

2025 CLASS DESCRIPTIONS AND EVENT OVERVIEW



Please use these descriptions to help you select the classes you would like to attend. Mark your class selections on the "Class Selection Form".

Be sure to indicate your 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choices for each time period. Please note that some are three-hour courses.

If you register for a class, it is expected that you will attend the class and not switch to another as there are caps on most of the sessions.

Whenever you see "Free Time" on the class selection form, it is your invitation to do you! Hang a hammock, read a book, take a nap, catch up with new and existing friends, take a solo hike ... your options are limited only by your imagination. This is your invitation to rest and restore or kick it up a notch with something vigorous.

FRIDAY EVENING

Get Acquainted (Overview of the weekend, orientation to French Creek State Park, meet PA Parks & Forests Foundation, and connect with your fellow Outdoor Women). Before calling it a night, take part in a short UV glow hike or a stargazing opportunity.

SATURDAY MORNING

Archery. 2024 Women in the Big Woods tuition and the generosity of other donors saw the purchase of archery equipment for programming here at French Creek and Marsh Creek. Let's put it to use. (*Limit 10. Offered three times: Saturday morning at 10:00 AM, Saturday afternoon at 3:30 PM, and Sunday morning at 8:30 AM.*)

Beginner Mountain Biking. Join Marsh Creek mountain biker Jenn Stover and partner Bill in an introduction to their favorite sport. While the trails at French Creek are pretty technical and rocky so the aim here is to learn a few basics of bike maintenance, hone a few skills, and then put your newfound knowledge to good use on a ride. Jenn and Bill recommend wearing padded shorts and comfortable, breathable clothing, along with sturdy shoes (NO open-toed shoes or flip-flops). Recommended to carry on a ride: first aid kit, packable pump, spare tube, hand sanitizer, bug spray, water bottles/hydration pack, snacks, and tool kit. For now, if you are interested in riding the trails, you will need to bring your own bike and helmet. We are working on finding a few suitable loaner bikes. (*Limit 10. Offered Saturday morning at 8:30 AM. This is a three hour course.*)

Bird Watching. Discover the fascinating world of bird watching in this engaging and educational program run by one of Marsh Creek's awesome educators. Whether you are a novice or an experienced birder, this program offers a supportive environment to learn and share your passion for avian life. This program will provide you with the skills and confidence to enjoy bird watching on your own or with friends. Binoculars provided, feel free to bring your own! (*Offered once: Saturday morning at 8:00 AM.*)

Fly Fishing. Are you new to the sport of fly fishing? Need a refresher? Women from the Delaware Valley Women's Fly Fishing Association and friends will lead an Intro to Fly Fishing session where you'll learn about essential gear, knots, aquatic insects, flies and fly casting. All equipment provided. (*Limit 10. Offered once: Saturday morning at 8:30 AM.*)

Forest Hike. Take a leisurely and immersive hike through French Creek State Park while learning easy ways to identify trees, shrubs, and other local flora along with an introduction to Leave No Trace principles. The hike will be slow with frequent stops to look at different flora and maybe even some wildlife. Please wear appropriate footwear and clothing

for hiking. *(Limit 15/session. Offered once: Saturday morning at 10:00 AM; a longer three-hour immersive hike is offered Saturday afternoon at 1:00 PM.)*

Introduction to Map/Compass with Orienteering. Introduction to orienteering, to read a map and work with a compass to navigate to locations designated. Think of it as a treasure hunt on foot with a really good map. No need to buy a compass, we will lend you one for use in the class. *(Offered twice: Saturday and Sunday mornings at 10:00 AM.)*

Kayaking. Get out on the water with the French Creek and Marsh Creek educators and learn the basics of recreational kayaking. After a brief introduction of kayaking techniques and safety skills, our guides will outfit you with a personal flotation device (PFD), review the best ways to set up your boat and go over a variety of paddling strokes. Once comfortable on the water, we'll set out on a relaxing paddle and a new adventure. Along the way, our expert guides will share their kayaking knowledge and history of the area. All necessary paddling equipment is provided. *(Limit 20/session. Offered twice: Saturday afternoon at 1:30 PM, and Sunday morning at 10:00 AM.)*

Safety in the Outdoors. Join park educational staff for an empowering and informative session for women who love to explore the great outdoors. We'll provide tips and strategies to stay safe while hiking, backpacking, and camping, leaving you feeling more prepared and empowered to take on your next adventure! *(Offered once: Saturday morning at 8:00 AM.)*

Sky-Viewing with a Solar Scope. Christa Sandoval from the Chesmont Astronomical Society will be on hand with her solar scope to provide this unique opportunity to view the daytime sky. *(Offered once: Saturday morning at 8:00 AM.)*

Yoga: Led by experienced yoga instructors, this program offers a nurturing space to relax, rejuvenate, and find inner peace. Embrace the tranquility of nature as you deepen your yoga practice and form meaningful connections with like-minded women. Join us for a transformative experience that will leave you feeling balanced and revitalized. Bring a mat or towel. *(Limit 15/session. Offered twice: Saturday morning at 8:00 AM and Sunday morning at 8:30 AM.)*

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

Archery. See Saturday morning description.

