

Caverns Stargazing Campout

On Friday, August 29th, Lewis & Clark Caverns will again host “Star Gazing Under the Caverns Sky” with Thomas Satterly. Satterly is one of our favorite presenters and we are happy to have him back for our Eighth annual stargazing campout. He will have at least one large reflecting telescope on hand to give everyone a chance to gaze upon some unique features of the night sky. Besides star gazing Satterly will offer some wonderful interpretation on how people enjoy the night sky.

The event is \$15 per family and \$20 for non-resident families which includes camping in the group use area and breakfast at the campground’s pavilion the morning of Saturday August 30th. Space is limited for this wonderful family opportunity so sign up as soon as possible. **Reservations are required for the special event campout & breakfast.** The programs begin at 8:30 pm and campers can start setting up their site at 6:30 PM.

For more information call (406) 287-3541

All regular campground programs and nature walks are free to Montana Residents

Non residents are required to pay a \$5 day use fee, or be registered campers at the park to enjoy these programs



Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park Interpretive Events Summer 2014



Cave Tours offered daily

May 1 to September 30

Tour Times:

May 1 to June 14: 9:00AM to 4:30PM
June 15 to Aug 19: 9:00AM to 6:30PM
Aug 20 to Sept 30: 9:00AM to 4:30PM

Tour Fees: Adults: \$10
Children 6-11: \$5
Children 5 and under: free



About the Cave Tour

Situated between Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks, Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park is an excellent stop along the road as well as a premier destination. The cave tour is the interpretive focus of the park and approximately 50,000 people a year enjoy the tour. It continues to be the park’s biggest draw. The cave is one of the most decorative in the Northwestern United States and is the only show cave in Montana.

Cave tours take around 2 hours and require 2 miles of walking including a three-quarter mile hike to the cave with 300 feet in elevation gain. Inside the cave stooping and bending are required and there are 600 stairs most of which are downhill. Visitors are encouraged to bring water with them during the warmer months, but no other food or drinks are allowed inside the cave. Photography is allowed in the cave, but a flash is needed for good pictures. The cave is electrically lit and flashlights are not necessary. Sturdy rubber soled walking shoes and a sweater or light jacket are highly recommended for the 50° cave.



Cathedral Room

Special Interpretive Events

Bat Week

Due to the success we had the last few years, August 5 to August 9 will be our fifth annual Bat Week at Lewis & Clark Caverns. There will be two special tours, “**The Misunderstood Bat**” will occur on Tuesday the 5th and Wednesday the 6th at 6:45. Bat programs will be held Thursday and Friday night in the campground featuring bats and the important roles they play in our lives. There will also be two night time bat walks as well. For fees and reservations please call.



Townsend's Big-eared Bat

Birding Day

This summer Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park will again host a day for the birds. Our fifth annual birding day will be on June 21st meeting at 8:00 AM at the Main (lower) Visitor Center. We will be visiting the park’s different bird habitats throughout the morning through several short hikes. Several birds uncommon to this region are found in the park as are some of Montana’s best known birds making a great combination for new and experienced birders.

Other Opportunities

If you are bringing a group to the park for a special occasion you can request a naturalist program for a fee. Call ahead for fees and availability. Topics include: the history, geology, flora, fauna and even archaeology of the park and the area.

Special programs require advanced registration. Space is limited so call (406) 287-3541 to make a reservation today.

