONSERVATION WEEK: JULY 17-25						
<b>24</b> Qi Gong in Nature, p. 61	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> Just Be Yoga and Meditation Series, p. 60	<b>27</b> A Colorful History of the Poudre River, p. 53	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> Sights and Sounds of McMurry, p. 68	<b>30</b> Astronomy at Bobcat Ridge, p. 43
	<b>31</b>					




# AUGUST

## NATURAL AREA ACTIVITIES



Artwork by Cathy Morrison

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2 Just Be Yoga and Meditation Series, p. 60	3	4 Junior Naturalist: Life of a Ranger, p. 28	5 Toddler Tracks, p. 27 Skygazing at Fossil Creek Reservoir, p. 45	6 Bison-Archaeology Connection, p. 53 Campfire at Nix, p. 41
7	8	9 Wade the River, p. 67	10 A Colorful History of the Poudre River, p. 53	11 Out and About: Conservation Agriculture, p. 50	12 Campfire at Coyote Ridge, p. 41	13 Just Be Yoga and Meditation Series, p. 60
14 Yoga in Nature, p. 60	15	16	17	18	19 History Underfoot, p. 53	20 Hike Through the Ages, p. 53 Poudre Riverfest, p. 73 Astronomy at Bobcat Ridge, p. 43
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	<div></div> <p><b>Registration is required</b> for most programs and opens 30 days prior to the activity date at <a href="https://fcgov.com/register">fcgov.com/register</a> or 970-416-2815. <b>Check for cancellations</b> at <a href="https://fcgov.com/naturalareas">fcgov.com/naturalareas</a> before you go!</p>		



# SEPTEMBER

## NATURAL AREA ACTIVITIES



*Rabbitbrush Rainbow Sky* by Katy Piotrowski

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>4</b>  Skygazing at Fossil Creek Reservoir, p. 45	<b>5 LABOR DAY</b>	<b>6</b> From Shore to Ocean Depths, p. 71	<b>7</b> Forest Therapy, p. 61	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> Dakota Hogback, p. 71 Campfire at Nix Farm, p. 41	<b>10</b> Wade the River, p. 67
<b>11</b> LGBTQ+ Hike, p. 66	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> Black-Footed Ferret Exploration, p. 68	<b>16</b> Sights and Sounds of Bobcat Ridge, p. 68	<b>17</b> Skygazing at Soapstone Prairie, p. 45
<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> Bring on the Floods! p. 50	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> Astronomy at Bobcat Ridge, p. 43	<b>24 NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY</b> Walk the Gangplank, p. 71 Black-Footed Ferret Rediscovery Day, p. 73
<b>25</b> Qi Gong in Nature, p. 61	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> Finding the Bellvue Fault, p. 71 History Underfoot, p. 53	




# OCTOBER

## NATURAL AREA ACTIVITIES



Autumn Palette by Rick Rizzotto

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY		
	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> Don't Take This for Granite, p. 71	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b> Skygazing at Fossil Creek Reservoir, p. 45		
		<b>10</b> INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>		<b>13</b> The Superb Northern Saw-Whet Owl, p. 50 <i>Moved to Nov. 10</i>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> Astronomy at Bobcat Ridge, p. 43
		HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH: SEPT. 15 – OCT. 15						
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> Black-Footed Ferret Exploration, p. 68	<b>22</b>		
<b>23</b> BAT WEEK: OCT. 23-30	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> Skygazing at Fossil Creek Reservoir, p. 45		
	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>						

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH: SEPT. 15 – OCT. 15

BAT WEEK: OCT. 23-30



# SHIFT YOUR RIDE

## Natural Areas with Bike Racks:

- **Bobcat Ridge**
- **Cattail Chorus**
- **Coyote Ridge**
- **Gustav Swanson**
- **Maxwell**
- **Nix Farm**
- **North Shields Ponds**
- **Pelican Marsh**  
(at Water's Way Park)
- **Red Fox Meadows**
- **Reservoir Ridge**  
(at Overland and Michaud lots)
- **Ross**  
(at Rolland Moore Park)
- **Running Deer**  
(at the Colorado Welcome Center)



Some areas with bike racks do not allow biking on the trails. Please check before you arrive.

For more ways to live sustainably, check out [shiftfoco.com](https://shiftfoco.com)

## AT HOME

Besides enjoying your natural areas and spending time outdoors, there are lots of ways you can take action to help our environment. Check out these ideas!



### Shop Locally

This generates sales taxes that support natural areas conservation and visitor amenities.



### Plant Native Plants

Make your yard an extension of the natural areas network by planting native plants. Visit [fcgov.com/naturalareas/native-plants](https://fcgov.com/naturalareas/native-plants).



### Minimize Pollutants

Minimize pesticides and herbicides to prevent runoff that pollutes waterways and protect beneficial pollinators.



### Keep Cats Indoors

The great outdoors is no place for cats. Keep cats indoors. Learn more at [fcgov.com/naturalareas/wildlife](https://fcgov.com/naturalareas/wildlife).



### Adjust Your Lighting

Dark skies benefit people and wildlife. Light only where you need it. Resources available at [fcgov.com/nightsky](https://fcgov.com/nightsky).



### Support Air Quality & Climate

Carpool or use alternative transportation such as biking or walking.



### Create a Nature Space

Create a nature space with a *Nature in the City* grant which funds projects for residents, neighborhoods, and communities. Grant submissions are open November through mid-January at [fcgov.com/natureinthecity](https://fcgov.com/natureinthecity).



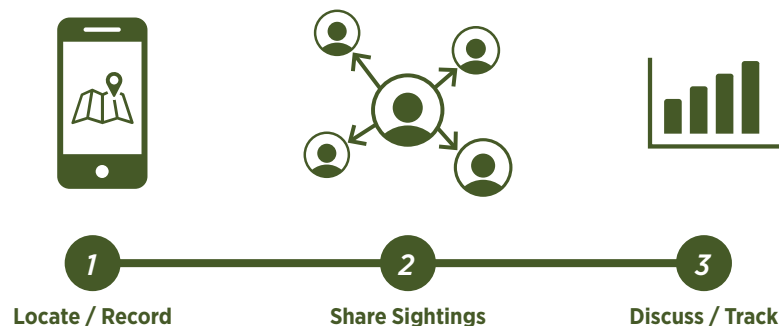
### Reduce & Reuse

Reduce single-use plastics. These can be ingested by wildlife and they pollute waterways. Opt for reusable, recyclable, or compostable packaging whenever possible.

**THANKS FOR SUPPORTING  
YOUR LOCAL NATURE SPACES.**



## COMMUNITY SCIENCE



Your sightings contribute to hundreds of conservation decisions, peer-reviewed papers, thousands of student projects, and help inform bird research worldwide.

[ebird.org](http://ebird.org)



Every observation can contribute to biodiversity science, from the rarest butterfly to the most common backyard weed. This app shares your findings with scientific data repositories like the Global Biodiversity Information Facility to help scientists find and use your data. All you have to do is observe.

[inaturalist.org](http://inaturalist.org)



WESTERN MONARCH  
MILKWEED MAPPER

Monarch populations across North America are in serious decline. To preserve and protect populations in western states, we need to better understand where monarchs and their milkweed host plants occur in the landscape. Your help is critical in collecting data to better inform conservation efforts in the western U.S.

[monarchmilkweedmapper.org](http://monarchmilkweedmapper.org)

Still want to do more? [fcgov.com/naturalareas/community-science](http://fcgov.com/naturalareas/community-science)

## ON THE TRAIL

### YOUR STEWARDSHIP CHECKLIST



There are plenty of ways to give back!



#### PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE

- ✓ Use the checklist on page 74. Natural areas can be busy, so check parking lot webcams at [fcgov.com/naturalareas/status](http://fcgov.com/naturalareas/status) before you go.
- ✓ Keep trails in good condition by checking trail status before you head out, visiting lesser known natural areas, and visiting at less crowded times. See [trails.colorado.gov](http://trails.colorado.gov) or CoTrex for closures.
- ✓ Visit in the mornings, evenings, or on weekdays. Check out hidden gems on page 75.



#### TRAVEL ON DURABLE SURFACES

- ✓ Don't create new trails! If it's muddy, respect trail closures and visit a paved trail instead. Using the same path minimizes ecological impacts.



#### DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY

- ✓ Use the trash and recycling containers at trailheads.
- ✓ If trash can is full, pack out your own trash.
- ✓ Restrooms are at trailheads and some interior locations.
- ✓ Scoop your pet's poop to prevent water pollution.
- ✓ Pick up litter by becoming a Natural Areas Adopter at [fcgov.com/naturalareas](http://fcgov.com/naturalareas).



#### LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND

- ✓ Allow the narrative of each place to be sustained. Don't collect any items. Leave everything as you found it.



#### NO FIRES ARE ALLOWED ON NATURAL AREAS

- ✓ Attend a campfire activity in this guide! (See page 41.)



#### RESPECT WILDLIFE

- ✓ Allow wildlife to thrive in their home and habitat by giving them space and not feeding them.



#### BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHER VISITORS

- ✓ Be aware of other visitors and follow trail etiquette: Bikers yield to horses and pedestrians. Pedestrians yield to horses.





## AT NATURAL AREAS

Natural areas are yours to enjoy and explore, and as stewards it is our responsibility to care for these special places. With more than 40,000 acres and more than 50 natural areas, there is a lot to care for!

### PICK IT UP FOCO

Want to take your impact to the next level? Lead your own trash clean-up.

- Clean up our city before trash makes its way to the Cache la Poudre River.
- Help us better understand issues around trash and single-use plastics in our City.
- Collect data that will help drive policy changes.



The City of Fort Collins is partnering with Litterati to engage the community in picking up litter in Fort Collins—download the app to help!



Visit [fcgov.com/volunteer/trashpickup](https://fcgov.com/volunteer/trashpickup) for more information.



Visit [litterati.org](https://litterati.org) for more information.



*Help protect our waterways for future generations by checking for and repairing any vehicle leaks. When it rains and as snow melts, runoff carries oil, antifreeze, gas, transmission fluid, and other pollutants down storm drains, contaminating our rivers, streams, and lakes. Your car's small leaks and drips add up. Learn more at [fcgov.com/ddd](https://fcgov.com/ddd).*

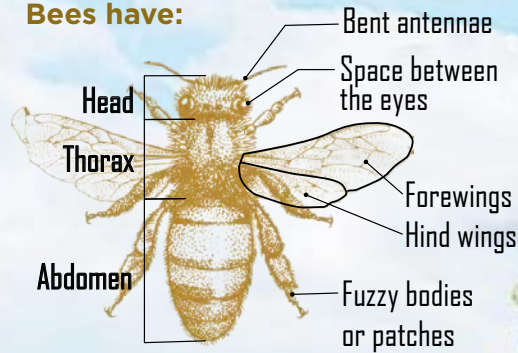




# What's the Buzzzzzzz on Native Bees?

## How do I know it's a bee?

### Bees have:



### Did you know:

- Colorado has over 900 bee species.
- Around 1/3 of bee species only collect pollen from specific native plants.
- Colorado has 1/2 of the species of bumblebees found in North America.



Hairy Belly Bee



Green Metallic Bee



Bumble Bee



Tiny Dark Bee



Cuckoo Bee



Check Out Native Bee Watch To Learn More







## Pedal Hard, Climb Again

by Lauren Mehl

Growth.  
Is that what this is?  
The potent forest air breathes—  
Epiphany!  
Pedaling hard, climbing again,  
I feel challenged  
Constantly.

Growth.  
Push me over.  
I have bruises and scrapes  
On my knees  
And on my heart.

Growth.  
Stretching my muscles  
and my fortitude.  
Bursting through the tangled fascia,  
Sending the twisted trail.

