



The Wild Grapevine

Vol. 21 No. 4 October 2025

The Wild Grapevine will provide you with nature-related articles and upcoming event information four times per year. All annual pass holders will receive this newsletter free as part of their benefits. Send your email address to [metea@allencountyparks.org](mailto:metea@allencountyparks.org) for free e-mailed copies.

Allen County Parks website: [www.allencountyparks.org](http://www.allencountyparks.org)

Fox Island Alliance website: [www.foxislandalliance.org](http://www.foxislandalliance.org)

***Your Allen County Parks***

- Fox Island County Park**, 7324 Yohne Road, southwest Fort Wayne (260) 449-3180
- Metea County Park**, 8401 Union Chapel Road, at State Route 1, Leo-Cedarville (260) 449-3777
- Payton County Park**, 13928 Dunton Rd. just east of Hometown between Gump and Hathaway Roads
- Cook’s Landing County Park**, corner of Shoaff and Coldwater Roads
- Deer Run Wilderness Area** – access by permission only
- Allen County Hanauer Reserve** – Easterday Road rental facility



[www.nistem.org](http://www.nistem.org)

Allen County Parks is a partner in the NISTEM network



[www.allencountytrailblazers.org](http://www.allencountytrailblazers.org)

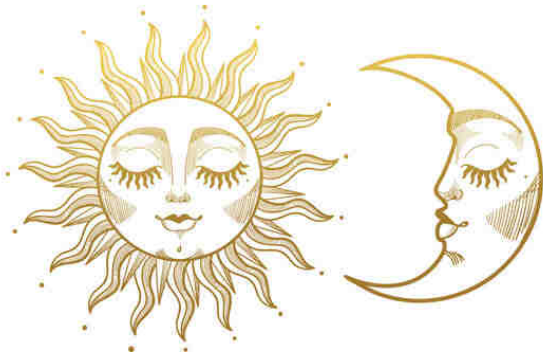
Allen County Parks is a partner in Allen County Trailblazers

## Photoperiodism – Measuring the Days and Nights

By Bob Dispenza, Park and Education Manager, Metea County Park

While it seems logical that colder weather will make plants lose their leaves and animals migrate, hibernate or grow winter coats, temperatures are only one factor, and possibly not the most important. I have lived long enough to see warm temperatures all the way into December, but the leaves still turn and fall and animals all still prepare for winter.

The most important factor is actually day length – how long it stays light (or dark). As the days get shorter, chemical pathways in plants and in the brains of animals trigger changes in plant foliage (withdrawing resources from leaves in preparation to dropping them, leading to our fall colors) and animal behavior (from migration urges to adding fat before hibernation to growing thicker fur to mating behavior to singing in birds). Successful living organisms are not fooled by anything so changeable and unreliable as weather, especially Indiana weather. Day length (or night length) is a more reliable indicator of coming winter.



Photoperiodism (discovered in 1920) is the ability of plants and animals to measure environmental day length (photoperiod), typically by monitoring night length. This process underlies a biological calendar. It is not biologically useful in tropical areas due to daylength being about the same all year long.

“Food, temperature, moisture, and air pressure are all very much less regular in their seasonal procession and are therefore likely to be less effective as “clocks” than photoperiod” (Andrewartha & Birch, 1954, p. 294).

Plants have pigments called phytochromes, which absorb red light from sunlight, and are how plants measure day length without eyes or a brain. Absorption of red light by Phytochrome Red (PR) converts it into Phytochrome Far Red (PFR). In the dark, PFR spontaneously converts back to PR over time, giving plants a measure of how long the night is, and conversely, how long the day is. This tells plants when to flower, set seed, or lose their leaves.

Animals in temperate zones need to know when the days get shorter so they can prepare for the coming winter. Shortening days tell them when to seek warmer climates by migrating (birds, bats, some insects), or lay eggs that can survive cold (most insects), or grow thick winter fur (deer, beaver, and most other furred mammals) or begin nesting (owls), or go into hibernation (some insects, amphibians, land snails, bats, groundhogs) or store up food for the winter (chipmunks, squirrels) or engage in reproductive behaviors. Photoperiod possibly has influence on human reproduction, though its influence is apparently less since the industrial revolution.

