



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Badlands National Park

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Badlands News Release

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5th Annual Badlands Astronomy Festival to Be Held July 8-10, 2016

BADLANDS NATIONAL PARK, INTERIOR, S.D. — Badlands National Park has partnered with the South Dakota Space Grant Consortium to co-sponsor the **2016 Badlands Astronomy Festival, July 8-10**. The festival this 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 events will provide opportunities for visitors to learn about the night sky, the sun, and space exploration. 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, model rocket building and launching, planetarium shows, as well as equipment demonstrations by Celestron. Badlands Natural History Association (BNHA) will offer night sky-themed merchandise which will be 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, Celestron, South Dakota Discovery Center, town of Interior, Black Hills Astronomical Society, NPS Night Skies Program, and Badlands National Park.

Schedule of Events:

Evening Programs/Public Stargazing

Friday, July 8; Saturday, July 9; and Sunday, July 10

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

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

Friday night guest speaker: Black Hills Raptor Center, Owls

Saturday night guest speaker: "Dark Ranger" Kevin Poe, Viewing the Vexing Void

Sunday night guest speaker: Cherilynn Morrow, AstroJazz

Sun Fun Solar Observing

Friday, July 8; Saturday, July 9; and Sunday, July 10

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.

Model Rocket Building & Launching Workshop

Saturday, July 9; and Sunday, July 10

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 9; and Sunday, July 10

9:00 am - 2:00 pm at the Interior School Gym, 2 miles south of The Ben Reifel Visitor Center

The SD Discovery Center from Pierre will present planetarium shows using their portable planetarium.

Celestron Instrumentation Demonstrations

Afternoons and evenings on Friday, July 8; Saturday, July 9; and Sunday, July 10

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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