

WINTER ACTIVITIES ANNOUNCED FOR LOCAL STATE PARKS

-First Day Hikes kick off 2012 with a breath of fresh air-

The Niagara Region of the Office of New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation has announced its winter 2012 programming, which starts with a First Day Hike on January 1, 2012. As always, events are free and open to the public but registration is always encouraged due to limited space.

Activities are as follows:

Sunday, January 1

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

First Day Hike

Beaver Island State Park

Start the New Year on a healthy note and connect to the great outdoors on a fun hike along the Niagara River! In winter the unfrozen waters of the mighty Niagara attract arctic waterfowl and other birds in great numbers including Tundra Swans, Canvasback, Long-tailed, Goldeneye and Bufflehead ducks. In the event of deep snow we will outfit everyone with snowshoes to look for animal tracks and wildlife along the wooded trails. *For information and registration call (716) 549-1050.*

Sunday, January 1

2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

First Day Hike

Niagara Falls State Park

Join a naturalist at the oldest state park in our nation for a winter walk. We'll visit the Falls and Goat Island to see if they are decked out in winter white! Our discovery hike will also look to see if Niagara River's 2012 Ice Bridge is forming. *For information and registration call (716) 282-5154.*

Saturday, January 7

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Annual Winter Trails Day Walk

DeVeaux Woods State Park

Celebrate the 17th Annual Winter Trails Day with a power point presentation and a walk through an old growth woods. See huge trees over 150 years old! Snowshoes will be provided if there is sufficient snow. Bring your own skates as there is an ice rink available (weather permitting)! *For information and registration call (716) 282-5154.*

Sunday, January 8

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Lake Erie by Ski

Lake Erie State Park

Take a guided cross-country ski tour through the park on groomed trails ending with a breathtaking view of Van Buren Point! You must provide your own skis. *For information and registration call (716) 549-1050.*

Saturday, January 21

2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Glaciers and Creatures of the Ice Age

DeVeaux Woods State Park

Learn about the advance and retreat of glaciers. Did mammoths and mastodons live here? Learn where their remains have been found. See replica teeth. Hands-on activities will follow. *For information and registration call (716) 282-5154.*

Saturday, January 28

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Long Point Cross Country Ski

Long Point State Park

History and nature, old growth trees and more, ski the scenic views along the lakeshore. A glacial moraine rises above 1,300 feet and below Lake Chautauqua's waters are considered the most deep. The hills and forest block winds that are gusty, next to a lake renowned for its Musky! Now do a "Minturn" to head on back for some hot cocoa and a sweet snack! *For information and registration call (716) 549-1050.*

Saturday, February 4

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Ice Volcanoes of Lake Erie

Evangola State Park

Ice Volcanoes can erupt leaving a bizarre lunar landscape of cones, vents, mounds, ice caves and craters. Take a guided walk to learn frozen Lake Erie geology and how the ice volcanoes form. *For information and registration call (716) 549-1050.*

Saturday, February 4

2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Ice Bridges-100th anniversary of the "tragedy"

Niagara Falls State Park

Meet with a park naturalist at the Visitor's Center and see an Ice Bridge display. Learn of the 1912 tragedy and walk to the Falls to see if the annual ice bridge has formed. *For information and registration call (716) 282-5154.*

Saturday, February 18

10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Goat Island Icicles

Niagara Falls State Park

Park naturalists will lead a walk through a winter wonderland at Niagara Falls State Park. Optional “buy your own lunch” to follow at the Hard Rock Café. *For information and registration call (716) 282-5154.*

Saturday, February 25

1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Ice Volcanoes of Lake Ontario

Fort Niagara & Wilson Tuscarora State Parks

Meet at one of Fort Niagara’s historic buildings to view a power point presentation on Ice Volcanoes. We’ll visit the shoreline at Fort Niagara and Wilson Tuscarora State Parks in search of ice volcanoes. *For information and registration call (716) 282-5154.*

Saturday, March 3

10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Birding on the River

Beaver Island & Buckhorn Island State Parks

Join us as we search for migratory waterfowl and other wintering birds found along the shores of the Niagara River. We will visit the new lagoon overlook as well as a few of the many viewing areas you will find in our state parks on Grand Island. *For information and registration call (716) 282-5154.*

Saturday, March 24

1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Maple Sugaring 101

Evangola State Park

It’s that time of year again! Maple sugaring time that is! Park naturalists will give an indoor presentation about the maple sugaring process. An informal outdoor hands-on presentation will follow. Learn how to tap a tree and see the sap turn into syrup. *For information and registration call (716) 549-1050.*

Friday, March 30

6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Night Sounds

Evangola State Park

Listen for the sleigh bell serenade of Spring Peepers under shooting stars and a copper Mars. Will the Wood Frogs quack and the Timber Doodles twitter? Do Screech Owls whinny and can Barred Owls call for dinner? Find out on a journey through dusk into the world of night! *For information and registration call (716) 549-1050.*

State Park Naturalists will also be present at the following special events throughout Western New York:

Village of Williamsville Winterfest

Sunday, February 12

Glen Park

Free snowshoe loan for a limited time. Snow-shoes will be available 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

This *Winterfest* is sponsored by the Village of Williamsville Recreation Department.

42nd Annual Gem, Mineral and Fossil Show

*Sponsored by the
Buffalo Geological
Society:*

Saturday, March 24

10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 25

10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Erie County Fairgrounds

Hamburg, NY, Route #62

See our state park interpretive display. Visit with a naturalist and enjoy hands-on activities.