



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Badlands National Park

25216 Ben Reifel Road
Interior, SD 57750

(605) 433-5361
www.nps.gov/badl

Badlands News Release

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Contact: Aaron Kaye, 605-433-5243

8th Annual Badlands Astronomy Festival to Be Held July 5th-7th, 2019

BADLANDS NATIONAL PARK, INTERIOR, S.D. — Badlands National Park has partnered with the NASA South Dakota Space Grant Consortium to co-sponsor the **2019 Badlands Astronomy Festival, July 5th-7th**. The festival 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. Telescopes will be provided by astronomers from the Black Hills Astronomical Society, Badlands National Park and Dark Ranger Telescope Tours for day and night observations.

The schedule of events includes special guest speakers, public stargazing activities, solar observing opportunities, planetarium shows, static displays, as well as equipment demonstrations by professional and amateur astronomers. 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 free event is made possible through funding and support from the Badlands Natural History Association, NASA South Dakota Space Grant Consortium, Dark Ranger Telescope Tours, town of Interior, Black Hills Astronomical Society, Black Hills Raptor Center, The Journey Museum and Learning Center, University of Utah, Cedar Pass Lodge, and Badlands National Park.

Schedule of Events:

Planetarium Shows

Saturday, July 6; and Sunday, July 7

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

The Journey Museum and Learning Center from Rapid City will present planetarium shows using their portable planetarium.

Sun Fun Solar Observing

Friday, July 5; Saturday, July 6; and Sunday, July 7

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.

Guest Speakers/Evening Programs/Public Stargazing

Friday, July 5; Saturday, July 6; and Sunday, July 7

10am (Sat) and 9pm - 11:30 pm (Fri, Sat, Sun) 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.”

9:00 p.m. Friday night guest speaker: “Dark Ranger” Kevin Poe, Dark Ranger Telescope Tours

10:00 a.m. Saturday day guest speaker: Black Hills Raptor Center

9:00 p.m. Saturday night guest speaker: Tom Durkin, NASA SD Space Grant Consortium

9:00 p.m. Sunday night guest speaker: Paul Ricketts, University of Utah

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