

TRACKS & TRAILS

YOUR GUIDE TO FREE EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES
ON CITY OF FORT COLLINS NATURAL AREAS

JUNE–OCTOBER 2018



City of
Fort Collins
Natural
Areas

naturally yours

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Discover Your Natural Areas!

Natural areas are special places to explore and treasure. The City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Department manages more than 40 natural areas encompassing over 36,000 acres and 100 miles of trails—there’s probably a natural area near you! Check the maps on pages 46-49 or visit fcgov.com/naturalareas.

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



What the Symbols Mean



Handicapped accessible; wheelchairs welcome. Paved or hard-packed trails; distance is 1 mile or less with moderate inclines. *Auxiliary aids and services are available for persons with disabilities.* V/TDD: Dial 711 for Relay Colorado. Asistencia disponible en español a ningún costo.



Some programs are not suitable for all audiences and have age restrictions indicated by a symbol such as this. Children must be accompanied by adults on all programs.





Generation Wild: 100 things to do before you're 12. Attend these programs and check them off! See page 25 and visit generationwild.com for more details.

Registration

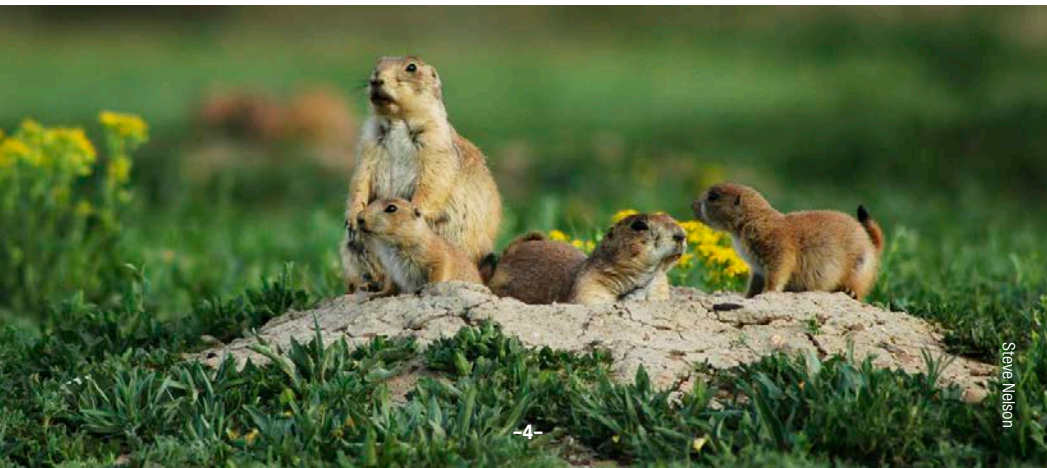
Registration is required for all programs. Go to fcgov.com/register. Set up your account in Engage with your name, phone number, and email. By registering, you will receive reminders and updates. For assistance, call 970-416-2815 or email naturalareas@fcgov.com.

Cancellations

Everything you need to know about an activity can be found in four places:

- fcgov.com/register for descriptions and registrations
- fcgov.com/naturalareas for cancellations and updates
-  [FCNaturalAreas](#) for news and information
-  [@FCNaturalAreas](#) for cancellations, updates, and trail conditions

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



Program Leaders

Master Naturalists are highly trained volunteer educators who lead most of the *Tracks & Trails* activities. 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 Master Naturalist-led program.

Programs for Groups

Groups of six or more are required to schedule their activities at a separate time. To request an activity for your group, visit www.fcgov.com/naturalareas/naturalists. You will be directed to *Engage* to set up an account before filling out the program request form. If you have questions, please contact Alex, Community Educator, at 970-416-2043 or amchenry@fcgov.com. At least two weeks advance notice is required. All activities are free.

Groups of 15 or more visiting a natural area without a Master Naturalist must apply for a permit in advance, at fcgov.com/naturalareas/permits.php. Permits are free and help ensure there are no conflicts on the day you plan to visit.

Dogs

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

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

Registration is required for all programs. Register at fcgov.com/register or call 970-416-2815. **Check for cancellations** at fcgov.com/naturalareas before you go!



Rich Ernst

JUNE NATURAL AREA ACTIVITIES

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2 National Trails Day, p.16 Poudre River Fest, p.16 Bugs, Blooms and Nature Captured in a Naturalist's Notebook, p.35
3	4	5 Tots on the Trail, p.21 Archaeological Dig Tour, p.32	6	7 Nature Nuggets: It's a Bug's Life, p.22	8 Astronomy at Bobcat Ridge, p.28	9 Discover the Bobolinks, p.40 Poudre River Nature Walk, p.37 Wildflowers of Soapstone Prairie, p.37 Rustic Women of Soapstone Prairie, p.32
10	11 Pollinator Week, p.19	12	13	14	15	16 Nix Farm Native Plant Garden Tour, p.37 River Bike Tour, p.37 Behind the Scenes Birding, p.40
17	18 From Shore to Ocean Depths, p.39 Tots on the Trail, p.21	19	20	21 Nature Nuggets: Bird Beak Buffet, p.23 Campfire at Nix Farm, p.27	22 Skygazing at Fossil Creek Reservoir, p.29	23 Introduction to Nature Journaling, p.35 Hike through the Ages, p.33 Poudre River Nature Walk, p.37
24	25	26	27	28 Junior Naturalists: A Day in the Life of Your Ice-Age Neighbor, p.24	29	30 Natural History of Pineridge, p.37

Registration is required for all programs. Register at fsgov.com/register or call 970-416-2815.
Check for cancellations at fsgov.com/naturalareas before you go!



