



Summer Kick-Off 2023 in Iowa State Parks & Forests

Kick off the summer at a family friendly event 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](#)
- [Bellevue State Park](#)
- [Brushy Creek State Recreation Area](#)
- [Cedar Rock](#)
- [Dolliver Memorial State Park](#)
- [Fairport State Recreation Area](#)
- [Geode State Park](#)
- [Honey Creek State Park](#)
- [Lake Anita State Park](#)
- [Lake Macbride State Park](#)
- [Ledges State Park](#)
- [Lewis and Clark State Park](#)
- [Maquoketa Caves State Park](#)
- [Pikes Peak State Park](#)
- [Pine Lake State Park](#)
- [Prairie Rose State Park](#)
- [Rock Creek State Park](#)
- [Springbrook State Park](#)
- [Walnut Woods State Park](#)
- [Waubonsie State Park](#)
- [Wildcat Den State Park](#)

Backbone State Park

Friday June 9th 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Meeting Location: Camp Host Site

Park Address: 1282 120th St, Dundee, Iowa

Description: Park History - Learn about the park's natural history and the park's history from the CCC to now.

Contact: (563) 924-2527

Saturday June 10th 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Meeting Location: North Flats Wading Stream

Description: Critter Catch - Creek stomp to catch what we can catch and identify.

What to Bring: Dress to get wet in the creek

Saturday June 10th 4:30 PM - 5:30 PM

Meeting Location: Backbone Trail

Description: Hike - Casual hike down the Backbone Trail with our naturalist.

What to Bring: Wear good hiking shoes.

Bellevue State Park

Saturday June 10th Noon - 4:00 PM

Meeting Location: Nature Center

Park Address: 24668 Highway 52, Bellevue, Iowa

Description: Skulls and Fur Display - Visit the seasonal naturalist at the Nature Center to see a display of a variety of native animal furs and skulls.

Contact: (641) 459-2047

Sunday June 11th 6:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Meeting Location: Dyas Unit Campground Kiosk

Description: Early Bird Hike - Join the seasonal naturalist on a hike around the park to find the many different bird species that visit our area. Participants are encouraged to bring binoculars and bird ID books/Apps.

Saturday June 20th Noon - 4:00 PM & Sunday June 11th 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Meeting Location: South Bluff Nature Center

Description: Scavenger Hunt - Try completing the Naturalist' scavenger hunt while walking on the Nelson Unit Trails. Will you find everything?

Brushy Creek State Recreation Area

Saturday June 10th 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Meeting Location: Fish Pier Point Shelter

Park Address: 2820 Brushy Creek Rd, Lehigh IA 50557

Description: Critter Hour - Learn about common Iowa wildlife, including furs, tracks, habits and habitats.

Contact: (515) 543 8298

Cedar Rock

Saturday June 10th 6:30 PM - 9:00 PM

Meeting Location: Park Visitor Center

Address: 2611 Quasqueton Diagonal Blvd, Independence IA 50644

Description: Strawberry Moon - Evening open house, grounds decorated with special lighting, music, and access to all historic structures. Special feature presentation with local Wildthunder W.A.R.S. (Wildlife and Animal Rehabilitation and Sanctuary).

Contact: (319) 934-3572

Dolliver Memorial State Park

Saturday June 10th 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM

Meeting Location: Campground Registration Area

Park Address: 2757 Dolliver Park Ave., Lehigh, Iowa 50557

Description: Flying Squirrels - Come out and learn about flying squirrels.

Contact: (515) 359-2539

Fairport State Recreation Area

Saturday June 10th 8:00 PM - 10:00 PM

Meeting Location: Shower Building

Park Address: 1884 Wildcat Den Rd, Muscatine IA 52761

Description: Movie night! Bring your blankets and chairs and see a presentation about pollinators, then watch a projected showing of Dreamworks Bee Movie. Snacks will be provided by Friends of Fairport Campground.

Contact: (563) 263-4337

Geode State Park

Saturday June 10th 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM

Meeting Location: Campground

Park Address: 3333 Racine Ave, Danville IA 52623

Description: Meet Park Staff - Come learn about the park improvements to the watershed.

Contact: (319) 392-4601

Honey Creek State Park

Saturday June 10th 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Meeting Location: Ranger Point Shelter

Park Address: 12194 Honey Creek Pl, Moravia IA 52571

Description: Furs and Feet - Come check out the pelts of some native Iowa critters. Try to guess who made the tracks in the shelter, and maybe make a footprint or two to take home with you.

Contact: (641) 724-3739

Lake Anita State Park

Saturday June 10th 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Meeting Location: North Boat Ramp

Park Address: 55111 750th St, Anita IA 50020

Description: Kayaking in the Lilies - Kayak safety and beginners paddling instruction. Limited number of kayaks and life jackets provided, or bring your own. We will also learn about the water lilies on our lake and why they were put in to help our water quality.

Contact: (712) 762-3564.

Saturday June 10th 5:15 PM - 6:15 PM

Meeting Location: Campground Playground

Description: Join in a scavenger hunt and explore the park in search of natural items and signs of summer! The first person to find everything will get a small prize! Another scavenger hunt sheet will be posted in the campground kiosk for you to do on your own.

Saturday June 10th Sunset (Around 9:00 PM)

Meeting Location: Popcorn Shed in the Campground

Description: Bring chairs or a blanket and watch a fun, family friendly movie, Transformania! Free popcorn supplied by the Friends of Lake Anita.