In mammals, melatonin produced at night is a primary regulator, along with thyroid hormone. These are influenced by daylight seen through the eyes. Photoperiod is inversely correlated to the nightly duration of melatonin secretion in animals. The longer it's dark, the more melatonin is produced, and the shorter the daylight time is.

Humans with seasonal affective disorder are especially sensitive to decreasing day length. Symptoms include fatigue, depression, hopelessness, and social withdrawal. Full spectrum light therapy is a possible treatment.

Some animals and plants get confused about whether the year is coming or going. I've seen dogwoods flowering in the fall as their leaves are changing, and have heard spring peepers calling in October. The length of day is similar in October and March, but moving in the opposite direction. The confusion is enough to get some living things to give the wrong seasonal response, but only for a short time.

So, while the weather may be part of the story, length of day is the real mover of the plot.

## Upcoming Programs for Autumn

*Program fees are usually \$2.00 per person unless otherwise stated, and are used to provide operating funds (which are not supported by tax revenue) for Allen County Parks. Most programs require pre-registration to allow resource and staff allocation planning. There may be requirements for a minimum number registered to offer the program. You will be notified at least 1 day before the program if it has been cancelled due to minimum registrations not being met.*

<b>Dune Restoration Hikes</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>Schedule with a Park Manager</b>		<b>Nature Center</b>
Please call Park Manager, Natalie Haley, to schedule a dune restoration hike for your group. Phone number is 260-449-3246. Email: nhaley@allencountypark.org	Cost: Park Entry ONLY Pre-register by: (5 days before program) Min. 10 Max. N/A	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:foxisland@allencountyparks.org">foxisland@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-3246 Natalie Haley

<b>Free Firewood</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>Schedule with Park Manager</b>		<b>Nature Center</b>
Please contact park manager, Natalie Haley, to set up a time to cut and retrieve free firewood.	Cost: Park Entry ONLY Pre-register by: (5 days before program)	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:foxisland@allencountyparks.org">foxisland@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-3246 Natalie Haley

<b>Kid's Nature Hike</b>		<b>Metea County Park</b>
<b>October 4, Saturday</b>	<b>1 PM – 2 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Bring your family and come join Sydney for a kid's nature hike. This hike will allow children to have an up-close encounter with nature. The hike will focus on wildlife, plants, and why nature is important. Meet outside the front of the Nature Center for this hour-long easy hike exploring the wonders of nature.	Free with Admission	For more information: Email: <a href="mailto:sschrock@allencountyparks.org">sschrock@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-3778 Sydney Schrock

<b>Preschool Story Time &amp; Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>October 7, Tuesday</b>	<b>10:30 AM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
L is for Leaf litter. Why is leaf litter important? Come find out and take a short hike to find out what lives in the leaf litter. Come dressed for the weather.	Cost: \$3/child <b>Pre-register by: 10/6</b> Min. 5	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Dune Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>October 7, Tuesday</b>	<b>1:30PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Join in a mid-day Hike afternoon from 1:30 – 3 p.m. We will meet in front of the nature center.	Free w/ park entry (\$3) Min. 5, Max. 20	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Full Hunter's Moon Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>October 7, Tuesday</b>	<b>6 PM</b>	<b>In front of the Nature Center</b>
Join us for an interactive hike on this Full Wolf Moon evening.	Free w/ park entry (\$3) Pre-register by 10/3 Min. 5, Max. 30	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Full Hunter's Moon Drum Circle</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>October 7, Tuesday</b>	<b>7:45 PM</b>	<b>VDWOB</b>
Bring a drum if you have one. There will be a limited of drums available to borrow. Join in this community building experience!	Free w/ park entry (\$3) Pre-register by 10/3 Min. 5	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Full Hunters/Harvest Moon Hike</b>		<b>Metea County Park Nature Center</b>
<b>October 7, Tuesday</b>	<b>8 PM</b>	
Hike by the light of the Hunter's Moon. Learn about the moon and our nocturnal animals, especially the ones that are hunted in Indiana and how they are managed.	Cost: \$3 Register by: 10/4	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:metea@allencountyparks.org">metea@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-8619 Bob Dispenza