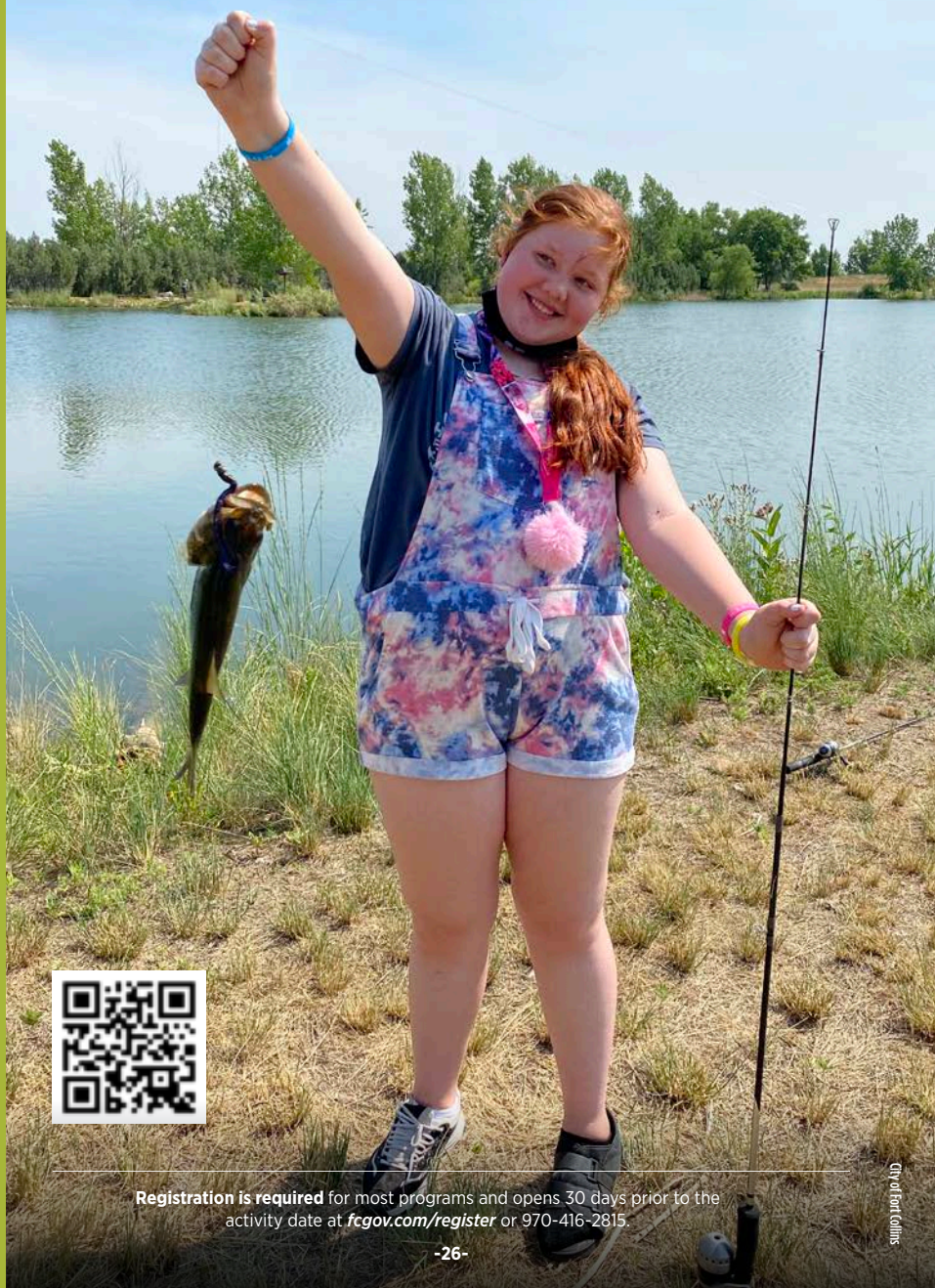
I'm getting stronger, and I'm already strong.  
I'm becoming bolder, and I'm already bold.  
I'm so grateful, and  
I'm already great.

Growth.  
I thought I knew you.  
We have a lifetime together.



## DO-IT-YOURSELF RESOURCES

[fcgov.com/naturalareas/learn](http://fcgov.com/naturalareas/learn)



Registration is required for most programs and opens 30 days prior to the activity date at [fcgov.com/register](http://fcgov.com/register) or 970-416-2815.

## YOUNG NATURALISTS

Activities specifically for young people. **Parents/guardians must be present at all times during the program.**

## FOR TODDLERS

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Fri. June 17	10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	<b>Ross</b> Meet at Rolland Moore Park Playground.	<b>Toddler Tracks Storytime</b> <span style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 2px;">R</span> Discover flowers, bugs, tracks, and more in this slow-paced exploratory walk with the Poudre River Library District. Bring your library card along to check out books from the Book Bike! 1-3 yrs. Register at <a href="http://read.poudrelibraries.org/events">read.poudrelibraries.org/events</a> .
Fri. July 15	10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	<b>Red Fox Meadows</b> Meet at the trailhead kiosk on Longworth Dr.	
Fri. Aug. 5	10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	<b>Maggie Meander</b> Meet at Soft Gold Park.	

## FOR TEENS

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Fri. June 10 Fri. June 24 Fri. July 8 Fri. July 22	10:00 a.m. – noon	<b>Riverbend Ponds</b> Meeting location available upon registration.	<b>The Arts and the Great Outdoors for Tweens and Teens</b> <span style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 2px;">R</span> Let your creativity flow with a mini-workshop on topics ranging from photography to ukulele playing to sketching to tai chi! After the mini-workshop, explore Riverbend Ponds with a naturalist. For teens and tweens ages 10-18. Register at <a href="http://read.poudrelibraries.org/events">read.poudrelibraries.org/events</a> .



Check for cancellations at [fcgov.com/naturalareas](http://fcgov.com/naturalareas) before you go!



# JUNIOR NATURALISTS

## AGES 8-12

Explore, learn, and grow your stewardship skills. **Parents/guardians must be present at all times.** Siblings are welcome, but the activities are geared towards the stated age group.

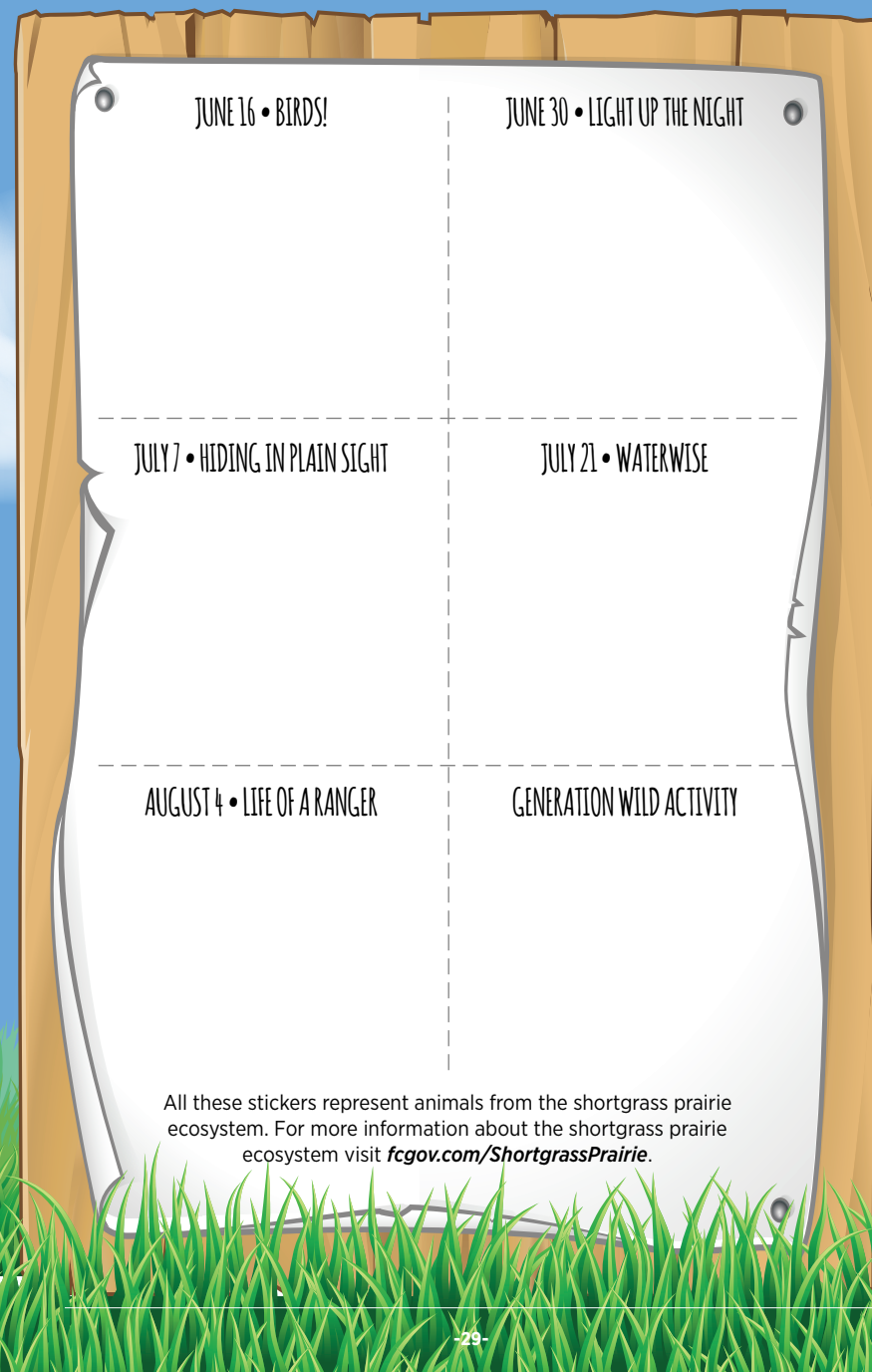
DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Thurs. June 16	10:00 a.m. – noon	<b>North Shields Ponds</b> Meet at the parking lot for Shields Street River access.	<b>Birds!</b> What exactly do birds do all day (or, for some species, all night)?! Practice identifying our local feathered friends and discover the fascinating lessons they can teach us! Up to 1 mile; easy.
Thurs. June 30	8:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.	<b>Riverbend Ponds</b> Meet at the parking lot off of Prospect Rd.	<b>Light up the Night</b> Did you know we have fireflies in Fort Collins? Find out why it's such a great place for fireflies to live and fun facts about these amazing beetles. Up to 1 mile; easy.
Thurs. July 7	10:00 a.m. – noon	<b>Riverbend Ponds</b> Meet at the Cairnes Dr. entrance, off of Timberline Rd.	<b>Hiding in Plain Sight</b> Have you ever been frustrated by not seeing wildlife on a hike? Use the SLOW method to increase your chances of seeing nature's creatures on your next hike. Chances are, they are hiding right under your nose! Up to 1 mile; easy.
Thurs. July 21	10:00 a.m. – noon	<b>Gateway</b> Meet at the picnic shelters.	<b>WaterWise</b> Explore the journey of a drop of water from its source to your tap at home. This program will include a short hike and an exploration of how the City assesses the health of our watershed to provide drinking water for thousands.
Thurs. Aug. 4	10:00 a.m. – noon	<b>Red Fox Meadows</b> Meet at the trailhead kiosk off of Longworth Dr.	<b>Life of a Ranger</b> What's it like to be a Natural Areas ranger? Come learn from real rangers and see how they help keep our natural areas safe and healthy. Up to 1 mile; easy.



Registration is required for most programs and opens 30 days prior to the activity date at [fcgov.com/register](https://fcgov.com/register) or 970-416-2815. Check for cancellations at [fcgov.com/naturalareas](https://fcgov.com/naturalareas) before you go!

## STICKER PAGE

Attend every Junior Naturalist program and collect a sticker from the program leader. Attend each program to collect them all! As a bonus, complete one activity from Generation Wild's *20 Ideas for 20 Minutes Outside* and draw a picture of it.