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JULY NATURAL AREA ACTIVITIES

Registration is required for all programs. Register at fsgov.com/register or call 970-416-2815. Check for cancellations at fsgov.com/naturalareas before you go!

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7 Wildflowers of Soapstone Prairie, p.37 Astronomy at Bobcat Ridge, p.28
8	9	10 Tots on the Trail, p.21	11	12 Junior Naturalists: From Source to Tap, p.24 Artist's Day in the Field, p.35	13 Sights and Sounds of Gateway Natural Area, p.38	14 Story of the American Bison, p.41 Campfire at the Cabin, p.27
15	16	17	18	19 Nature Nuggets: Cattail Curiosities, p.23 Grasslands: Foundations of Global Biological Sustainability, p.31	20	21 Soapstone Treasures: The Bison-Archaeology Connection, p.33 A Thousand Years of History on the Poudre River, p.33 Skygazing at Fossil Creek Reservoir, p.29 NoCo Urban Homestead Tour, p.19
22	23	24 Tots on the Trail, p.21	25	26 Junior Naturalists: Writers in the Wild, p.24 Urban Nature Walk, p.19	27 The Lay of the Land, p.35	28 A Day in the Life of Your Ice-Age Neighbor, p.33 Campfire at Nix Farm, p.27
29	30	31				



Rich Ernst

AUGUST NATURAL AREA ACTIVITIES

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2 Nature Nuggets: Marvelous Monarchs p.23	3	4 Natural History of Pineridge, p.37 Wade the River, p.17 Rustic Women of Soapstone Prairie, p.32
5	6 Tots on the Trail, p.21	7	8	9 Junior Naturalists: Pioneer Days, p.24	10 Campfire at the Cabin, p.27	11 Astronomy at Bobcat Ridge, p.28
12	13	14	15	16 Nature Nuggets: Leave it to Beaver, p.23 Homesteading at Soapstone Prairie, p.31 Urban Nature Walk, p.19	17 Skygazing at Fossil Creek Reservoir, p.29	18 Soapstone Treasures: The Bison-Archaeology Connection, p.33 A Thousand Years of History on the Poudre River, p.33
19	20	21	22 Campfire at Nix Farm, p.27	23	24	25 River Bike Tour, p.37 Ecosystem Wonders, p.35 Walk the Gangplank, p.39
26 Weird Wild Weather, p.38 Full Moon Walk, p.26	27	28	29	30	31	

Registration is required for all programs. Register at fsgov.com/register or call 970-416-2815.
Check for cancellations at fsgov.com/naturalareas before you go!



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SEPTEMBER NATURAL AREA ACTIVITIES

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 Naturalists at Soapstone Prairie, p.17
2	3	4	5 Prairie Dogs, Plague, and Black-Footed Ferrets, p.31	6	7	8 Smithsonian at Lindenmeier, p.33
9	10	11 Black-Footed Ferret Exploration, p.41	12	13	14 Astronomy at Bobcat Ridge, p.28	15 Nature's Harvest Fest, p.17 Loren Eiseley: Scientist, Poet and Time Traveler, p.33 Skygazing at Fossil Creek Reservoir, p.29
16	17	18	19 Ancient People of Fossil Creek, p.31	20	21	22 Hike through the Ages, p.33
23 Nix Farm Native Plant Garden Tour, p.37	24 Full Moon Walk, p.26	25	26 Natural Areas Welcome Hike, p.38	27	28 Campfire at the Cabin, p.27	29 National Public Lands Day, p.17
30						

Registration is required for all programs. Register at fsgov.com/register or call 970-416-2815. Check for cancellations at fsgov.com/naturalareas before you go!



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OCTOBER NATURAL AREA ACTIVITIES

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3 Black-Footed Ferret Exploration, p.41	4	5 Astronomy at Soapstone Prairie, p.28	6
7	8 Exotic Plants in Your Natural Areas, p.31	9	10	11 Natural Areas Welcome Hike, p.38	12 Astronomy at Bobcat Ridge, p.28	13
14	15	16	17	18	19 Skygazing at Fossil Creek Reservoir, p.29	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	Make a Difference Week, p.17					
			Full Moon Walk, p.26		Campfire at Nix Farm, p.27	
28	29	30	31			

Registration is required for all programs. Register at fsgov.com/register or call 970-416-2815.
Check for cancellations at fsgov.com/naturalareas before you go!



SPECIAL EVENTS IN 2018

Poudre River Fest

Sat. June 2, Noon – 7:00 p.m.

Poudre River “Oxbow” adjacent to New Belgium Brewery, 500 Linden Street

Enjoy a free family-friendly festival that celebrates the Cache la Poudre River with live music, food, exhibitors, and activities. Come and explore the role of the river as habitat for wildlife, recreation for us, and a source of clean drinking water. Visit www.poudreriverfest.org.