Lake Macbride State Park

Saturday June 10th 10:30 AM - Noon

Meeting Location: North Campground Parking Lot

Park Address: 3525 Highway 382 NE, Solon IA 52333

Description: Boundary Waters Prep Class - Presentation, with gear, on how to prepare for high adventure in the Boundary Waters Canoe Access Wilderness, utilizing Iowa State Parks campgrounds, lakes, and trails. Bring a water bottle, bag, chair, and something to take notes. For teens on up.

Contact: (319) 624-2200

Ledges State Park

Saturday June 10th 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Meeting Location: First Parking Lot on the One Way Canyon Drive Road.

Park Address: 1515 P Ave, Madrid, IA 50156

Description: Wilderness Creek Stomp - Explore Peas Creek where people rarely visit. We will go north into the untouched section of the creek and see some rare plants and animals that call Ledges home. We will have nets to see what critters we can find!

Contact: 515-432-1852

Saturday June 10th 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Meeting Location: Lost Lake Trailhead. Can be found in the southwest corner of the park on 225th street.

Description: Lost Lake - Go for a casual hike around Lost Lake Trail and do some wildlife watching. We will provide binoculars to explore the beautiful area around Lost Lake. Keep your eyes on the ground to find some cool plants and fungi as well! Feel free to come and go as you please!

Lewis and Clark State Park

Saturday June 10th 6:00 PM

Meeting Location: Banquet Room Visitors Center

Park Address: 21914 Park Loop, Onawa IA 51040

Description: Kids Fishing - Bring your family and learn kid-friendly fishing tips.

Contact: (712) 423-2829

Maquoketa Caves State Park

Saturday June 10th 6:00 PM

Meeting Location: Lower Stone Shelter

Park Address: 9688 Caves Rd, Maquoketa IA 52060

Description: No Light Cave Tour - Learn about the cave's history and bat facts! We will go on a night time cave tour with flashlights. This will be a fun experience to see what the caves were like before lights!

Contact: (563) 652-5833

Pikes Peak State Park

Saturday June 10th 10:00 AM

Meeting Location: Stone Shelter

Park Address: 32264 Pikes Peak Rd, McGregor IA 52157

Description: Paracord Crafts - Learn to make survival bracelets using paracord. Bring your own paracord, there will also be some provided.

Contact: (563) 873-2341

Pine Lake State Park

Saturday June 10th 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Meeting Location: Playground Parking Lot

Park Address: 22620 County Highway S56, Eldora IA 50627

Description: Go fishing! Life jackets will be provided for small children.

Contact: (641) 858-5832

Prairie Rose State Park

Friday June 9th 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Meeting Location: Keep an eye out for our Naturalist in the park!

Park Address: 680 Road M-47. Harlan IA 51537

Description: Owl Chat - As you're at your campsite Friday evening, watch for our Naturalist walking around the park with a live, education Screech Owl.

Contact: (712) 773-2701

Saturday June 10th 10:00 AM

Meeting Location: South Shelter House

Description: Simple Campfire Cooking - We will be making some simple campfire recipes that don't require any special equipment. Come prepared to do some cooking and sampling!

Rock Creek State Park

Friday June 9th 7:00 PM

Meeting Location: Near the lower shower building

Park Address: 5628 Rock Creek E, Kellogg IA 50135

Description: Fish cleaning and cooking demonstration - Kids under 12 must be accompanied by parent or adult.

Contact: (641) 236-3722

Saturday June 10th 10:00 AM

Meeting Location: By the concession building.

Description: Fish Tips - Bait/tackle selection, casting, knot tying, fish identification, and fishing in Rock Creek Lake. Bring any fishing gear you have and wear clothing for the weather. Anyone who is over 16 will need a fishing license to fish.

Kids under 12 must be accompanied by a parent or adult.

Springbrook State Park

Saturday June 10th 9:30 AM - 10:00 AM

Meeting Location: Campground Gazebo

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

Description: Story Time - Enjoy a nature themed story with our Campground Hosts

Contact: 641-295-6028

Saturday June 10th 10:00 AM - Noon

Meeting Location: Beach

Description: Kayaking on Springbrook Lake - With a limited number of kayaks and life jackets provided, or bring your own! Safety and beginning paddling instruction will be provided. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. Meet at the beach at 10:00 AM for safety instruction.

Walnut Woods State Park -- This event canceled due to road construction

Waubonsie State Park

Saturday June 10th 8:30 PM - 9:30 PM

Meeting Location: Waubonsie Overlook Shelter

Park Address: 2585 Waubonsie Park Rd, Hamburg IA 51640

Description: Guided hike with park staff - We will enjoy a leisurely hike along Sunset Ridge trail, calling wild owls with special equipment. Barred owls respond well to calling and will put on a good show for hikers. We will also learn about how Owls fit into the Waubonsie ecosystem and examine some owl pellets. The hike will be short (less than a half mile), but bring a reusable water bottle and your comfortable hiking wear.

Contact: (712) 382-2786

Wildcat Den State Park

Saturday June 10th 12:30 PM - 4:30 PM

Meeting Location: Melpine Schoolhouse

Park Address: 1884 Wildcat Rd, Muscatine IA 52761

Description: The Pine Creek Grist Mill and Melpine Schoolhouse will be open for visitation and tours from 12:30 PM to 4:30 PM. An interpretive display will be presented near the Melpine Schoolhouse featuring furs and feathers of various Iowa animals.

Contact: (563) 263-4337.