

# October

## **Making Tracks! Below the Bluff**

Old Cedar Avenue Trailhead

Monday, October 1

4:30 pm-6 pm

Sense the pulse of migrating and year-round residents of Long Meadow Lake while improving your powers of observation and your health. We'll take a long hike through the river valley and wind around the wetlands, exploring some of Minnesota Valley's best habitat. Come prepared for brisk walking with frequent stops.

Judy Geck, Park Ranger

## **Wild Writers! Connecting to Nature through Literature: Art in Nature**

Bloomington Education and Visitor Center

Saturday, October 6

9:30 am-11:30 am

Here at Minnesota Valley we nurture nature, including human nature. Join Librarian Judy Geck for a monthly review of thematically selected books that provide skill development, activities, program support, pleasure and inspiration. Learn how to use our Resource Center to expand your literary horizons and discover how to make a difference--and a future--for human and wildlife habitat through literature. For book and nature lovers, families, and educators who want to make meaningful connections with the natural world.

Two CEU's available.

Judy Geck, Park Ranger

## **Bird Watching Trek**

Old Cedar Avenue Trailhead

Saturday, October 6

8 am-10:30 am

Join us for a bird walk on one of the many refuge units and learn about the birds that visit the Refuge during their fall migration. With a variety of habitats at the different units, you will want to explore them all. During fall migration observe a mix of waterfowl, raptors, warblers, and sparrows resting and feeding before they continue their southerly migration. Birders of all skill levels are welcome on these walks. Bring along your binoculars, favorite field guide and dress appropriately for the weather.

Craig Mandel, Volunteer Refuge Naturalist

## **Bird Watching for Beginners**

Rapids Lake Education and Visitor Center

Sunday, October 7

9 am-10:30 am

Bird Watching is a hobby enjoyed by millions of Americans, and you can learn how to enjoy it as well from a professional birder. You will learn how to find birds in their different habitats and will learn how to use a field guide and look for identifying features of birds such as eye rings, wing bars, and other distinctive markings. While the fall plumages of birds offer lots of challenges, it is also a great season to begin watching birds! Dress for the weather and bring along your binoculars. There will be extra binoculars to loan if you don't have any.

Craig Mandel, Volunteer Refuge Naturalist

### **Morning Photo Hike**

Bloomington Ferry Trailhead

Saturday, October 13

7:30 am-10 am

Come and spend the morning exploring the Minnesota River. Sunrise is scheduled for 7:28 so the light should be perfect. We will be looking for some early signs of fall, migrating birds, and wild flowers. Anyone interested in nature photography can attend. Bring your camera (any kind will do), a tripod if you have one, water, and dress for the weather.

Don Tredinnick, Volunteer Refuge Naturalist

### **The Big Sit**

Rapids Lake Education and Visitor Center

Sunday, October 14

6 am-8 pm

Experience the first big sit on the refuge! Join in for a day at the Rapids Lake Unit where we will see how many species of birds we can observe from a predetermined 17 foot circle. We will begin our Big Sit at 6:00 am, in hopes of hearing an owl or two and giving us a chance to catch the first migrants that may be flying through at dawn. Everyone is invited to join in the circle and help find and identify the birds we observe. Our circle will enjoy a good view of the visitor center feeders and several tree lines that offer the opportunity to observe any migrant song birds that may be passing through. With luck, we will also get some migrating waterfowl and raptors, along the Bluff. We will end our Big Sit around 8:00 pm. For more information or if you're interested in participating in the Big Sit, please contact Volunteer Refuge Naturalist, Craig Mandel at 952-546-3407.

### **Close Encounters of the Animal Kind**

Bloomington Education and Visitor Center

Sunday, October 14

1 pm-2:30 pm

Are the birds telling the local residents you're in the woods? Are you moving out of sync with the rest of the environment? Then come learn techniques used by our ancient ancestors to see wildlife before they see you. We'll spend about 45 minutes learning a few of these techniques then go outside to practice them.

Donnie Phyllaier, Volunteer Refuge Naturalist

### **Bird Watching Trek**

Old Cedar Avenue Trailhead

Monday, October 15

8:30 am-10:30 am

Join us for a bird walk on one of the many refuge units and learn about the birds that visit the Refuge during their fall migration. With a variety of habitats at the different units, you will want to explore them all. During fall migration observe a mix of waterfowl, raptors, warblers, and sparrows resting and feeding before they continue their southerly migration. Birders of all skill levels are welcome on these walks. Bring along your binoculars, favorite field guide and dress appropriately for the weather.

Craig Mandel, Volunteer Refuge Naturalist

### **National Wildlife Refuge Week: Wetlands of the Valley**

Chaska Unit, Carver River Front Park Trailhead

Monday October 15

1 pm - 2:30 pm

Wetlands are vital to the wildlife that live and migrate in the Minnesota River Valley. Observe wetlands in action while hiking 3 miles. Wear boots or shoes that can get wet and muddy. Bug spray, water bottle, and binoculars are suggested.

Mara Koenig, Park Ranger

### **Going Wild: Rail to Refuge**

Nicollet Mall Light Rail Station

Monday, October 15

1 pm-4 pm

Ride with a Ranger on the Hiawatha Light Rail and find out how easy it is to access one of our wildest natural areas via mass transit. Explore the Twin Cities' unique urban network of communities and public lands and discover how you can appreciate and enjoy diverse and easily accessible natural areas. Visit the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge and learn about the long history of natural resource conservation in this major metropolitan area.

Meet at the Nicollet Mall Light Rail Station in downtown Minneapolis and come prepared for a scenic tour, Ranger program, and guided hike on the refuge.

Adult fares are \$1.75-\$2.25.

Judy Geck, Park Ranger

### **Bloomington Amateur Radio operators**

Bloomington Education and Visitor Center

Saturday, October 20

9 am-5 pm

Join the Bloomington Amateur Radio operators as they broadcast *live* from the Bloomington Education and Visitor Center during **National Wildlife Refuge**

**Week.** Operators will highlight refuge features, wildlife and geography when making contact with other stations across North America using voice, teletype and Morse code. View their equipment and talk with their operators as they spread the word about Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge and help promote the National Wildlife Refuge System.

### **Bird Watching Trek**

Rapids Lake Education and Visitor Center

Saturday, October 20

8 am-10:30 am

Join us for a bird walk on one of the many refuge units and learn about the birds that visit the Refuge during their fall migration. With a variety of habitats at the different units, you will want to explore them all. During fall migration observe a mix of waterfowl, raptors, warblers, and sparrows resting and feeding before they continue their southerly migration. Birders of all skill levels are welcome on these walks. Bring along your binoculars, favorite field guide and dress appropriately for the weather.

Craig Mandel, Volunteer Refuge Naturalist

### **Thoreau Country Minnesota**

Bloomington Education and Visitor Center

Saturday, October 20

9:30 am – 3:00 pm

Visit and talk with author and naturalist Henry David Thoreau, as portrayed by historian Richard Smith and discover how Thoreau's travels and philosophies are intertwined with the Minnesota River Valley. Join us for a celebration of Henry David Thoreau's historic journey to the west and month-long visit to Minnesota in 1861 presented by the Thoreau Society, Bloomington Historical Society, Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, Refuge Friends, Inc., and Minnesota Independent Scholars' Forum. Activities include presentations, discussion, reenactment, exhibits, and a refuge hike.