Wade the River

Sat. Aug. 4, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Lee Martinez Park, 600 North Sherwood St.

Wade the river with dip nets and collecting trays to discover what lives beneath the surface of the Cache la Poudre River. Biologists will help identify your finds. Fish, insects, larvae, algae, and more are easily seen with field microscopes. All equipment is provided. Bring your own towels, wear closed-toe shoes that can get wet, and sun and mosquito protection. No registration required but you can get a reminder and updates by signing up at fcgov.com/register. *The river is dynamic and so are we—we may have to reschedule or cancel for safety reasons.*

Registration is required for all programs. Register at fcgov.com/register or call 970-416-2815. Check for cancellations at fcgov.com/naturalareas before you go!

Naturalists at Soapstone Prairie

Sat. Sept. 1, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Soapstone Prairie Natural Area

Enjoy a day of family-friendly learning about the wonders of Soapstone Prairie. Stop by anytime. Naturalists will be stationed at various spots of interest around the property. Visit the Bison Overlook, Lindenmeier archaeological site, and more! Information and a detailed schedule are available in August at fcgov.com/register. Free, no registration required.

Nature’s Harvest Fest

Sat. Sept. 15, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

The Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave.

Celebrate local nature and agriculture! You are invited to a free day of fun and learning for the whole family that includes live animals, interactive activities, live music, food, vendors, presentations, giveaways, and more! Check fcgov.com/gardens for updates.

National Public Lands Day

Sat. Sept. 29

Save the date for a family-friendly project that celebrates giving back to the natural areas you love! Project registration, details, and description will be available in late summer. All volunteers under the age of 16 must be with an adult 18+. Free, **registration is required** at fcgov.com/register.

Make a Difference Week

Oct. 22 – 26

Pitch in and make a difference! Various family-friendly stewardship projects will be available throughout the week. Project registration, details, and description will be available in early fall. All volunteers under the age of 16 must be with an adult 18+. Free, **registration is required** at fcgov.com/register.





Pollinator Week

June 11 – 17

Pollinators take over social media! [f FCNaturalAreas](#) [t FCNaturalAreas](#)

NoCo Urban Homestead Tour

July 21

Want to learn about bees, raising chickens, and all things about edible gardening? Get inspired by the 5th annual self-guided NoCo Urban Homestead Tour. *Nature in the City* is a sponsor. Tickets available June 10 (\$20). To learn more and register, visit fcgov.com/gardens.

Urban Nature Walks ¹⁸⁺

Thurs. July 26, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Thurs. Aug. 16, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Learn about the best places to take a green break close to work or home. Enjoy nature each day by incorporating the knowledge provided by *Nature in the City*. Meet in Old Town Fort Collins and stroll as a group on paved trails and through gardens and green spaces. To learn more and register (\$10), visit fcgov.com/recreator.

Nature in the City (NIC)

The Nature in the City program works with neighborhoods across Fort Collins to improve access to nature and enhance habitat for wildlife.



From Spark to Sprout! NIC Community Project Empowerment Series

Times and locations to be determined.

Plan and build a new connection to nature in your neighborhood with support from NIC. We'll help you turn your idea into a solid application for NIC grant funding and project partnership in 2019. Learn about available resources, review previous projects, and become empowered to be a neighborhood advocate in your community. We will cover a different topic each session and provide time for one-on-one consultations. Childcare and interpreters available upon request. **Registration required**, visit fcgov.com/natureinthecity for more details.

Registration is required for all programs. Register at fcgov.com/register or call 970-416-2815. Check for cancellations at fcgov.com/naturalareas before you go!





BUDDING YOUNG NATURALISTS

These activities are designed for families with young children. Organized groups must schedule programs at a separate time; contact Alex, Community Educator at 970-416-2043 or amchenry@fcgov.com.


Registration is required for all programs. Register at fcgov.com/register or call 970-416-2815.



Tots on the Trail – Ages 3 and under

9:30 – 11:00 a.m.

Head off on adventure—toddler style! Bring your child (3 years old and under), snacks, and stroller or backpack to explore nature from the ground up. Programs with the accessible symbol are stroller-friendly.

DATE	NATURAL AREA
Tues. June 5	Ross  Meet at the playground at Rolland Moore Park.
Tues. June 19	Magpie Meander Meet at Soft Gold Park, 520 Hickory St.
Tues. July 10	Fossil Creek Reservoir  Meet at the picnic shelter near the parking lot.
Tues. July 24	Riverbend Ponds Meet at the parking lot off Timberline and Cairnes Dr.
Tues. Aug. 7	Prospect Ponds  Meet at the south parking lot.

Check for cancellations at fcgov.com/naturalareas before you go!



City of Fort Collins

Nature Nuggets – Ages 4-7

9:30 a.m. – noon

Bring your little ones (ages 4-7) to learn about nature through stories, activities, nature walks, and hands-on projects. Choose your adventure! Rotate through four different stations; each repeats every half hour. **Parents/guardians must be present at all times.** Siblings are welcome but the activities will be geared towards the stated age group. Organized groups must schedule programs at a separate time; contact Alex, Community Educator at 970-416-2043 or amchenry@fcgov.com.

