

National Park Service

Wupatki, Sunset Crater Volcano, Walnut Canyon National Monuments

United States Forest Service

Peaks/Mormon Lake District

News Release: NPS/USFS Interpretive Partnership and Park Events

The mission of the Interpretive Partnership Program is to help understand, cherish, and preserve our local natural and cultural resources. Partnership rangers:

- a. Provide interpretive programs (ranger talks) at the top of Snowbowl Skyride.
- b. Give campfire talks at Bonito, Dairy Springs, and Pine Grove Campground.
- c. Provide interpretation at Sunset Crater Volcano, Wupatki, and Walnut Canyon N.M.
- d. Conduct interpretive hikes and walks in the Flagstaff area.
- e. Provide special programs for children at summer camps.

For immediate release----- August 25, 2008 (events to September 30)

For media questions only: 526-1157 ext 273, or 527-8222.

Note--- this News Release includes most of the events offered. Check the Coconino National Forest website, Arizona Daily Sun Calendar, and campground hosts for weekly updates.

DATE

EVENT

Every Friday,
Sat. & Sun. to
end Oct.

“Snowbowl Ranger Talks.” Top of Snowbowl’s Agassiz Skyride, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Flora, fauna, history, and geology of the San Francisco Peaks. Adult lift tickets \$12; Juniors (ages 8-12) and Seniors (ages 65-69) \$8; 70 & over, 7 & under, & birthdays free. Group (15 or more) rates 50% off. 779-1951, ext 109. Talks sponsored by the NPS/USFS Interpretive Partnership Program.

MONUMENT EVENTS (Staff & weather permitting). All require an entrance fee.

Daily

“Ranger Walk along the Lava Flow Trail.” 10:30 -11:00 am and 2:00 – 2:30 pm. Take a beautiful walk at base of a spectacular volcano. Meet at the Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument Lava Flow Trail parking lot. No pets please. 526-0502. Park entrance fee.

Every Sat. & Sun.

“Coffee with a Ranger.” 7:30 – 9:00 am. Join a NPS ranger for a free cup of coffee, hot chocolate, or tea and casual conversation and information about our area’s most recent volcano. Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument Visitor Center. 526-0502. Park entrance fee.

Sundays & Tuesdays

“Ranger Talk.” Sundays, 9:00-11:00 am; Tuesdays, 1:00-3:00 pm. NPS volunteer ranger Ernie Stech will show how the Sinagua gathered food, harvested water, and tended crops. Walnut Canyon National Monument. No pets please. 526-3367. Park entrance fee.

- Wed, Sept 3 **“Mysteries of Walnut Canyon.”** 9:00-11:00 am. Join NPS volunteer ranger Barbara Parker for a brief but fascinating talk on the mysteries and history of Walnut Canyon. Meet at the Visitor Center. No pets please. 526-3367. Park entrance fee.
- Sunday, Sept 7,
Thurs, Sept 18 **“Historic Cabin Walk.”** 10:00 am - noon. Journey back in time at Walnut Canyon National Monument. Take an easy 2-mile guided ranger walk from the 1939 stone visitor center built by the Civilian Conservation Corps to the 1904 log cabin built by the first U. S. Forest Service ranger appointed to protect the cliff dwellings from pilfering pottery hunters. No pets please. Participants must be 16 years or older. Limit: 8. Reservations required. 526-3367. Meet at Walnut Canyon National Monument Visitor Center at 9:45 am. Sponsored by the NPS/USFS Interpretive Partnership Program. Park entrance fee.

