

July 2026

PATUXENT RIVER STATE PARK and FREEDMAN'S STATE PARK

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patuxentriver.statepark@maryland.gov

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Dress for the weather and activity, wear sunscreen and insect repellent, bring plenty of water and snacks, and remember to check for ticks.</p> <p>For more information, call (443) 962-0216 or email patuxentriver.statepark@maryland.gov.</p>			1	2 Nature Center Open: 9am-1pm Crafts or games are always available.	3 Nature Center Open: 9am-1pm Crafts or games are always available.	4 July 4th Celebration Freedman's State Park (10-3): A Miller's Life For Me
5 Nature Center (10-11 & 1-2): Patuxent River Formation Guided Hikes at 11 and 2	6 Nature Center (10-2): The Joy of Bubbles	7	8	9 Nature Center Open: 9am-1pm Crafts or games are always available.	10 Nature Center Open: 9am-1pm Crafts or games are always available.	11 Freedman's State Park: Tour 10 am Nature Center (10-2): Dragonflies & Damselflies: Aerial Acrobats
12 Nature Center (11-3): Explore Fireflies	13 Nature Center (10-2): Tree Cookie Pendants	14	15	16 Nature Center Open: 9am-1pm Crafts or games are always available.	17 Nature Center Open: 9am-11am Crafts or games are always available.	18 Freedman's State Park: Tour 10 am Nature Center (10-3): Pill Bugs or Rolly Polys?
19 Nature Center (11-1): Fabulous Ferns (11-1) and Fern Hike (1 pm)	20 Nature Center (10-2): Make Your Own Dragonfly	21	22	23 Nature Center Open: 9am-1pm Crafts or games are always available.	24 Nature Center Open: 9am-1pm Crafts or games are always available.	25 Freedman's State Park Tour 10 am Nature Center (10-3): All About Bugs
26 Nature Center (12-4): Go Batty and Make a Zine	27 Nature Center (10-2): Duck Foot Simulator	28	29	30 Nature Center Open: 9am-1pm Crafts or games are always available.	31 Nature Center Open: 9am-1pm Crafts or games are always available.	For photos & more, visit: Friends of Seneca Creek & Patuxent State Parks or Maryland State Parks Facebook Pages

All events are all ages and free unless otherwise noted.

Programs subject to change or cancellation. Please check our website for up-to-date program information

A Miller's Life for Me: Patuxent River Valley was filled with all kinds of mills, including grain mills. Come explore what it was like to be a miller in the Valley and why this service mattered to the farmers, including the Howard family, living here. Hands-on activities include threshing, winnowing, and hand grinding of sheaves of wheat.

All About Bugs: Insects are everywhere! Come learn how to identify some common insects and discover the secret but crucial roles that they play in the ecosystem. Make and take a craft insect of your own!

Duck Foot Simulator: Hoping for a hot day. Learn about duck's feet and how they swim. Then try being a duck in a little pool with webbed swimming gloves. Expect to get splashed, but not soaked.

Dragonflies and Damselflies – Aerial Acrobats: Dragonflies and damselflies are dazzling sights throughout the summer! But how can you tell them apart? What important roles do they play in the ecosystem? Visit the Nature Center to discover the answers and explore the world of these incredible aerial acrobats. While you're here, create a fun, take-home dragonfly craft!

Explore Fireflies: Stop by the Nature Center and explore the world of fireflies with one of the park's naturalists! Learn about the fascinating behaviors of these glowing insects and discover how to identify different species. A perfect way to celebrate summer's natural light show!

Fabulous Ferns and Fern Hike: Drop in to the Nature Center and learn about the fabulous ferns that live in the park. At 1 pm, join a park naturalist

on a hike of the park's Red Trail. We will look for the different ferns along the trail. The hike will be about 3.7 miles round trip with two "step across" creek crossings and varied terrain. Wear comfortable walking shoes and bring water. Meet at the Nature Center.

Freedman's State Park Tour: Learn about the incredible life of Enoch George Howard, who purchased his family's freedom from slavery and eventually bought the land where his wife was enslaved. Tours start at Heritage Trailhead at 10 am. ***Advanced registration is required.** Email: karen.whitehair@maryland.gov for more information.

Go Batty and Make a Zine: Bats have been on Earth for more than 50 million years. With more than 1,400 species, they are the second largest order of mammals, and live everywhere except Antarctica. Drop in to the Nature Center and learn about Maryland's bats. Then make your own Zine with what you've learned about these fascinating mammals!

Joy of Bubbles: We have a pretty good recipe for bubbles and we will make up a batch or two. If you have a small jar, bring it and you can take some home. But first we'll make bubble wands and blow bubbles.

Make Your Own Dragonfly: The shore of the Patuxent River is a wonderful place to find and watch dragonflies and damselflies. Come learn about these wonderful insects and make your own Dragonfly pin for your shirt or backpack.

Patuxent River Formation: Guided Hikes 11 am and 2 pm: Join us for an engaging exploration of the natural forces that shaped the upper Patuxent River valley! Using a stream table, we'll demonstrate the dynamic processes that formed this unique landscape. Afterward, enjoy a guided hike along the river where we'll observe firsthand how the valley has evolved over time. Bring water shoes and expect to get wet!

Pill Bugs or Rolly Polys? Crawling about under fallen branches, flowerpots, or even next to your house, pill bugs are amazing little arthropods uniquely adapted to living on land. Stop by the Nature Center and see these little creatures up close. We'll set up a short investigation – do pill bugs really prefer living where it's dark? Also, learn some fun facts – what do researchers call these little animals?

Tree Cookie Pendant: If you look closely at the wood of a tree, you can see the growth rings and read them to discover the history of that tree. We will learn about how to read tree rings and have sections of tree branches to take home. We will decorate them and turn them into pendants that wear or hang on your backpack.