DATE	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Thurs. June 7	Redwing Marsh Meet at Greenbriar Park, 730 E Willox Ln.	It's a Bug's Life Insects live very differently than we do! Discover what life is like from their perspective.
Thurs. June 21	Fossil Creek Reservoir Meet at the picnic shelter near the parking lot.	Bird Beak Buffet Are birds picky eaters? Learn about how and what different birds eat.
Thurs. July 19	North Shields Ponds Meet at the parking lot. Additional parking at Shields Street River Access.	Cattail Curiosities Investigate the plants and animals that call a pond home!
Thurs. Aug. 2	Ross Meet at the Rolland Moore Park playground.	Marvelous Monarchs Discover these special butterflies that visit Fort Collins every summer.
Thurs. Aug. 16	McMurry Meet at Soft Gold Park, 520 Hickory St.	Leave it to Beaver Discover the benefits of beavers and how they create homes for other wildlife.

Registration is required for all programs. Register at fcgov.com/register or call 970-416-2815.
Check for cancellations at fcgov.com/naturalareas before you go!



City of Fort Collins



City of Fort Collins



Natural Areas favorite #100THINGSTODO BEFORE YOU'RE 12

Junior Naturalists – Ages 8–12

Become a Junior Naturalist! Explore, learn, and grow your stewardship skills. Attend all programs and receive Junior Naturalist Certification. One program may be substituted by attending another program in this booklet. **Parents/guardians must be present at all times.** Siblings are welcome but the activities will be geared towards the stated age group. Organized groups must schedule programs at a separate time; contact Alex, Community Educator at 970-416-2043 or amchenry@fcgov.com.

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Thurs. June 14	9:00 – 11:00 a.m.	Fossil Creek Reservoir Meet at the picnic shelter near the parking lot.	Exploring through Journaling Start your very own nature journal to document your adventures throughout the summer. Journals will be provided.
Thurs. June 28	10:00 a.m. – noon	Soapstone Prairie Meet at the north parking lot; approximately one-hour drive time from Fort Collins.	A Day in the Life of Your Ice-Age Neighbor Jump back in time and learn what it was like to live on the prairie 10,000 years ago.
Thurs. July 12	9:30 – 11:00 a.m.	Gateway Meet at the picnic shelters.	From Source to Tap Follow the journey of a drop of water from its source to your home.
Thurs. July 26	9:00 – 11:00 a.m.	North Shields Ponds Meet at the parking lot.	Writers in the Wild Explore the outdoors in a new way and discover how nature can inspire writing and creativity.
Thurs. Aug. 9	9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Bobcat Ridge Meet at the parking lot.	Pioneer Days Experience a day in the life of pioneer children. Bring your lunch to enjoy at the pioneer cabin. 3.5 miles; easy.

Registration is required for all programs. Register at fcgov.com/register or call 970-416-2815. **Check for cancellations** at fcgov.com/naturalareas before you go!

☐ **NO. 1** Skip rocks.

☐ **NO. 2** Spot a shooting star.

☐ **NO. 5** Roll down a hill.

☐ **NO. 6** Go on a picnic.

☐ **NO. 8** See what's hiding under a rock.

☐ **NO. 9** Walk on a log.

☐ **NO. 11** Imitate a bird's call.

☐ **NO. 12** Dance in the rain.

☐ **NO. 13** Dig up worms.

☐ **NO. 15** Climb a tree.

☐ **NO. 19** Roast marshmallows.

☐ **NO. 20** Find the Big Dipper.

☐ **NO. 21** Jump into a pile of leaves.

☐ **NO. 23** Splash in puddles.

☐ **NO. 29** Wade in a stream.

☐ **NO. 34** Read a book under a tree.

☐ **NO. 39** Try to catch your shadow.

☐ **NO. 42** Make a crayon leaf rubbing.

☐ **NO. 45** Tell ghost stories around the campfire.

☐ **NO. 48** Hear your own echo.

☐ **NO. 49** Find shapes in the clouds.

☐ **NO. 51** Chase a butterfly.

☐ **NO. 57** Make a fairy garden.

☐ **NO. 59** Make mud pies.

☐ **NO. 61** Hear an elk bugle in the wild.

☐ **NO. 64** Find a secret hiding place.

☐ **NO. 65** Go bird watching.

☐ **NO. 70** See who can jump the farthest.

☐ **NO. 88** Identify animals by their tracks.

☐ **NO. 96** Watch a caterpillar turn into a butterfly.

Facebook and Instagram: @GenerationWildColorado

Tag Us: #100ThingsToDo

To learn more and see the complete list, visit generationwild.com.



Kevin Clarke

NATURAL AREAS AFTER DARK

Explore and enjoy your natural areas after the sun goes down! Organized groups should schedule programs at a separate time; contact Alex, Community Educator at 970-416-2043 or amchenry@fcgov.com.

