

Program and Event Schedule

**Every Saturday and Sunday,
May 6 through October 28:**
Ranger Hike

May:

- 5: Red Carpet Corridor Day
- 12: Geology of Midewin
- 26: Memorial Day Tour – “Thank You For Your Service”

June:

- 2: Birds of Midewin – West Side
- 5: Midewin For Kids – Fun With Fossils
- 6: Midewin For Kids – Bird’s the Word
- 7: Midewin For Kids – Prairie Detectives
- 9: Birds of Midewin – East Side
- 13: Midewin For Kids – Buzzing About the Prairie
- 16: Birds of Midewin – West Side
- 19: Midewin For Kids – Pond Life
- 20: Evening Hike on the Prairie
- 21: Midewin For Kids – Croaking Around
- 23: Birds of Midewin – East Side
Ghosts of the Ammunition Plant
- 26: Midewin For Kids – Crayfish Corner
- 27: Midewin For Kids – Batty Evening
- 28: Midewin For Kids – The Bison Project
- 30: Prairie Farmstead Tour – “Preferable By Far to the Timberlands”
Midewin by Auto

July:

- 14: Midewin by Auto
Twilight Bike Tour
- 21: Ghosts of the Ammunition Plant
- 24: Midewin For Kids – The Life of a Butterfly
- 25: Midewin For Kids – Batty Evening
- 26: Midewin For Kids – Dragonflies a.k.a. Mosquito Hawks
- 28: Midewin by Auto
- 31: Midewin For Kids – The Artful Buffalo

August:

- 1: Evening Hike on the Prairie
- 2: Midewin For Kids – Prairie Picassos
- 4: Midewin by Auto
Midewin For Kids – Can You Dig It?
- 7: Midewin For Kids – The Skinny on Mammals
- 8: Midewin For Kids – Batty Evening
- 9: Midewin For Kids – Fun With Fossils
- 11: Ghosts of the Ammunition Plant
- 18: Midewin by Auto
- 25: Illinois Bicentennial Tour – The Land Before Lincoln

September:

- 1: Midewin by Auto
- 8: Ghosts of the Ammunition Plant
- 15: Geology of Midewin
Fall Color Hike
- 22: Midewin by Auto

October:

- 6: Geology of Midewin
- 13: Ghosts of the Ammunition Plant
- 20: Midewin For Kids – Indian Chiefs, Warriors, and the Fur Trade
- 27: Prairie Farmstead Tour – “Preferable by Far to the Timberlands”

Program and Event Information

Fees

All programs and events are **FREE**.

Reservations

Unless otherwise noted, **advanced registration** is required. To register, please either **email us** at Midewin_RSVP@fs.fed.us or call **815-423-6370**.

Cancellations

Midewin

We will make every effort to offer all activities as scheduled. All programs, but primarily walking and bike tours, may be cancelled or rescheduled due to inclement weather or poor site condition. We will contact you as soon as possible in the event of a cancellation.

You

If you need to cancel your reservation, please call us as soon as possible at 815-423-6370. You may leave a message outside of normal business hours.

Where to Meet

Unless otherwise noted, all programs begin and end at the Midewin Welcome Center located at 30239 S. State Route 53, Wilmington, Illinois - the building with the 3 flagpoles in front.

When to Arrive

All programs begin promptly at the published time. Please plan to arrive 15 minutes early to allow time for check-in.

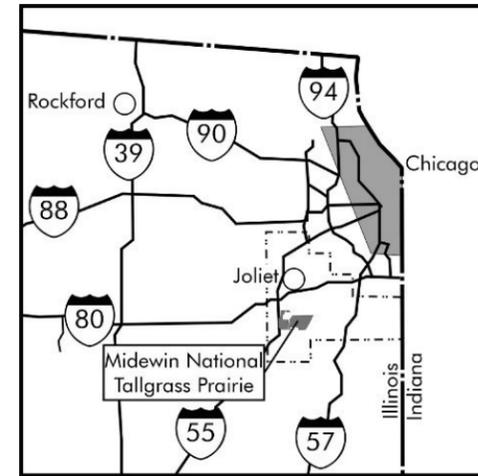
What to Bring

Auto Caravan Tours

Participants in these activities will drive their own vehicles as part of a staff-led caravan. A number of stops are made along the way with short walks to points of interest. Running commentary can be heard over hand-held radios as the tour moves from point to point. Participants need not leave their vehicles if they do not wish to do so.

Bike Tours

Participants in these activities must provide their own bike.



Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie
30239 S. State Route 53
Wilmington, IL 60481
(815) 423-6370

2018 Welcome Center Schedule

Hours: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Monday through Saturday (May-Oct)

Monday through Friday (Jan-Apr and Nov-Dec)

Trails are open year round
from 4 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Stay Connected

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/midewin>



Facebook.com/Midewin



Twitter.com/MidewinNatTP

OnCell - “A Tour Guide in Your Pocket”

Information about Midewin on your mobile device or computer.

Mobile: Free download from your favorite app store. Search for “OnCell”, then search for “Midewin”.

