



NATURE PROGRAMS

For more information on these programs,
call Mark Battista at 318-8735 or
battistam@chesterfield.gov.
Register at least one week before programs.

DUTCH GAP CONSERVATION AREA

Explore the 809-acre conservation area which is part of the Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail, an Important Bird Area, and part of the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network. Watch wildlife from two observation decks overlooking Aiken Swamp, launch your kayak or canoe from the new boardwalk that provides access to the James River and the Tidal Lagoon Water Trail. Hike, bike, or horseback ride the 4.5-mile long Dutch Gap Trail.

Directions: From I-95, take exit 61 (Route 10, Hopewell) east to first traffic signal. Turn left onto Old Stage Road (Route 732), travel two miles to stop sign at Coxendale and follow to park entrance on right, Henricus Park Road.

For more information, Noel Losen, 748-1129 or Mark Battista, 318-8735.

Presquile Island Boat Tour

Take a pontoon boat tour around Presquile National Wildlife Refuge to learn about this important resource in the James River. Participants will also have an opportunity to explore the extensive trail system and visit the Menenak Discovery Center. Join Chesterfield County and US Fish and Wildlife Service naturalists as they search for bald eagles, great blue herons, egrets, and the federally endangered Atlantic sturgeon. Children under 10 must bring their own PFD.

Thursday, September 5; 8:30 - 11:30 a.m. Course 36009
Meet: End of Bermuda Hundred Road (directions will be provided)
Fee: Free; but register online at www.chesterfield.gov/parks
Register at least one week before program.
Details: Mark Battista, 318-8735

FAMILIES IN THE OUTDOORS

Unplug from the digital world in this series of outings to explore our local environments. Each program is designed to encourage families to get outdoors, get exercise and enjoy the wild outdoors.

Night Ride and Campfire

Explore the Dutch Gap Conservation Area by bike – at night. Start your bike trek before sunset and pedal an easy two miles to the Peninsula. Enjoy a light meal by the Lagoon, some activities and a campfire with s'mores. Turn on your headlights and ride back 2.5 miles to the parking lot. This is an easy bike ride with minimal elevation gain. Trail is suitable for bikes hauling trailers. Mountain bikes and hybrid bikes are necessary. Helmets and bike lights are required. Bring a light meal and drink. We'll provide the s'mores. Henricus Visitor Center, 251 Henricus Park Road
Saturday, Oct. 12, 6-8 p.m. \$5 Course 36026

Explore the Appomattox River Valley

Start your journey at the Radcliffe Conservation Area. Hike the bluff trail, scramble across rock outcroppings, roam along wetlands while looking for beaver lodges and dams and explore tumbling streams. Return with the river trail and continue downriver for lunch at the old abutment dam. Return along river trail.

Radcliffe Conservation Area, 21501 Chesdin Road
Saturday, Nov. 9, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. \$4 Course 36027

Bushwhacking the Brown & Williamson Conservation Area

Bushwhack and explore the 500-acre conservation area along the James River. Find the eagle nest, clues that reveal the story of the land, skunk cabbage and vernal pools. Have lunch in the hollow, then trek to the bluff that overlooks the James River. This will be an adventurous three-mile hike involving lots of bushwhacking and some stream crossings. Minimum age is 8. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Henricus Visitor Center, 251 Henricus Park Road
Saturday, Dec. 7, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. \$4 Course 36023

Sky Watch

Join the Richmond Astronomical Society to roam the night sky in search of star clusters, planets, and other sky objects. View the cosmos with various telescopes. Programs last about one hour and meet at the Woodlake Athletic Complex located behind Clover Hill Elementary School.

Program 1: Friday, Oct. 4, 7- 8 p.m. Course 36010
Program 2: Friday, Nov. 1, 6:30-7:30 p.m. Course 36011
Free, but register online at www.chesterfield.gov/parks

Winter Bird Count Primer

Joining a winter bird count this season? This two-hour walk will review the winter birds. Head to the wetlands to observe gadwall, pintail, and other waterfowl. Then head down the trail in search of eastern bluebirds, eastern meadowlarks, hermit thrush, yellow-rumped warblers and more. Bring your binoculars and bird book. Some binoculars will be available.

Dutch Gap Conservation Area, 341 Henricus Park Road
Saturday, Dec. 14, 8:30-10:30 a.m.
Free, but call 318-8735 to register

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WEEKDAY WANDERERS

Join these trips to explore and learn about the rich and diverse resources of Virginia. Each trip will reveal the natural and cultural history of the various sites. All programs include a naturalist, transportation and admission fees (if required).