Full Moon Night Walks **16+**

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

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA
Sun. Aug. 26	7:30 – 9:30 p.m.	Bobcat Ridge
Mon. Sept. 24	7:00 – 9:00 p.m.	Bobcat Ridge
Wed. Oct. 24	6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Bobcat Ridge





Registration is required for all programs. Register at fcgov.com/register or call 970-416-2815. Check for cancellations at fcgov.com/naturalareas before you go!

Campfire Programs

Spend a cozy evening by the campfire, complete with stories and s'mores! These programs are 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. Meet your naturalist guide at the cabin and enjoy a campfire and stories on the deck. 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. June 15	8:00 – 9:30 p.m.	Coyote Ridge Cabin	Adapted for Darkness Discover how birds, bats, and other animals have adapted to thrive in the dark.
Thurs. June 21	8:00 – 9:30 p.m.	Nix Farm 	
Sat. July 14	8:00 – 9:30 p.m.	Coyote Ridge Cabin	Bird Brains Crows, ravens, and magpies are all intelligent birds. Learn how to tell them apart and the role they play in Native American stories and folklore.
Sat. July 28	8:00 – 9:30 p.m.	Nix Farm 	
Fri. Aug. 10	7:30 – 9:00 p.m.	Coyote Ridge Cabin	Predators on the Prowl Many animals are nocturnal. Learn what predators are on the prowl while you sleep.
Wed. Aug. 22	7:30 – 9:00 p.m.	Nix Farm 	
Fri. Sept. 28	7:00 – 8:30 p.m.	Coyote Ridge Cabin	Starlight Storytelling Campfire stories are a powerful tradition passed down through generations. Explore how to share your story.
Fri. Oct. 26	6:30 – 8:00 p.m.	Nix Farm 	



City of Fort Collins

Astronomy

Enjoy a brief, family-friendly astronomy program followed by skygazing. Volunteers from the Northern Colorado Astronomical Society provide telescopes for your viewing pleasure. Dress warmly, bring water, and a blanket or chair to sit on in the parking lot. The 30-minute presentations at Bobcat Ridge are at the picnic shelter, a 0.25 mile-walk, at the time listed. **Please arrive on time! The gate closes shortly after start times and parking is not allowed on the road outside the gate.**

DATE	NATURAL AREA	TIME	DESCRIPTION
Fri. June 8	Bobcat Ridge	8:30 – 10:30 p.m.	Astronomy Bright and Dark Dark skies make it easy to find bright stars and planets and are important for wildlife. Discover ways wildlife depend on starlight for migration, navigation, and more.
Sat. July 7	Bobcat Ridge	8:30 – 10:30 p.m.	Planet Possibilities Planets are up there, but, where are they? Learn the relationship between the Earth, the sun, and the moving planets.
Sat. Aug. 11	Bobcat Ridge	8:30 – 10:30 p.m.	The Persiads Are Here! Discover where meteors come from and learn about the upcoming meteor shower.
Fri. Sept. 14	Bobcat Ridge	7:30 – 10:00 p.m.	Telescopes and Astronomy Learn about different types of telescopes and how they can help you explore the night sky.
Fri. Oct. 5	Soapstone Prairie Meet at the south parking lot; approximately one-hour drive time from Fort Collins.	6:30 – 11:00 p.m.	Delightful Darkness Darkness benefits humans and wildlife. Learn how the City of Fort Collins is working to protect our night skies.
Fri. Oct. 12	Bobcat Ridge	6:30 – 9:00 p.m.	The Moon Dance Learn about the movement of the moon and what determines its phases.



Skygazing at Fossil Creek Reservoir

Volunteers from the Northern Colorado Astronomical Society provide telescopes for your viewing pleasure and share their knowledge about stars, planets, galaxies, and more. Dress warmly and bring a blanket or chair to sit on. Meet in the parking lot. No program provided unless noted.

DATE	TIME
Fri. June 22	9:00 – 11:00 p.m.
Sat. July 21	9:00 – 11:00 p.m.
Fri. Aug. 17	8:00 – 10:30 p.m. *Special program
Sat. Sept. 15	8:00 – 10:00 p.m.
Fri. Oct. 19	7:30 – 9:30 p.m.
Sat. Nov. 17	7:30 – 9:30 p.m.
Fri. Dec. 14	7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

*Learn about the speed of light through an interactive model of our solar system! The program will run 8:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. followed by skygazing.



SCIENCE BEHIND THE SCENERY

These informative talks are designed for adults to learn more about research and science related to natural areas. Parking is limited—please carpool, bike, or walk. Bring a snack if you like.