FOREST AND CAMPGROUND EVENTS

- Friday, Sept 5 **“Creepy Crawlies.”** Bonito Campground amphitheater, 7:30 pm. Join NPS ranger Joanna Bleil for a fascinating discussion about things that creep and crawl around our area. 526-0502. Sponsored by the NPS/USFS Interpretive Partnership Program.
- Saturdays, Sept 6,
13, 20 & 27 **“Nature Walk.”** (Sept 6, 27, 2:30 pm; Sept 13, 20, 3:00 pm.) Dairy Springs Campground. Join an interpretive ranger for an easy one-hour walk along the Dairy Springs Loop trail. Meet at the Dairy Springs Amphitheater. 526-1157 ext 273 or 527-8222. No dogs please. Sponsored by the NPS/USFS Interpretive Partnership Program.
- Saturday, Sept 6 **“I can’t see the forest for the trees.”** 4:30 – 5:30 pm. Pine Grove Campground amphitheater. Heidi Strickfaden will lead this special ponderosa pine program for children. 527-8222. Sponsored by the NPS/USFS Interpretive Partnership Program.
- Saturday, Sept 6, 27 **“Jewels in Flight: Hummingbirds.”** 7:30 pm. Pine Grove Campground Amphitheater. Join Heidi Strickfaden for a summer evening learning about our fascinating hummingbirds. 527-8222. Sponsored by the NPS/USFS Interpretive Partnership Program.
- Saturday, Sept 6 **“Pumphouse Wash Greenway.”** 9 – 11:30 am. Pumphouse Wash carves a deepening watercourse from the highlands south of the airport all the way to Oak Creek. Steve and Lois Hirst will lead this short hike from Kachina Village into the lush riparian area flourishing along the stream bank. Take I-17 exit 333 toward Kachina Village. Turn right onto Kachina Trail. Turn left onto Pinon Trail and go one mile. Park at the trailhead on left just past the pumphouse. Difficulty: easy. 527-8222. Sponsored by the NPS/USFS Interpretive Partnership Program.
- Sunday, Sept 7 **“Strawberry Crater Hike.”** 9 am – noon. Join Forest Service interpreters Dr. Richard Holm and Heidi Strickfaden at Strawberry Crater, where solitude awaits amid limitless horizons. You will experience an eerie sense

of timelessness in this volcanic wilderness. From its peak we will see the Painted Desert, Hopi Buttes, and mesas of the Little Colorado River valley. The area's fascinating geology and twisted junipers offer excellent subjects for photographers. This steep climb requires good shoes, hiking clothing, water, and a snack. Length: 2 mile loop. Difficulty: moderate to difficult. Elevation gain: 400 ft. Meet at 8 am at the Peaks Ranger Station, 5075 N. Hwy 89. 527-8222. Sponsored by the NPS/USFS Interpretive Partnership Program.

- Thursday, Sept 11 **“Walnut Canyon Overlook Hike.”** 9:00 am to 1 pm. Arizona Trailhead parking lot. I-40 east from Flagstaff to Walnut Canyon NM turnoff. Follow Walnut Canyon entrance road to FR 303 (before the monument entrance) and turn right. Parking area is about two miles down the dirt road. Join Steve and Lois Hirst for an informative 4-mile walk to Walnut Canyon overlook along the Arizona Horse Bypass Trail. Crosses a deep Walnut Canyon tributary to yield a variety of plants and wildflowers. Hear about Walnut Canyon's long and continuing significance for life around the Peaks. Difficulty: moderate. 527-8222. Sponsored by the NPS/USFS Interpretive Partnership Program.
- Sat, Sept 13, 20 **“Secrets of the Osprey.”** 7:30 pm. Pine Grove Campground amphitheater. John Westerlund will discuss one of our interesting local fish-hunting birds, often called the fish eagle. 526-1157 ext 273. Sponsored by the NPS/USFS Interpretive Partnership Program.
- Thurs, Sept 18 **“Leroux Springs Hike.”** 9:00 – 11:30 am. Leroux Springs trailhead, about one mile up Snowbowl Road. NPS interpretive ranger John Westerlund will lead a 2-mile walk to Big and Little Leroux Springs, discussing exploration and settlement of the area. Difficulty: easy. 526-1157 ext 273. Sponsored by the NPS/USFS Interpretive Partnership Program.
- Friday, Sept 19, 26 **“Secrets of the Osprey.”** 7:30 pm. Bonito Campground amphitheater. John Westerlund will discuss one of our interesting local fish-hunting birds, often called the fish eagle. 526-1157 ext 273. Sponsored by the NPS/USFS Interpretive Partnership Program.
- Sunday, Sept 21 **“Walker Lake Hike.”** 9:00 – noon. Meet at the intersection of FR 151 and Hwy 180, just past MP 235. Rangers Steve and Lois Hirst will lead this fascinating hike to the rim of a volcano with a lake in its crater. Spectacular view of the Peaks, the Painted Desert, and the distant Grand Canyon. Difficulty: Moderate. Group limit 15. Call 527-8222 for reservations. Sponsored by the NPS/USFS Interpretive Partnership Program.
- Thursday, Sept 25 **“Aspen Loop Walk.”** 9:00 – 11:00 am. Meet at the lower parking lot at Snowbowl's Hart Prairie Lodge at the trailhead. Join Karin Heiser in this walk through the aspens and pines and learn about local flora and fauna and the San Francisco Volcanic Field. Bring water, hiking shoes. Difficulty: easy. 527-8222. Sponsored by the NPS/USFS Interpretive Partnership Program.