# 20 IDEAS FOR 20 MINUTES OUTSIDE AT HOME

## 1. HOST A MUD PARTY

Get the mud and fun flowing. Try mud painting. Make mud pies. Squish mud between your toes. All it takes is a big bucket, dirt, water, and a little imagination.



## 3. CAMP IN YOUR BACKYARD

Just pitch a tent or sleep under the stars in your yard. Make some s'mores and enjoy an adventure close to home—and indoor toilets!

## 2. ADD WATER & CHILL

Fish for marbles. Fill a baby pool with ice and water. Then add marbles and try to fish them out with your toes. Or do a frozen T-shirt challenge. Freeze tees and water in plastic bags. See which friend can break the ice to wear one first.

## 4. GO ON A COLOR SCAVENGER HUNT

Search for things outdoors that match each of the six colors here. Could be flowers, bugs, the sky—whatever catches your eye. Bonus points if you capture a photo or drawing of what you find.

## 5. MAKE SUN PRINTS

Place colored construction paper outside in the sun. Make a design on top of it with leaves, sticks, rocks and other stuff. Then let it sit out, and in a few hours, the sun will turn it into a wild piece of art. Don't forget to sign your masterpiece!

## 6. MAKE NATURE FOSSILS

Form clay into circular shapes about a half-inch thick. Find interesting rocks, leaves, sticks and plants that you can press into each piece of clay and remove. Boom! Instant "fossils"!



## 7. SET UP A TOY CAR WASH

Here's something cool to do on a hot day. Grab your toy trucks and cars and hold your own mini soapless carwash. And if a water fight happens to break out, it'll be even cooler.

## 8. PLAY TAG

At dusk, grab some friends and a flashlight, and it's game on! Whoever gets tagged with the light beam is it.

## 9. TURN LUNCH INTO A REAL PICNIC

Any meal is more fun outdoors. So, grab a blanket, a basket of your favorite snacks, and find a shady patch of grass. To make it extra sweet, cut fruit into flower shapes and munch away.

## 10. CREATE A BIKE OBSTACLE COURSE

Grab some chalk and draw a curvy track on your sidewalk or driveway. Add a stopwatch and crown a track champion for the fastest lap.

## 11. MAKE A SUNDIAL

Grab a stick and 12 rocks. Paint numbers 1-12 on each rock. At noon, plant the stick straight up in a sunny spot. Place rock #12 at the end of the stick's shadow. At 1:00 p.m., do the same with rock #1 and repeat every hour until sunset. Return the next morning to mark shadows on the hour from sunrise to noon.



## 12. GROW VEGGIES FROM SCRAPS

Place the end of some celery or romaine lettuce in a bowl with a little water. Set it in a sunny spot and watch for roots to appear. Then plant it outdoors or in a pot and watch it grow. No seeds necessary!

## 13. GO ON A SAFARI

Have someone hide toy animals outside and let the search begin. If they're hidden too well, hints like "cold!" "warm!" and "hot!" will help guide you.

## 14. MAKE LEAF ZOMBIES

Collect rocks and interestingly shaped leaves and make zombie, ghost, and monster faces out of them.

## 15. PAINT WITH WATER ON YOUR SIDEWALK

Grab a paintbrush and a container of water and get your Van Gogh on. Watch what happens to your painting as the sun heats it up.

## 16. "COLLECT" SOME BUGS

Grab a camera and explore your yard or local park. See how many bugs you can add to your photo collection. If you're nice, they might even smile for the camera.



## 17. MAKE A ROLY POLY HABITAT

Get a container that allows for airflow, and fill it with dirt, dead leaves, rotting wood, and moss. Then add some roly-polies. After having some fun watching them, set them free.

## 18. FEED YOUR BIRD CURIOSITY

Hang up a bird feeder and then sit back and watch the airshow. Keep a list of how many birds visit, make drawings of them and keep it all in a journal.

## 19. TAKE A MICRO HIKE

Rope off a 3' x 3' area in the grass with string. Then crouch down and use your fingers to move the grass and dig in the dirt. Use a magnifying glass to see what lives there. It's a new, close-up way to see the world.

## 20. MAKE TREE RUBBINGS

Nature is one amazing artist—and you can be too. Just hold a sheet of paper against a tree trunk and rub over it with crayons or pencils. Try it against different trees to complete your art collection.

For more adventures, join [GenerationWild.com](http://GenerationWild.com)

Facebook and Instagram: @GenerationWildColorado

Tag Us: #20MinutesOutside



# AGENTS OF DISCOVERY

MOVE TO PLAY & LEARN



COMING SOON TO THE CITY OF FORT COLLINS  
NATURAL AREAS – SUMMER 2022!



Owl by Desiree Luca



## NEWCOMERS' SERIES

Are you new to Fort Collins or Larimer County? Welcome!

This special series of programs helps residents learn about the ecosystems that make the area so special. **All programs are free. Registration required.**

Selected activities are marked with the New symbol: 

- **Bison-Archaeology Connection**, Aug. 6..... page 53
- **Parade of Prairie Bloom**, June 3 ..... page 65
- **Sights and Sounds of North Shields Ponds**, May 24..... page 65
- **Starting Anew: Signs of Spring on the High Plains**, May 25 ..... page 65
- **From Basement to Desert**, May 26..... page 70
- **Nature's Morning Greeting**, June 8..... page 66
- **Out and About: Pollinators**, June 9 ..... page 49
- **Bobolinks are Back!**, June 4..... page 66
- **Sights and Sounds of Gateway**, June 14 ..... page 66
- **Light Up the Night**, June 24 or July 5..... page 28
- **Smithsonian at Lindenmeier**, July 9 or Sept. 3..... page 53
- **Out and About: Restoration—Is it for the Birds?**, July 14 ..... page 49
- **The Water We Use**, July 20..... page 50
- **A Colorful History of the Poudre River**, July 27 or Aug. 10..... page 53
- **Sights and Sounds of McMurtry**, July 29..... page 68
- **Out and About: Conservation Agriculture**, Aug. 11..... page 50
- **History Underfoot**, Aug. 19 or Sept. 30..... page 53
- **From Shore to Ocean Depths**, Sept. 6..... page 71
- **Sights and Sounds of Bobcat Ridge**, Sept. 16..... page 68
- **Bring on the Floods!**, Sept. 21..... page 50
- **Walk the Gangplank**, Sept. 26 ..... page 71



*Prospect Ponds by Chelle Costello*

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Check for cancellations at [fcgov.com/naturalareas](https://fcgov.com/naturalareas) before you go!






Artwork by Cathy Morrison



## NIGHT WALKS

Walks are offered near the full moon with lots of natural light—no need for flashlights! Dress warmly, wear closed-toed walking shoes, and bring water to drink. The activity will include a 1-2 mile walk on unpaved trails, easy.

DATE	TIME	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
Fri. June 24	8:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.	<b>Riverbend Ponds</b> Meet at the Prospect Road parking lot.	<b>Light Up the Night</b>  Did you know we have fireflies in Fort Collins? Find out why it's such a great place for fireflies to live and fun facts about these amazing beetles. Up to 1 mile; easy.
Tues. July 5			

**PHOTO:** The impact of light pollution on the night sky as seen from Soapstone Prairie.



Registration is required for most programs and opens 30 days prior to the activity date at [fcgov.com/register](https://fcgov.com/register) or 970-416-2815.

## GO FOR YOUR OWN NIGHT HIKE!

Have you ever explored nature at night? Take a night walk in a natural space and listen for owls, frogs, and other wildlife. Learn what flowers bloom at night. Here are some tips to keep you safe and learning:

- **Social or Solo?** Hiking at night alone vs. hiking with a group provide very different experiences. Whether you choose to hike alone for solitude or with a group for a social experience, make sure everyone knows the safety tips below.
- **Head out just before sunset:** Heading out before sunset can make it easier to get motivated, plus there's still a little light on the way out, which will make the way back easier.
- **Hike on a full moon:** On full moon nights, there is more natural light. You can use your headlamp or flashlight less!
- **Take a familiar trail:** Taking a trail you already know will make nighttime travel easier.
- **Pick the right location:** Some natural areas are closed after dark. Coyote Ridge, Reservoir Ridge, and Riverbend Ponds are all great places to try a night hike and they're open until 11 p.m.! Check out [fcgov.com/naturalareas](https://fcgov.com/naturalareas) for more natural areas that are open late.
- **Slow down and be observant:** Darkness can make terrain more challenging and it's easy to get turned around and miss a trail junction. Slow down and pay attention to your surroundings, including signs of wildlife.
- **Bring layers:** If you start before the sun sets, you may want an extra layer of clothing once the night sets in and it cools off.
- **Bring a cellphone or radio for emergencies:** Be aware of the area you are hiking and know if you can get cell service there.
- **Tell someone where you are going:** Always let someone know where you are going and when you expect to be back.



Night hiking tips modified from: [rei.com/blog/hike/night-hiking-basics](https://rei.com/blog/hike/night-hiking-basics)

Check for cancellations at [fcgov.com/naturalareas](https://fcgov.com/naturalareas) before you go!





City of Fort Collins








Laura Fritz

## CAMPFIRES

Spend a cozy evening by the campfire, complete with stories and s'mores! Suitable for all ages. Dress warmly and bring water to drink.

Campfires at **Coyote Ridge** include a hike on an unpaved trail to the cabin. Please allow 30-40 minutes to reach the cabin. The campfire begins at the time listed below. Bring a flashlight for the walk back. 2 miles; easy.

Campfires at **Nix Farm** do not include a hike and are wheelchair accessible. Bring lawn chairs or blankets to sit on if you like (limited seating available).

DATE	TIME	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
Fri. July 8	8:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.	<b>Coyote Ridge Cabin</b>	<b>Antlered Animals</b> What are antlers made of anyway? And what are they for? Learn about our antlered animal friends and how their antlers help them survive.
Fri. Sept. 9	6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	<b>Nix Farm</b> 	
Sat. July 23	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	<b>Nix Farm</b> 	<b>Latino Conservation Week</b>  Celebrate the stories and contributions of Latinos to conservation and the outdoors. Explore the many ways to connect to nature in Northern Colorado.  <b>Semana de Conservación Latina</b>  <i>Celebre las historias y contribuciones de los latinos a la conservación y la naturaleza. Explore la variedad de maneras en que puede conectarse a la naturaleza en el Norte de Colorado.</i>
Sat. Aug. 6	6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	<b>Nix Farm</b> 	<b>Animals with Altitude</b> What does it take to survive in the high country of Colorado? Mountain goats and bighorn sheep know the secrets!


*Continued on next page*

Registration is required for most programs and opens 30 days prior to the activity date at [fcgov.com/register](https://fcgov.com/register) or 970-416-2815.

Check for cancellations at [fcgov.com/naturalareas](https://fcgov.com/naturalareas) before you go!



