



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Badlands National Park

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Badlands News Release

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Badlands Astronomy Festival to Be Held July 17-19

BADLANDS NATIONAL PARK, INTERIOR, S.D. — Once again Badlands National Park has partnered with the South Dakota Space Grant Consortium to host *South Dakota Space Days 2015* during the **Badlands Astronomy Festival, July 17-19**. The festival this coming weekend brings together space science professionals, amateur astronomers, educators, and visitors for a three day celebration.

Novices and experts alike will enjoy the spectacular dark night skies of Badlands National Park at public star parties each evening. During the day, a variety of family-friendly workshops and special events will provide opportunities for visitors to learn about the night sky, the sun, and space exploration. Once again this year additional telescopes will be provided by Celestron for day and night observations.

The schedule of events includes nightly special guest speakers, public stargazing activities, solar observing opportunities, planetarium shows, several workshops, as well as equipment demonstrations by Celestron. The Badlands Natural History Association (BNHA) will offer night sky-themed merchandise for sale in the bookstore at the Ben Reifel Visitor Center.

This event is made possible through funding and support from the Badlands Natural History Association, South Dakota Space Grant Consortium, Black Hills Astronomical Society, Journey Museum, South Dakota Discovery Center, town of Interior, National Park Foundation, Badlands Cedar Pass Lodge, Celestron, NPS Night Skies Program, Minuteman Missile National Historic Site, and Badlands National Park.

Schedule of Events:

Public Stargazing

Friday, July 17; Saturday, July 18; and Sunday, July 19

8:30 - 11:30 pm at the Cedar Pass Campground Amphitheater

Keynote presentations by invited guest speakers followed by hands-on experience with multiple state-of-the-art telescopes and amateur astronomers providing constellation tours and guiding visitors around the universe. View planets, star clusters, nebulae, and double stars while going down the "scope line."

Friday night keynote speaker: Richard Walker, Black Hills Astronomical Society

Saturday night keynote speaker: Amber Knutson, Graduate Student NPS Volunteer

Sunday night keynote speaker: "Dark Ranger" Kevin Poe

Sun Fun Solar Observing

Friday, July 17; Saturday, July 18; and Sunday, July 19

3:00-5:00 pm at the Ben Reifel Visitor Center

View solar flares and sunspots through our special solar telescopes, 100% safe for eyes. Various other sun based activities will also be offered during this particular event, including solar car racing.

Silo Talk

Offered daily throughout the summer at 9am and 3:30pm

Join a ranger from Minuteman Missile National Historic Site for a daily program on rocket development spanning from Sputnik to nuclear war. For more information stop by the new Minuteman Missile National Historic Site Visitor Center north of I-90 at exit 131.

Build Your Own Sundial Workshop

Saturday, July 18; and Sunday, July 19

12:00-2:00 pm at the Ben Reifel Visitor Center

Planet Walk

Saturday, July 18; and Sunday, July 19

12:00-1:30 pm at the Ben Reifel Visitor Center

Take a hike on a 1:1 billion scale journey through our solar system. The trail will remain marked all day on Saturday and Sunday for self-guided tours, as well as the guided tours Saturday and Sunday at noon.

Model Rocket Building & Launching Workshop

Saturday, July 18; and Sunday, July 19

10:00 am - 12:00 noon in Interior, SD next to the school

Rocket-building kits will be available for sale.

Planetarium Shows

Saturday; July 18; and Sunday, July 19

9:00 am - 5:00 pm at the park Fire Cache, 1/4 mile southeast of the Ben Reifel Visitor Center

The Journey Museum from Rapid City and the SD Discovery Center from Pierre will present planetarium shows using their portable planetariums.

Celestron Instrumentation Demonstrations

Throughout the day on Friday, July 17; Saturday, July 18; and Sunday, July 19

Join representatives from Celestron as they demonstrate state-of-the-art equipment such as solar and night-sky telescopes.

For more information, see <http://www.nps.gov/badl>
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