



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

**Everglades and
Dry Tortugas
National Parks**

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Everglades News Release

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

For Immediate Release

Date: December 18, 2013

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Free Seasonal Ranger Led Programs to Begin

HOMESTEAD, Florida – Winter is the perfect time to visit Everglades National Park! Spectacular opportunities abound to enjoy the great outdoors in your back yard. During south Florida's dry season there are few mosquitoes, afternoon storms are gone and temperatures are cooler.

Everglades National Park is ***just minutes away*** from Miami, Homestead, Naples and Key Largo, and whether you have one hour or a full week, the dry winter season is the best time to enjoy the many cultural and natural resources that make the park so special.

Starting the week of December 21, 2013 through March 22, 2014, the park will offer over 85 free ranger led programs for the public each week. These programs include guided walks, talks, bike rides, hikes, canoe trips, evening programs and more! In addition to these free programs, the park's concessioners also offer daily tram tours in the Shark Valley area of the park, and boat tours in the Flamingo and Gulf Coast areas (prices and times vary).

"There is no better way to enjoy Everglades National Park than by getting out with the experts," said Superintendent Dan Kimball. "Our diversity of ranger led programs offers something for everyone and we are excited to begin a new visitor season, and our 66th year of guided programs!"

Each year an average of 80,000 visitors participate in a ranger led program; over a half million people explore the park's visitor centers, museum and art gallery; and many also enjoy the park in self-guided adventures, bringing the total to about one million visitors each year.

Ranger led programs will be offered daily this winter throughout the various locations of the park, including Royal Palm, Flamingo, Shark Valley and Gulf Coast. The full slate of the park's seasonal programs will begin December 18 at Flamingo, December 21 at Gulf Coast, and December 22 at Shark Valley and Royal Palm. Schedules may change during the season so be sure to check the schedule before you come. Many programs are available. See the park website for a complete list of programs:

<http://www.nps.gov/ever/planyourvisit/rangerprograms.htm>

Check in or call area visitor centers for current schedules and times. Some ranger-guided programs require reservations in advance. Required reservations are specified in program schedules.

In addition to ranger programs and concession tours there are a number of permitted guides who offer a variety of more personalized tours. You can find a list of these on the park website as well.

<http://www.nps.gov/ever/planyourvisit/permittedtours.htm>

For your safety, visitors are encouraged to consider personal comfort needs and bring water, sunscreen, and appropriate footwear.

Hope to see you in Everglades National Park this season!

WHAT: Seasonal ranger led programs beginning

WHEN: The full slate of the park's seasonal programs will begin December 18 at Flamingo, December 21 at Gulf Coast, and December 22 at Shark Valley and Royal Palm.

WHERE: **Royal Palm Visitor Center** 305-242-7700

Shark Valley Visitor Center 305-221-8776

Flamingo Visitor Center 239-639-2945

Gulf Coast Visitor Center 239-695-3311

*This and other park releases are available
at www.nps.gov/ever/parknews/newsreleases.*

More information on Everglades National Park can be found on the park website at <http://www.nps.gov/ever>

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About the National Park Service: More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 401 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. Learn more at www.nps.gov.