

# GET INTIMATE WITH THE SHRUB-STEPPE 2026

FRIDAY MAY 8TH	TIME	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
WILDFLOWERS OF THE UPPER COUNTY - DICK AMBROSE	10:00AM-12:00PM	COOKE CANYON (private land, location to be shared upon registration)	Wildflowers of the Upper County Explore spring blooms on private land in Cooke Canyon with expert guidance on native shrub-steppe wildflowers and plant communities.
Shinrin (Forest) Yoku (Bath) Experience Certified Forest Therapy Guide, Dawn Ambrose	12:30PM-2:30PM	COOKE CANYON (private land, location to be shared upon registration)	Shinrin-Yoku (Forest Bathing) Experience Slow down and reconnect through a guided forest therapy walk designed to deepen your sensory awareness and connection to place.
SHRUB-STEPPE, Petrification, Ice Age - Lorena Medina-Dirksen	9:30AM-12:00PM	<a href="#">GINKGO PETRIFIED FOREST - Trees of Stone Interpretive Trail</a>	Shrub-Steppe, Petrification & the Ice Age Discover the geologic forces that shaped our region while exploring petrified wood and Ice Age history at Ginkgo Petrified Forest.
KITTITAS COUNTY STEWARDSHIP FUND & LOCAL CONSERVATION PROJECTS - NICKY PASI	1:30PM-2:30PM	<a href="#">IOOF</a>	Kittitas County Stewardship Fund & Local Conservation Projects Learn how local funding supports on-the-ground conservation efforts throughout Kittitas County.
MID-COLUMBIA FISHERIES PROJECT UPDATES - BECCA WASSELL	2:30PM-3:30PM	<a href="#">IOOF</a>	Mid-Columbia Fisheries Project Updates Get the latest on regional fish habitat restoration, river health, and fisheries enhancement efforts.
Stories Written on the Land: Interpreting Nature for the Next Generation - JILL SCHEFFER	3:30PM-4:30PM	<a href="#">IOOF</a>	Stories Written on the Land Explore how interpretation connects people to landscape and inspires the next generation of environmental stewards.
SOCIAL HOUR, LAMPREY, FOOD, FUN - DAVEY LUMLEY, YAKAMA NATION PACIFIC LAMPREY PROJECT	6PM-9PM	<a href="#">IRONHORSE TAP ROOM W/SWIFTFIRED PIZZA &amp; WHEELY GOOD BOOKS</a>	Social Hour, Lamprey, Food & Fun Enjoy food, community, and a special presentation on Pacific lamprey from the Yakama Nation.
TWILIGHT OWL & SNAKE WALK - DEB ESSMAN AND DR. DAN BECK	6:00PM-9:00PM	<a href="#">YCIC</a>	Twilight Owl & Snake Walk An evening exploration to search for owls and snakes while learning about their roles in the shrub-steppe ecosystem.
BATS! - BATS NORTHWEST - KATIE REMINE	6:00PM-9:00PM	<a href="#">YCIC</a>	Bats! Discover the fascinating world of bats during this evening program focused on bat ecology and conservation.
SATURDAY MAY 9TH	TIME	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
PASSERINES AND RAPTORS OF THE YAKIMA RIVER CANYON—DEB ESSMAN	6:00AM-10:00AM	<a href="#">UMTANUM CREEK RECREATION AREA</a>	Passerines & Raptors of the Yakima River Canyon Early morning birding focused on songbirds and birds of prey in one of Washington's richest canyon habitats.
SHRUB-STEPPE OBLIGATES: BIRDS & HABITATS—SCOTT DOWNES	8:00AM-11:00AM	<a href="#">WDFW PUBLIC LANDS OFF VANTAGE HIGHWAY GREEN GATE</a>	Shrub-Steppe Obligate Birds & Habitats Learn to identify birds uniquely adapted to shrub-steppe environments and the habitats they depend on.
