

February 2026

Patapsco Valley State Park Soldiers Delight NEA

Register [here](#) or by contacting us at 410-461-5005. patapsco.statepark@maryland.gov

Accommodations for individuals with disabilities will be provided upon request. Two weeks advance notice is requested.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9- SERP Restoration Volunteer Event 11- Rapids Secret Hike	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 1- Serpentine Ecology and History Hike	9	10	11	12	13	14 2- Winter Tree ID Hike
15 9- SERP Restoration Volunteer Event 10 - The Great Backyard Bird Count - Avalon	16 10- The Great Backyard Bird Count - SDNEA President's Day	17	18	19	20	21 1- Meet a Tree Paint a Tree 6:30- WASI: Astronomical Phenomena
22 11- Indigenous Pottery 2- Hidden Corners Hike	23	24	25	26	27	28

Unless otherwise noted, events are held rain or shine, free and fun for all ages; donations are always welcome. Children under 10 must be accompanied by an adult. Dress for the weather/activity, wear sunscreen and insect repellent, bring plenty of water and snacks, and remember to check for ticks.

Centers of SDNEA & PVSP Hours of Operation

Soldiers Delight NEA Visitor Center: Daily, 11-3 p.m.

5100 Deer Park Road, Owings Mills, MD 21117

William Offutt Johnson History Center: Open by appointment.

William Offutt Johnson History Center: 5120 South Street, Halethorpe, MD 21227

Nature Center: Open by appointment.

Nature Center: 1101 Hilton Avenue, Catonsville, MD 21228

February 1 and 15: SERP Restoration Volunteer Event

9 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at Soldiers Delight Natural Environment Area

5100 Deer Park Road, Owings Mills, MD 21117

Volunteer with the Maryland Natural Heritage Program on one or several Serpentine Ecosystem Restoration Project work days this winter. Volunteers will assist by removing non-native Virginia pine and other invasive plants, allowing grasses to re-colonize the area. A variety of methods will be used, including hand pulling, chipping, and use of hand tools. Bring a lunch, snacks and plenty of water. Pack light, with layered clothing, a hat, sturdy shoes, and work gloves. Call 410-260-8568 after 7 p.m. the night before the event to check for inclement weather schedule changes. Space is limited, so registration is required! Email paula.becker@maryland.gov to register.

February 1: Rapids Secret Hike *FULL and closed*

11-1 p.m. at Marriottsville Railroad Parking Area

Closest intersection is Marriottsville Road and Henryton Road

The Patapsco River is millions of years old, but the beautiful and popular McKeldin Rapids are less than 200 years old. When the rapids were created, the Worthington Tenant House changed counties. How is this all possible? Visit two places on the Maryland Historic Trust inventory to find out. [Signup required](#), limited to 15 participants. Shine only.

February 8: Serpentine Ecology & History Hike

1-3:30 p.m. at Soldiers Delight Visitor Center

5100 Deer Park Road, Owings Mills, MD 21117

Serpentine grasslands are rare and beautiful ecosystems filled with unique plants, ancient geology, and centuries of human history. Follow Park staff as we explore the Serpentine grasslands of Soldier's Delight, learn their past, and discuss the methods we use to fight threats facing the savannah. Limited to 15 participants. Will include hiking on a trail with moderate slopes, uneven terrain, and areas of direct sun. Shine only, temperatures above freezing only. [Signup encouraged](#).

February 14: Winter Tree ID Hike

2-3:30 p.m. at Soldiers Delight Visitor Center

5100 Deer Park Road, Owings Mills, MD 21117

Learn about the dichotomous keys and how to use them to identify trees during the winter! Afterwards, we'll put our new ID skills to the test on a hike through part of our Serpentine Trail, so prepare for a hike on rocky terrain and a slight elevation change. [Signup required](#), limited to 15 participants. Shine only.

February 15: Great Backyard Bird Count - Avalon

10-11:30 a.m. at Avalon Area, Lost Lake

5120 South Street, Halethorpe, MD 21227

Calling all citizen scientists: the 2026 Great Backyard Bird Count is upon us! Join a park naturalist on a birding excursion to identify and record as many birds as we can, and have your observations uploaded to Cornell's bird population database. Be prepared for a hike on a flat, paved trail with brief excursions onto uneven terrain with moderate slopes. Shine only. [Signup required](#), limited to 15 people.

February 16: Great Backyard Bird Count - Soldiers Delight

5100 Deer Park Road, Owings Mills, MD 21117

10-11:30 a.m. at Soldiers Delight Visitor Center

Calling all citizen scientists: the 2026 Great Backyard Bird Count is upon us! Join a park naturalist on a birding excursion to identify and record as many birds as we can, and have your observations uploaded to Cornell's bird population database. Will include hiking on a trail with moderate slopes, uneven terrain, and areas of direct sun. Shine only. [Signup required](#), limited to 15 participants

February 21: Meet a Tree, Paint a Tree

1-2 p.m. at Soldiers Delight Visitor Center

5100 Deer Park Road, Owings Mills, MD 21117

Join our Naturalists as they lead you in a step by step painting experience while you learn about one of our native tree species of Maryland! \$10 per participant, limited to 20. [Signup required](#). Rain or shine.

February 21: Astronomical Phenomena: Eclipses, meteor showers, and other spectacular events in the night sky

6:30-8:30 p.m. at Soldiers Delight Visitor Center

Astronomical phenomena such as eclipses, meteor showers, and other spectacular events in the night sky captivate our imagination and offer a glimpse into the vastness of the universe. Eclipses, whether solar or lunar, occur when the Earth, moon, and sun align, casting shadows and creating breathtaking visual displays. Meteor showers, like the Perseids or Geminids, result from Earth passing through the debris left by comets, producing streaks of light as meteoroids burn up in the atmosphere. Other phenomena, such as auroras, are caused by solar particles interacting with Earth's magnetic field, painting the sky with vibrant colors. These events not only provide stunning visuals but also deepen our understanding of celestial mechanics and the dynamic nature of our cosmos.

February 22: Indigenous Pottery: Piscataway & Susquehannock

11 a.m.-1 p.m. at Soldier's Delight Visitor Center

5100 Deer Park Rd, Owings Mills, MD 21117

Join us at the Soldier's Delight Visitor Center to learn about the history of the Indigenous peoples of Maryland. We will discuss the historic and surviving cultures of the Piscataway and Susquehannock peoples before making our own pottery pieces inspired by traditional Indigenous techniques. [Signup required](#). Limited to 15 participants. \$10 per participant.

February 22: Hidden Corners Hike

2-5 p.m. at Soldiers Delight Visitor Center

5100 Deer Park Rd, Owings Mills, MD 21117

Join Volunteer Ranger and mining historian Johnny Johnsson on a Hidden Corners Hike. We plan to hike several miles, off trail, to rediscover little known or forgotten historic features of Soldiers Delight such as mill foundations, dam ruins, chrome mining pits, and quartz quarries. This program is appropriate for ages 12 and up, able to hike this distance and variable terrain. Hiking footwear, gloves, hat, and appropriate warm clothing layers for winter weather with possible snow on the ground will be needed. Be prepared to navigate some briars and thorns (hand pruners are helpful) and wet crossings. Hiking sticks are helpful. No pets please. [Signup required](#). Limited to 25 participants.