<b>Preschool Storytime at the Aboite Library</b>		<b>Aboite Library</b>
<b>October 8, Wednesday</b>	<b>10:15 AM</b>	
B is for Bat. Join Eva Webb from Fox Island County Park for fun hands-on learning through stories & activities about bats. This will be at the Aboite Branch Library. (For ages 2-5 years old)	FREE	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Nature Story Time</b>		<b>Metea County Park Nature Center</b>
<b>October 8, Wednesday</b>	<b>10:30 AM</b>	
<b>Deer Over Here</b> Join Jennifer from the Grabill Branch Library and Bob Dispenza from Metea County Park as we learn about the great outdoors! Each session will focus on a nature theme with stories, activities and hands-on learning. We'll meet in the Nature Center then do a little outdoor exploring if weather permits.	Cost: FREE Pre-register by: 10/5	To register or for more information: <a href="https://acpl.libnet.info/event/">https://acpl.libnet.info/event/</a> or Email: <a href="mailto:bdispenza@allencountyparks.org">bdispenza@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-8619 Bob Dispenza

<b>Mid-Day Drum Circle</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>October 10, Friday</b>	<b>1:30 PM</b>	<b>VDWOB</b>
Come to the Vera Dulin Wildlife Observation Building to partake in a community drum circle. Bring a drum if you have one. There are limited drums and percussion instruments available to borrow.	Free w/ park entry (\$3) Pre-register by: 10/9 Min. 5, Max. 30	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Owl Prowl</b>		<b>Metea County Park</b>
<b>October 10, Friday</b>	<b>8 PM – 9 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center Parking Lot</b>
Come and learn about these mysterious predators of the night as we go on an easy hike listening for these amazing predators. This is a hike with no lights or only red lights to deter less owls. Great for families.	Cost: \$3	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:sschrock@allencountyparks.org">sschrock@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-3778 Sydney Schrock

<b>Fall Nature Journal</b>		<b>Metea County Park</b>
<b>October 11, Saturday</b>	<b>1 PM – 3 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Come and experience nature by drawing and water coloring some of its wonders. Join Naturalist Sydney and local artist Tara Schrock to learn more about mushrooms and how to draw them. Come enjoy the beauty of Fall with this short hike and journaling lesson.	Cost: \$8 Max. 25 Register by email by 10/3	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:sschrock@allencountyparks.org">sschrock@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-3778 Sydney Schrock

<b>Sunset Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>October 14, Tuesday</b>	<b>6 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Join other nature lovers in a Sunset Hike every from 6 p.m.-7:30 p.m.	Free w/ park entry (\$3) Pre-register by: 10/13 Min. 5, Max.25	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Preschool Story Time &amp; Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>October 15, Tuesday</b>	<b>10:30 AM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Part 2 of B is for Bat that will take place at Fox Island County Park. A hike will be included with the songs, story, and movement! (For ages 2-5 years old)	Free w/ park entry (\$3) Pre-register by: 10/14 Min. 5, Max.15	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Monthly Birding Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>October 18, Saturday</b>	<b>9 AM</b>	<b>Meet at the VDWOB</b>
Join fellow birders for a birding hike. All levels of experience are welcome.	Free w/ park entry (\$3) Pre-register by: 10/17 Min. 5, Max.25	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Women's Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>October 18, Saturday</b>	<b>11 AM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Join in the Women's Only Hike from 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	Free w/ park entry (\$3) Pre-register by: <b>10/17</b> Min. 5, Max.25	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Creepy Crawlies With Matt Reichenbacher</b>		<b>Metea County Park</b>
<b>October 18, Saturday</b>	<b>1 PM – 2 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
In preparation for Halloween, come and learn about some of our creepy crawlies, like bats and spiders, we have here at the park. We will talk about some of the benefits of these animals and why they are important to our environment. Join volunteer Matt Reichenbacher for this 1-mile hike designed for the whole family.	Free with admission (\$3)	For more information: Email: <a href="mailto:sschrock@allencountyparks.org">sschrock@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-3778 Sydney Schrock

