

FIRST DAY HIKES
**Start the Year
Outdoors!**
JANUARY 1, 2023



First Day Hikes 2023 in Iowa State Parks & Forests

Spend New Year's Day on a guided hike in your favorite state park! Participating parks and forests listed alphabetically.

List of Parks and Forests with events (click on park name to jump to that entry):

- [Backbone State Park](#)
- [Brushy Creek State Recreation Area](#)
- [Cedar Rock](#)
- [Lacey-Keosauqua State Park](#)
- [Lake Anita State Park](#)
- [Ledges State Park](#)
- [Maquoketa Caves State Park](#)
- [Mines of Spain State Recreation Area](#)
- [Palisades-Kepler State Park](#)
- [Pikes Peak State Park](#)
- [Pilot Knob State Park](#)
- [Prairie Rose State Park](#)
- [Springbrook State Park](#)
- [Stone State Park](#)
- [Waubonsie State Park](#)
- [Wildcat Den State Park](#)
- [Yellow River State Forest](#)

Backbone State Park

10:00am

Meeting Location: Old Shop just east of the East Park Entrance

Park Address: 1282 120th St, Dundee IA 52038

Description: Join a one-mile nature hike and wildlife viewing on the Bluebird Trail with park staff.

What to Bring: Dress for the weather.

Contact: RSVP to the office at 563-924-2527.

Brushy Creek State Recreation Area

1:00pm

Meeting Location: Prairie Resource Center

Park Address: 2820 Brushy Creek Rd, Lehigh IA 50557

Description: Enjoy the winter scenery and wildlife along the Des Moines River. Wear warm clothes, sturdy footwear and bring a water bottle.

Contact: (515) 543 8298

Cedar Rock

1:00pm

Meeting Location: Park Visitor Center

Address: 2611 Quasqueton Diagonal Blvd, Independence IA 50644

Description: Join park staff on a 1-mile nature hike around Cedar Rock. The hike is easy to moderate. Dress for the weather.

Contact: (319) 934-3572 or cedar_rock@dnr.iowa.gov

Lacey-Keosauqua State Park

10:00am

Meeting Location: Lodge

Park Address: 22895 Lacey Trl, Keosauqua IA 52565

Description: Meet at the lodge for a 1- to 3-mile moderate hike along the Des Moines River bluffs. Enjoy nature such as bald eagles and waterfowl. Enjoy hot chocolate, coffee & soup at the end of the hike.

Contact: Park Office 319-293-3502 Listen to Park Office message

Lake Anita State Park

10:00am

Meeting Location: East end of beach parking lot.

Park Address: 55111 750th St, Anita IA 50020

Description: Two options for a hike. Long Hike - starting at the beach parking lot, we will travel north on the all-weather trail and continue around the lake until we get back to the parking lot. Short Hike - starting at the beach parking lot we will travel north until the picnic area and turn back around and head back the way we came until we get back to the parking lot. Both hikes are very scenic on a paved path through mostly restored prairie. Wildlife and waterfowl.

Contact: (712) 762-3564.

Ledges State Park

9:00am

Meeting Location: Oak Woods Shelter

Park Address: 1515 P Ave, Madrid IA 50156

Description: Hike around the Canyon Drive entrance gates, and down the roadway into the Canyon. Typically, during the winter months, you'll be met on the Canyon floor by walls of ice, frozen over the top of sandstone outcroppings. In the morning it's common to see deer, squirrels and many types of birds on this scenic hike. Having the foliage off the trees also provides spectacular views of the Des Moines River and Pea's Creek valleys as you descend the hill. Deemed "the most photogenic park in Iowa" by its own park manager, you'll be hard pressed to find a better First Day Hike than at Ledges State Park.

Contact: Park Office 515-432-1852; email: Ledges@dnr.iowa.gov

Maquoketa Caves State Park

9:00am

Meeting Location: Lower shelter house

Park Address: 9688 Caves Rd, Maquoketa IA 52060

Description: Hike around the woodland trail and under the natural bridge. This will be a moderate hike, please dress for the weather and if it is snowing or raining the hike will not be guided.