## Campfires, continued

DATE	TIME	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
Fri. Aug 12	7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Coyote Ridge Cabin	<b>Avian Melodies</b> Enter into the melodic conversation of birds! Learn to identify local bird calls and song and discover the many layers of their communications.
Fri. Sept. 2	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	Coyote Ridge Cabin	<b>Raptors</b> Do hawks, eagles, and owls really have dinosaur ancestors? Unravel the mysteries of these winged wonders.
Sat. Oct. 8	5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	Nix Farm 	<b>Hispanic Heritage Month/Día de los Muertos Campfire</b>  Join a naturalist for an evening of stories centered around Día de los Muertos. All ages welcome!  <b>Fogata del Mes del Patrimonio Hispano/Día de los Muertos</b>  <i>Participe en una noche de historias sobre el Día de los Muertos con un naturalista. ¡Evento apto para todas las edades!</i>

# ASTRONOMY AT

## BOBCAT RIDGE

Enjoy a brief, family-friendly astronomy activity followed by skygazing. Volunteers from the Northern Colorado Astronomical Society provide telescopes. Dress warmly, bring water, and a blanket or chair to sit on in the parking lot. If bringing a flashlight, use a red light or cover it with red cellophane. Activities at Bobcat Ridge will begin at the picnic shelter, a 0.25 mile-walk. **Please arrive on time! Allow for a 10-minute walk to the shelter. The gate closes shortly after start times and parking is not allowed on the road outside the gate.**

DATE	TIME	DESCRIPTION
Fri. June 3	8:30 p.m. – 10:30 p.m.	<b>The Long and Short of It</b> As we approach the summer solstice, learn what really causes our days to lengthen and shorten and how our skies change with the seasons.
Sat. July 30	8:15 p.m. – 10:15 p.m.	<b>The Perseid Meteor Shower</b> Probably the most well-known and easy to see meteor showers, the Perseids are one of the best opportunities to catch a glimpse of impressive “shooting stars.”
Sat. Aug. 20	8:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.	<b>Globular Clusters &amp; the Galactic Core</b> First observed in 1665, globular clusters are thousands of stars grouped together in tight clusters which appear around the center of our galaxy. They are spectacular in the telescope!
Fri. Sept. 23	7:00 p.m. – 9:00p.m.	<b>The Autumnal Equinox</b> For the next six months, the nights are longer than the days. Familiarize yourself with the constellations of the fall evening sky and enjoy the telescope views of planets and deep-sky objects.
Sat. Oct. 15	6:15 p.m. – 8:15 p.m.	<b>The Gas Giants: Jupiter and Saturn</b> Saturn and Jupiter march across the evening sky in October and into the winter. They will slowly separate over the next decade.





Registration is required for most programs and opens 30 days prior to the activity date at [fcgov.com/register](https://fcgov.com/register) or 970-416-2815.

## SKYGAZING AT SOAPSTONE PRAIRIE

Enjoy a very special night to celebrate dark skies during the new moon at Soapstone Prairie. Learn about the benefits of dark skies for humans and wildlife. Then enjoy viewing through telescopes with members of the Northern Colorado Astronomical Society. Dress warmly and bring a blanket or chair to sit on. Event will take place in the South Parking Lot. **Gates will close shortly after the start and road parking is not allowed, so please be on time!**

DATE	TIME
Sat. Sept. 17	7:30 p.m. – 10:30 p.m.

## SKYGAZING AT FOSSIL CREEK RESERVOIR

Volunteers from the Northern Colorado Astronomical Society provide telescopes and share their knowledge about stars, planets, galaxies, and more. Dress warmly and bring a blanket or chair to sit on. Meet at the parking lot.

DATE	TIME
Sat. June 4	9:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.
Sat. July 16	9:30 p.m. – 11:30 p.m.
Fri. Aug. 5	8:30 p.m. – 10:30 p.m.
Sun. Sept. 4	8:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.
Sat. Oct. 1	7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Sat. Oct. 29	7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Tues. Nov. 8	3:00 a.m. – 5:30 a.m. (Special Lunar Eclipse Viewing)
Sat. Nov. 12	6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Wed. Dec. 7	7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. (Mars Lunar Occultation)
Fri. Dec. 30	6:30 p.m. – 8:30p.m.

Check for cancellations at [fcgov.com/naturalareas](https://fcgov.com/naturalareas) before you go!





# A Fireproof Resilience

by Eryn Lylum

"Raise your hand if you have been here before."

Eight moms and our combined dozen-and-a-half children stand before me with hands at their sides. It strikes me that no one from our school group has set foot at Bobcat Ridge. The exception is my children and me. The last time I brought my kids here was over a year ago. We spent a morning sitting beneath the wooden shelter, reading books, and painting with watercolors. Their creations reflected the surrounding green ponderosa pine, golden rabbitbrush, and pearl white yucca blossoms. A rock wren sang to us from the red sandstone cliffs hemming the valley.

Eleven days later, the entire area was on fire. Red and orange plumes engulfed the green, gold, and white hues relegated to canvas, preserved in time and memory.

Today, over a year later to celebrate its reopening, we've brought our school group for a nature hike and lesson on wildfire and restoration. I watch children brimming with energy run ahead, stopping abruptly to observe mule deer making their silent passage across the valley. I share how the Arapaho and Ute Indians used this valley as wintering grounds, seeking shelter between the hills from harsh conditions. Into this soil is sown a resilience no fire can touch.


Watching our group fall in love with this area as I have, I realize one doesn't have to know something, someplace, or someone as its prior self to appreciate its beauty. Sometimes seeing the scar is enough. We hike past ponderosa pine bearing blackened trunks. Fragile, newly planted grasses and wildflowers cautiously poke through charred soil. My children and I are familiar with Bobcat Ridge's beauty before the Cameron Peak Fire. The rest of our group knows it only after the fact; yet all of us are touched by the restoration we're witnessing. We feel connected to the Native Americans and pioneers who called this land home. As they gleaned from the land the resilience needed for their struggles, we can also.

Further, we feel a kinship with the staff and volunteers who worked tirelessly over the past year to reopen Bobcat Ridge. We know it is their efforts that have welcomed us to these trails. In the gracious stride of mule deer, the wingbeats of a magpie soaring overhead, and yucca stalks stretching toward the sun, we sense the miracle taking place around our feet. Following the path of the Arapahos and Utes, pioneers, wild turkey, elk, mule deer, and finally the volunteers who fought for all its history, we discover similar resilience and restoration. Bobcat Ridge stands as a stunning reflection of our unique journeys and a return to well-being.



## STEWARDSHIP BEHIND THE SCENERY 16+

These informative talks are designed for adults to learn more about research in natural areas and how their unique and valuable natural resources are stewarded. Parking is limited—please carpool, bike, or walk.

DATE	TIME	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
Thurs. June 9	6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	<b>Sugar Beet Park Pollinator Garden</b> Pre-register for more details.	<b>Out and About: Pollinators</b>   Pollinators are important to the health of our plants. Come learn how to create and maintain a pollinator garden with Nature in the City staff.
Wed. June 15 Sat. June 18	7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	<b>Soapstone Prairie</b> Meet at the south parking lot, approximately a one hour drive from Fort Collins.	<b>Searching for Baird's Sparrow</b> Soapstone Prairie is the only known breeding site for the rare Baird's Sparrow in the state of Colorado. Join biologists from the Bird Conservancy of the Rockies and Fort Collins Natural Areas to look for the elusive birds and learn why conserving grasslands is important to their survival.
Thurs. July 14	6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.	<b>McMurry</b> Park at the Shields St. River Access. Group will walk to McMurry together.	<b>Out and About: Restoration—Is it for the Birds?</b>   Discover how biologists, botanists, and restoration staff work together to create healthier plant and animal communities. Register at <a href="https://read.poudrelibraries.org/events/">read.poudrelibraries.org/events/</a>
Fri. July 15	8:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.	<b>Gateway</b> Meet at Shelter A.	<b>Bats!</b> Did you know that Gateway is home to one of the largest maternal roosts in Northern Colorado? Learn where they live and why local scientists have been watching their habits closely.





*Continued on next page*

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## Stewardship Behind the Scenery, continued

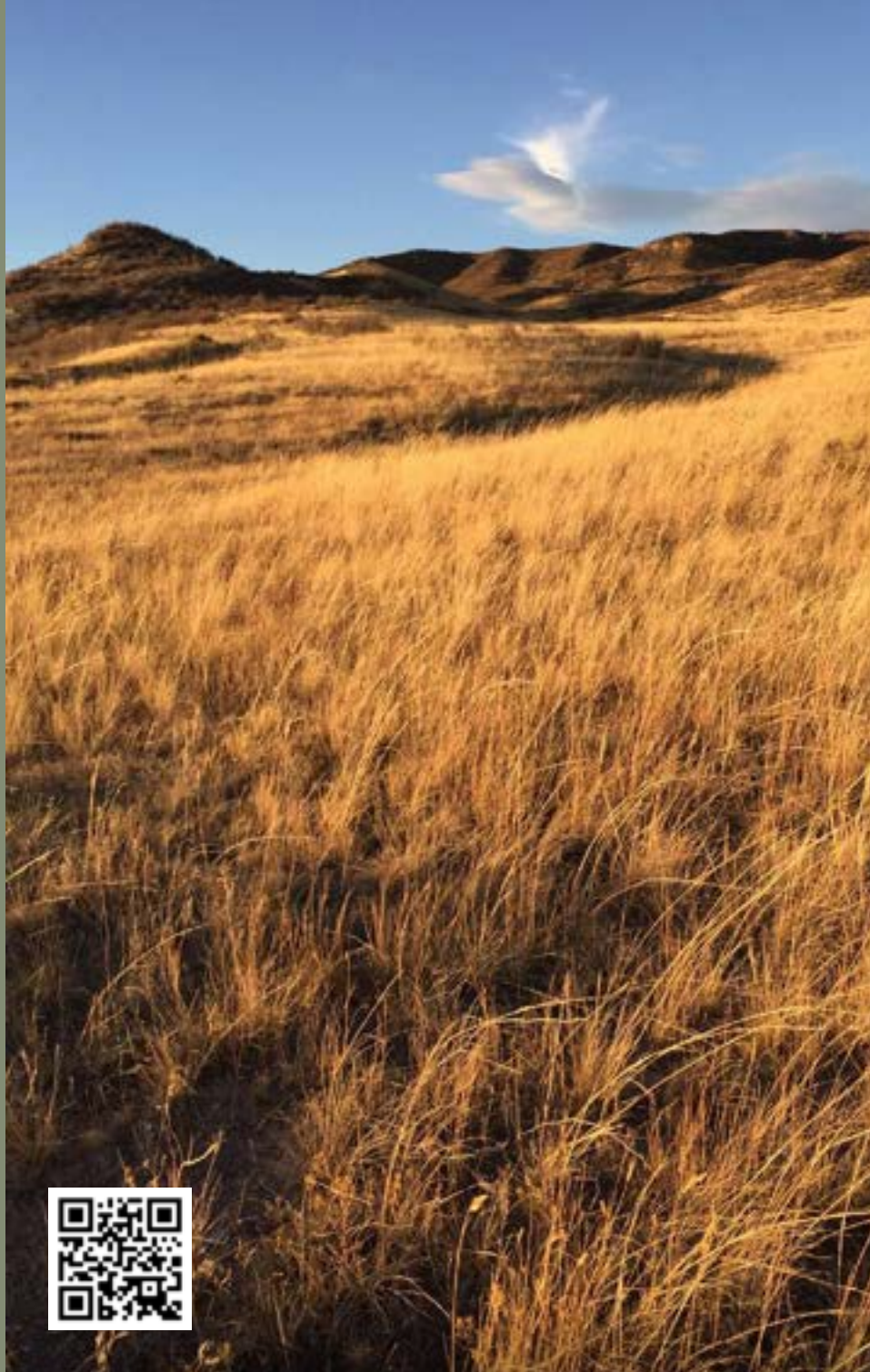
DATE	TIME	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
Wed. July 20	6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.	<b>Gateway</b> Meet at Shelter A.	<b>The Water We Use</b>  Where does our high quality water come from, how much do we have, and how do we get it? Join Fort Collins Utilities experts to dive into these questions and more!
Thurs. Aug 11	6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	<b>Kestrel Fields</b> Register for more information.	<b>Out and About: Conservation Agriculture</b>   What do kale, carrots, currant, and chokecherry have in common? These plants may be found growing together on one of the newest natural areas in the city. Kestrel Fields is home to a conservation agriculture pilot project. We will take a closer look at what's happening in the farm fields and how the City is restoring the surrounding land to support the community, wildlife, and local agriculture. Register at <a href="https://read.poudrelibraries.org/events/">read.poudrelibraries.org/events/</a>
Wed. Sept. 21	6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.	<b>Red Fox Meadows</b> Meet at the trailhead kiosk off of Longworth Dr.	<b>Bring on the Floods!</b>  Red Fox Meadows is an important stormwater detention area. Why is it important? What is stormwater and where does it go? Join Fort Collins Utilities experts and take a deeper look at the design of Red Fox Meadows and why it's important for preventing floods. Up to 1.5 miles; easy.
Thurs. Nov. 10	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	<b>Fort Collins Senior Center</b> 1200 Raintree Dr.	<b>The Superb Northern Saw-Whet Owl</b> They're small, fierce, and an important part of a mountain ecosystem. So why is so little known about them? Join Fort Collins Audubon to learn more about the elusive northern saw-whet owl and hear the data that's been collected at local natural areas.