<b>Dune Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>October 21, Tuesday</b>	<b>1:30 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Hike with the environmental educator on the Dune Trail. Meet at the Nature Center.	Free w/ Park entry (\$3) Minimum: 5	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Home School Environmental Education: Tree Ecology</b>		<b>Metea County Park</b>
<b>October 23, Thursday</b>	<b>9:30 AM- 11:30 AM</b>	<b>Nature Center Basement</b>
Come join us to learn about the science of trees. How trees obtain sugars and energy through photosynthesis, parts of a tree and how to identify common trees of Indiana. Recommended for grades 4-8, but all are welcome.	Cost: \$3 Register by email by 10/16	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:sschrock@allencountyparks.org">sschrock@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-3778 Sydney Schrock

<b>Sunset Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>October 24, Friday</b>	<b>6 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Join other nature lovers in a Sunset Hike every from 6 p.m.-7:30 p.m.	Free w/ park entry (\$3) Pre-register by: 10/23 Min. 5, Max.25	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Nature and Death</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>October 25, Saturday</b>	<b>1 PM</b>	<b>VDWOB</b>
Join the Environmental Educator in this special program that will explore the daily interactions we have with nature and death that we all experience, whether we realize it or not. There will be a story, discussion, a creative response and a hike.	Cost: \$5 Pre-register by: 10/24 Min. 5, Max.25	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Create Your Own Pollinator Garden</b>		<b>Metea County Park</b>
<b>October 25, Saturday</b>	<b>1 PM- 2 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center Basement</b>
Learn about native plants that live here in Indiana and how they help our pollinators. We will also be making seed balls from seeds found in our prairie so you can go home and plant your own pollinator garden.	Free with admission	For more information: Email: <a href="mailto:sschrock@allencountyparks.org">sschrock@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-3778 Sydney Schrock

<b>Dune Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>October 28, Tuesday</b>	<b>1:30 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Hike with the environmental educator on the Dune Trail. Meet at the Nature Center.	Cost: \$3/child Pre-register by: 10/24 Min. 5, Max. 30	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Preschool Story Time and Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>November 4, Tuesday</b>	<b>10:30 AM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
D is for Deer! Join the environmental educator to learn more about this through story, songs, and a hike. (For ages 2-5)	Cost: \$3/child Pre-register by: 10/31 Min. 5, Max. 30	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Dune Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>November 4, Tuesday</b>	<b>1:30 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Hike with the environmental educator on the Dune Trail. Meet at the Nature Center.	Free w/ Park entry (\$3) Minimum: 5	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Preschool Storytime at the Aboite Library</b>		<b>Aboite Library</b>
<b>October 8, Wednesday</b>	<b>10:15 AM</b>	
W is for Weather. Join Eva Webb from Fox Island County Park for fun hands-on learning through stories & activities about weather. This will be at the Aboite Branch Library. (For ages 2-5 years old)	FREE	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Big Sit Bird Count</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>October 12, Sunday</b>	<b>Noon-4:00PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Sit with Three Rivers Birding on the largest tail-gating party for birders. A bird count with the "FIBS" (Fox Island Bird Sitters-we shall not tell a fib) on the back deck of the nature center. Snacks and drinks provided by Three Rivers Birding. We do have some binoculars we are willing to share with you.	Cost: Park Entry ONLY No pre-registration required. Min. 5 Max. 25 in the circle	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:foxisland@allencountyparks.org">foxisland@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-3246 Natalie Haley

<b>Grateful Weed Wrangles</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>Every Wednesday in November</b>	<b>10:00am-2:00pm</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Join us in restoring Fox Island by removing invasive shrubs/trees from our restoration sites at Fox Island. Please pre-register so that are prepared for you to volunteer. Earn your annual park pass by volunteering for 10 hours of invasive shrub removal. Please wear full length pants and long sleeve shirts, protective eye wear, hat and leather gloves. If cold, we recommend insulated coveralls.	Cost: Free for those who pre-register. Pre-register by: (5 days before program) Min. 5 Max. unlimited but requires pre-registration for equipment	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:foxisland@allencountyparks.org">foxisland@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-3246 Natalie Haley

<b>Fall Color Hike with Chris Fairfield</b>		<b>Metea County Park</b>
<b>November 1, Saturday</b>	<b>1 PM – 2 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Join our wonderful volunteer for a hike talking about fall colors, why they happen and how trees prepare for winter. Join Chris Fairfield for this 1-mile hike through our beautiful fall forest.	Free with admission	For more information: Email: <a href="mailto:sschrock@allencountyparks.org">sschrock@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-3778 Sydney Schrock