75h Anniversery Friday Night Campfire Programs

- May 23 8 PM “Float Smart Water Safety Workshop”
T.E. Lewis, Float Smart Founder
- May 30 8 PM “Geologic History of the Madison Limestone”
Alan English, Research Hydrogeologist
MT Bureau of Mines & Geology (MBMG)
- Jun 6 8 PM “Montana Historic Earthquakes”
Mike Stickney, Earthquake Guru MBMG
- Jun 13 8 PM “Nature Songs & Facts for the Young at Heart”
Donna Weldon, Musician, Cave Tour Guide
- Jun 20 8 PM “Penny Post Cards & Prairie Flowers”
Philip Burgess, Humanities MT **HM**
- Jun 27 8 PM “Hides and Seek”
Carla Wambach, Environmental Educator
- Jul 4 8 PM “Butte, the Cosmopolitan City of Montana”
Tom Satterly, **HM**
- Jul 11 8 PM “The Indian Education of Lewis & Clark”
Hal Stearns, Historian **HM**
- Jul 18 8 PM “Songs We Used to Sing”
Janet Zimmerman, Musician
- Jul 25 8 PM “The Haunted Outdoors”
Ellen Baumler, MT Historicl Society
- Aug 1 8 PM “Volcanism and Stratigraphy of the lower Deer Lodge Valley ”
Kaleb C. Scarberry, MBMG
- Aug 8 8 PM “Montana’s Bats & the White-nose Threat”
Bryce Maxell, MT Natural Heritage
- Aug 15 8 PM “GPS: Are We There Yet?”
Steven Hamilton, Science Teacher, Environmental Consultant, Park Staff, Mayor.
- Aug 22 8 PM “Montana Raptors”
Becky Kean, Director, MT Raptor Center

Aug 29 6:30 PM “Stargazing Event”

HM designates “Humanities Montana” presenters. For further information on Friday Night Campfire Programs contact the park at (406) 287-3541

Thursday Night Ranger Programs

Thursday evening programs will be presented by Park Ranger Tom Forwood and other park staff. Starting on May 29th these programs focus on the history, ecology and geology of the park and surrounding area. These programs cater to visitors of all ages and experience levels. All talks meet in the campground amphitheater or at the Main (lower) Visitor Center @ 8:00 PM. For further info call (406) 287-3541 or email fwptforwood@gmail.com.

7th Anniversery Special Programs

We will once again be offering a special **Bat Tour** on Friday May 23 at 5:30 PM. The Bat Tours are \$10 adults and \$5 children 11 and under.

Birding By Ear: On Sunday May 25 at 10:30 AM we will have a free workshop program featuring phonetics, recordings and actual birds. Visitors will be given the oppurtunity to learn some common and even some unusual birds of the park and the area. The last portion of the workshop will be a moderate hike to one of the park’s best birding areas.

After Dark Programs: Three special late night events will again be held this year as well. **“Things that go Bump”**, a special night walk returns on Thursday June 19th at 9PM, preceded by a Night Sounds Program at 8PM.

On Tuesday August 12 at 9:30 PM we will be meeting in the campground amphitheater for the largest **meteor shower** of the summer, the famed Perseid Meteor Shower.

For all After Dark Programs warmer clothing, bug spray, water and snack are recommended. Flashlights may be brought, but are usually not needed.

Music in the Mountains: A celebration of 75 years of Montana State Parks.

On Sunday July 27 and Saturday August 23 we will have two days of music in the park. With performances starting sometime in the morning and going throughout the day. For details call the park.

Saturday Naturalist Walks

Our naturalist led walks feature the diverse wildflower and bird species of Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park. As always changing of the season and the different park ecosystems will be highlighted. The walks will be held at different times, so please check times or call Tom @ (406) 287-3541

This season all walks will meet at the park’s Main Visitor Center east of the campground.

May 3 8:00 PM “Let’s go Owling!” A walk up the park road at night to hear and maybe see some of the park’s owls. (2+ miles)

May 10. 11:00 AM, “DanMor Gypsum Mine Loop” A longer hike from the campground out to the park’s historic gypsum mine that features flowers, birds and other wildlife along the way (2.5 miles)

May 17. 11:00 AM, “In Plain Sight” We will try to find the chocolate Lily, right before our eyes. (1 mile)

May 24. 9:00 AM “The Greer Gulch Loop” a hike on our park’s oldest trail for many great wildflowers, birds, great views and more. (2.2 miles)

May 31. 10:00 AM “The Upper Loop” Great birding, good flowers and more on this fairly rigorous hike. (~4 miles)

June 7. 6:00 PM “The Nature Loop” a short easy walk along the park’s riparian nook. (.25 miles)

June 14. 11:30 AM “Park Wildflowers Day” We will have 2 walks featuring some of the best wildflower patches in the park. (.5 to 2 miles)

June 21. 8:00 AM “6th Annual Birding Day” We will have walks throughout the day to some of our best habitats to see many different park birds. (3+ miles spread out)

June 28. 9:00 AM ”Sheep Gulch” This will be our most rugged hike of the year as we team up with the Audubon Society and go off trail to see a chunk of the park that is still undeveloped. (4+ miles)

Naturalist Walks cont.