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Susan Marshall

## VOICES OF THE PAST

For over 10,000 years, northern Colorado has been a great place to live. Discover people of the past that have lived in and shaped our community.

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Sat. July 9	9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	<b>Soapstone Prairie</b> 	<b>Smithsonian at Lindenmeier</b>  Travel back in time to learn how Paleo-Indians survived the high plains and how Smithsonian Institution archaeologists uncovered their story in the 1930s. 0.25 mile; easy.
Sept. 3	10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Meet at the north parking lot, approximately a one hour drive from Fort Collins	
Wed. July 27	9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	<b>Old FC Heritage Park</b> 	<b>A Colorful History of the Poudre River</b>   Join us for a lively stroll through the natural wonders and more than a thousand years of human activity along the Poudre River. 1 mile, easy.
Wed. Aug. 10		Meet at the parking lot behind the Northside Aztlan Center.	
Sat. Aug. 6	9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	<b>Soapstone Prairie</b> 	<b>Bison-Archaeology Connection</b>  Learn about the acquisition of Soapstone Prairie, the history of the American bison, and the treasures uncovered at the Lindenmeier archaeological site. Hike of 0.25 mile; easy.
		Meet at the south parking lot, approximately a one hour drive from Fort Collins.	
Fri. Aug. 19	2:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	<b>Arapaho Bend</b>	<b>History Underfoot</b> 
Fri. Sept. 30		Harmony Transit Center parking lot. Meet at the NW end of the lot near the trailhead.	Discuss original homesteaders from Paleo-Indians to the Arapaho and Cheyenne bands that call the area home. Hear stories about Chief Friday, the Buss family, George Strauss, and the Sherwood Ranch. Up to 3 miles; easy-moderate, some off-trail hiking.
Sat. Aug. 20	9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.	<b>Soapstone Prairie</b>	<b>Hike through the Ages</b> 
Sat. Oct. 8	9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Meet at the south parking lot, approximately a one hour drive from Fort Collins.	Experts in geology, ecology, and history show how Soapstone Prairie was formed, the creatures that keep it functioning, and the homesteading and ranching history that's part of our heritage. 6-7 miles; strenuous, off-trail hike. Each date will hike a different route. See website for more details.

Check for cancellations at [fcgov.com/naturalareas](https://fcgov.com/naturalareas) before you go!





*Winter Dance and Summer Splendor* by Mary Harnett

## The Big Box of Crayons

by George Wallace

While we tossed and turned,  
the wide Wyoming wind blew steady all night,  
scrubbing, flushing, polishing, pushing South all the  
bad air, fugitive chemistry and grime that had drifted North  
from the centers of progress, in the days before.

It howled, it sang, till it had blown the top off  
the big box of crayons—the best box—with all the colors:  
Burnt Umber, Raw Sienna, Granny Smith, and Forest Greens,  
now illuminated by the clean light of a fresh Fall day that suffuses  
all the grasses, forbs, shrubs, trees, and waters with: Sepia, Beaver,  
Tumbleweed, Asparagus, Sea Green, Blue Green Cerulean, and Indigo.

Just as an excited child sees, smells, almost tastes  
the potential beauty, the opportunity, of a fresh white pad and a new box  
of crayons on the first day of school under a Celestial Blue sky,  
we rise wanting only to wade out into nearby nature's Venetian Red, Burnt Orange,  
Pine Green, Lavender, and Plum—into all the sharp and subtle shades of heaven.

Without the wind to sharpen our world, in time  
the tips will begin to flatten and the many shades and scatters will return  
to their small box approximations: red, blue, green, brown, gold.  
Still, good teachers will ask us to remember and re-create the colors, the beauty,  
the ideas for living fully—that this morning are so apparent.



# CREATIVE BY NATURE

Beginners and veterans welcome! Instruction, focused and guided observations, along with drawing, painting, and writing deepen your connections to nature. No art experience required. Children 9 and older are welcome if accompanied by an adult. Bring something to sit on (a stool, jacket, pad, etc.). Feel free to bring your own art supplies or borrow ours.

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Sun. June 26	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	<b>Primrose Studio</b> Meet at the studio at 4300 Michaud Lane near Reservoir Ridge.	<b>Bugs and Blooms Captured in a Naturalist's Notebook</b> Learn how to use art as a tool for discovering and capturing the details of plants, insects, and other creatures. Up to 1 mile; easy.
Wed. June 29	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	<b>Primrose Studio</b> Meet at the studio at 4300 Michaud Lane near Reservoir Ridge.	<b>Introduction to Nature Journaling</b> Discover the art materials easiest to use in nature, types of journals, and journaling techniques. A guided opportunity to develop skills of observing and recording your nature experience. 0.5 mile; easy.
Wed. July 6	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	<b>Fossil Creek Reservoir</b> Meet at the outdoor classroom near the parking lot.	<b>Journaling the Nature Experience</b> Whether capturing the distant mountain landscape or the close flora and fauna, nature journaling is a way to enjoy and develop appreciation of nature. 0.5 mile; easy.
Wed. July 13	6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	<b>Bobcat Ridge</b> Meet at the parking lot.	<b>Evening Nature Journaling</b> Learn to use nature journaling techniques to capture the magic of a summer evening in a natural area. 0.5 mile; easy.



*Hipster Trout* by Kate Mosely



## STUDENTS WITH THE COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS TRANSITION PROGRAM OF POUDRE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Artistic Abilities is an inclusive art class that collaborates with CSU Art Education, Poudre School District, and Adaptive Recreation Opportunities (ARO). Class members gathered natural materials, especially colorful leaves, which they arranged into rainbows with glue, cardboard, and paint. Nature can always provide artistic inspiration, complementing the multiple benefits of moving outdoors and expressing creativity. Artistic Abilities works with ARO to provide quality programs and equal opportunities in recreation and leisure to community members with and without disabilities.



Registration is required for most programs and opens 30 days prior to the activity date at [fcgov.com/register](https://fcgov.com/register) or 970-416-2815.

Check for cancellations at [fcgov.com/naturalareas](https://fcgov.com/naturalareas) before you go!



# PLANT-BASED NATURAL AREA OUTDOOR DINING

Marty Cowan, author of *Table To Trail*

## MENU

- Watercress & Hummus sandwiches
- Fresh fruit
- Sparkling water
- Cookie brittle

It only takes a bit of planning ahead for a big reward of picnic-style dining at one of Fort Collins beautiful natural areas. Gather friends and family and choose a day! The watercress and hummus sandwiches are portable and stay fresh and delicious until ready to enjoy. Beautiful to look at and fun to eat. A side of fresh fruit and sparking water to drink elevates the occasion. Crunchy-sweet cookie brittle for dessert is a trail favorite—fun to munch on while enjoying the conversation and company in a delightful natural area setting. A homemade meal made from plants, created by your own hands means less processed foods, less packaging and waste. Better for your body and the planet! When you are finished with your picnic, remember to leave no trace behind.

Show us your Fort Collins Natural Area trailside cuisine: [#fcnaturalareas](#)

## MENU COMPONENTS

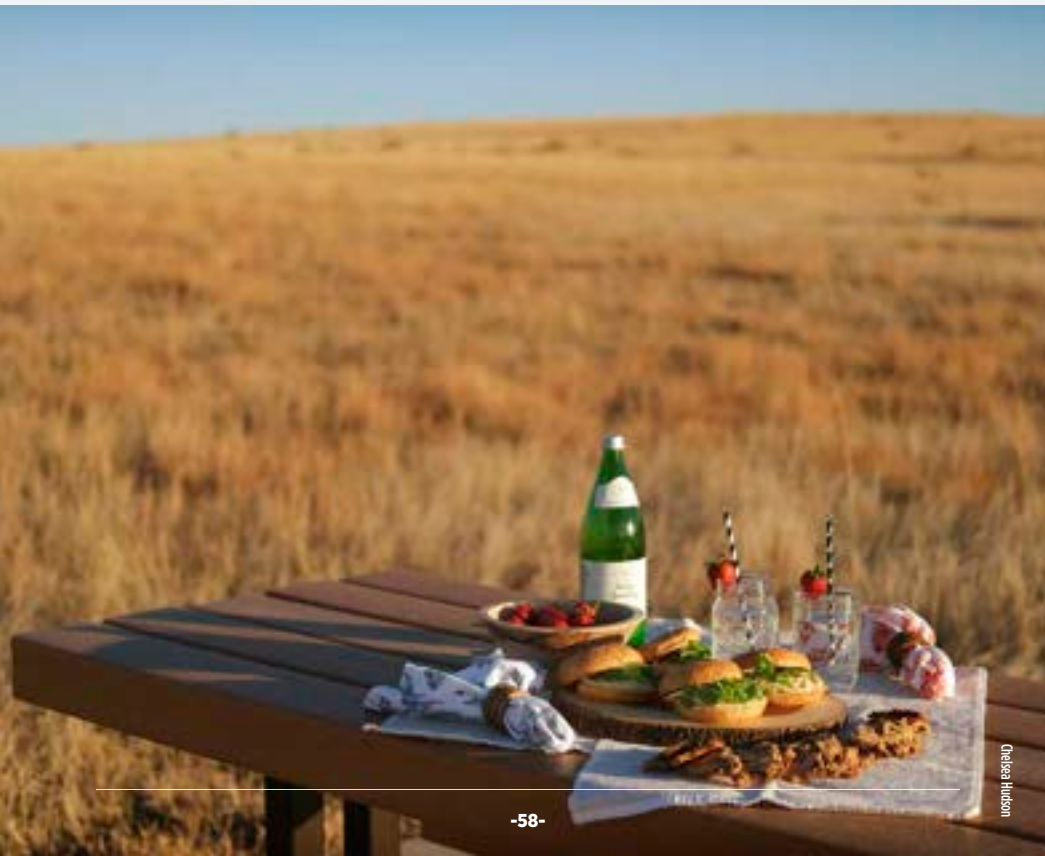
- 1 loaf of multigrain bread or buns
- Homemade hummus (recipe below)
- Watercress, rinsed and trimmed (or other lettuce variety)
- Fresh basil leaves
- Sparkling water
- Fresh strawberries
- Cookie brittle (recipe below)

## HOMEMADE HUMMUS

EQUIPMENT	DIRECTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food processor</li> <li>• Can opener</li> </ul>	Place all ingredients in a food processor with the “S” blade. Blend until the consistency is completely smooth. Smooth a generous layer of the hummus on one side of the bread. Top with watercress and fresh basil leaf or two. Place in an airtight container and refrigerate until ready to use. Store leftover hummus in the fridge for up to 3 days. It's perfect for dipping crackers, tortilla chips, and vegetables.
INGREDIENTS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 cans of chickpeas, rinsed and drained (or one can of chickpeas, one can of white beans)</li> <li>• 1/4 C. olive oil</li> <li>• 1/4 C. canola oil</li> <li>• 2 cloves garlic, minced</li> <li>• 1 TBS. tahini</li> <li>• 1 lemon, juiced</li> <li>• 1 tsp. salt</li> <li>• 1 tsp. ground cumin</li> </ul>	