<b>Full Cold Moon Drum Circle</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>November 4, Wednesday</b>	<b>6 PM</b>	<b>VDWOB</b>
Join in a community drum circle in the Vera Dulin Wildlife Observation Building. Call or FB Message Fox Island County Park to reserve your spot.	Free w/ entry (\$3) Pre-register by: 11/3 Min. 5, Max. 30	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Full Cold Moon Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>November 4, Wednesday</b>	<b>7:30 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Join us for an interactive hike on this Full Cold Moon evening. Find out why it's called the Beaver Moon, as well as some other fun facts.	Free w/ entry fee. Pre-register by: 11/3 Min. 5, Max. 30	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:webb@allencountyparks.org">webb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Full Beaver Moon Drum Circle</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>November 5, Wednesday</b>	<b>6 PM</b>	<b>VDWOB</b>
Join in a community drum circle in the Vera Dulin Wildlife Observation Building. Call or FB Message Fox Island County Park to reserve your spot.	Free w/ entry (\$3) Pre-register by: 11/3 Min. 5, Max. 30	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:webb@allencountyparks.org">webb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Full Beaver Moon Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>November 5, Wednesday</b>	<b>7:30 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Join us for an interactive hike on this Full Beaver Moon evening. Find out why it's called the Beaver Moon, as well as some other fun facts.	Free w/ entry fee. Pre-register by: 11/3 Min. 5, Max. 30	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:webb@allencountyparks.org">webb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Full Beaver Moon Hike</b>		<b>Metea County Park</b>
<b>November 5, Wednesday</b>	<b>7:30 PM</b>	
Hike by the light of the Beaver Moon. Learn about the moon, the role of beavers in our ecosystem, and how they are returning to our waterways.	Cost: \$3 Pre-register by: 11/1 Min: 5 Max: 35	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:bdispenza@allencountyparks.org">bdispenza@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-8619 Bob Dispenza

<b>Autumn Wildlife Hike</b>		<b>Metea County Park</b>
<b>November 8, Saturday</b>	<b>1 PM – 2 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
As the weather gets colder our wildlife is preparing for the cold winter months. Come and learn how our wildlife prepares and survives the cold on this easy mile hike for the whole family.	Free with Admssion	For more information: Email: <a href="mailto:sschrock@allencountyparks.org">sschrock@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-3778 Sydney Schrock

<b>Preschool Story Time and Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>November 12, Tuesday</b>	<b>10:30 AM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
W is for Weather! Join the environmental educator to learn more about this through story, songs, and a hike. (For ages 2-5)	Cost: \$3/child Pre-register by: 11/11 Min. 5, Max. 30	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:webb@allencountyparks.org">webb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Dune Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>November 12, Tuesday</b>	<b>1:30 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Hike with the environmental educator on the Dune Trail. Meet at the Nature Center.	Free w/ Park entry (\$3) Minimum: 5	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:webb@allencountyparks.org">webb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Nature Story Time</b>		<b>Metea County Park Nature Center</b>
<b>November 12, Wednesday</b>	<b>10:30 AM</b>	
<b>Animals Getting Ready for Winter</b> Special guest Jennifer from Grabill Library will be here to share stories and activities all about our big, beautiful world. Then we will go outside to explore the story subjects in real life. This special nature storytime at Metea County Park happens on the second Wednesday of the month.	Register at the Allen County Public Library site	Register here: <a href="https://acpl.libnet.info/events">https://acpl.libnet.info/events</a> For more information: Email: <a href="mailto:metea@allencountyparks.org">metea@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-8619 Bob Dispenza