- Fri, Sept 26 **“Lava Tubes Exploring & Snowbowl Skyride.”** 9:00 am – noon or later. Meet at the parking lot at the intersection of Hwy 180 and Snowbowl Road to carpool. Join USFS interpretive ranger Heidi Strickfaden for this extraordinary walk into the lava tubes of Hart Prairie shield volcano. Ankle boots & flashlight per person. Difficulty: moderate. After the tubes, head to the Snowbowl and up Agassiz ski lift at a reduced price. Reservations required. Group limit: 20. 527-8222. Sponsored by the NPS/USFS Interpretive Partnership Program.
- Friday, Sept 26 **“A Night at Wupatki Ruins: The Timeless Place.”** 6:00-7:30 pm. USFS interpretive ranger Heidi Strickfaden will read letters from Courtney Jones. She and her husband David Jones were the first fulltime caretakers of Wupatki National Monument. Experience isolation, beauty, dramatic red-rock landscape, purple volcanoes, endless blue sky, lack of electricity, and the Navajo friendships and everyday life through the letters of Courtney Jones. Meet at Wupatki Visitor Center at 6 pm. Bring flashlight, blanket, water, snack. 527-8222. Event includes an evening guided tour of the ruins. Sponsored by the NPS/USFS Interpretive Partnership Program.
- Saturday, Sept 27 **“Flowers First Hand.”** 4:30 – 5:30 pm. Pine Grove Campground Amphitheater. Heidi Strickfaden will be introducing children to flowers up close and personal. We will dissect flowers, examine them under a magnifying glass, and learn their parts. After this, we will take an adventure hike, looking for late-blooming flowers of the area. (Please bring magnifying glass if you have one.) 527-8222. Sponsored by the NPS/USFS Interpretive Partnership Program.
- Saturday, Sept 27 **“Veit Springs Hike.”** 9:00 a.m.–noon. Meet at the parking lot at the intersection of Hwy 180 and Snowbowl Road 7 miles north of Flagstaff. Join interpretive ranger Jane Jackson for a short walk through shaded forest to a spring high on the south slope of the San Francisco Peaks. Native grasses and wildflowers proliferate. Hear about stage robbers, missing gold, and the presence of ancient spirits. Difficulty: easy. 527-8222. Sponsored by the NPS/USFS Interpretive Partnership Program.
- Sunday, Sept 28 **“Slate Mountain Hike.”** 9 am – 1 pm. Hike with USFS interpreters Bill and Ellen Wade through wild-flowered meadows and ponderosa forests to the crest of a lava dome. Great views of the San Francisco Volcanic Field. Difficulty: moderate (4-mile round trip). Wear comfortable hiking shoes and sun block. Bring water & sack lunch. Meet at the Slate Mountain trailhead. Directions: 25 miles NW of town on Hwy 180. Go slightly past MP 242, turn left onto Slate Mtn Rd; drive 2.5 miles to parking area at trailhead. 526-1157 ext 273. Sponsored by the NPS/USFS Interpretive Partnership Program.

Bonito Campground is located adjacent to the entrance of Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument, about 10 miles northeast of Flagstaff off Hwy 89.

Dairy Springs Campground is located on the west side of Mormon Lake. Take Lake Mary Road about four miles past Upper Lake Mary. Turn off on Mormon Lake Lodge loop road. Follow road sign to Dairy Springs about 3.5 miles.

Pine Grove Campground is located about one mile past Upper Lake Mary and about a half-mile off Lake Mary Road.