## COOKIE BRITTLE

EQUIPMENT	DIRECTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Large mixing bowls (one needs to be microwave safe)</li> <li>• Whisk</li> <li>• Food processor</li> <li>• Baking sheet (12" x 17")</li> <li>• Large spatula</li> <li>• Cutting board</li> <li>• Chef's knife</li> </ul>	Preheat oven to 350°. In the microwave-safe mixing bowl, add the butter and sugar. Melt in the microwave for 30 seconds and whisk. Repeat two times or until butter is melted. Whisk and let sit for 5 minutes. Add the vanilla and whisk until completely blended. In the other mixing bowl, add the all-purpose and oat flours, salt, baking powder, cinnamon and stir until blended. Add the butter/sugar/vanilla mixture to the flour mixture and stir until blended. Fold in half the pecans. Press the dough evenly in the baking sheet (it seems like there won't be enough but keep at it). Top with the chocolate chips and remaining pecans. Press them into the dough lightly. Bake for 24 minutes, rotating the pan every 7-8 minutes. Remove from oven and cool completely. Break into uneven pieces. Store in an airtight container.
INGREDIENTS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3/4 C. plus 2 TBS. nondairy butter</li> <li>• 1 C. sugar</li> <li>• 2 tsp. vanilla</li> <li>• 1 1/2 C. all-purpose flour</li> <li>• 1 C. oats blended or 1C. oat flour</li> <li>• 1 tsp. salt</li> <li>• 1 tsp. baking powder</li> <li>• 1 tsp. cinnamon</li> <li>• 3/4 C. pecans, chopped and divided</li> <li>• 3/4 C. dark chocolate chips</li> </ul>	







## WELLNESS

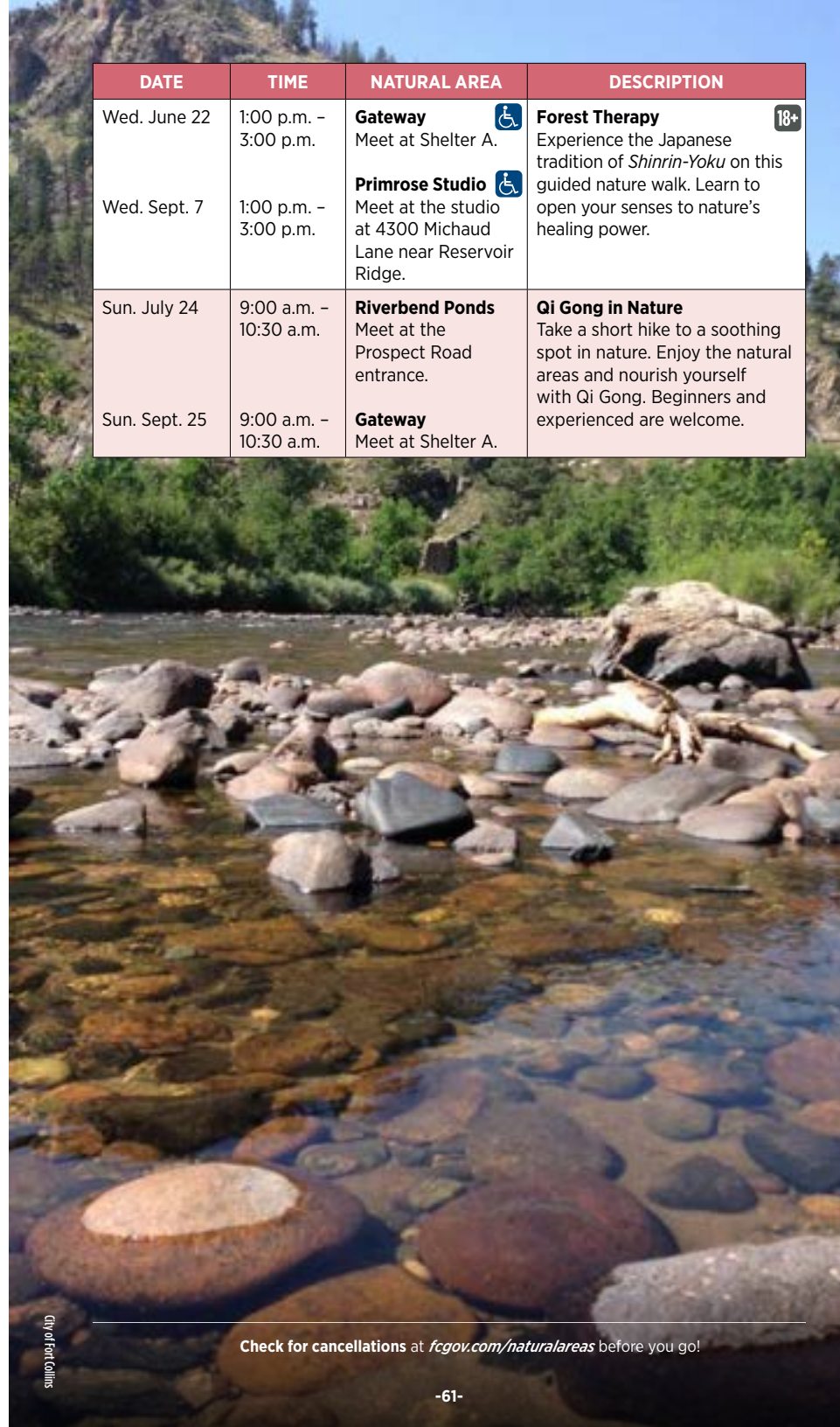
Time spent in nature has been linked to reduced stress, improved sense of well-being, and increased social connectedness. Join trained Volunteer Naturalists to explore how time spent in green spaces can positively affect both your mental and physical health. Organized groups should schedule activities at a separate time; contact [naturalareas@fcgov.com](mailto:naturalareas@fcgov.com).

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Sun., June 5	8:00 p.m. – 8:45 p.m. (sunset)	<b>McMurry</b> Meet at the Shields Street River Access.	<b>Just Be Yoga and Meditation Series</b> The asana practice of yoga is designed to prepare the body for meditation. Sunrise and sunset are beautiful transitions in nature and allow us to appreciate the world around us and inside of us. Join Reneca and Duan of InnatelyU for meditation and a light yoga practice at sunrise and sunset for all levels of yoga practitioners. We want to build community and experience nature together with you in hopes to help us all live well and healthy!
Tues., June 21	5:00 a.m. – 5:45 a.m. (solstice sunrise)	<b>McMurry</b> Meet at the Shields Street River Access.	
Sun., July 10	5:15 a.m. – 6:00 a.m. (sunrise)	<b>Red Fox Meadows</b> Meet at the kiosk off of Longworth Dr.	
Tues., July 26	7:45 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. (sunset)	<b>Red Fox Meadows</b> Meet at the kiosk off of Longworth Dr.	
Tues., Aug. 2	5:30 a.m. – 6:15 a.m. (sunrise)	<b>Fossil Creek Reservoir</b> Meet at the outdoor classroom near the parking lot.	
Sat., Aug. 13	7:30 p.m. – 8:15 p.m. (sunset)	<b>Fossil Creek Reservoir</b> Meet at the outdoor classroom near the parking lot.	
Sun. June 12	9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	<b>Red Fox Meadows</b> Meet at the trailhead kiosk off of Longworth Dr.	<b>Yoga in Nature</b> Take a short hike to a soothing spot in nature. Enjoy the natural areas and nourish yourself with yoga. Beginners and experienced are welcome. Move at your own pace. Bring a mat or towel.
Sun. Aug. 14	9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	<b>McMurry</b> Meet at the Shields Street River Access.	



Registration is required for most programs and opens 30 days prior to the activity date at [fcgov.com/register](https://fcgov.com/register) or 970-416-2815.

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Wed. June 22	1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	<b>Gateway</b> Meet at Shelter A. 	<b>Forest Therapy</b>  Experience the Japanese tradition of <i>Shinrin-Yoku</i> on this guided nature walk. Learn to open your senses to nature's healing power.
Wed. Sept. 7	1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	<b>Primrose Studio</b>  Meet at the studio at 4300 Michaud Lane near Reservoir Ridge.	
Sun. July 24	9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	<b>Riverbend Ponds</b> Meet at the Prospect Road entrance.	<b>Qi Gong in Nature</b> Take a short hike to a soothing spot in nature. Enjoy the natural areas and nourish yourself with Qi Gong. Beginners and experienced are welcome.
Sun. Sept. 25	9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	<b>Gateway</b> Meet at Shelter A.	



Check for cancellations at [fcgov.com/naturalareas](https://fcgov.com/naturalareas) before you go!





*Gateway in Winter* by Kate Mosely

## The Push

by Roxanne Griffin

The push of earth carries me deep  
into the fabric of the forest over shadows  
long cast by old growth sentinels.

Sunlight falls quietly across the understory  
blooming anew into a myriad of shapes  
beyond the bounds of mortal imaginings.

A gentle breeze sends wings fluttering  
above sparkling green meadows.  
Air fills with the passing fragrance  
of the ponderosa pine's essence.











Choruses of life-giving rivulets carry the melt  
from above across fallen branches and boulders  
at tempos ranging from largo to allegro.

I do not need to stop to listen.  
No longer am I a stranger.  
My spirit quiet as the woods.



## NATURAL DISCOVERIES

Enjoy a variety of activities and hikes. Organized groups should schedule activities at a separate time; contact [naturalareas@fcgov.com](mailto:naturalareas@fcgov.com).

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Tues. May 24	10:00 a.m. – noon	<b>North Shields Ponds</b> Park at Shields Street River Access and walk north along the road to the natural area.	<b>Sights and Sounds of North Shields Ponds</b>   Discover a special Poudre River natural area right in town. North Shields Ponds includes riverbanks and two large ponds with easy trails for exploration. Its wetland and forest habitats support a wide variety of animal life. 1-2 miles; easy.
Wed. May 25	3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	<b>Pineridge</b> Meet at the parking lot above Dixon Reservoir, off of County Road 42C/ Dixon Canyon Road.	<b>Starting Anew: Signs of Spring on the High Plains</b>   <b>10+</b> Explore springtime transformations and discuss how scientists, through the study of phenology, are gaining insights into seasonal biological events and a warming climate.
Thurs. June 2	6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	<b>Coyote Ridge</b>  Meet at the parking lot for a hike to the cabin.	<b>Raptors and Nature: Explore and Share</b>  Learn about the amazing raptors that populate Colorado's Front Range and how we can help conserve them. Observe live raptors up close with a visit from special guest, the Rocky Mountain Raptor Program. Then enjoy a short hike with a naturalist to further explore the local environment. See the registration website for more information. 1-2 miles; easy.
Thurs. July 21	6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	<b>Fossil Creek Reservoir</b>  Meet at the outdoor classroom near the parking lot.	
Sat. Sept. 3	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	<b>Soapstone Prairie</b>  Meet at the north parking lot.	
Fri. Jun 3	8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	<b>Pineridge</b> Meet at Cottonwood Glen Park in the parking lot.	<b>Parade of Prairie Bloom</b>   <b>18+</b> Explore the blooms through the months, while learning about native and non-native plants. 1.4 miles; easy-moderate.

*Continued on next page*









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## Natural Discoveries, continued

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Sat. June 4	8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	<b>Reservoir Ridge</b> Meet at the parking lot off of Overland Trail.	<b>Bobolinks are Back!</b>   Each year one of Colorado's rare birds visits Reservoir Ridge. Learn about this special animal and take a walk to listen and hopefully see them!
Wed. June 8	9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	<b>Lee Martinez Park</b>  Meet at the parking lot by the tennis courts.	<b>Nature's Morning Greeting</b>   Take an active, friendly stroll along the Poudre River. Particular attention will be given to wildlife and plants discovered along the way. Easy hike, up to 1 mile.
Tues. June 14	10:00 a.m. – noon	<b>Gateway</b> Meet at Shelter A.	<b>Sights and Sounds of Gateway</b>   Explore where the river and foothills meet. See the birds, butterflies, and plants that live here. Bring your lunch to enjoy during a short presentation after the hike. 1.5 miles; easy.
Wed. June 15	5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	<b>Location available upon registration.</b>	<b>LGBTQ+ Community Hikes</b>  Explore natural areas and their importance to our local ecosystems and our own mental health and wellness. Topics will vary. Hikes are intended to be a safe and inclusive space for members of the LGBTQ+ community to gather. Allies are welcome. Please be mindful of the safe space. 2-3 miles; easy-moderate.
Sun. Sept. 11	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.		
Sun. Oct. 2	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.		