<b>Monthly Mid-Day Drum Circle</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>November 14, Friday</b>	<b>1:30 PM</b>	<b>VDWOB</b>
Come to the Vera Dulin Wildlife Observation Building to partake in a community drum circle. Bring a drum if you have one. Limited drums and percussion instruments are available to borrow.	Free w/ entry (\$3) Pre-register by: 11/13 Min. 5 Max. 30	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb
<b>Monthly Birding Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>November 15, Saturday</b>	<b>9:00 AM</b>	<b>VDWOB</b>
Join fellow birders for a birding hike. All levels of experience are welcome.	Free w/ park entry (\$3) Pre-register by: 11/14 Min. 5	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb
<b>Women's Monthly Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>November 15, Saturday</b>	<b>11 AM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Hike with other women who enjoy the outdoors. Meet at the Nature Center.	Free w/ Park entry (\$3) Preregister by 11/14 Minimum: 5	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb
<b>Fall Poetry Hike</b>		<b>Metea County Park</b>
<b>November 15, Saturday</b>	<b>1 PM – 2 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
With Thanksgiving just around the corner, it time we express what we are grateful for, and what better way to do that then with poetry. So, come and hear some nature poems to express our gratitude for nature. Feel free to also bring your own nature poems to share as well.	Free with Admission	For more information: Email: <a href="mailto:sschrock@allencountyparks.org">sschrock@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-3778 Sydney Schrock
<b>Dune Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>November 18, Tuesday</b>	<b>1:30 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Hike with the environmental educator on the Dune Trail. Meet at the Nature Center.	Free w/ Park entry (\$3) Minimum: 5	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb
<b>Woodworking Workshop: Pickle &amp; Whimdiddle</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>November 18, Tuesday</b>	<b>6 PM</b>	<b>VDWOB</b>
Tim and Jeff Ormiston will be leading a woodworking workshop to show how to make a pickle and a whimdiddle. You must pre-register as there is LIMITED SPACE.	\$5/person MUST Pre-register by: 11/14 Min. 5, Max. 10	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb
<b>Home School Environmental Education: Habitats</b>		<b>Metea County Park</b>
<b>November 20, Thursday</b>	<b>9:30 AM – 11:30 AM</b>	<b>Nature Center Basement</b>
Come join us to learn about habitats. We will learn about what kinds of plants and animals live in different habitats, and the adaptations they need to survive. Recommended for grades 4-8, but all are welcome.	Cost: \$3 Register by email by 11/13	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:sschrock@allencountyparks.org">sschrock@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-3778 Sydney Schrock
<b>Book Discussions on "the Nature of Oaks"</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>November 21, Friday</b>	<b>6:00PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Please join Park Manager Natalie Haley fireside for an orientation into Doug Tallamy's "The Nature of Oaks".	Cost: Park Entry (\$3) Pre-register by: 11/18 Min. 5 Max. N/A	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:foxisland@allencountyparks.org">foxisland@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-3246 Natalie Haley

<b>Fall Scavenger Hunt</b>		<b>Metea County Park</b>
<b>November 22, Saturday</b>	<b>11 AM – 3 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Come bring the family to complete our fall scavenger hunt. Two scavenger hunts will be available, one for small children and one for older children and adults. Come choose your level of scavenger hunt and earn a special prize to take home! Come to the Nature center to collect the scavenger hunt then go out on the trails to complete.	Free with admission (\$3)	For more information: Email: <a href="mailto:sschrock@allencountyparks.org">sschrock@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-3778 Sydney Schrock

<b>Wolf Trees</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>November 22, Saturday</b>	<b>12:00-1:00PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Why do we leave up dead “wolf” trees? Who would do that? Join a park manager and find out the method to our madness while hiking the woods to investigate some of the wolf trees left standing at Fox Island.	Cost: Park Entry (\$3) Pre-register by: 11/19 Min. 5 Max. 25	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:foxisland@allencountyparks.org">foxisland@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-3246 Natalie Haley

<b>Dune Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>November 25, Tuesday</b>	<b>1:30 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Hike with the environmental educator on the Dune Trail. Meet at the Nature Center.	Free w/ Park entry (\$3) Minimum: 5	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Full Cold Moon Hike</b>		<b>Metea County Park</b>
<b>December 4, Thursday</b>	<b>7:30 PM</b>	
The cold light of the Cold Moon will illuminate our path (if it's not too cloudy). We'll investigate how our native animals survive the time of scarcity and cold, including frogcicles.	Cost: \$3 Pre-register by: 12/1 Min: 5 Max: 35	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:bdispenza@allencountyparks.org">bdispenza@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-8619 Bob Dispenza


