



U.S. Department of the Interior News Release

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Interior Department Announces National Park Week Celebrating Nation's Parks and American Heritage

From April 17-25, outdoor enthusiasts encouraged to recreate responsibly with variety of events

WASHINGTON – The Department of the Interior today announced that [National Park Week](#) – an annual weeklong celebration of America's national parks – will run from April 17 to April 25. National Park Week encourages the public to explore the vast network of our national parks, sacred sites, and historical landmarks, as well as our shared heritage contained within them.

"Every national park has its own unique story to tell, yet so much of our nation's shared heritage can be found in the towering forests and vast desert expanses that make up our National Park System," **said Interior Secretary Deb Haaland**. "The outdoors has also proven to be a welcome refuge during the past year of the pandemic. I encourage everyone to enjoy the beauty and wonder of our national parks safely and responsibly."

To kick off National Park Week, every national park will have a free admission day on Saturday, April 17. The public is asked to [recreate responsibly](#) when visiting parks, including following rules requiring masks when physical distancing cannot be maintained, or to explore parks virtually through a variety of engaging online activities. Visit nps.gov/npweek or nationalparkweek.org for more virtual programming.

The National Park Service invites everyone to participate in a Twitter chat preview of National Park Week on April 16 at 1 p.m. Join the conversation and share favorite memories, tips and stories about national parks using the hashtag #NationalParkWeek.

"National Park Week is always a great reminder of the wide variety of sites, parks and programs available for the public to explore in-person or online," **said National Park Service Deputy Director Shawn Benge**. "Throughout the week, 'travel' to national parks through virtual tours and other entertaining and educational digital activities designed to connect visitors with the vast network of historical, cultural, inspirational and recreational parks across the country."

"The National Park Foundation and our park partners celebrate the full diversity of our parks. They come in all shapes and sizes. They are urban and rural, natural and manmade. They each have their own, unique story, perspective and experience to share with all of us that, when

taken together, really tell the American story,” **said National Park Foundation President and CEO Will Shafroth.** “And each of us has an important role to play in helping to preserve and protect these special places.”

The 2021 National Park Week theme days are:

Saturday, April 17: Free Admission and [ParkRx Day](#)

Spending time in parks and nature benefits overall physical and mental health and wellness. In honor of the NPS’ century-long collaboration with the Office of Public Health, National Park Week begins with ParkRx Day! Enjoy a free admission visit to recreate responsibly in a national park near you.

Sunday, April 18: [VIP \(Volunteers in Parks\) Sunday](#)

With over 400 national park sites to manage, NPS volunteers play a critical part in helping parks thrive. From clearing trails and providing directions to assisting visitors through museum collections, volunteers help all of us enjoy national parks.

Monday, April 19: [Military Monday](#)

National parks provide military members, past and present, with places for reflection and recreation where they can experience the comradery, solace, and healing that nature offers. In gratitude for their service, free annual passes are available for all those who served in the U.S. Armed Forces. Learn more at nps.gov/subjects/military.

Tuesday, April 20: [Transformation Tuesday](#)

How have parks changed through the years? How will they change in the future? Some transformations in national parks have occurred naturally while others are the result of conservation and restoration projects. From restoring buildings to their historical appearance, to rehabilitating ecosystems, to the maturation of wildlife, to incorporating emerging technology, learn how and why parks and their features have transformed through the years.

Wednesday, April 21: [Wayback Wednesday](#)

Take a look at some of your favorite parks then and now. How has the view changed? Who else has stood in the same spot in the past? Learn about the living landscapes, historical battlefields, ancient ancestral structures, homes of prominent people, and buildings that are tangible reminders of the ever-evolving U.S. story.

Thursday, April 22: [Earth Day](#)

A global celebration encouraging all people to learn more about and care for the planet, Earth Day is the perfect time to reflect on the natural wonders that the NPS helps to protect.

Friday, April 23: [Friendship Friday](#)

Caring for our parks is a big job. Park partners have played an important role since the NPS was founded in 1916, and this tradition of generous, committed support continues today with individuals, groups and communities helping preserve and enhance the national park experience.

Saturday, April 24: [Junior Ranger Day](#)

The NPS Junior Ranger program provides fun and engaging ways for young people to connect with our country's heritage and landscapes, both virtually and in-person.

Sunday, April 25: [BARK Ranger Day](#)

National parks are fun to share with those we love – including those of the fluffy variety! BARK Ranger principles ensure a pet's visit to a park is fun and safe.

For more information, please visit [NPS.gov/npweek](https://www.nps.gov/npweek) and nationalparkweek.org.

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