Details: Mark Battista, 318-8735

Fall Wildflowers

See and revel in the brilliant explosion of fall wildflowers. Take a van to various park sites, then hike through forest, wetlands, and along rivers to observe and identify fall wildflowers. Tentative sites include Dutch Gap Conservation Area, Point of Rocks Park, Radcliffe Conservation Area and Appomattox Riverside Park. Total hiking distance will be approximately 3-4 miles.

Henricus Park Visitor Center, 251 Henricus Park Road

Thursday, Sept. 12, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. \$20 Course 36013

Tree Identification Class

Ramble through the conservation area to learn common trees of the wetlands, forests and fields. This class will introduce participants to basic tree terminology and explain how to use a tree key. Also learn why trees are important to wildlife and us. Fee includes naturalist and the 120-page Common Native Trees of Virginia guide. This will be an easy, mile walk.

Henricus Park Visitor Center, 251 Henricus Park Road

Thursday, Sept. 19, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. \$15 Course 36020

James River Heritage Trail

Stroll along another section of the James River Heritage Trail in Lynchburg. Start at Hollins Mill Crossing and hike along the Point of Honor Trail to downtown Lynchburg for lunch at the Depot Grill. After lunch, head back up through the Hollins Mill Tunnel, then hike a section of Creekside Trail. Total hiking distance will be about four miles which includes some paved and natural paths.

Rockwood Nature Center, 3401 Courthouse Road

Thursday, Sept. 26, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. \$32 Course 36028

Gleen Trails

Start your hike in Montpelier, then hike through meadows, crest Chicken Mountain, and then descend to an active nursery to have lunch at the Market at Gleen. Return along the same trails for a total distance of about five miles.

Rockwood Nature Center, 3401 Courthouse Road

Thursday, Oct. 3, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. \$25 Course 36029

Rockfish Valley Trails

Cavort and roam along sections of the Rockfish Valley Trails that wind along pastures, bogs, Rockfish River and Reids Creek. Experience this bucolic setting staged at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The field and river habitats provide ideal viewing of herons, kingfishers, meadowlarks, orioles, swallows, vireos and various warblers. Afterwards, enjoy lunch at the Bold Rock Cider Barn. Hiking distance is a leisurely and gentle three miles.

Rockwood Nature Center, 3401 Courthouse Road

Thursday, Oct. 10, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. \$30 Course 36019

Rappahannock River Trail

Head upriver along the Rappahannock River Trail to see beautiful stretches of scenic river and listen to its wildness as it tumbles and roils over granite rocks. Start your hike near the city, and then stroll past the remains of Embrey dam, past abandoned quarries and beyond Interstate 95 bridge. Head to Carl's after the hike. Hike will be a flat four miles along the river.

Rockwood Nature Center, 3401 Courthouse Road

Thursday, Oct. 17, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. \$30 Course 36018

Discovering the Lower Appomattox River and Pocahontas Island

Take a three-mile hike (1.5 miles up and back) along the Appomattox River Heritage Trail. Find stone arches and old canals that reveal the rich history of this area while enjoying the views of this state designated scenic river and the natural history. Afterwards, have lunch at a local eatery in historic Petersburg, then take a short stroll to learn about the intriguing history of Pocahontas Island.

Henricus Park Visitor Center, 251 Henricus Park Road

Thursday, Oct. 24, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. \$20 Course 36016

Windsor Castle Park

Head south to Smithfield to hike and explore the trails of Windsor Castle Park. The 208-acre park borders Cypress Creek and the Pagan River. Hike almost four miles of trails that wind through meadows, forested areas and over creek and marshes.

Henricus Historical Park, 251 Henricus Park Road

Thursday, Oct. 31, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. \$25 Course 36034

North Rivanna River Trail

Head to Charlottesville to hike the Northern Rivanna River Trail. Start at Pen Park, then stroll down to the Rivanna River. Continue through bottomland forests, meadows, old farms and a section of upland forest. This is an easy out-and-back hike that is four miles.

Rockwood Nature Center, 3401 Courthouse Road

Thursday, Nov. 7, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. \$25 Course 36017

High Bridge Trail

Hike one of Virginia State Park's newest parks near Farmville. This rail-to-trail park spans 31 miles from Pamplin City to Burkeville and has numerous trail heads. Stroll an easy two miles (round trip) to the high bridge which spans 2,400 feet and is 160 feet above the Appomattox River. The bridge, built in 1853, was part of the South Side Railroad, an old rail line from Petersburg to Lynchburg. Afterward, have lunch at a local eatery in Farmville, and then hike another one-mile section near downtown. Total hiking distance is an easy, flat three miles.