<b>Nature Ornament Decoration</b>		<b>Metea County Park</b>
<b>December 6, Saturday</b>	<b>1 PM – 2 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center Basement</b>
Come and learn how we can give back to nature this Christmas season as you paint your own wooden Christmas ornament for your tree.	Cost: \$3 Pre-register by: 12/4 Max.25	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:sschrock@allencountyparks.org">sschrock@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-3778 Sydney Schrock

<b>Dune Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>December 9, Tuesday</b>	<b>1:30 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Hike with the environmental educator on the Dune Trail. Meet at the Nature Center.	Free w/ Park entry (\$3) Minimum: 5	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Preschool Storytime at the Aboite Library</b>		<b>Aboite Library</b>
<b>December 10, Wednesday</b>	<b>10:15 AM</b>	
E is for Evergreen. Join Eva Webb from Fox Island County Park for fun hands-on learning through stories & activities about Evergreen trees. This will be at the Aboite Branch Library. (For ages 2-5 years old)	FREE	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Nature Story Time</b>		<b>Metea County Park Nature Center</b>
<b>December 10, Wednesday</b>	<b>10:30 AM</b>	
<b>Winter Wonderland</b> Special guest Jennifer from Grabill Library will be here to share stories and activities all about our big, beautiful world. Then we will go outside to explore the story subjects in real life. This special nature storytime at Metea County Park happens on the second Wednesday of the month.	FREE Register at the Allen County Public Library site	Register here: <a href="https://acpl.libnet.info/events">https://acpl.libnet.info/events</a> For more information: Email: <a href="mailto:bdispenza@allencountyparks.org">bdispenza@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-8619 Bob Dispenza

<b>Monthly Mid-Day Drum Circle</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>December 12, Friday</b>	<b>1:30 PM</b>	<b>VDWOB</b>
Come to the Vera Dulin Wildlife Observation Building to partake in a community drum circle. Bring a drum if you have one. Limited drums and percussion instruments are available to borrow.	Free w/ entry (\$3) Pre-register by: 12/11 Min. 5 Max. 30	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Nature's Christmas at Metea</b>		<b>Metea County Park</b>
<b>December 13, Saturday</b>	<b>2:00-5:00PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Make handmade Christmas ornaments for gifts and join our annual tradition of celebrating the holidays with homemade cookies, horse-drawn hay rides, and a photo with Father Christmas - all nestled by the fire with a warm cocoa.	Cost \$5.00, ages 6 and under free	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:metea@allencountyparks.org">metea@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-8619 Bob Dispenza
		

<b>Holiday Story Walk</b>		<b>Metea County Park</b>
<b>December 15- January 12</b>	<b>All Day</b>	<b>Trails</b>
Even though our naturalists are taking a break for the Christmas season nature never stops being enjoyed. Come to the nature center and pick up a map for a holiday story planted along one of our trails at the park. Hike our trails and enjoy this holiday tale of the Christmas season.	Free with admission	For more information: Email: <a href="mailto:sschrock@allencountyparks.org">sschrock@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-3778 Sydney Schrock

<b>Dune Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>December 16, Tuesday</b>	<b>1:30 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Hike with the environmental educator on the Dune Trail. Meet at the Nature Center.	Free w/ Park entry (\$3) Minimum: 5	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Woodworking Workshop: Northern Cardinal</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>December 16, Tuesday</b>	<b>6 PM</b>	<b>VDWOB</b>
Tim and Jeff Ormiston are leading a woodworking workshop to show how to make a Northern Cardinal. Required Pre-register as there is LIMITED SPACE.	\$5/person MUST Pre-register by: 12/11 Min. 5, Max. 10	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Preschool Story Time &amp; Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>December 17, Tuesday</b>	<b>10:30 AM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Join environmental educator for a nature themed story time, E is for Evergreen, including songs, story, movement and a hike. This is for ages 2-5 years old.	Cost: \$3 Register by: 12/16 Min. 5, Max. 30	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Monthly Birding Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>December 20, Saturday</b>	<b>9:00 AM</b>	<b>VDWOB</b>
Join fellow birders for a birding hike. All levels of experience are welcome.	Free w/ park entry (\$3) Pre-register by: 12/19 Min. 5	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Women's Monthly Hike</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>December 20, Saturday</b>	<b>11 AM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Hike with other women who enjoy the outdoors. Meet at the Nature Center.	Free w/ Park entry (\$3) Preregister by 12/19 Minimum: 5	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Poetry in the Park Program</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>December 20, Saturday</b>	<b>1 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Fox Island County Park, in partnership with Poetz Portal Kollektiv is offering a meaningful poetry program as we gear up for winter.	Cost: \$10 <b>Preregister by: 12/18</b> Minimum: 5	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:ewebb@allencountyparks.org">ewebb@allencountyparks.org</a> Eva Webb