DATE	TIME	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
Thurs. July 19	7:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Nix Farm 1745 Hoffman Mill Rd.	Grasslands: Foundations of Global Biological Sustainability Ray Aberle, Natural Resources Faculty at Front Range Community College, will examine the role that grasslands play in sustaining biological richness, their essential contributions to planetary health, and their central role in our natural areas.
Thurs. Aug. 16	7:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Harmony Library Community Room 4616 S Shields St.	Homesteading at Soapstone Prairie Learn about late 19 th and early 20 th century homesteading from Master Naturalist Brian Carroll.
Wed. Sept. 5	7:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Nix Farm 1745 Hoffman Mill Rd.	Prairie Dogs, Plague, and Black-Footed Ferrets Learn about these dynamic relationships occurring at Soapstone Prairie and hear updates on the ferret population from Natural Areas Land and Water Manager, Daylan Figgs.
Wed. Sept. 19	7:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Old Town Library Community Room 1 201 Peterson St.	Ancient People of Fossil Creek Discover what life was like for the ancient inhabitants of the plains. Anthropologist Dr. Jason LaBelle uncovered artifacts from over 1,200 years ago at Fossil Creek Wetlands. Hear updates from the past three years of research.
Tues. Oct. 9	7:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Nix Farm 1745 Hoffman Mill Rd.	Exotic Plants in Your Natural Areas Learn about the noxious weeds in the Natural Areas, what makes them so successful, and how you can help control the spread of these invasive plants with Crystal Strouse, Natural Areas Botanist.

Registration is required for all programs. Register at fcgov.com/register or call 970-416-2815.
Check for cancellations at fcgov.com/naturalareas before you go!



City of Fort Collins

VOICES OF THE PAST

From ancient to modern times, northern Colorado has been a great place to live. Discover people of the past that have lived in and shaped our community. Organized groups must schedule programs at a separate time; contact Alex, Community Educator at 970-416-2043 or amchenry@fcgov.com. Please bring water, food, sun protection, and any other comforts you might need.

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Tues. June 5 Wed. June 13	9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Location provided at time of registration.	Archaeological Dig Site Tours Witness Anthropologist Dr. Jason LaBelle and his team of CSU students conduct an archaeological dig. Discover what life may have been like for the ancient inhabitants of the plains. 1 mile; off-trail, moderate. 16+
Sat. June 9 Sat. Aug. 4	1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Soapstone Prairie Meet at the north parking lot; approximately one-hour drive time from Fort Collins.	Rustic Women of Soapstone Prairie Discover three pioneer women and get a glimpse of early life on the prairie. 0.25 miles; easy.

Continued on next page

Registration is required for all programs. Register at fcgov.com/register or call 970-416-2815.

Voices of the Past, continued

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Sat. June 23 Sat. Sept. 22	9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Soapstone Prairie Meet at the south parking lot; approximately one-hour drive time from Fort Collins.	Hike through the Ages 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. 12+
Sat. July 21 Sat. Aug. 18	9:00 – 11:00 a.m.	Soapstone Prairie Meet at the south parking lot shelter; approximately one-hour drive time from Fort Collins.	Soapstone Treasures: The Bison-Archaeology Connection! Learn about the acquisition of Soapstone Prairie, the history of the American bison, and the treasures uncovered at the Lindenmeier archaeological site. 16+
Sat. July 21 Sat. Aug. 18	9:30 – 11:00 a.m.	Heritage Park Meet behind the Northside Aztlan Community Center.	A Thousand Years of History on the Poudre River Consider the origins of the Cache la Poudre River and explore both the history and future of people along the river. 1-2 miles; easy.
Sat. July 28	10:00 a.m. – noon	Soapstone Prairie Meet at the north parking lot; approximately one-hour drive time from Fort Collins.	A Day in the Life of Your Ice-Age Neighbor Discover what it was like to live 10,000 years ago and how people hunted, cooperated, and thrived. 0.5 miles; easy. 9+
Sat. Sept. 8	10:00 a.m. – noon	Soapstone Prairie Meet at the north parking lot; approximately one-hour drive time from Fort Collins.	Smithsonian at Lindenmeier Travel back in time to learn how Paleoindians survived the high plains and how Smithsonian Institution archaeologists uncovered their story in the 1930s. 0.25 miles; easy. 12+
Sat. Sept. 15	10:00 a.m. – noon	Soapstone Prairie Meet at the north parking lot; approximately one-hour drive time from Fort Collins.	Loren Eiseley: Scientist, Poet, and Time Traveler Experience the amazing prose and poetry of naturalist Loren Eiseley and learn about his critical archaeological discovery at the Lindenmeier site. 0.5 miles; easy. 12+

Check for cancellations at fcgov.com/naturalareas before you go!



Garry Stricklin

CREATIVE BY NATURE

Set your creative side free and experience nature in a new way. No art experience required! Children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Bring drinking water, a snack if you like, and something to sit on (a stool, jacket, pad, etc.). Feel free to bring your own art supplies or borrow ours. Organized groups must schedule programs at a separate time; contact Alex, Community Educator at 970-416-2043 or amchenry@fcgov.com.

Continued on next page

Registration is required for all programs. Register at fcgov.com/register or call 970-416-2815. **Check for cancellations** at fcgov.com/naturalareas before you go!