Composting. Put those food scraps to work! Learn the 5 easy steps to composting in this beginner friendly class. Backyard composting is a simple and rewarding way to lessen your household waste, lower your environmental impact and help you grow bigger, happier plants! *(Offered once: Saturday afternoon at 1:30 PM.)*

Considerations for Outdoor Women. Join a frank and funny conversation with experienced Outdoor Leaders Justine Andronici, Jess Lee, and Marci Mowery about being a confident, comfortable, and carefree outdoor adventurer. *(Offered once: Saturday afternoon at 3:30 PM.)*

Disc Golf. Join the French Creek disc golf club for an introduction to the fun sport of disc golf. Slightly used discs (frisbees) will be provided with instruction on how to throw and keep score. New discs will also be available for purchase. *(Offered twice: A full Saturday afternoon at 1:00 PM and a shorter session Sunday morning at 10:00 AM.)*

Forest Hike Immersion. See Saturday morning description. This longer hike is by request of 2024 WIBW attendees seeking a longer outing on the park's many trails. Allow this morning's mountain biking leader, Jenn, to "shift gears" and help you to a deeper understanding of the benefits of exercising in nature, including hiking in the woods, and some of the animals and plants that inhabit the area *(Offered once: A full Saturday afternoon at 1:00 PM.)*

Introduction to GPS and Geocaching. Combine hide-and-seek with a treasure hunt - that's basically geocaching. And while you may not come away with a bucket of gold coins, you will learn to use GPS and hone your observational skills. (Limit 10/session. Offered twice: Saturday afternoon at 1:00 PM and Sunday morning at 8:30 AM.)

Kayaking. See Saturday morning description.

Mindful Outdoor Experience. Daily grind got you down? Find your mind moving in multiple directions? Slow down and connect to both yourself and nature in this guided outdoor mindfulness experience. This is a slow paced moving and sitting experience. No experience necessary. Participants are encouraged to bring a towel or something to sit upon (that they can carry). Space is limited to 12 participants per session. *(Offered twice: Saturday afternoon at 1:30 PM and Sunday morning at 10:00 AM.)*

Natural Dyes. Learn to bring color to your wardrobe using plants! Bring your own (preferably all cotton) T-shirt for experimentation. *(Offered once: Saturday afternoon at 3:30 PM.)*

SATURDAY EVENING

From 6:30 until ____, we'll gather around the campfire.

We'll provide the ingredients and the fire (and a lot of add-ons) so you can cook your own burger, hot dogs, veggie protein. Try your hand at Atlatl, visit with newfound friends, and enjoy the evening

Staff from Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site will be on hand for a short presentation and campfire talk:

Discover the inspiring story of the Civilian Conservation Corps. This talk brings history to life through the voices of the men who worked here from 1935-1942. Using their own newsletters, you'll gain a unique perspective on their challenges, triumphs, and the emotions they experienced while contributing to the restoration and establishment of Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site and French Creek State Park.

We'll wrap-up the evening with plenty of time to socialize before we dampen the fires and hit the sack.

SUNDAY MORNING

Archery. See Saturday morning description.

Backpacking 101. Thinking about getting outside and exploring the backcountry? Are you ready to take your day-hiking to the next level? This primer will be a perfect segue to improving your outdoor experience. The workshop will span approximately 3 hours with several breaks between topics for gear demonstrations. Topics will include: Trip Planning, Trail Navigation, The 10 Essentials, Proper Gear Selection, Menu Planning/Nutrition, Backcountry Hygiene, Campsite Selection, Trail Safety, and much more! *(Offered once: Sunday morning at 9:00 AM. This is a three-hour course.)*

Disc Golf. See Saturday afternoon description.

Fire-Starting and Other Ways to Prep Your Meals. Making a campfire is the classic (and not as hard as you might think) method for cooking in the outdoors. But what's a reflector oven? How about that tiny little backpacking stove? Find out. *(Offered once: Sunday morning at 8:30 AM.)*

Introduction to GPS and Geocaching. See Saturday afternoon description.

Introduction to Map/Compass with Orienteering. See Saturday morning description.

Kayaking/Paddle-Boarding. See Saturday afternoon description.

Mindful Outdoor Experience. See Saturday afternoon description.

Mycology. Take a guided walk with Sam Bucciarelli, President of the Philadelphia Mycology Club. Discuss important identifying features of wild mushrooms, explore their diverse and important ecological roles, and gain confidence in your ability to find mushrooms in the wild. (*Offered once: Sunday morning at 11:00 AM.*)

Yoga. See Saturday morning description.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON

Check out of your cabin by 2:30 PM and then feel free to put your new skills to work by exploring French Creek State Park or neighboring Hopewell Furnace (there's a trail connecting the two properties that's a lovely hike).