Registration is required for most programs and opens 30 days prior to the activity date at [fcgov.com/register](https://fcgov.com/register) or 970-416-2815.








DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Wed. June 22	9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	<b>Riverbend Ponds</b> Meet at the Cairnes Dr. entrance off of Timberline Rd.	<b>Hiding in Plain Sight</b>  Have you ever been frustrated by not seeing wildlife on a hike? Use the SLOW method to increase your chances of seeing nature's creatures on your next hike. Chances are, they are hiding right under your nose! Up to 1 mile; easy.
Wed. July 13 Tues. Aug. 9 Sat. Sept. 10	9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	<b>Poudre Trail</b> Park at the tennis courts at Lee Martinez Park and follow the paved trail west until you come to a small beach on the north side.	<b>Wade the River</b>  All ages welcome! Use dip nets and collecting trays to discover what lives beneath the surface of the Cache la Poudre River. Biologists will be on hand to help identify your finds. All dip netting equipment is provided. Bring your own towels, wear closed-toe shoes that can get wet, and sun and mosquito protection. Program will occur in 30 minute sessions—register online!

Continued on next page

Check for cancellations at [fcgov.com/naturalareas](https://fcgov.com/naturalareas) before you go!



Natural Discoveries, continued

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Fri. July 29	10:00 a.m. – noon	<b>McMurry</b> Meet at the Shields St. River Access.	<b>Sights and Sounds of McMurry</b>   Discover a special Poudre River natural area right in town. We'll look for important plant and insect resources and watch for active animals. After our short walk, we'll find a shady spot to play short audio and video clips of resident wildlife. 1.5 miles; easy.
Fri. Sept. 2	8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	<b>Pineridge</b> Meet at the parking lot above Dixon Reservoir, off of Hwy 42C.	<b>Natural History of the Foothills</b> Discover fascinating ecological links in three dynamic life zones. From the prairie to the scrublands and up to the ponderosa forest tree line. 2 miles; easy.
Wed. Sept. 15	6:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.	<b>Soapstone Prairie</b> Meet at the north parking lot, approximately a one hour drive from Fort Collins.	<b>Black-Footed Ferret Exploration</b>  Learn about North America's rarest mammal. Journey to Soapstone Prairie for a presentation about black-footed ferrets. Then hike and search for this elusive resident. 1-2 miles; moderate with uneven terrain.
Fri. Oct. 21	5:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.		
Fri. Sept. 16	10:00 a.m. – noon	<b>Bobcat Ridge</b> Meet at the parking lot.	<b>Sights and Sounds of Bobcat Ridge</b>   Explore the convergence of shortgrass prairie and foothills plant communities, how they support a web of animal life, and their resilience after wildfire. We'll take a hike along the Eden Valley Spur to examine plant resources, watch for active animals, and notice the local geology and wildfire impacts. Up to 1.5 miles; easy.

Registration is required for most programs and opens 30 days prior to the activity date at [fcgov.com/register](https://fcgov.com/register) or 970-416-2815. Check for cancellations at [fcgov.com/naturalareas](https://fcgov.com/naturalareas) before you go!



Milkweed by Jan Latona



# GEOLOGY AND ECOLOGY 12+

## EXPLORATIONS

Explore with experts in geology and ecology to uncover the secrets of the oldest to youngest rocks in Fort Collins. Discover how the geology's natural forces formed the ecological landscape. Bring sun protection, lunch, water, sturdy shoes, and rain gear.

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Thurs. May 26	9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.	<b>Bobcat Ridge</b> Meet at the parking lot.	<b>From Basement to Desert</b> <span>⊕ 12+</span> Discover the oldest rocks in Larimer County, the Great Unconformity, and the red rocks shed from the ancestral Rockies. 4 miles; moderate.
Tues. June 7	8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.	<b>Coyote Ridge</b> Meet at the parking lot.	<b>Cover to Cover: Reading the Rocks of the Front Range Foothills</b> Take a walk through time and get a full look at northern foothills geology through the juxtaposition of Coyote Ridge Natural Area and Devil's Backbone Open Space. 10 miles; very strenuous.
Sat. June 25	9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	<b>Gateway</b> Meet at Shelter A.	<b>Real Colorado Roots</b> <span>18+</span> Discover Colorado's origins as pieced together by geologists using the theory of plate tectonics and evidence along the Black Powder Trail. 1.5 miles; moderate.
Sat. July 9	Noon – 3:00 p.m.	<b>Fort Collins Senior Center</b>	<b>Wild Fest!</b> This event is geared towards families of all ages. Learn about native species, how to safely interact with them and see educational presentations. Visit <a href="http://nocowildlife.org/events">nocowildlife.org/events</a> for more information.

Registration is required for most programs and opens 30 days prior to the activity date at [fcgov.com/register](http://fcgov.com/register) or 970-416-2815.

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Tues. Sept. 6	9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.	<b>Coyote Ridge</b> Meet at the parking lot.	<b>From Shore to Ocean Depths</b> <span>⊕ 12+</span> Examine the watery sediments that formed Coyote Ridge. Learn how these rocks were deposited, uplifted, eroded, and vegetated to form the present landscape. 4 miles; moderate.
Fri. Sept. 9	8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	<b>Maxwell</b> Meet at the parking lot off of County Road 42C/Dixon Canyon Road.	<b>Dakota Hogback: Geologic Hazard?</b> <span>18+</span> Observe the landscape features at Maxwell, discuss how rockslides form and the risks they pose. 4 miles; moderate.
Sat. Sept. 24	9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	<b>Soapstone Prairie</b> Meet at the north parking lot; approximately one hour drive time from Fort Collins.	<b>Walk the Gangplank</b> <span>⊕ 12+</span> Discover the geologic secrets of rocks shed from the Rocky Mountains and how these influence humans and wildlife. 5-6 miles; moderate-strenuous.
Fri. Sept. 30	8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	<b>Reservoir Ridge</b> Meet at the parking lot off of Michaud Ln.	<b>Finding the Bellvue Fault</b> <span>18+</span> Walk across a geologic fault and observe the landscape changes that it has created at this unique natural area. 3 miles; moderate.
Tues. Oct. 4	9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.	<b>Bobcat Ridge</b> Meet at the parking lot.	<b>Don't Take This for Granite</b> <span>18+</span> Trek to the high meadow at Bobcat Ridge, the only natural area where you can walk across a unique igneous rock dated from the very beginning of the Rockies. 8 miles; strenuous.

Check for cancellations at [fcgov.com/naturalareas](http://fcgov.com/naturalareas) before you go!



# PLAY IT SAFE ON THE RIVER

THIS INFORMATION COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE!



## WEAR A LIFE VEST

- ✓ No pool toys—they won't hold you up.
- ✓ Wear shoes and a helmet.
- ✓ Don't tie anything to yourself or your vessel. It could drown you.



## KNOW WHERE YOU ARE

- ✓ Take a map!
- ✓ Plan your take-out location before you get in.
- ✓ Pay attention and follow all warning signs.



## BE COURTEOUS

- ✓ Don't leave trash in or near the river. Look for trash and recycling cans in parking lots.



## SHARE THE RIVER

- ✓ Give other boaters and anglers plenty of space.



## SAFE TO GO?

- ✓ Know the weather and water conditions. High flows are unsafe.
- ✓ This water is melted snow—it's always cold.
- ✓ Avoid logs, branches, rocks, and debris. They can drag you under.
- ✓ Your risk-taking endangers the lives of rescuers.



## FLOAT SOBER, FLOAT SAFE

- ✓ Alcohol and drugs, including marijuana, impair judgment.



## IF YOU'RE IN THE WATER

- ✓ Don't stand up in the river; avoid foot entrapment.
- ✓ Get on your back with feet pointing downstream. Get your toes out of the water.
- ✓ Use your arms to paddle to shore.

## HAVE A SAFE TRIP!

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, CALL 911.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

Come see the Natural Areas staff and volunteers at these local special events!

### WILD FEST!

#### Fort Collins Senior Center

July 9, 2022, Noon – 3:00 p.m.

Bring the family and learn about native wildlife species, how we can safely interact with them, and how you can contribute to local wildlife conservation efforts.

### POUDRE RIVERFEST

#### New Belgium Brewery

August 20, 2022

Join us at New Belgium Brewery for a day of education, restoration and celebration of the Poudre River! There will be live music, exhibitor booths, interactive games, food trucks, tasty beer, and door prizes! You can also learn about river restoration projects being led by the local non-profits and sign up to volunteer.

<https://poudreriverfest.org>

### BLACK-FOOTED FERRET REDISCOVERY DAY

#### Fort Collins Museum of Discovery

September 24, 2022, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Come hear the best story in North American wildlife conservation!

### BLACK-FOOTED FERRET CLONE DAY

#### Fort Collins Museum of Discovery

December 10, 2022, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Celebrate the birthday of the first cloned ferret, Elizabeth Ann. Learn how Fort Collins played an important role in this landmark scientific achievement.



Registration is required for most programs and opens 30 days prior to the activity date at [fcgov.com/register](https://fcgov.com/register) or 970-416-2815. Check for cancellations at [fcgov.com/naturalareas](https://fcgov.com/naturalareas) before you go!





## WHAT TO BRING

Having the right things with you will help make your natural area visit a success. Use this checklist as a guideline to help you pack for a day outdoors.

- ☐ **Map and Compass, a GPS System, or Your Phone:** (not all natural areas have good reception, see the box below for more info). A natural areas map is at [fcgov.com/naturalareas](http://fcgov.com/naturalareas) and at trailhead kiosks.
- ☐ **Layered Clothes and Rain Gear:** Be prepared for sudden changes in weather.
- ☐ **Repair Kit:** This may include duct tape, multi-tool, etc.
- ☐ **Water:** Pack more than you think you'll need and drink before you feel thirsty.
- ☐ **Trail Food**
- ☐ **First Aid Kit:** Include a space blanket if you have one.
- ☐ **Flashlight**
- ☐ **Sun and Bug Protection**



Visitor safety is important to the Natural Areas Department. Bobcat Ridge, Soapstone Prairie, and Gateway natural areas have little to no cell phone coverage. Call boxes are available in case of an emergency. See locations and details below:

- **Bobcat Ridge Natural Area** usually has cell phone coverage in the higher elevations. (Call box in parking lot.)
- **Soapstone Prairie Natural Area** has more cell phone coverage towards the north parking lot. (Call box at gatehouse near entrance.)
- **Gateway Natural Area** never has coverage. (Call box before gatehouse upon entry.)

**Registration is required** for most programs and opens 30 days prior to the activity date at [fcgov.com/register](http://fcgov.com/register) or 970-416-2815.

## FIND YOUR NATURAL AREAS

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?	NATURAL AREA RECOMMENDATION
 <b>GOOD CHANCE FOR SOLITUDE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Running Deer</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Soapstone Prairie</b></li> </ul>
 <b>DESIGNED FOR KIDS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Cattail Chorus</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Hidden Clues Trail at Coyote Ridge</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Gateway's Natural Playground</b></li> </ul>
 <b>EASY FISHING ACCESS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Arapaho Bend</b> (park at the Harmony Road Transit Center)</li> <li>➤ <b>Riverbend Ponds</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Prospect Ponds</b></li> </ul>
 <b>SHADY PICNIC SPOTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>North Shields Ponds</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Reservoir Ridge</b> (at Overland Trail Rd. parking lot)</li> <li>➤ <b>Fossil Creek Reservoir</b></li> </ul>

Find more information on each natural area at [fcgov.com/naturalareas/finder](http://fcgov.com/naturalareas/finder).