Creative by Nature, continued

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Sat. June 2	9:00 a.m. – noon	Reservoir Ridge Meet at Primrose Studio.	Bugs, Blooms, and Nature Captured in a Naturalist's Notebook Learn how to use art as a tool for discovering and capturing the details of plants, insects, and other creatures. 1 mile; easy. 9+
Sat. June 23	9:00 – 11:00 a.m.	Reservoir Ridge Meet at Primrose Studio.	Introduction to Nature Journaling Discover the art materials easiest to use in nature, types of journals, and journaling techniques. Participate in studio and outdoor nature journaling. 0.5 mile; easy. 9+
Thurs. July 12	9:00 a.m. – noon	Soapstone Prairie Meet at the north parking lot; approximately one-hour drive time from Fort Collins.	Artist's Day in the Field Treat yourself to a day in the field to learn about Soapstone Prairie's past and be inspired by spectacular prairie views. 0.5 miles; easy. 16+
Fri. July 27	6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Fossil Creek Reservoir Meet at the parking lot.	The Lay of the Land Observe the differences in how the artist's eye sees nature up close versus far away. Learn techniques to draw and paint that which inspires you most. 0.1 mile; easy. 9+
Sat. Aug. 25	9:00 – 11:00 a.m.	Riverbend Ponds Meet at the parking lot off of Prospect Rd.	Ecosystem Wonders This diverse ecosystem provides riparian forests, ponds, river views, diverse grasses, and many birds. Journal through drawing and writing what delights your eyes and heart. 0.5 miles; easy. 9+

Check for cancellations at fcgov.com/naturalareas before you go!



NATURAL DISCOVERIES

Enjoy a variety of programs and hikes with trained naturalists. Organized groups must schedule programs at a separate time; contact Alex, Community Educator at 970-416-2043 or amchenry@fcgov.com. Be prepared! Bring water, food, sun protection, appropriate footwear, and any other comforts you might need. Unprepared individuals may be denied participation for their safety.

Continued on next page

Registration is required for all programs. Register at fcgov.com/register or call 970-416-2815.

Natural Discoveries, continued



DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Sat. June 9 Sat. July 7	10:00 a.m. – noon	Soapstone Prairie Meet at the north parking lot; approximately one-hour drive time from Fort Collins.	Wildflowers of Soapstone Prairie Take a walk to see what is in bloom and learn about native plants. 1-2 miles; easy. 12+
Sat. June 9 Sat. June 23	9:30 – 11:00 a.m.	Lee Martinez Park Meet at the parking lot near the tennis courts.	Poudre River Nature Walk Enjoy a leisurely walk on the Poudre Trail. Explore the dance between the river and the land while observing animal and plant life. 1-2 miles; easy.
Sat. June 16 Sun. Sept. 23	9:00 – 10:30 a.m.	Nix Farm 1745 Hoffman Mill Rd.	Nix Farm Native Plant Garden Tour Learn why native plants are important for birds, pollinators, and other wildlife. Explore the Natural Areas Department's native plant garden and come away with wildflower seeds and ideas for using native plants in your garden.
Sat. June 16 Sat. Aug. 25	10:00 a.m.	Lee Martinez Park Meet at the parking lot; bike route will be both paved and dirt trails along the Poudre River.	River Bike Tours For beginner and advanced riders alike! Bring your bike and helmet. Bike through two natural areas while learning fascinating information about the river corridor and how it supports humans, wildlife, and plants. 2 or 10 mile option available.
Sat. June 30 Sat. Aug. 4	9:00 – 11:30 a.m.	Pineridge Meet at the west parking lot. Do not park at Maxwell for this program.	Natural History of Pineridge Explore the natural history along the lower tree line. Learn about the ecological connections between the prairie, shrublands, and ponderosa pine forests. 1 mile; easy.

Continued on next page

Check for cancellations at fcgov.com/naturalareas before you go!



Natural Discoveries, continued

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Fri. July 13	10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Gateway Meet at the picnic shelters.	Sights and Sounds of Gateway Natural Area Explore the convergence of riparian and foothills plant communities and how these support a web of animal life. Bring your lunch to enjoy during a short presentation after the hike. 1.5 miles; easy.
Sun. Aug. 26	2:00 – 4:00 p.m.	Fossil Creek Reservoir  Meet at the parking lot.	Weird Wild Weather Learn about our unique weather patterns and how weather and climate affect humans and animals alike. 0.25 miles; easy. 
Wed. Sept. 26	10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Coyote Ridge Meet at the parking lot.	Natural Areas Welcome Hikes New and old residents welcome! Pack a lunch and discover the wonders of the natural areas by exploring neighborhood natural areas with staff who can answer questions and give recommendations for future hikes.
Thurs. Oct. 11	10:30 a.m. – noon p.m.	Red Fox Meadows Meet at the parking lot off Taft Hill.	

Registration is required for all programs. Register at fcgov.com/register or call 970-416-2815. Check for cancellations at fcgov.com/naturalareas before you go!

Geology and Ecology Explorations

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

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Tues. May 15	9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Bobcat Ridge Meet at the parking lot.	From Basement to Desert Discover the oldest rocks in Larimer County, the Great Unconformity, and the red rocks shed from the Ancestral Rockies. 4 miles; moderate.
Tues. June 19	9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Coyote Ridge Meet at the parking lot.	From Shore to Ocean Depths Examine the Cretaceous Seaway sediments that form Coyote Ridge. Learn how these sediments were deposited, uplifted, eroded, and vegetated to form the landscape of today. 4 miles; moderate.
Sat. Aug. 25	9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Soapstone Prairie Meet at the north parking lot; approximately one-hour drive time from Fort Collins.	Walk the Gangplank Discover the geologic secrets of rocks shed from the Rocky Mountains and how these influence human and wildlife activity. 5-6 miles; moderate-strenuous.