YAKIMA CANYON GEOLOGY— DR. KARL LILLQUIST	9:00AM-10:30AM	<a href="#">UMTANUM CREEK RECREATION AREA</a>	Yakima Canyon Geology Uncover the dramatic geologic story of the canyon, from lava flows to tectonic forces.
SNAKE SNEAKING—DR. DAN BECK	9:00AM-10:30AM	<a href="#">UMTANUM CREEK RECREATION AREA</a>	Snake Sneaking Search for native snake species while learning about identification, behavior, and conservation.
<b>AM-1:00PM YAKIMA CANYON INTERPRETIVE CENTER HANDS-ON SCIENCE BOOTHS—COME SEE US!</b> KEEN, YCIC, CWU Biology Reptiles, Lamprey with the Yakama Nation, Conservation Northwest, Wild Ones Columbia Basin Seedling Chapter, Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group, Kittitas Audubon, Bats Northwest, Washington Butterfly Association, CWU Wildcat Farm, Mountains to Sound Greenway, Puget Sound Energy/Wild Horse Wind Facility, CWU Department of Anthropology, Kittitas County Conservation District, WA Department of Fish & Wildlife, US Fish and Wildlife Service - Leavenworth Fisheries Complex, Benton Conservation District, Reach Museum, Washington State Department of Agriculture, NW Gamehawkers, and more!			
YAKIMA RIVER CANYON FLOAT TRIP	10:30AM-12PM	<a href="#">UMTANUM CREEK RECREATION AREA</a>	Yakima River Canyon Float Trip Experience the canyon from the water on a guided float highlighting river ecology and wildlife.
CULTURAL IMPORTANCE OF THE YAKIMA RIVER CANYON - DR. STEVEN HACKENBERGER	10:30AM-12:00PM	<a href="#">YCIC</a>	Cultural Importance of the Yakima River Canyon Explore the deep cultural history and significance of the canyon landscape.
CAMINATA FAMILIAR PARA ENCONTRAR SERPIENTES —DR. DAN BECK EN ESPAÑOL	10:30AM-12PM	<a href="#">UMTANUM CREEK RECREATION AREA</a>	Caminata Familiar para Encontrar Serpientes (En Español) A family-friendly Spanish-language snake walk exploring native reptiles and their habitats.
WILDFLOWER HIKE AT SELAH CLIFFS NATURAL AREA PRESERVE—KEVIN LIESKE & ABBI LUITEN	10:30AM-12:00PM	<a href="#">SELAH CLIFFS</a>	Wildflower Hike at Selah Cliffs Natural Area Preserve Enjoy a guided walk through spectacular spring wildflower displays and unique canyon scenery.
NATURE JOURNALING - SOPHIA TROEH	11:00AM-12:00PM	<a href="#">YCIC</a>	Nature Journaling Learn simple techniques to observe, sketch, and record your nature experiences.
SHRUB-STEPPE HABITAT RESTORATION & UPDATE ON YAKIMA CANYON INTERPRETIVE CENTER—JILL SCHEFFER	12:00PM-1:00PM	<a href="#">YCIC</a>	Shrub-Steppe Habitat Restoration & YCIC Update Hear about ongoing habitat restoration efforts and progress on the Yakima Canyon Interpretive Center.
BASALT CACTUS EXPLORATIONS - RON BOCKELMAN	1:00PM-3:00PM	<a href="#">WILDHORSE WIND AND SOLAR FACILITY</a>	Basalt Cactus Explorations Explore cactus species growing among basalt formations and learn about their adaptations.
YAKIMA RIVER CANYON FLOAT TRIP	1:30PM-3:00PM	<a href="#">UMTANUM CREEK RECREATION AREA</a>	Yakima River Canyon Float Trip Experience the canyon from the water on a guided float highlighting river ecology and wildlife.
PLANETARIUM SHOWS— DR. BRUCE PALMQUIST	2:00PM-5:00PM (45-MINUTE SHOWS ON THE HOUR)	<a href="#">CWU'S LYDIG PLANETARIUM</a>	Planetarium Shows Immersive star talks and astronomy programs at CWU's Lydig Planetarium (45-minute shows on the hour).