Rockwood Nature Center, 3401 Courthouse Road

Thursday, Nov. 14, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. \$25 Course 36015

Shenandoah Summits

First, hike to Bear Den Mountain from Beagle Gap on the Appalachian Trail. Enjoy views as you ascend through open meadows to the summit at 2,885 feet. This is an easy 1.2-mile round trip with about 355 feet of elevation gain. Next, hike to Blackrock Summit with views of Madison Run and Dundo Hollow. This is an easy one-mile hike with only 175 feet of elevation gain.

Rockwood Nature Center, 3401 Courthouse Road

Monday, Nov. 11, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. \$32 Course 36030

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Greensprings and Powhatan Creek Trail

Head down near Jamestown to hike a two-mile loop around a beaver pond and wetlands. Head to Jamestown for lunch, then take a second hike to Powhatan Creek. This is an easy, mostly flat hike that will be a total of 3 – 4 miles.

Rockwood Nature Center, 3401 Courthouse Road
Thursday, Nov. 21, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. \$25 **Course 36014**

Coyote Run

Take a leisurely 2.5-mile hike through meadows, transitional fields, and forest edge to explore Coyote Run in Powhatan State Park. Break for lunch, and then take a short 0.75-mile hike along the James River.

Rockwood Nature Center, 3401 Courthouse Road
Thursday, Dec. 5, 9 a.m.- 3 p.m. \$20 **Course 36012**

Wild Tour of Chesterfield County

Hike and explore some of our newest parks, some of which are open and some still closed to the public. Bushwhack through the new, but not open, Winterpock Park. Next, head south to explore the Ettrick/VSU Trail. Break for lunch at the Ettrick Deli. Lastly, roam along the bottomlands of the Swift Creek Conservation Area. The hikes will involve bushwhacking. Hiking distance will be about three miles.

Rockwood Nature Center, 3401 Courthouse Road
Thursday, Dec. 12, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. \$17 **Course 36021**

WILD LANDSCAPES

Travel and explore diverse landscapes filled with natural beauty and intriguing history. Explore by kayak, bike, and by foot. All trips include guides and transportation.

Lighthouse Paddle

Launch your kayak from the southern tip of Mathews County. Next, stop at a sandy island for lunch and exploration, then continue your paddle to New Point Comfort Lighthouse, the third oldest lighthouse on the Chesapeake Bay. NOTE: Paddling destination may change due to weather or water conditions. Minimum age is 13 (youth aged 13-15 must be accompanied by an actively participating adult). Formal kayak instruction strongly recommended. Paddling time is approximately 3.5 hours.

Parks Maintenance Office, 9201 Public Works Road
Friday, Sept. 20, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. \$55 **Course 36031**

Camp Hoover Hike

Head to Shenandoah National Park and hike to the retreat of President Herbert Hoover nestled at the confluence of the Mill Prong and Laurel Prong streams. Known as Camp Hoover or Rapidan Camp, the retreat was established in 1929, and then donated to the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1932 for inclusion into the proposed Shenandoah National Park. The hike will start at Milam Gap and follow Mill Prong stream almost two miles to the retreat. Total hiking distance is four miles with 750 feet of elevation change.

Rockwood Nature Center, 3401 Courthouse Road
Saturday, Sept. 28, 8 a.m.- 6 p.m. \$32 **Course 36032**

Individual and Group Canoe/Kayak Tours

Enlist the naturalist for a nature tour to discover and explore the Dutch Gap Conservation Area. All trips include canoe and/or sit-on-top kayaks, paddles, personal flotation device, basic paddling instructions and guided tour. Tours can accommodate an individual, couples or groups. For more information and to schedule a tour, call Mark Battista at 318-8735.

Biking False Cape State Park

Explore and bike one of Virginia's most wild park which is accessible only by foot, bike or boat. This bike tour will travel through Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge and False Cape State Park and explain the mission of these two agencies while learning about the unique ecology of a barrier spit. Take a short hike to walk a remote beach and to visit the wash woods cemetery. This will be an easy and flat 16-20-mile bike trek. Mountain bike and/or beach cruisers will be provided.

Rockwood Nature Center, 3401 Courthouse Road
Saturday, Oct. 19, 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. \$50 **Course 36022**

Appomattox River Hike

Hike along the fall zone of the Appomattox River, a regional treasure and designated scenic river. Start your hike at the Appomattox Riverside Park, then head downriver to Petersburg. Enjoy the sound and views of cascading water; ramble through meadows and forest and see the remains of a rich history of the old canals and mills. Total hiking distance is approximately four miles. Minimum age is 12.

Parks Maintenance Office, 9201 Public Works Road
Saturday, Nov. 16, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. \$18 **Course 36033**