## MORE ACTIVITIES

Check out these other City of Fort Collins activities:

- **Gardens on Spring Creek** — Visit the world-class botanic garden and enjoy the new butterfly house. Go to [fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens) or 970-416-2486.
- **Fort Collins Utilities** — Learn about electricity, water, stormwater and wastewater through a variety of offerings. Visit [fcgov.com/utilities](http://fcgov.com/utilities) or 970-224-6141.
- **Fort Collins Museum of Discovery** — Expand your mind. Engage your world. Hands-on explorations in science and culture await! [fcmuseum.org/programs](http://fcmuseum.org/programs)
- **Youth PlayPass** — Visit to Fort Collins attractions Memorial Day through Labor Day with the Youth PlayPass! The pass includes admission for kids 16 and under to select recreation facilities, The Gardens on Springs Creek, Fort Collins Museum of Discovery, and golf courses. Find out more at [fcgov.com/communityservices/youthplaypass](http://fcgov.com/communityservices/youthplaypass).

Check for cancellations at [fcgov.com/naturalareas](http://fcgov.com/naturalareas) before you go!



## NATURAL AREAS VISITOR CENTER

Fort Collins Museum of Discovery, 408 Mason Court, Fort Collins

Tues. – Sun., 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Check out the Natural Areas Visitor Center in the lobby of the museum. Play with the interactive map and watch live endangered black-footed ferrets. Pick up a map or other natural areas information while you're there. *No admission fee!*

## PRIMROSE STUDIO

Primrose Studio is a quiet facility in a beautiful setting in northwest Fort Collins. It is perfect for small classes and retreats.

**Hours: Mon. – Sat. 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m. Closed Sundays and holidays.**

Cost: Private groups: \$250 for up to 5 hours and \$50 per additional hour. Non-profit and government rates: \$150 for up to 5 hours and \$30 per additional hour. Three-hour minimum required. Learn more at [fcgov.com/naturalareas/primrose](http://fcgov.com/naturalareas/primrose) or call 970-416-2815.



City of Fort Collins/Jamie Robinson



# Join us.

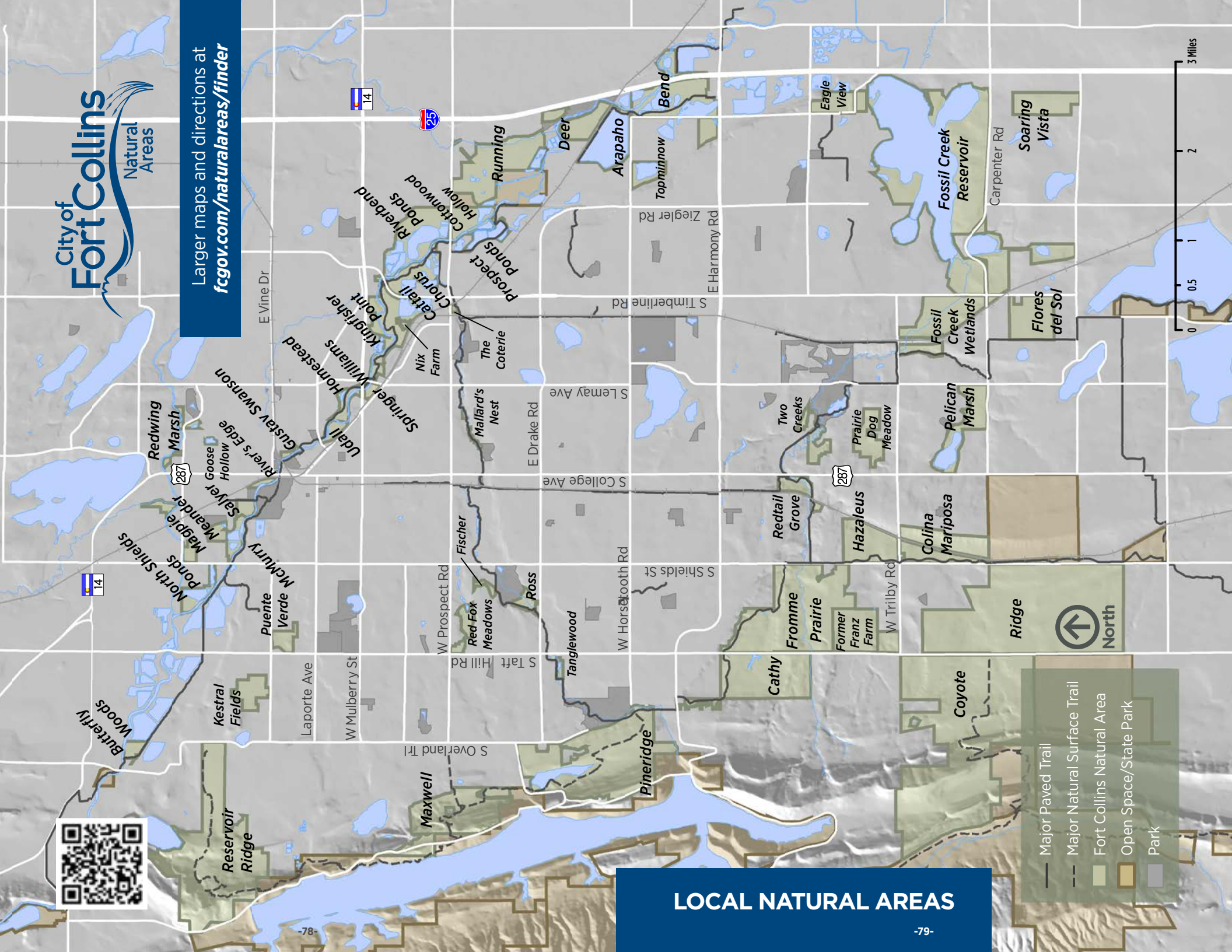
**Come be a part of  
the family!**

Work at having fun,  
in Recreation!

**[fcgov.com/recreation/join-us](http://fcgov.com/recreation/join-us)**







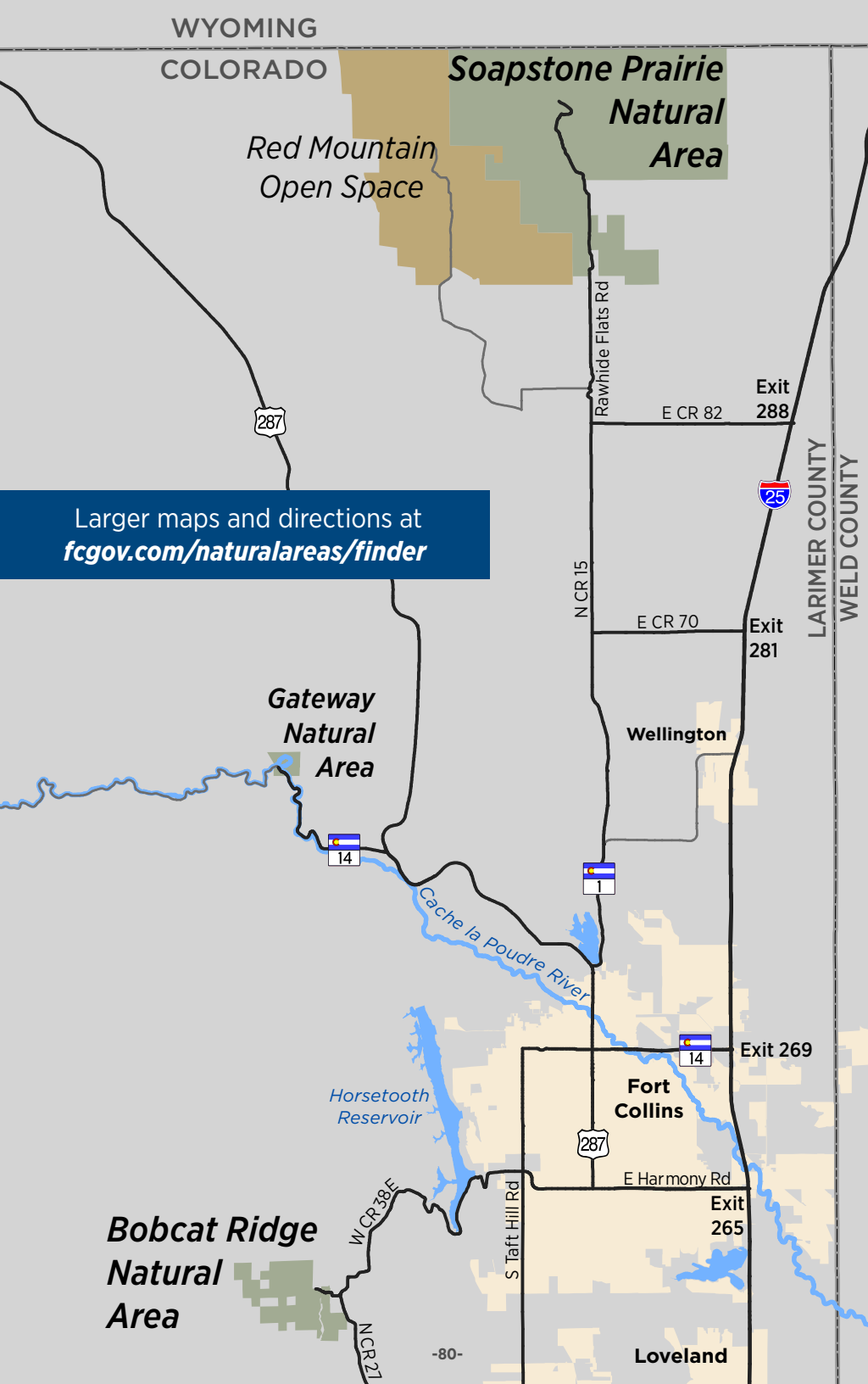
## LOCAL NATURAL AREAS

- Major Paved Trail
- - - Major Natural Surface Trail
- Fort Collins Natural Area
- Open Space/State Park
- Park



0 0.5 1 2 3 Miles





Larger maps and directions at [fcgov.com/naturalareas/finder](http://fcgov.com/naturalareas/finder)

## REGIONAL NATURAL AREAS

### Soapstone Prairie

Travel north on Highway 1 (Terry Lake Road). Turn left (toward Waverly) on County Road 15. Travel north and turn right onto Rawhide Flats Road. Go 6 miles to the entrance station. Please obey posted speed limits. Soapstone Prairie is about 25 miles from Fort Collins and takes approximately one hour drive time.

Gary Raham

### Gateway

Travel north on Highway 287. Turn left onto Highway 14 (Poudre Canyon Highway). Go 5 miles and turn right into the entrance.

City of Fort Collins

### Bobcat Ridge

From Fort Collins, take Harmony Road (County Road 38E) to Masonville. Turn left (south) onto County Road 27 (at the Masonville Mercantile). Go 1 mile to County Road 32C. Turn right and proceed 1 mile to the parking lot.

From Loveland, go west on Highway 34, located about 4.5 miles west of Wilson Avenue. Turn north on County Road 27 (at Big Thompson Elementary School) and drive 4.5 miles. Turn left on County Road 32C and go 1 mile west to the Bobcat Ridge parking lot.

Jan Lubora





**Coneflower by Shirley Kendrick**

# THANK YOU!

The activities in this booklet and the conservation and stewardship of City of Fort Collins Natural Areas are funded by Fort Collins and Larimer County voters. Your sales tax dollars conserve land and provide funds for trails, shelters, restrooms, parking lots, and educational activities. Thank you!



Natural Areas Department - **970-416-2815**  
Rangers - **970-416-2147**  
[fcgov.com/naturalareas](http://fcgov.com/naturalareas)  
[naturalareas@fcgov.com](mailto:naturalareas@fcgov.com)



Tell us what you think! Leave feedback  
at [fcgov.com/naturalareas/feedback](http://fcgov.com/naturalareas/feedback).