July 4. 9:00 AM “Mining and the River” We will take a short walk along the bank of the Jefferson River and follow it up with a 1.5 mile round trip hike to the park’s historic gypsum mine.

July 5 9:00 PM “Riverside Bats” Join us for a walk along the Jefferson River, one of the park’s life centers to see and hear who is hunting on a summer night.

July 12 **TBA**

July 19 9:00 AM “The Old Fire Rd” A hike to the view behind cave mountain. (1.5 miles)

July 26 9:00PM “The Night White” One of the park’s largest flowers blooms late season, and after the sun has left it’s petals. Come check out the White Blazing Star. (short walk)

August 2 **TBA**

August 9 9:00 PM “Spotted Bat” We will take a night walk centered on finding North America’s only audible echolocator, the Spotted Bat. (1 to 2 miles)

August 16 9:00 AM “Along the Jeff” A walk along the banks of the Jefferson River to see late season flowers.

August 23 **TBA** Nite walk

August 30 8:30 AM “Greer Gulch Loop” Another trip around the park’s most diverse 2 miles. (2.2 miles)

For walks less than a mile, distance is not noted. Times subject to change and other walks not listed above may become available. For more information on any of these programs contact Tom Forwood @ (406) 287-3541 or fwptforwood@gmail.com.



Evening Ranger Programs

Thursday evening programs will be presented by Park Ranger Tom Forwood and other park staff. These programs focus on the history, ecology and geology of the park and surrounding area. These programs cater to visitors of all ages and experience levels. All talks that meet in the campground amphitheater will be moved to the Main (lower) Visitor Center in the case of inclement weather. For further info call (406) 287-3541 or email fwptforwood@gmail.com.

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| Sunday May 25 7:00 PM
Campground parking area | “The Amazing Atlatl” A Hands on program introducing people to the world’s oldest compound hunting implement, the Atlatl. |
| Thursday May 29 8:00 PM
Amphitheater | “Can I Eat This?” Edible, Medicinal and Toxic Plants commonly found during spring in the park. |
| Thursday June 5 8:00 PM
Amphitheater | “Snakes of Western Montana” The name says it all, the snakes that are found in this part of the state and amazing adaptations they possess. |
| Thursday June 12 8:00 PM
Main Visitor Center | “Who’s that Singing?” Birds of the park and their amazing songs and the different places we find them. |
| Thursday June 19 8:00 PM
Amphitheater | “Things That Go Bump” A short program on night sounds followed by a walk up the park road to hear park night sounds and learn about who makes them. |
| Thursday June 26 8:00 PM
Main Visitor Center | “Geology Rocks” A step by step discussing of all the amazing layers of rock in the park, how they got there and why some of them are so significant. |
| Thursday July 3 7:00 PM
Main Visitor Center | “A History of the Park” Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park ties into all aspects of Main Montana’s history, from exploration to the mining years, to our first state park. |
| Thursday July 10 8:00 PM | TBD |
| Thursday July 17 8:00 PM
Amphitheater | “Cave Rocks in a New Light” In the cave touching formations is forbidden, but this programs gives people a chance to handle some formation and see them in the light of day. |
| Thursday July 24 8:00 PM
Amphitheater | “Jefferson River Life” An introduction to some of the smaller creatures that live in the famous Jefferson River. |
| Thursday July 31 8:00 PM
Main Visitor Center | “The Hazards and Obstacles of Lewis & Clark” A telling of the many hardships they ran into in Montana and the way the Corps of Discovery handled them. |
| Thursday August 7 8:00 PM
Main Visitor Center | “The Misunderstood Bat” Come learn about our bats and all of the myths and misconceptions that have led to a very unfair and undeserved bad reputation. |
| Thursday August 14 8:00 PM
Amphitheater | “Can I Eat This Now?” A late season return to the park flora that you do or do not want to ingest. |
| Thursday August 21 8:00 PM | TBD |