<b>Winter Solstice</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>December 21, Sunday</b>	<b>5 PM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Learn about the Winter Solstice in an evening around the fire at Fox Island. The Winter Solstice is the darkest day of the year on the eve of this solstice.	Cost: \$3.00 plus park entry, includes a smore! Pre-register by: 12/16 Min. 5 Max. N/A	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:foxisland@allencountyparks.org">foxisland@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-3246 Natalie Haley

<b>Winter Solstice Hike</b>		<b>Metea County Park Nature Center</b>
<b>December 21, Sunday</b>	<b>7:30 PM</b>	
The actual astronomical winter solstice takes place at 10:30 this morning. We will walk out into the winter woods on the longest night of the year.	Cost \$3 Pre-register by: 12/18 Min. 5 Max. 40	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:metea@allencountyparks.org">metea@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-8619 Bob Dispenza

<b>Christmas Bird Count</b>		<b>Fox Island County Park</b>
<b>December 27, Saturday</b>	<b>8:00 AM</b>	<b>Nature Center</b>
Join Three Rivers Birding in their annual Southwest Allen County Christmas Bird Count! Pre-register by Christmas Eve by contacting Cynthia Powers at <a href="mailto:zzedpowers@aol.com">zzedpowers@aol.com</a> ! You will be assigned an area of southwest Allen County to drive your car and look for birds. This is an adventure for you and/or your car companions. You must have at least one decent birder in your car! LOL. <i>Chili</i> will be served at Fox Island for lunch as we compile our morning bird sightings.	Cost: Park Entry \$3 Pre-register by: 12/22	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:foxisland@allencountyparks.org">foxisland@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-3246 Natalie Haley

<b>First Day Hike</b>		<b>Metea County Park Nature Center</b>
<b>January 1, 2026, Thursday</b>	<b>2 PM</b>	
The first day hike challenge is upon us. First Day Hikes are part of a nationwide initiative led by America's State Parks to encourage people to get outdoors. On New Year's Day, hundreds of free, guided hikes will be organized in all 50 states. Join us in this initiative by signing up to hike with a Naturalist. Let's get our hearts pumping in 2026 and enjoy the beauty found in your own Allen County Parks.	Cost: FREE Pre-register by: 12/29 Min. 5 Max. 35	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:metea@allencountyparks.org">metea@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-8619 Bob Dispenza

<b>Full Wolf Moon Hike</b>		<b>Metea County Park</b>
<b>January 3, 2026, Saturday</b>	<b>7:30 PM</b>	
We don't hear wolves around here anymore, but we now have coyotes. We'll stalk through the night woods learning about our local predators and how they get through winter.	Cost: \$3 Pre-register by: 1/1 Min: 5 Max: 35	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:bdispenza@allencountyparks.org">bdispenza@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-8619 Bob Dispenza

<b>Cross Country Ski Clinic</b>		<b>Metea County Park Nature Center</b>
<b>January 10, 2026, Saturday</b>	<b>10:00 AM - Noon</b>	
Learn: how equipment works, waxing vs. no-wax, purchasing, ski prep and maintenance, how to dress and receive basic instruction and practice on technique (weather permitting). Leave phone number and shoe size when registering in order to reserve equipment.	Cost: \$8.00 includes one hour rental (weather permitting) or voucher for future ski rental. \$3.00 if bringing your own equipment. Pre-register by: 1/07 Min: 5 Max: 15	To register or for more information: Email: <a href="mailto:metea@allencountyparks.org">metea@allencountyparks.org</a> Call: 449-8619 Bob Dispenza