

# Neal Smith

*National Wildlife Refuge*



## Special Events

### Audubon Christmas Bird Count

**Saturday, December 31**

**8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

Help scientists collect important data about our Iowa birds! Audubon's Christmas Bird Count is a great time to lend a hand and learn more about our feathered friends. Our findings will allow scientists to study the health of birds.

A FREE lunch will be provided by the Friends of NSNWR.

**Pre-registration is required by December 28, 2016.**



### Jolly Holiday Craft Party!

**Saturday, December 17**

**11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.**

Bring out your creative side for a crafty day at the refuge! Design your own Upcycled Animal Ornaments, build winter bird feeders, and more holiday creations **using all recycled or natural materials.**



### Cabin Fever Day

**Saturday, February 18**

**10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.**

Sick of being stuck indoors this winter? Then mark your calendars for Cabin Fever Day! Meet us at the refuge for games, crafts, movies, and more. Try your shot at our indoor archery range, create your own animal tracks, or enjoy a ranger-led snowshoe hike. All are welcome!



Like Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge on Facebook for event reminders!

# Program & Activity Guide

## Naturalist Programs

### Winter Naturalist Hike January 28 from 10:00 ~11:00 a.m.

Join a ranger to discover the secrets and beauty of nature in winter. Walk along the 1/2 mile Oak Savanna Trail to discover winter wildlife. To register or for more information, call the Refuge at 515/994-3400 or email Nancy\_corona@fws.gov. Bring your binoculars and/or camera!



### Impromptu Snowshoe Hikes!

A ranger leads visitors of all ages on snowshoe hikes. **When heavy snow falls, check our Facebook page to know if there is a hike!** Join the email list by contacting Brianna\_Patrick@fws.gov. Snowshoe rental is free! **Registration encouraged.**



| Date  | Time              | Age   |
|---|-------------------|---|
| Held on Saturdays;<br>dependent upon snowfall | 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm | All ages welcome!<br>Child & Adult Sizes<br>Available |

### Winter Photo Hikes

Photographers of all skill levels using a variety of camera types are invited to join a ranger-led walk. Discover the prairie flowers and wildlife using your lens. Meet at the Learning Center. Be prepared for the weather and walking off the trails. **Please pre-register by calling 515-994-3400 or email Doreen\_Vanryswyk@fws.gov.**



|                       |                   |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Saturday, January 21  | 7:00 am - 9:00 am |
| Saturday, February 18 | 7:00 am - 9:00 am |



For more information: (515) 994-3400 [http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Neal\\_Smith/](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Neal_Smith/)

# Children and Youth Programs

## Saturday Nature Tots

Children ages 3-5 are invited to bring their favorite adult and join us as we read stories, explore outside, make nature crafts, and much more! **Registration required.**

| Date       | Time              | Age      | Topic                           |
|------------|-------------------|----------|---------------------------------|
| December 3 | 10:30 am—11:30 am | 3Y to 5Y | Winter Wildlife Survival        |
| January 7  | 10:30 am—11:30 am | 3Y to 5Y | Big and Furry Bison             |
| February 4 | 10:30 am—11:30 am | 3Y to 5Y | Sparrows:<br>Our Backyard Birds |



## Indoor Archery and More! Saturday, Feb. 25 from 1:00 ~ 3:30 p.m.

Participants ages 11-16 are invited to spend a day discovering the art of archery! Being a great archer or bow hunter also means being a great naturalist! Students will use tools to develop their skills in wildlife watching, tracking, and archery. Instructors are certified by the National Archery Association. Limited space is available and pre-registration is required! To register, call the Refuge at 515/994-3400 or email Nancy\_corona@fws.gov

# Volunteer Opportunity

## Second Saturday Stewardship

Interested in giving back to the environment and your community? Stewardship volunteer programs occur on the second Saturday of each month at the Refuge.

To register, call the Refuge at 515/994-3400 or email Nancy\_corona@fws.gov.

| Date        | Time             | Age |
|-------------|------------------|-----|
| December 12 | 9:00 am—12:00 pm | All |
| January 9   | 9:00 am—12:00 pm | All |
| February 13 | 9:00 am—12:00 pm | All |



For more information: (515) 994-3400 [http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Neal\\_Smith/](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Neal_Smith/)

## Self-Guided

### Return to Wildness Movie

15 minutes

Film presentation about Neal Smith NWR is shown every hour on the half hour, or upon request. No group is too small!

The Prairie

### COME VISIT!

Learning Center and Visitor Center is open Monday through Saturday during winter months (Dec. 1-Feb. 28). The Visitor Center is **closed on federal holidays**. Hours are 9am-4pm, Monday—Saturday. Trails and Auto Tour are open daily from dawn to dusk.

### Outdoor Scavenger Hunts

How many birds do you see? Can you identify their tracks? Borrow a copy of a seasonal scavenger hunt and ID sheets at the front desk of the Visitor Center to use while you hike.

### Hiking Trails

Take a hike through the beautiful tallgrass prairie or oak savanna. Hiking trails are not maintained during the winter, but they are open. **Snowshoes are available to use for free on the trails, with a minimum 4 inches of snow.** Cross-country skiing is also permitted along firebreak trails. Brochures and maps are available at the Visitor Center.



| Trail             | Length   | Surface           | Habitat           |
|-------------------|----------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Overlook Trail    | 1/2 mile | Paved— Accessible | Tallgrass Prairie |
| Tallgrass Trail   | 2 miles  | Paved             | Tallgrass Prairie |
| Oak Savanna Trail | 1/2 mile | Gravel            | Oak Savanna       |
| Basswood Trail    | 1/2 mile | Grass             | Woodland          |



### Prairie Learning Center Exhibits

Come explore the interactive exhibits at the Prairie Learning Center! Exhibits include an underground maze, videos, drawing table, scavenger hunts, puppet theatre, and exploratory bison room.



### LET'S CRUISE

Enjoy the Refuge from the comfort of your vehicle on the 4 mile Auto Tour. This is the best way to see bison or elk. Check out a narrated interpretive CD of the route for FREE at the Visitor Center.



All programs are FREE & open to the public!