Contact: Cancelled if raining or snowing. 563-652-5833 or <https://www.facebook.com/maqcavesfriends/>

Mines of Spain State Recreation Area

Noon

Meeting Location: EB Lyons Nature Center

Park Address: 8991 Bellevue Hgts, Dubuque IA 52003

Description: Walk lead by Dubuque County Conservation with refreshments provided by Friends of Mines of Spain. Check out the Friends of Mines of Spain Facebook page for more information.

Contact: Please call the EB Lyons Nature Center at 563-556-0620 to RSVP.

Palisades-Kepler State Park

Noon

Meeting Location: Lodge

Park Address: 700 Kepler Dr, Mount Vernon IA 52314

Description: Join us on a 2-mile hike through the woods over moderate to difficult terrain. Enjoy scenic views of the Cedar River, including Bald eagles. Hot drinks will be provided, with warming area inside lodge. Dress for the weather. Pets are allowed but must be on-leash.

Contact: Please find details on the Facebook page for Friends of Palisades-Kepler State Park.

Pikes Peak State Park

10:30am

Meeting Location: Stone Shelter

Park Address: 32264 Pikes Peak Rd, McGregor IA 52157

Description: Join us for a 1- to 2-mile hike with beautiful views followed by hot drinks. Dress for the weather.

Contact: 563-873-2341 Pikes_Peak@dnr.iowa.gov

Pilot Knob State Park

1:00pm

Meeting Location: Warming House

Park Address: 2148 340th St, Forest City IA 50436

Description: Choose a 1-mile paved trail, or a 3-mile or 6-mile moderate to difficult trail. Friends of Pilot Knob will provide hot chocolate. Also enjoy snowman building and sledding. Dress for the weather.

Contact: Pilot_Knob@dnr.iowa.gov and/or friendsofpilotknob@gmail.com

Prairie Rose State Park

4:00pm

Meeting Location: Park Office

Park Address: 680 Road M47, Harlan IA 51537

Description: Hike around the east side of Prairie Rose Lake. This will take us through some small wooded areas, lots of prairie, and across our hidden bridge. Dress for the weather.

Contact: Park office (712) 773-2701, Prairie_Rose@dnr.iowa.gov

Springbrook State Park

1:00pm

Meeting Location: Park House/Office

Park Address: 2437 160th Rd, Guthrie Center IA 50115

Description: Join us for a hike to the highest point in the park, stopping at geologically and historically significant sites along the way and looking for signs of wildlife activity. Warm up with hot chocolate afterward!

Contact: 641-295-6028

Stone State Park

10:00am

Meeting Location: Parking lot across from Park Office

Park Address: 5001 Talbot Rd, Sioux City IA 51103

Description: Join park staff for a short 45-minute hike through the Loess Hills in Stone State Park. Meet at the gravel parking lot across from the office and enjoy a moderate hike through the woods. Dress for the weather.

Contact: Park office (712) 255-4698; Stone@dnr.iowa.gov

Waubonsie State Park

1:00pm

Meeting Location: Wa-Shawtee Lodge

Park Address: 2585 Waubonsie Park Rd, Hamburg IA 51640

Description: The 2-mile hike will begin at Wa-Shawtee Lodge and wind off-trail through the woods of Waubonsie State Park and the Militia Hollow Wildlife Management Area. The Friends of Waubonsie will be supplying food and beverages before and after the hike.

Contact: Park Mgr: 712-350-0873, Park Tech: 712-355-3620, Broadcast Cancellation INFO on KMA 960 AM

Wildcat Den State Park

1:00pm

Meeting Location: Upper Picnic Area Shelter

Park Address: 1884 Wildcat Rd, Muscatine IA 52761

Description: Follow the Punch Bowl trail through the Devil's Punch Bowl. The hike will then follow the Lower Picnic Area Trail along Pine Creek, past Steamboat Rock, then loop back up- hill to the shelter. A warming fire will be lit and hot chocolate will be served in the shelter prior to the hike. Dress for the weather.

Contact: Cancellation information will be posted online at <http://www.iowadnr.gov/wildcatden> or you may contact park staff at 563-263-4337.

Yellow River State Forest

9:00am

Meeting Location: Forest Headquarters/Fire Tower

Description: Hike 2.5 - 3 mile loop from the cabin to the Browns Hollow Trail up to the Fire Tower and back to the cabin.
Dress for the weather.

Contact: Call 563-586-2254 or check The Friends of Yellow River State Forest website or FB page