

AURORA WELCOMES SUMMER
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Some like it hot! With the warmth and blue skies of summertime upon us, some of Aurora’s local reptile species are leaving their state of brumation and joining us on the trails. Brumation is the term used to describe hibernation in cold-blooded animals, also known as ectotherms. While exploring Aurora’s magnificent parks and open spaces, keep your eyes peeled for these native reptiles: Bullsnake, Prairie Rattlesnake, Plains Garter Snake, Snapping Turtle and Colorado’s state reptile, the Western Painted Turtle.

JUNE ◀◀

- This month’s moon has historically been called the strawberry moon and got its name from the Algonquin tribes, who knew it as a signal to gather the ripening fruit of wild strawberries.
- Summer solstice occurs on June 20, the longest day of the year. In Latin, solstice means “the sun stands still.”
- Elk, pronghorn and mule deer babies are born.
- Burrowing owlets appear above ground.
- Showy milkweed begins to flower.

JULY ◀◀

- This month is notable because it will have two new moons this year.
- The Aquarid meteor shower will be visible during the last week of the month in the southeastern sky.
- Bats forage at sunset to provide for their young.
- Sunflowers light up the prairie and mushroom season begins.

AUGUST ◀◀

- The Perseid meteor shower, likely the best Aug. shower of the year, peaks around the 12.
- Elk and deer begin to scrape velvet from fully grown antlers.
- Shorebirds like the Baird’s and Least Sandpipers migrate into Aurora.
- Blazingstars bloom at night.

Welcome summer and enjoy the natural beauty of Aurora by joining the Aurora naturalist team for a hike, kayak adventure or full moon walk!

COMMUNITY NATURALIST PROGRAMS
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CELEBRATE YOUR CHILD’S BIRTHDAY IN NATURE

Celebrate your child’s next birthday at Morrison or Senac Creek Nature Center. Nature parties accommodate up to 20 kids and feature your child’s favorite local nature topics through fun games, educational activities and discovery time on the trail. Parties cost \$85 for up to 3 hours (including set up and clean up) and are designed for children ages 4 to 12.

BOY AND GIRL SCOUT PROGRAMS

Our naturalist-led programs connect scouts to the natural world. Programs meet requirements for some badges, including the Cub Scout World Conservation Award. Scout programs require a \$2 per scout fee and a \$20 deposit when the program is scheduled.

COMMUNITY AND MEET-UP GROUPS

Need a guest speaker for your garden club, HOA meeting, Rotary or other professional or social group? Aurora naturalists offer engaging and relevant presentations on topics people love to learn about and discuss. Programs take place at any of our nature centers or open space areas. Community programs have a fee of \$25.

SCHEDULING A PROGRAM

Choose a topic(s) and select a date and time. We recommend having several dates selected because our schedule can fill up quickly. Programs can be held at one of our nature centers or at one of our many open spaces. A minimum of 10 participants is required. Due to resource protection or limited facilities, some sites may have participant limits as low as 30 people. Remember that programs can be tailored to most special needs and interests. Let us know what interests you!

AURORA NATURE CENTERS
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Morrison Nature Center at Star K Ranch
16002 E. Smith Road • 303.326.8445
Wednesday-Friday, noon—4:30 p.m.
Saturday-Sunday, 9 a.m.—4:30 p.m.



Senac Creek Nature Center at Aurora Reservoir
5800 S. Powhatan Road • 303.326.8429
Wednesday-Friday, noon—4:30 p.m.
Saturday-Sunday, 9 a.m.—4:30 p.m.



Plains Conservation Center
21901 E. Hampden Ave. • 303.326.8380
Wednesday-Friday, noon—4:30 p.m.
Saturday-Sunday, 9 a.m.—4:30 p.m.

CITY OF AURORA
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NATURE NEWS

SUMMER 2019

AuroraGov.org/Nature



MORRISON NATURE CENTER
AT STAR K RANCH◀◀

STAR K KIDS *Ages 5 and younger*
Discover Aurora’s true nature through puppets, interactive activities and discovery time on the trail. No registration required.
Every Thursday, 9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m.

JR RANGERS *Ages 6-12*
Learn about Aurora’s true nature as you explore Star K Ranch.
12701 Things That Creep and Crawl June 9
12702 All Things Water July 14
12703 Bats Aug. 11
Sundays, 9:30-11 a.m.

STAR K NATURE CAMP *Ages 6-12*
Get outside and into nature for a fun, adventure filled week exploring Star K Ranch!
12741 June 4-7
12742 June 18-21
12743 July 16-19
Tuesday-Friday, 9 a.m.-noon, \$50 per child

ADVANCED JUNIOR RANGER CAMP *Ages 10-14*
Join us for a week of in-depth exploration as we see Star K Ranch as never before! Children must have attended at least one Star K Nature Camp or Tween Camp prior to attending this camp.
12745 June 24-28
Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., \$75 per child

SUMMER RAPTORS WITH HAWKQUEST *All ages*
Learn which raptors call Aurora home during the summer with LIVE birds from Hawkquest.
18181 Saturday, June 15, 10-11 a.m.

SUPERSTITION AND MYTHOLOGY OF AURORA OWLS *Ages 6 and older*
The Greek goddess Athena saw owls as protectors while the Hopi see burrowing owls as gods of death. Come learn about the owls native to Aurora and some of the mythology historically associated with them. Program includes owl pellet dissection followed by a walk/wagon ride to look for owls.
12750 Sunday, June 2, 10-11:30 a.m.

NATURE AT NIGHT *Ages 2 and older*
11817 Coyotes Friday, June 21, 8:30–10 p.m.

FULL MOON HIKE *Ages 8 and older*
Discover Aurora’s true nature under the light of the full moon and learn a little about its history through this guided nature hike.
17893 Buck Moon
Tuesday, July 16, 8-9:30 p.m.