Computer: Visit midewin.oncell.com



United States Department of Agriculture

Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie

2018 Programs and Events



Yellow Coneflowers
Photo Credit: Ron Kapala



Forest
Service

Publication
03/18

Program and Event Descriptions

Birds of Midewin - East Side (Walking Tour)

Saturdays, June 9, June 23, 8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

This east side walking tour will begin at the Welcome Center. Participants will follow tour guides to the Iron Bridge Trailhead to start the hike. You may see blue grosbeaks, loggerhead shrikes, bobolinks, grasshopper sparrows, black-billed cuckoos, mockingbirds, and brown thrashers. A 2-hour walk on hiking trails with stops to look at birds. Binoculars encouraged, photography welcome.

Birds of Midewin - West Side (Driving Tour)

Saturdays, June 2, June 16, 8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Birders on this west side car caravan tour may see loggerhead shrikes, Henslow's sparrows, bobolinks, grasshopper sparrows, meadowlarks, blue grosbeaks, orioles, warblers, and vireos. Tour lasts two hours through much of the west side property. Binoculars encouraged, photography welcome.

Evening Hike on the Prairie

Wednesday, June 20, 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Wednesday, August 1, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Discover what is blooming this time of year. Hear the wind rustle through prairie grass as the sun begins to set. Enjoy the scents only encountered on an evening stroll on the prairie. Great for families.

Fall Color Hike

Saturday, September 15, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

What autumn colors have fallen on the landscape of Midewin? Come find out and immerse yourself in the shades of an autumn tallgrass prairie. Enjoy a peaceful ramble amid the waving expanse of grass. Great for one and all, including families who want to see a different face of fall.

Geology of Midewin

Saturdays, May 12, September 15, October 6,

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

15,000 years ago, a one-mile thick glacial ice sheet moved over Illinois leaving its mark on Midewin. Environments in prehistoric times included tropical swamplands and subtropical oceans. View the rocks, hills and plains of Midewin that still bear evidence of these vastly different environments on this 3 hour auto caravan tour. Tour takes place on unimproved roads; gravel and potholes can be expected.

Ghosts of the Ammunition Plant

Saturdays, June 23, July 21, August 11, September 8,

October 13, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

In 1940, the U.S. Government acquired over 36,000 acres of land to build an ammunition plant. Why here? And how was it built and operated? Learn about the deadly explosion during World War II. Tour the inside of one of the few remaining warehouses and an ammunition storage bunker. Car caravan tour lasts about 3 hours with travel over unimproved roads, including gravel and potholes.

NEW! Illinois Bicentennial Tour – The Land Before

Lincoln

Saturday, August 25, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

In this bicentennial year of Illinois statehood we hear a lot about things that happened downstate in 1818. But what was going on right here on Midewin? This tour will visit several sites on Midewin to talk to educators and interpreters that will help us to understand that era; learning about the Potawatomi residents, French-American fur traders, and the early surveyors who paved the way for European American agriculture. We will also visit prairie restored to what the Illinoisans of 1818 would have experienced, and which Midewin is working hard to bring back.

Memorial Day Tour – “Thank You For Your Service”

Saturday, May 26, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Join us on this car caravan tour to honor our veterans and delve into the origins of Memorial Day. Learn about the lives of local veterans and the conflicts in which they served as well as the role of the Joliet Arsenal in these conflicts as we visit local cemeteries on Midewin and sites of the old Joliet Arsenal.

Midewin by Auto

Saturdays, June 30, July 14, July 28, August 4,

August 18, September 1, September 22,

10:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Explore Midewin by car caravan to view restored wetlands and prairie and observe wildlife. Find out why ecological restoration is so important while experiencing some of Midewin's best examples of restored prairie. Learn how Midewin will change and what that will mean for wildlife and recreation. Visit one of the remaining ammunition bunkers for a glimpse into the past. A few stops at points of interest are made, you can stay in your vehicle if you choose to. This tour takes place on unimproved roads; expect potholes and gravel.

Midewin For Kids – Batty Evening

Wednesdays, June 27, July 25, August 8,

7:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Learn about the flying mammal that eats mosquitoes! Become an expert and learn how to tell between myth and fact. Decorate a bat house to take home (one per family). Take a short hike looking for these tiny, wonderful creatures of the night. Wear long sleeved shirts, pants, close-toed shoes and socks. Bring bug repellent. Recommended for families.

NEW! Midewin For Kids – Bird's the Word

Wednesday, June 6, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Midewin has a diversity of habitats that provide homes for many kinds of birds. Join us as we learn what birds live at Midewin and how they are adapted to different habitats. Our learning experience will include hands on activities as well as how to use binoculars and a birding hike on crushed limestone and mowed grass paths. Ages 6 – 10.

Midewin For Kids – Buzzing About the Prairie

Wednesday, June 13, 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Please join us to discover why bees, butterflies, and other insects are so important to all gardens, not just the prairie! Capture some pollinators using sweep nets, look at them through magnified containers and release them. You can transfer your new-found knowledge and skills to your own garden! Ages 4 – 12.

