



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Old-Growth Bottomland Forest
Research and Education Center
Congaree National Park

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Congaree News Release

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Congaree Fall Butterfly Programs

Would you like to help scientists discover the wonders of your National Park? Are you interested in identifying butterflies and collecting valuable information? If so, then please attend the upcoming, FREE butterfly programs at Congaree National Park. These programs are coordinated in partnership with the Carolina Butterfly Society and the North American Butterfly Association (NABA).

Butterflies are one of the most beautiful elements of the natural world and ecologically important as pollinators, consumers, and food sources for other animals. Scientists recognize butterflies as important indicators of ecosystem health. The goal of the upcoming programs at Congaree National Park is to engage citizen scientist volunteers to help identify and count butterflies.

These programs provide data not only for the park, but also contribute to long-term, nationwide monitoring of butterfly populations. NABA Butterfly Counts have been held annually since 1975. Volunteers across North America select a count area 15 miles in diameter and conduct a one-day census of all butterflies observed within that circle. Several seasonal counts are held from spring into late fall. Two separate programs are now being offered at Congaree National Park in relation to the 2011 NABA Butterfly Count. In addition to the actual count, one optional training session will provide a pre-count introduction for beginners. The full schedule is as follows:

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Saturday, September 10, 2011, 8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. – Butterfly Identification Training:

This optional program will involve a short, powerpoint introduction to butterflies at Congaree and the basic tips and tricks for identifying butterflies in the field. A short hike to practice these new skills will immediately follow the indoor portion of the program.

Saturday, September 17, 2011, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. – Fall NABA Butterfly Count:

Participants will work in teams to conduct a day of field observations counting butterflies along the trail system and within various habitats of Congaree National Park. The count will last until about 4:00 p.m. weather permitting. Please come for all or just part of the day.

All ages and experience levels are welcome. These programs are free, but space is limited. **Advance reservations are required.** Appropriate clothing is required of all participants, including long- pants and closed- toed shoes that attach to the feet. In addition, sun protection, bug spray, water and snacks/lunch are recommended. A limited supply of butterfly identification field guides will be available for use during these programs. For more information please contact Theresa Thom, Ecologist and Research Coordinator, theresa_thom@nps.gov (803)695- 0214.

To make reservations or to find more information about how you can experience Congaree National Park, please call the front desk at 803.776.4396, ext. 0 or visit our website at www.nps.gov/cong.

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