

**December 2016. Maintenance and safety checks of buildings and grounds, seasonal mowing, firewood cutting splitting and stacking, storm clean-up, shelter house and toilet cleaning, litter pick-up and disposal, road grading, trail maintenance, equipment maintenance, scheduling shelter rentals and collecting shelter and camping fees, drinking water sampling . Shelter houses and Lodge are used every weekend by scouts, families and other groups. Natural Resource Center Educational Staff teaching school groups at Russell Woods and making classroom visits. PDRMA Risk Management and Loss Control review and preserve safety in progress for 2016 compliance.**

# Winterfest

Saturday, January 21<sup>st</sup>

~ SCHEDULE ~

## 9:30 a.m. ~ Bird Behaviors & Identification

Whether you are a beginning birder or just enjoy watching the birds, join us inside the Natural Resource Education Center to learn simple techniques for identifying birds as you watch our feeding station.

## 10:00 a.m. ~ Illinois Wildlife Program and *Un-Nature* Nature Trail

Peggy Doty will share information about area wildlife and then participants can go on an *un-nature* hike. Come and see what this is about and bring the family!

## 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. ~ Candle Making

Volunteers will be on hand to assist in the making of hand-dipped candles you can take home with you. (One per person, please)

## 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. ~ Face Painting

Kids will love having our artists design a piece of nature art on their hand or face.

## 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. ~ Crafts & Activities

Make and take crafts with helpful volunteers available to assist as well as other on-going family-friendly activities. (Large classroom)

## 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. ~ Digital Scavenger Hunt

See how many items from our scavenger hunt you can "shoot" with your phone or camera. Items may be found inside and outside the nature center and along specified trail.

(See a staff member or volunteer for instructions) (Meet in Little Seeds Library)



### 11:00 a.m. ~ Story Time

Join Sarah Tobias as she reads some of her favorite winter stories from our own library. **11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. ~ Snacks & Lunch**  
Available for purchase from the Genoa Prairie Gems 4-H Club  
(Please support our local 4-H Club)

### 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. ~ Horse Drawn Wagon Rides

Enjoy the winter scenery of Russell Woods Forest Preserve from the comfort of a horse drawn wagon.  
(Pick-up in front of the Natural Resource Education Center)

### 12:30 p.m. ~ Tracking

Join Jason Thompson for a native skills tracking lesson. Jason is a long time practitioner of native skills and will share his years of experience and tracking knowledge.  
(Small classroom)

### 1:30 pm ~ Hike

Join us for an afternoon hike and even put your new tracking knowledge to work.  
(Meet in the large classroom)



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University of Illinois College of Agricultural, Consumer & Environmental Sciences/USDA/Local Extension Councils Cooperating

University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

Horse drawn wagon rides through Russell Woods at WinterFest



**Great Horned Owls begin nesting soon, pictured is Great Horned owl on nest in Cottonwood Tree at Wilkinson Marsh Forest Preserve**