Midewin For Kids – Can You Dig It?

Saturday, August 4, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

People have lived on this land for thousands of years. See how archaeologists on Midewin are learning more about how those people used the land and what we can learn from them. The program will visit an actual archaeological excavation on Midewin, followed by archaeology related activities. Do you like to dig in the dirt and solve mysteries? Maybe you're an archaeologist too! Ages 6 – 12.

Midewin For Kids – Crayfish Corner

Tuesday, June 26, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

What are they? Learn all about these little crustaceans. Scoop the pond for these little lobsters and learn how to safely handle them. Ages 5 – 10.

NEW! Midewin For Kids – Croaking Around

Thursday, June 21, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Toad or frog? Learn to identify who is who using live animals. Find out fun facts about these amazing amphibians! Ages 5 – 12.

NEW! Midewin For Kids – Dragonflies a.k.a.

Mosquito Hawks

Thursday, July 26, 12:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Spy these mosquito hunters near our pond! Learn about these flying aces. Use nets to catch a few. Ages 6 – 12.

Midewin For Kids – Fun With Fossils

Tuesday, June 5 and Thursday, August 9,

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Learn about fossils in a fun and interactive way. Discover how fossils were formed and where you might find some! Have the opportunity to see and study real fossils. Ages 6 – 12.

NEW! Midewin For Kids – Indian Chiefs, Warriors,

and the Fur Trade

Saturday, October 20, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

The prairie was home to a vast array of Indian tribes. Chiefs and warriors fought valiantly during the Beaver Wars, trading goods with the English, Dutch and French. Relive this exciting story and experience what life was like during this interactive story telling adventure. Ages 5 and up.

Midewin For Kids – Pond Life

Tuesday June 19, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Uncover an amazing underwater world. Learn about the insects, amphibians, and mammals that call the pond their home. Dress for getting a bit dirty. Ages 7 – 12.

Midewin For Kids – Prairie Detectives

Thursday, June 7, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Walk on a real prairie. Use your detective skills to find out what animals live there. Learn about the plants and animals that make their home on a prairie. Wear pants, closed-toed shoes and socks. Ages 4 – 8.

NEW! Midewin For Kids – Prairie Picassos

Thursday, August 2, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Calling all budding artists! Turn the beauty of the tallgrass prairie into art! Ages 7 – 12.

NEW! Midewin For Kids – The Artful Buffalo

Tuesday, July 31, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Come express yourself in art through the spirit and strength of the mighty buffalo. Take home your finished art! Ages 6 – 12.

NEW! Midewin For Kids – The Bison Project

Thursday, June 28, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Learn about the majestic bison. See and touch a real bison pelt, skull, horn cap and more. Create history-based bison art to take home! Ages 6 – 12.

Midewin For Kids – The Life of a Butterfly

Tuesday, July 24, 12:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Come discover the life cycle of butterflies. Learn about habitats, butterfly nectar plants and host plants. Be ready to learn and explore the life of butterflies. Recommended for families.

Midewin For Kids – The Skinny on Mammals

Tuesday, August 7, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Illinois is home to more than 20 different mammals. Learn about the characteristics of mammals and how they differ from other animal groups. Study mammal tracks and other signs left behind in the wild. Mammal pelts, skulls and tracks will be available for hands-on exploration. Ages 4 – 12.

NEW! Prairie Farmstead Tour – “Preferable By Far to the Timberlands” *

Saturdays, June 30, October 27, 9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Although we often focus on the transformation of the old Arsenal to restored tallgrass prairie, it was actually during the Agricultural Era of Midewin, from 1830 to 1940, when most of the prairie disappeared under the sizzle of the self-scouring steel plow. Accompany us on a short and easy 90 minute walk from the Iron Bridge Trailhead to learn about the National Register eligible Rodgers/Schumacher Farmstead, continuously farmed from the mid-Nineteenth Century to 1940 and then, once the buildings were removed, preserved in time. **Meet at the Ranger trailer at the Iron Bridge Trailhead.** * Quote from Henry J. Abel, 1838

Ranger Hike

Every Saturday and Sunday, May 6 through October 28,

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Join a Midewin Ranger for a hike to the bison pasture. As usual, you may or may not spot the bison, but you will learn about Midewin's unique past, present and future in a fun, interactive way, and learn about the dynamics of these fascinating creatures. **No reservations required. Meet at the Ranger trailer at the Iron Bridge Trailhead.**

Red Carpet Corridor Day

Saturday, May 5, 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Stop in the Welcome Center for a special commemorative button. Visit our natural resources expo at the Iron Bridge Trailhead parking lot and explore the prairie! Wear comfortable clothing for hiking and bring your own water and snacks. Don't forget your binoculars to better spot the bison herd. **No reservations required.**

Twilight Bike Tour

Saturday, July 14, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Tour Midewin's trails by bicycle. Expect to see an abundance of wildlife which may include deer, turkey, grassland birds, and maybe a coyote or two. Since at least part of the route will be on gravel surfaces, "fat" tires are recommended. An 8-10 mile ride with stops.