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Minnewaska State Park Preserve, Gardiner, NY  
Palisades Interstate Park Commission

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**NEWS RELEASE:**

**Junior Naturalist Youth Programs at  
Minnewaska State Park Preserve for  
July and August 2018**

**Pre-registration is required for participation in all public programs. Please call the Minnewaska Park Preserve Office at 845-255-0752. For outings, please wear appropriate clothing and footwear and bring snacks and water. A parent or guardian over the age of 18 must accompany children wishing to participate in any programs. Meeting locations are listed for each program.**

**Summer 2018 Youth Programs: Junior Naturalist at Minnewaska**

Minnewaska's fun and affordable summer youth programming offers parents the opportunity to join in the exploration with their children. All programs include time outside discovering the glorious trails of Minnewaska, and you pay only the daily parking fee of \$10 per vehicle. Your parking fee gets you into the Park Preserve for the entire day, so plan to stay after the program and bring your swim gear, bikes and cameras. Well-behaved siblings of any age are welcome, but all programs do include hiking. Very young children need to be carried by adults in a backpack style carrier. See dates and age recommendations below. Participants must come dressed appropriately and pack their own lunch, snack and water. **Pre-registration is required and all children must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian over the age of 18.**

The following Junior Naturalist programs will be offered at Minnewaska State Park Preserve in July and August 2018:

**Wednesday, July 11, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.: Junior Naturalists: Slithery Snakes**

Curious about Snakes? Come join us at Minnewaska for a brief lesson about the snakes found in the Park Preserve. This will be followed by a Snake Scents Game, where you are the snake and must determine what is inside a container by scent alone. Snake stories will also be shared by leaders and participants and the group will be led on a hike along the scenic, three-mile-long Beacon Hill Loop. This program is recommended for seven to twelve-year-old children, accompanied by a parent or legal guardian over the age of 18. Well behaved younger siblings are always welcome. Meet at the Minnewaska Nature Center. **Pre-registration is required by calling Minnewaska at 845-255-0752.**

**Thursday, July 12, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.: Junior Naturalists: Outdoor Survival Skills**

Join park educators on an exciting and fun outdoor survival challenge. Participants will learn how to read a map and use a compass, pack a backpack for a hike, and understand the principles of Leave No Trace. Then, everyone will practice their skills on a hike around Lake Minnewaska, stopping at various points along the way to orient themselves using the map and compass. This program is recommended for eight to twelve-year-old children, accompanied by a parent or legal guardian over the age of 18. Meet at the Minnewaska Nature Center. **Pre-registration is required by calling Minnewaska at 845-255-0752.**

**Tuesday, July 31, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.: Junior Naturalists: Beautiful Butterflies**

Join park educators to learn about butterflies and what makes them so unique. We'll search for evidence of their activity, including eggs, caterpillars, leaf chewing and actual butterflies, as we walk the trails in the Peter's Kill Area. We'll also play a fun butterfly game called Flutter-by Butterfly. This program is recommended for six to ten year old children, accompanied by a parent or guardian over the age of 18. Siblings of any age are welcome; however, younger siblings may need parental assistance. Meet at the Peter's Kill Park Office. **Pre-registration is required by calling Minnewaska at 845-255-0752.**

**Wednesday, August 1, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.: Junior Naturalists: Pond Exploration and Blueberry Picking Adventure**

Join park educators to learn all about the animals and insects that live in ponds, and then we'll pick delicious blueberries! We'll take an approximately two-mile-long hike to visit two remote ponds where children will use nets to search for animals. When we've had enough fun with the pond, we'll pick wild blueberries until our hands are purple! This program is recommended for six to ten-year-old children, accompanied by a parent or legal guardian over the age of 18. Well behaved younger siblings are always welcome. Meet at the Minnewaska Nature Center. **Pre-registration is required by calling Minnewaska at 845-255-0752.**

**Wednesday, August 15, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.: Junior Naturalists: Birds**

Join park educators for a round of birding. Bring your children to learn all about birds by listening to bird calls, touching bird feathers and feet, measuring their wing span and looking at mounted birds. An interactive game will teach them the concepts of gathering food for their young as they pretend to be parent birds and they'll make their own bird mask. Then, we'll take a walk on the picturesque trails in the Peter's Kill Area to look for birds. A few pairs of binoculars will be available to borrow for the walk. This program is recommended for seven to twelve-year-old children, accompanied by a parent or legal guardian over the age of 18. Well behaved younger siblings are always welcome. Meet

at the Peter's Kill Parking Area. **Pre-registration is required by calling Minnewaska at 845-255-0752.**

**Thursday, August 16, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.: Junior Naturalists: Water Cycle & Rain Sticks**

Join park educators for a fun morning learning about the water cycle. We'll take a hike to visit the Peter's Kill stream and we'll play the Incredible Journey Game, where each child pretends to be a drop of water. Lastly, everyone will make their very own rain stick to take home. This program is recommended for eight to twelve-year-old children, accompanied by a parent or legal guardian over the age of 18. Well behaved younger siblings are always welcome. Meet at the Peter's Kill Park Office. **Pre-registration is required by calling Minnewaska at 845-255-0752.**

For more information and to register for programs at Minnewaska, please call the Park Preserve Office at 845-255-0752. The Park Preserve is open from 9:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. from June 5 until July 31, when it changes to a closing time of 8:00 p.m. The fee for parking at Minnewaska is \$10 per car. All fees are subject to change. There are no additional fees for public programs, unless noted otherwise. Minnewaska State Park Preserve consists of over 23,000 acres of wild and scenic land located on Route 44/55, five miles west of the intersection with Route 299 in Gardiner, New York and also includes the Sam's Point Preserve, located in the hamlet of Cragmoor, south of Route 52.

The Palisades Interstate Park Commission administers 30 parks, parkways and historic sites for the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation in New York as well as the Palisades Interstate Park and parkway in New Jersey. For more information about New York State Parks, please visit

[www.nysparks.com](http://www.nysparks.com)