



Illinois
Department of
**Natural
Resources**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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February Newsbits from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) is sharing the following upcoming events and noteworthy items for February 2026.

Feb. 1

Meet Wanda the Groundhog

Starved Rock State Park

Oglesby | LaSalle County

Enjoy a special Groundhog Day celebration where we explore the science and stories behind this famous tradition. Discover fun facts and meet Wanda the groundhog. Visit the [Starved Rock calendar](#) online for additional information.

Feb. 5

Tot Time: Winter Critters

Illinois State Museum

Springfield | Sangamon County

Tots and their adults will have fun exploring, discovering and learning about a different topic the first Thursday of every month. Participants will enjoy learning all about the animals that thrive during the wintertime here in Illinois. Admission is free. Visit the [Illinois State Museum's website](#) for additional information.

Feb. 5

Tot Time: Winter Critters

Dickson Mounds Museum

Lewistown | Fulton County

Tots and their adults will have fun exploring, discovering and learning about a different topic on the first Thursday of every month. Participants will enjoy learning all about the animals that thrive during the wintertime here in Illinois. Admission is free. Learn more on the [Illinois State Museum-Dickson Mounds](#) website.

Feb. 4-5, 11-12, 18-19, 25-26

Art, Date and Game Nights

Dana-Thomas House State Historic Site

Springfield | Sangamon County

View the home designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and enjoy a special night out. The Dana-Thomas House State Historic Site will host a variety of special themed evenings throughout February. For additional details and to register visit [Eventbrite](#).

Feb. 7

**Fulton-Mason Eagle Day
Dickson Mounds Museum**

Lewistown | Fulton County

Check out fun, free activities from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., including live raptor programs, hands-on activities and crafts for kids, activities at Dickson Mounds Museum, and bird watching in various locations near Lewistown and Havana in Fulton and Mason counties. [Go online](#) for locations and a list of the day's activities. Fulton-Mason Eagle Day is sponsored by the City of Lewistown, Forbes and Illinois River Biological Stations, Illinois River Road National Scenic Byway, Illinois State Museum-Dickson Mounds, Lewistown Chamber of Commerce, Therkildsen Field Station at Emiquon, The Nature Conservancy, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Illinois River Refuges Complex.

Feb. 7

**Children's Story Time: Lincoln's Hat
Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site**

Lerna | Coles County

Come enjoy a reading of a historically themed children's book followed by activities and crafts. This free program helps to engage youngsters ages 5 to 10 in American history and brings stories to life. All youths must be accompanied by an adult. Email education@lincolnlogcabin.org for more information.

Feb. 7

**Lincoln's birthday celebration
Vandalia Statehouse State Historic Site**

Vandalia | Fayette County

Celebrate Abraham Lincoln's birthday and America's 250th anniversary with a special, free event on Saturday, Feb. 7. The event will take place between 2 and 4 p.m. in the House of Representatives chamber where Abraham Lincoln served.

Feb. 7

**Valentine's cookie decorating workshop
Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site**

Lerna | Coles County

Join Rebecca Clark, the Nerdy Baker, on Saturday, Feb. 7 for a hands-on guided cookie-decorating workshop. Piping bags, icing and a cookie scribe will be provided. Participants will take home an assortment of decorated cookies.

[Register online.](#)

Feb. 7

**Winter tree identification hike
Argyle Lake State Park**

Colchester | McDonough

Join IDNR staff at 10 a.m. at the visitors' center for a discussion about trees in winter and how to identify them. Then set off on a hike to test out your identification skills. Visit [Argyle Lake](#) online for additional details.

Feb. 7

**Lincoln's birthday celebration
David Davis Mansion State Historic Site**

Bloomington | McLean County

Celebrate Abraham Lincoln's birthday at this free event. Children and their families will get to meet and take pictures with Abraham Lincoln and enjoy birthday cake at the home of one of Lincoln's closest friends and political allies, Judge David Davis. Follow David Davis Mansion's [event calendar](#) for details.

Feb. 7, 21, 28

Black History Nights

Old State Capitol State Historic Site

Springfield | Sangamon County

Enjoy special Black History Month programming at 5 p.m., 5:45 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. each night. Follow the [Springfield State Historic Sites](#) Facebook for additional information.

Feb. 14

Kid's Crafter-noon

Dickson Mounds Museum

Lewistown | Fulton County

Spend an afternoon making fun arts and crafts at the museum. A variety of supplies and materials will be available for children to create pieces to take home. The free program begins at 2 p.m. All ages are welcome with adult supervision. Learn more on the [Illinois State Museum-Dickson Mounds](#) website.

Feb. 14

Valentine's Walk

Black Hawk State Historic Site

Rock Island | Rock Island County

Spend an evening outdoors as luminaries light the trails at Black Hawk State Historic Site. Enjoy hot cocoa, cider, and musical entertainment at the Watch Tower Lodge from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. For additional information visit www.blackhawkpark.org or call 309-788-9536.

Feb. 14

Loving Lincoln: Lincoln's birthday open house and book signing

Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site

Lerna | Coles County

Stacy Lynn, author of "Loving Lincoln: A Personal History of the Women Who Shaped Lincoln's Life and Legacy," will be on site for a book signing and book talk at 2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 14. Copies of the book may be purchased at the Goosenest Prairie Gift Shop. Visit Lincoln Log Cabin's [online calendar](#) for additional details.

Feb. 14

Owl You Need is Love program

Starved Rock State Park

Oglesby | LaSalle County

Experience a lovely evening with ambassador owls this Valentine's Day. Northern Illinois Raptor Rehab and Education will lead a live animal presentation about owls at the Starved Rock State Park visitors' center. Visit the [Starved Rock calendar](#) online for additional information.

Feb. 16

Night of the Stars

Lincoln Trail State Park

Marshall | Clark County

Experience a lovely evening under the stars at this event co-hosted by the University of Illinois Astronomy Department. Visitors will learn about constellations and will use telescopes for night sky viewing. Meet at 7 p.m. at the park restaurant, 16985 E. 1350th Road in Marshall. For additional details call 217-826-2222 or follow [Lincoln Trail State Park](#) on Facebook.

Feb. 24

Winter Watercolors

Pere Marquette State Park

Grafton | Jersey County

Celebrate the beauty of the season at Pere Marquette State Park. Enjoy a cozy afternoon of painting the park's natural winter landscapes. All materials will be provided. This is a free, family-friendly event. Reservations are recommended; call 618-786-3323 or email menachem.smolianski@illinois.gov.

Feb. 28

Art in the Park workshop

Starved Rock State Park

Oglesby | LaSalle County

Starved Rock State Park will host an introduction to the Zentangle Method, an easy-to-learn, relaxing and fun way to create beautiful images by drawing structured patterns called tangles. [Register](#) online at Starved Rock Eventbrite.

Feb. 28

From Glaciers to Genocide

Giant City State Park

Makanda | Jackson County

Learn the history of the Mississippi River Valley from glaciers to the Illiniwek. Follow [Giant City State Park](#) on Facebook for more information.

Follow IDNR on [Facebook](#) and its [online calendar](#) of events for further information. View the full list of IDNR [seasonal events](#) online.

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