HANDS-ON ADULT LAMPREY RELEASES & TALKS —W/YAKAMA NATION	11-11:45am 12-12:45pm 1-1:45pm 2-2:45pm	<a href="#">THRALL ROAD PUBLIC ACCESS AREA</a>	Hands-On Adult Lamprey Releases & Talks Witness live lamprey releases and learn about their ecological and cultural importance.
WETLAND TRAIL NATURE INTERPRETATION PLANNING - STUDIO UNDERSTORY	3:30PM-4:30PM	<a href="#">IOOF</a>	Wetland Trail Nature Interpretation Planning A collaborative session exploring ideas for interpreting wetland trails and landscapes.
FALCONRY & CONSERVATION— Northwest Gamehawkers - TOBY CANTWELL	4:30PM-5:15PM	<a href="#">IOOF</a>	Falconry & Conservation Meet trained raptors up close while learning about falconry traditions and bird conservation.
YAKIMA CANYON INTERPRETIVE CENTER PROJECT UPDATE - JILL SCHEFFER	5:30PM-6:15PM	<a href="#">IOOF</a>	Yakima Canyon Interpretive Center Project Update An inside look at the vision and development of the future interpretive center.
KEYNOTE SPEAKER & DINNER - DR. DANIEL BECK "HOW DO WE 'GET INTIMATE' WITH NATURE?"	6:30PM-8:00PM	<a href="#">IOOF</a>	Keynote Speaker & Dinner – "How Do We Get Intimate with Nature?" An evening keynote exploring how we build meaningful relationships with the natural world.
<b>OTHER WEEKEND ADVENTURES:</b> <b>ERY &amp; FORTUITY CELLARS AND PURCHASE THEIR 'GIVE BACK RED BLEND' &amp; SUPPORT KEEN!</b> <b>VISIT SUNCADIA'S NELSON FARM FOR "SPRINGFEST!"</b> Saturday, May 9th, 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Celebrate the arrival of spring at Nelson Farm with family-friendly activities, live entertainment, and outdoor fun. Guests can enjoy live music, local vendors, and hands-on activities that highlight the beauty of the season and our community's connection to nature.			
SUNDAY MAY 10TH	TIME	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
PASSERINES AND RAPTORS OF THE YAKIMA RIVER CANYON—DEB ESSMAN	7:00AM-10:00AM	<a href="#">UMTANUM CREEK RECREATION AREA</a>	Passerines & Raptors of the Yakima River Canyon A second opportunity for early morning birding in prime canyon habitat.
BIRDING BY EAR— WALTER SZEGLIA (TENTATIVE)	6:00AM-9:30AM	<a href="#">YCIC</a>	Birding by Ear (Tentative) Improve your birding skills by learning to identify species through their songs and calls.
TRACKING SKILLS - KEVIN O'MALLEY	9:30AM-12:30PM	<a href="#">ROCKY COULEE</a>	Tracking Skills Learn to read tracks and signs to better understand wildlife movement and behavior.
TAKE YOUR MOTHER FOR A NATURE WALK— JILL SCHEFFER	10:30AM-11:30 AM	<a href="#">YCIC</a>	Take Your Mother for a Nature Walk A relaxed, family-friendly walk celebrating Mother's Day in nature.
Wildflower & Wind Power Walks <a href="#">Wild Horse Wind Facility</a> Morning Session: 10:00-11:00am Wind Turbine Tour, 11:00-1:00pm Wildflower Walk Afternoon Session: 2:00-3:00pm Wind Turbine Tour, 3:00-5:00pm Wildflower Walk Register by emailing <a href="mailto:wildhorse@pse.com">wildhorse@pse.com</a>			Wildflower & Wind Power Walks – Wild Horse Wind Facility Combine renewable energy education with guided wildflower walks and turbine tours.