

## Neal Smith

*National Wildlife Refuge*



## Special Events

### Photo Hike with Bryan Hansel Friday, April 6 at 6:00 p.m.

Join professional photographer, Bryan Hansel, for a photo hike at the Refuge to learn about techniques of nature photography. Bryan is an award-winning landscape photographer and outdoor educator. He has over 25 years of photography experience with over 100 publication credits from magazines such as National Geographic, Outdoor Photographer and Lake Superior Magazine. To register call 515-994-3400 or email [Doreen\\_vanrswywk@fws.gov](mailto:Doreen_vanrswywk@fws.gov).



### Earth Day

Saturday, April 21, 9:00 a.m. ~ 12:00 p.m.

In honor of Earth Day, we invite volunteers to help us restore prairie and oak savanna ecosystems. During this event, volunteers will participate in stewardship activities. Groups and individuals are welcome. FREE lunch provided by the Friends of Neal Smith NWR. **Pre-registration is required.**



### International Migratory Bird Day and JDS Ceremony Saturday, April 28, 10:00 a.m. ~ 1:00 p.m.

Are you interested in birds? Spring is the perfect time to explore outside and search for birds! Join us for a ranger-led morning bird hike, raptor programs, crafts, and other activities. The program is open to the public and activities are free. The annual Junior Duck Stamp Ceremony will be held at 1:30 p.m. No lunch will be provided, so pack your own and stay for the day!



### Pedal the Prairie

Saturday, May 19, 9:00 a.m. ~ 1:00 p.m.

Join us for a spring bike ride on the Prairie Parkway Bike Trail! Ride among wildflowers, toss seed bombs, meet live animals, hike the trails, with games and other activities. Prairie Parkway (10 miles) and Family Fun Hike (1.5 miles) both start at 9:00. Activities until 1:00 p.m. Visitor Center open until 4:00 p.m. To register go to "Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge" on Facebook and click "Coming".



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



## 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.**

Email [Doreen\\_vanryswyk@fws.gov](mailto:Doreen_vanryswyk@fws.gov) or call 515/994-3400.

Date	Time	Age	Topic
March 3	10:30 am—11:30 am	3Y to 5Y	In Like a Lion?
April 7	10:30 am—11:30 am	3Y to 5Y	Signs of Spring
May 5	10:30 am—11:30 am	3Y to 5Y	Burrowing Buddies



## Photo Hikes



Day	Date	Time
Sunday	March 18	5:30 p.m - 7:30 p.m.
Saturday	April 14	6:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.
Sunday	May 20	6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Meet near the front entrance to the Prairie Learning Center. In case of cancellation, please check the Neal Smith NWR Facebook page for updates. Call 515-994-3400 or email [Doreen\\_vanryswyk@fws.gov](mailto:Doreen_vanryswyk@fws.gov) with questions or to register. **Registration encouraged.**

## Volunteer Opportunities

### Second Saturday Stewardship

Date	Time	Age
March 10	9:00 am—12:00 pm	All
April 14	9:00 am—12:00 pm	All
May 12	9:00 am—12:00 pm	All

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](mailto:Nancy_corona@fws.gov).





## DIY Prairie Series



Would you like to learn how to create your own prairie garden? From seed cleaning and planting to weed control, learn a new skill every month in this Do It Yourself Series. This series is held on select Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and will continue through July. This program is for aspiring prairie gardeners of all ages and experience. Individuals and groups are welcome! Wear comfortable clothing for inside and

Date	Time	Topic
March 10	10:00 am—11:00 am	Starting Seeds Indoors
April 14	10:00 am—11:00 am	Transplanting Seedlings
May 12	10:00 am—11:00 am	Preparing Your Site



## Self-Guided

### Movie: Return to Wildness

15 minutes

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

Visitor Center

**COME VISIT!**

hours are 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. every day. Walking trails and Auto Tour are open from dawn to dusk every day. The Visitor Center will be open for Memorial Day on Monday, May 28, 2018.

### Outdoor

### Scavenger Hunts

How many birds do you see? Can you identify flowers?

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. Try to find early blooming flowers, migrating birds, or new bison calves! Brochures and maps 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

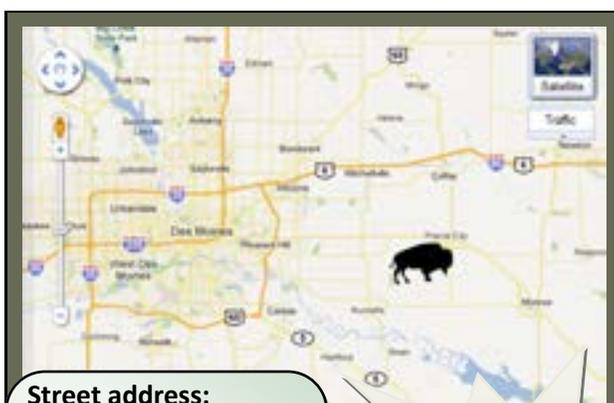


All programs are FREE and open to the public!

## Spring Exploration Ideas

Here are some spring activities that you can do by yourself or with friends and family:

- 1. Search for birds.** In the spring time, birds are active and arriving in Iowa from distant lands. Some are returning to Iowa to begin mating and nesting, while others are just passing through on their journey north.
- 2. Nurture sprouting plants.** Volunteer in our greenhouse and help prairie seedlings grow by transferring them to larger containers.
- 3. Find baby animals.** Most bison calves are born in the spring. Will you be the first one to find a calf in the herd? Other animals, like birds and burrowing animals, are also giving birth and raising their young. It is a great time to observe different animal families.
- 4. Explore** the interactive exhibits in the Prairie Learning Center.
- 5. Take a drive** on the Auto Tour and get a chance to see bison and elk.



### Street address:

Neal Smith NWR  
9981 Pacific Street  
Prairie City, IA 50228

25 miles from  
Des Moines!



## LET'S EXPLORE

Come explore the natural wonders Neal Smith NWR has to offer! Check out binoculars or a "Let's Go Outside Backpack" for FREE at the Visitor Center during normal business hours.

## Did you know...



... Each Spiderwort (*Tradescantia sp.*) has a cluster of buds with one or two flowers blooming for one morning and then wilting by mid-day? Another couple of buds blooms the next day.

## DIRECTIONS TO THE REFUGE

Coming from the EAST on Interstate 80, take the Colfax exit and go south on Iowa HWY 117, about 7 miles to Prairie City. The paved entry road is located at the southwest corner of Prairie City at the Highway 163-Prairie City interchange.

Coming from the WEST at the junction of Interstate 35 and 80, go east on Interstate 80 about 3 miles to the HWY 65 exit. Take HWY 65 south to Iowa HWY 163. At HWY 163 turn east and go about 15 miles to Prairie City. The paved entry road is located at the southwest corner of Prairie City at the Highway 163-Prairie City interchange.

