



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the
Interior

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Bryce Canyon National Park invites participants to help celebrate the 6th annual Utah Prairie Dog Day June 12, 2015

BRYCE CANYON NATIONAL PARK, UTAH – Superintendent Lisa Eckert invites you to join the park in our sixth annual celebration of the Utah prairie dog, a native species to Utah and the Bryce Canyon area. Utah Prairie Dog Day is sponsored by the Bryce Canyon Natural History Association and will occur on Friday, June 12, 2015 from 10:00 a.m. through 3:00 p.m. Planned activities include watching Utah prairie dogs and educational booths with fun activities for kids and adults alike. The Natural History Association has Utah Prairie Dog Day t-shirts available for \$5.00 that can be hand-colored at the festival. Don't miss our special guest, "Petey the Prairie Dog," who will be popping up from his burrow throughout the day! All activities will take place at the Bryce Canyon National Park Visitor Center.

Utah prairie dogs are considered a "keystone species" that perform a variety of important ecological functions including improving soil quality, providing prey and places to live for other animals, and maintaining meadow ecosystems. Park Deputy Chief of Resource Management, Chad Anderson states, "This year's celebration of the Utah prairie dog is aimed at increasing appreciation for the species. Their ability to engineer the landscape adds to the overall diversity of both plants and animals." Over 200 other species have been associated with prairie dog colonies, including wildlife that either depend upon or directly benefit by prairie dog activity for survival. "It cannot be overstated how beneficial the Utah prairie dog is to the overall health of southern Utah's meadows."



This year's guest speaker, Nathan Brown, is a key player in helping to recover this species from its threatened status. Nathan works for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as an ecologist and specializes in Utah prairie dog recovery and management. Working with a broad coalition of federal, state, private and local stakeholders, he helps to develop recovery goals. Previously, Nathan worked for the state of Utah where he was also involved in Utah prairie dog monitoring, management, and recovery. Nathan's presentation will focus on the species biology, habitat, and current recovery efforts. Please join us for this free presentation at the Bryce Canyon Visitor Center auditorium at 1:00 p.m.

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