

Rocky Mountain National Park

Night Sky Festival

Thursday, July 16

11am – 3pm – Moraine Park Discovery Center

Family Night Sky Activities

Join us at the Moraine Park Discovery Center for solar observing, special booths and activities, and get your Night Sky Junior Ranger book and patch!

7:30pm – Beaver Meadows Visitor Center

Protecting Night Sky Resources in National Parks and Beyond

For the last 4 years, Jeremy White has been collecting night sky measurements in national parks across the country. The night sky can be one of the most awe-inspiring views we will ever experience. But the night sky and natural darkness are easily damaged and in many places are becoming lost in the glow of artificial lights. Jeremy will be discussing the ongoing research of the NPS Natural Sounds and Night Sky Division. 45-60 minutes.

9:00pm - Upper Beaver Meadows

Wonders of the Night Sky

Join a ranger to learn some astronomy basics and hear the stories behind common constellations in the night sky. Bring binoculars and a flashlight.

9:00pm – Moraine Park Campground

Night Sky Photography

Our night sky is an awe-inspiring sight seen perfectly from parks like Rocky Mountain. Photographer Stan Honda will show night sky landscapes and other astronomical images taken in Rocky Mountain and other national parks, locations around the world and even New York City. Mr. Honda will show the beauty of the sky and why we need to preserve this diminishing resource. 45-60 minutes.

9:00pm – Glacier Basin Campground

The James Webb Space Telescope

The Hubble Space Telescope has been exploring the cosmos for over 25 years, vastly expanding our understanding of the universe. Hubble has produced the clearest views of the cosmic landscape we've ever seen, creating a gallery of spectacular images, familiar world-wide. Now astronomers are poised to get a whole new view of the cosmos with NASA's next flagship science mission, the James Webb Space Telescope. How do we transform science data into pictures, and what do the colors mean? What do these pictures show us about the depths of the universe? What makes Hubble so powerful? How will Webb's view of the universe be different? 45-60 minutes.

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7:30pm – Beaver Meadows Visitor Center

New Horizons

Come see the first clear images of Pluto, courtesy of Ball Aerospace's Ralph camera! Ralph is riding onboard New Horizons—the FIRST mission to Pluto, the FASTEST spacecraft to launch from Earth, and the spacecraft traveling the FARTHEST into the solar system! 45-60 minutes.

8:15pm - Upper Beaver Meadows

Astronomy in the Park

Observe the night sky with the help of a park ranger and expert volunteer astronomers. Dress warmly. Bring binoculars and a flashlight.

9:00pm – Harbison Meadow Parking Area

Celestial Wilderness

Use a telescope and join a ranger to explore the astronomy of Rocky's night sky. (If cloudy, meet at Kawuneeche Visitor Center)

9:00pm – Moraine Park Campground

The Moon, A New Perspective

Join us for a brief history of the Moon and its formation, with images of the lunar surface from the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter Spacecraft currently orbiting the moon.

9:00pm – Glacier Basin Campground

Night Sky Photography Workshop

Don't put your camera away after the sun sets! There's a whole different park to photograph when the stars come out. And you don't need a telescope. I'll show you various techniques and settings to get great shots of the Milky Way, the moon, stars and other objects at night with an ordinary digital SLR. Bring your camera (and tripod if you have one). It's best to have a camera that has settings that are manually adjustable.

Rocky Mountain National Park

Night Sky Festival

Saturday, July 18

11am – 3pm – Moraine Park Discovery Center

Family Night Sky Activities

Join us at the Moraine Park Discovery Center for solar observing, special booths and activities, and get your Night Sky Junior Ranger book and patch!

7:30pm – Beaver Meadows Visitor Center

James Webb Space Telescope

The night sky is dark in Colorado, and yet even the darkest night hides many mysteries, a universe unlocked by vision at frequencies beyond those our eyes can perceive: the infrared. Only two decades after the first planets outside our solar system were discovered, we now know of over 5000 planets and planet candidates. A few of them are even Earth-sized! But would we want to live there? How do planets form around other stars, how long does it take, and what are they made out of? What is the true variety of planets found in stellar systems in the universe? Is the universe teeming with life, or are habitable planets rare gems amongst an endless series of incredibly hostile environments? Dr. Joel Green will discuss the formation of protoplanets and their transformation into exoplanets, and reveal the mysteries that will be tackled by the James Webb Space Telescope, NASA's upcoming flagship mission. 45-60 minutes.

8:15pm - Upper Beaver Meadows

Astronomy in the Park

Observe the night sky with the help of a park ranger and expert volunteer astronomers. Dress warmly. Bring binoculars and a flashlight.

9:00pm – Moraine Park Campground

The Aurora – More than Pretty Lights in the Sky

The aurora are the result of activity on the Sun. I will talk about the impact space weather has on our lives and our technology and how the northern lights led a boy from Wisconsin to become a space scientist. 45-60 minutes.

9:00pm – Glacier Basin Campground

The Moon, A New Perspective

Join us for a brief history of the Moon and its formation, with images of the lunar surface from the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter Spacecraft currently orbiting the moon. 45-60 minutes.