

Dive Into the Wonders of Wetlands at Huntley Meadows Park

Celebrate the beauty and significance of wetlands at Huntley Meadows Park during Wetlands Awareness Day on Sunday, May 5, from noon to 4 p.m. Immerse yourself in this natural sanctuary, home to a nationally significant historic house, enchanting forests and expansive wetlands teeming with life.

Experience the best wildlife watching in the Washington Metropolitan Area as you stroll along forested paths and traverse immersive boardwalk trails. Encounter live raptors, reptiles and amphibians through up-close views and interactive displays. This family-friendly event invites everyone, including your neighbors, to explore the park's diverse ecosystems and learn about the vital roles played by its plants and animals.

Wetlands play a crucial role in maintaining ecological balance and providing various benefits to both the environment and society. Biodiversity hotspots, flood control, water purification, carbon sequestration and recreation are the top five reasons for the conservation and protection of wetlands.

These unique ecosystems support numerous species, contribute to water quality, mitigate climate change and provide recreational opportunities.

Grab a discovery guide upon check-in and visit different activity stations, collecting stamps along the way to earn a delightful prize. Rain or shine, this free event promises a fun and educational day for the whole family. For more information or to register visit page 92.



HIDDEN GEM



ELLANOR C. LAWRENCE PARK

At the northeast corner of the bustling new intersection of Route 28 and I-66 is Ellanor C. Lawrence Park (ECLP), a 650-acre park with a history that spans 8,000 years. This historic park, generously donated by the Lawrence family, is mostly forested and includes streams, a pond, and is home to many species of plants and animals. Inside the Walney Visitor Center you can learn about the natural and cultural



fires. The site can host birthday parties, and the historic mill

history of the park, see live reptiles and amphibians, enjoy children's hands-on activities or pick from a broad range of programs on nature and history topics. There are nature camps, school field trips and scout programs. Public programs include wagon rides, van tours and camp-

can be rented for private events. Summer also brings Arts in the Parks programs.

Trails also course past historic cultural resources that remain from the parkland's days as a farm. Buildings include an 18th century mill, a miller's house and outbuildings. You might get a smile out of the fake meat hanging in the smokehouse. If you visit during cold weather months, look for the black rat snakes hibernating in the ice house. Artifacts dating back to prehistoric

years have been found at ECLP. Pick up the historic tour map brochure and take a "Walk Through Time"!

Learn more about this historic park at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/ecl

