

Lost Dutchman State Park's Featured Hikes and other Outdoor Programs in December

PHOENIX - Please join us for interpretive ranger and volunteer naturalist guided hikes and family-oriented programs at Lost Dutchman State Park in December 2016. Fees for guided hikes and programs are included in the park entry fee of \$7 per vehicle. Reservations are not required unless specified in the program description.

Thursday, December 8: Bird Walk, 9 a.m.

Join volunteer "birder Vera" for a morning of discovering the birds of the desert. Learn how to identify the birds in your back yard, the proper use of binoculars, where to find birds in our area and then take a guided walk through the desert to practice new skills. Bring binoculars if you have them, appropriate clothing, water and enthusiasm, but **no dogs or small children** please. Expect to have some surprises and fun! Meet at the Native Plant Trail parking area on the right before reaching the ranger station for orientation. Participants will then relocate to Cholla Parking Area.

Saturday, December 10: Dr. Sky, 7 p.m.

Join **Dr. Sky**, a radio/TV journalist based in Phoenix, for **An Amazing Night Under the Skies**. What planets will we see in the dark desert sky? Dress warmly and be prepared to be amazed at the sightings. Palo Verde Day Use parking (weather permitting).

Sunday, December 11: Full Moon Hike, 7-9 p.m.

Join us for a guided 2.5 mile hike on Jacob's Crosscut Trail at the base of the mysterious Superstition Mountains. Hikers should dress appropriately and wear trail shoes or boots. Please bring a flashlight in case of cloudy conditions. **Some parts of the trail are rocky and uneven with occasional steep grades** (elevation gain: 120'). Participants should be in good health with no walking or night vision difficulties. Trail is NOT suitable for strollers or walkers. After the hike gather round the campfire for a marshmallow roast (marshmallows and sticks provided). **No pets, please**. Parking in Cholla Day Use area. **There is a limit of 100 hikers, so please call in advance to reserve your space: (480) 982-4485.**

Wednesday, December 14: Getting to Know the Birds Around You, 9 a.m.

Meeting in the Saguaro Day Use area, there will be a brief discussion about how to tell one bird from another, then we'll be looking for resident birds (from hawks to hummingbirds) and for any late migrants on their way south. After birding the Saguaro Day use area, we'll look for birds as we walk up toward Jacob's Crosscut Trail. We'll make the short loop around and back to Saguaro Day Use lot, birding as we go. This is more of an "amble" than a hike as we let the birds come to us. Bring binoculars, water and wear sturdy trail shoes. **No dogs, please**. Led by volunteer "Birder Babs."

Wednesday December 21: Exploring Siphon Draw Trail, 9 a.m.

Join us at Siphon Draw Trailhead for a 4.2 round trip hike to the basin (slick rock waterfall area). Along the way we will pass some remnants of an unsuccessful mining attempt, identify strangely named rock formations and look at layers of rock from the volcanic explosion that make up this portion of the Superstition Mountain, all of this while hiking the steady uphill grade on a less than smooth trail. Elevation change - 1030 ft. Wear sturdy trail or hiking shoes, carry at least 2 bottles of water and bring a snack for a 3 hour moderately strenuous hike. Led by volunteer hiking leader Grady.

Wednesday, December 28: Sunset Hike, 4:45 p.m.

Following the Treasure Loop trail to Jacobs Cross Cut and intersecting with Siphon Draw Trail will find hikers marveling at the mountain and the sky full of color, especially when there are a few clouds. A photographer's delight! Elevation change is 102 ft. on very well maintained trails. **Easy** two-hour hike. Wear hiking shoes and

carry water. Bring a flashlight for return to parking lot. Meet at Saguaro Day Use area. Led by volunteer hiking leader Barbara.

Friday, December 30: Star Talk 7:30 p.m.

Learn about the night sky, constellations and planets with local astronomer Bill Dellings. Parking and seating at campground amphitheater.

WHAT: Guided Hikes and other programs

WHERE: Lost Dutchman State Park – Located at 6109 N Apache Trail, Apache Junction.