City of Fort Collins

WILDLIFE WONDERS

Our natural areas are full of diverse wildlife! Come learn about some of the unique species that live in or migrate through Northern Colorado and the efforts to protect them. Bring binoculars, snacks, water, closed-toe shoes, and sun and wind protection.

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Thurs. May 17	8:30 a.m. – noon	Bobcat Ridge Meet at the parking lot.	Behind the Scenes Birding Explore a closed-off portion of a natural area. Discover the bird species that make these spots home. Participants will ride in a van and must stay for the entire program. 1-4 miles; off-trail, easy. 18+
Sat. June 16	9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Soapstone Prairie Meet at the north parking lot; approximately one-hour drive time from Fort Collins.	
Sat. May 26 Sat. June 9	8:30 – 10:00 a.m.	Reservoir Ridge Meet in the parking lot off Overland Trail Rd. across from the Poudre Overlook subdivision.	Discover the Bobolinks Discover one of Colorado's rare birds: the bobolink. Learn to listen and see this special visitor and some of its friends. Kids, bring your parents for a fun morning of bobolink spotting. 1 mile; easy.

Continued on next page

Wildlife Wonders, continued

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Sat. July 14	10:00 a.m. – noon	Soapstone Prairie Meet at the south parking lot; approximately one-hour drive time from Fort Collins.	Story of the American Bison See American bison in their natural habitat, the shortgrass prairie! Look for the herd and learn their amazing story of survival. <i>The bison are constantly on the move and we cannot guarantee that they will be visible.</i> 0.25 miles; easy.
Tues. Sept. 11	6:00 – 11:00 p.m.	Soapstone Prairie Transportation is provided from the Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Dr.	Black-Footed Ferret Exploration Explore North America's rarest mammal. We will journey together to Soapstone Prairie for a presentation about black-footed ferrets. Then we will hike and search for this elusive resident. 1-2 miles; moderate with uneven terrain. 16+
Wed. Oct. 3	5:00 – 10:00 p.m.		

Registration is required for all programs. Register at fcgov.com/register or call 970-416-2815.

Check for cancellations at fcgov.com/naturalareas before you go!

Natural Areas Visitor Center

Fort Collins Museum of Discovery, 408 Mason Court, Fort Collins
Tuesday–Sunday, 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Thursdays until 8:00 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!*

Schedule Your Next Meeting at 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: Tues. – Sat. 8 a.m. – 10 p.m. Closed holidays.

Cost: Private groups: \$200 for up to 5 hours and \$40 per additional hour. Non-profit and government rates: \$100 for up to 5 hours and \$20 per additional hour. Three-hour minimum required. Learn more at fcgov.com/naturalareas/primrose.php or call 970-416-2815.



Volunteer With Us!

The natural areas are yours to enjoy and explore and as stewards it is our responsibility to care for these special places. With over 36,000 acres and more than 40 natural areas there is a lot to care for!

Stewardship projects include trail maintenance, litter clean-up, plantings, and more. Visit fcgov.com/stewardship to learn more.

There's More to Explore

Keep up on natural areas happenings. New activities and events are added throughout the year. Check:

- fcgov.com/register for descriptions and registrations.
- fcgov.com/naturalareas for cancellations and updates.
- *Natural Areas Enews*, a monthly email newsletter that includes trail recommendations, news, and volunteer opportunities at fcgov.com/naturalareas (upper right hand corner).

Share Your Story #FCNaturalAreas

YOU are part of Fort Collins natural areas! Join the conversation!

 [FCNaturalAreas](https://www.facebook.com/FCNaturalAreas)

 [@FCNaturalAreas](https://twitter.com/FCNaturalAreas)

Registration is required for all programs. Register at fcgov.com/register or call 970-416-2815.
Check for cancellations at fcgov.com/naturalareas before you go!



Play It Safe On the River

This 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 tube. It could drown you.



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.



Know Where You Are

- Take a map!
- Plan your take-out location before you get in.



Float Sober, Float Safe

- Alcohol and drugs, including marijuana, impair judgment.



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.



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.

In case of emergency, call 911.

Have a safe trip!

Larger maps and directions at
fcgov.com/naturalareas/finder

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



WYOMING
COLORADO

Soapstone Prairie Natural Area

Red Mountain
Open Space

Rawhide Flats Rd

E CR 82

Exit 288

N CR 15

E CR 70

Exit 281

Wellington

Gateway
Natural Area

14

Cache la Poudre River

Horsetooth
Reservoir

Fort
Collins

14

Exit 269

E Harmony Rd

Exit 265

Loveland

Bobcat Ridge
Natural Area

W CR 38E

S Taft Hill Rd

N CR 21

-48-

Larger maps and directions at
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 Ralston

Gateway

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

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.

Jean Latona

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City of Fort Collins

Thank you! The Natural Areas Department is 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.



Natural Areas Department - 970-416-2815

Rangers - 970-416-2147

fcgov.com/naturalareas

naturalareas@fcgov.com

Register for activities at fcgov.com/register



naturally yours