SENAC CREEK NATURE CENTER
AT AURORA RESERVOIR◀◀

When attending a program at the Senac Creek Nature Center, reservoir entry is free during the time of the program.

LITTLE NATURALISTS *Ages 5 and younger*
Join us with your little ones for puppets, games and discovery time on the trail at Aurora Reservoir. No registration required.
Every Friday, 9:30-10:30 a.m.

SENAC TWEEN CAMP *Ages 8-12*
Get outside and into nature for a fun, adventure-filled week exploring and enjoying Aurora Reservoir!
12748 July 23-26, Tuesday-Friday, 9 a.m.-noon
\$50 per child

HISTORICAL USES OF EDIBLE and MEDICINAL WILD PLANTS OF THE PRAIRIE GRASSLANDS *Ages 8 and older*
Have you ever been curious about the plants you see on the outskirts of the city? It may be that those plants were once used to treat headaches, stop bleeding or help people sleep. Take a hike and learn about what some of the plants we see daily once did for the Native Americans and western colonizers.
12699 Sunday, July 14, 10-11:30 a.m.

NATURE AT NIGHT *Ages 2 and older*
12700 Summer Night Sky
Friday, July 19, 8:30–10 p.m.

SUNRISE AND SUNSET KAYAK ADVENTURES *Ages 12 and older. \$3 per person.* Join us as we look for wildlife and watch the sun rise or set from a kayak on beautiful Aurora Reservoir.
12739 June 7
12740 June 21
Friday, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
12755 June 15
12756 June 29
Saturday, 6-8 a.m.
12757 July 12
12759 July 26
Friday, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
12760 July 6
12761 July 20
Saturday, 6-8 a.m.
12763 Aug. 9
12764 Aug. 23
Friday, 6-8 p.m.
12765 Aug. 17
12769 Aug 31
Saturday, 6:15-8:15 a.m.

PLAINS CONSERVATION
CENTER◀◀

All programs at PCC require registration through the Denver Botanic Gardens website. Visit BotanicGardens.org, click education registration Plains Conservation Center.

PRAIRIE BIRDING *Ages 6 and older. \$5 per person.*
Enjoy the open prairie and it's diversity of plant and animal life as you search for resident birds. Whether you are new to birding or a seasoned pro, this is a great opportunity to meet other bird enthusiasts.
Sunday, June 23, 9-10:30 a.m.

HISTORICAL USES OF EDIBLE and MEDICINAL WILD PLANTS OF THE PRAIRIE GRASSLANDS *Ages 8 and older. \$10 per person.*
Have you ever been curious about the plants you see on the outskirts of the city? It may be that those plants were once used to treat headaches, stop bleeding or help people sleep. Take a hike and learn about what some of the plants we see daily once did for the Native Americans and western colonizers.
Sunday, July 21, 10-11:30 a.m.

SUMMER RAPTORS *All ages*
Help us welcome presenters from Hawkquest with LIVE raptors and learn which of these amazing birds call Aurora their summer home. This program takes place at the PCC visitor center as part of programming for SCFD free day.
Thursday, Aug. 15, 10-11 a.m.

SUPERSTITION AND MYTHOLOGY OF AURORA OWLS *Ages 6 and older, \$8 per person*
The Greek goddess Athena saw owls as protectors while the Hopi see burrowing owls as gods of death. Come learn about the owls native to Aurora and some of the mythology historically associated with them. Program includes owl pellet dissection followed by a walk/wagon ride to look for owls.
Sunday, Aug. 4, 10-11:30 a.m.

PRAIRIE HOMESTEAD SELF-GUIDED TOUR *All ages, \$3 per person*
Join us at the Plains Conservation Center for a self-guided tour of our historical sod village and tipis. Immerse yourself in a replication of an 1880s prairie homestead village with authentic artifacts and, depending on the season, real farm animals. Available during open hours, depending on programming.

OPEN SPACE PROGRAMS◀◀

NATURE HISTORY SERIES *Ages 18 and older*
Appreciate the important roles topography, plants and animals play in our environment and how they have influenced history, folklore and culture with this guided hike.
13611 Living West: Water
Sunday, June 17, 9-10:30 a.m.
Quincy Reservoir
13616 Myths and Legends of Aurora Wildlife
Sunday, July 7, 9-10:30 a.m.
Coal Creek Arena/Sand Creek Riparian Preserve
13619 Native Plants and their Historical Uses
Sunday, Aug. 25, 9-10:30 a.m.
Confluence Open Space

NATURE AT NIGHT
13314 Beavers
Friday, Aug. 16, 8:30-10:30 p.m.
Pronghorn Natural Area

MORNING BIRD WALK *Ages 8 and older*
Join us to observe what birds are out and about.
12696 Saturday, June 8, 7:30-10:30 a.m.
Pronghorn Natural Area
12697 Saturday, July 13, 7:30-10:30 a.m.
Jewell Wetland
12698 Saturday, Aug. 10, 7:30-10:30 a.m.
Confluence Open Space

FULL MOON HIKES *Ages 8 and older*
Discover Aurora’s true nature under the light of the full moon and learn a little about its history through this guided nature hike.
17890 Strawberry Moon
Monday, June 17, 8-9:30 p.m.
Pronghorn Natural Area
17891 Sturgeon Moon
Thursday, Aug. 15, 7:30-9 p.m.
Ponderosa Preserve



Registration is required for all programs, except for Star K Kids. To register for nature programs, call 303.326.8650 or visit AuroraGov.org/Recreation. Children under 16 must be accompanied by a registered adult for all programs except Junior Rangers and school break camps. Programs may be canceled due to low registration or poor weather. For information, call 303.326.8445 or nature@auroragov.org.