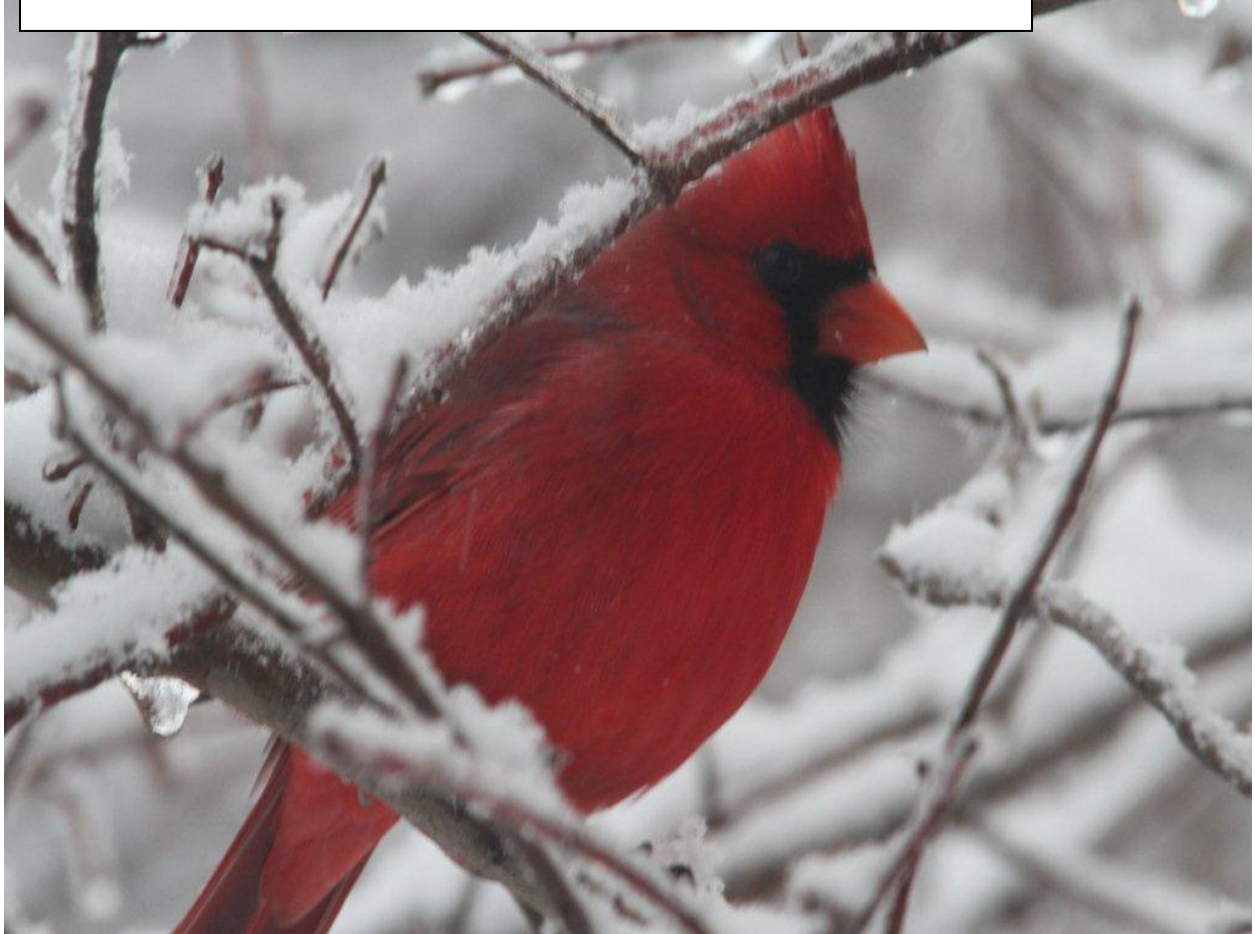
**Snowy Owls sometimes venture south (in lean food years up north) into DeKalb County. In photo is a Snowy Owl near Prairie Oaks Forest Preserve**







**Female and Male Cardinal brighten the winter landscape in Forest Preserves**



## Projects November – December 2016 Northern Preserves

Bill Prain and FP staff

- Deadfall removal along trails
- Toilet and floor tile replacement at RC
- Construction of RC observation deck
- Winterize power equipment
- Firewood supply stocking
- Safety lane trailer inspection
- Replace bumpers at Russell, Sycamore FP. and Resource Center C with boulders and concrete posts
- Maintenance shed insulation installation
- Administrative Priorities as called for ( materials and supply pickup – delivery )
- Safety investigation reporting and training
- Shut down well for winter (MacQueen Lodge)
- Vandalism cleanup, prevention and reporting at Russell Woods Potawatomi Woods and Hoppe Heritage Farmstead
- Stove pipe inspection and replacement at Shelter houses
- Skid loader repairs
- Snow plowing and ice control application
- Hole digging, sign post install and winter shut down (Sycamore F.P.)
- Sledding Hill garbage pickup, safety monitoring, signage and replace /add to firewood supply

## **December 2016 south and central forest preserves project maintenance work**

Josh Clark and staff:

Several snow plowing and removal days

Continued cleaning up maintenance yard at Afton

Continued cleaning up future plant nurse area at Afton

Maintenance and cleaning of Bobcat Skidsteer

Sanded and painted garbage barrels at Afton

Burned brush piles at Afton

Developing 2017 maintenance list and natural resource management plans for preserves

Built bluebird nesting boxes and in photo Kestrel ( Sparrow Hawk) nesting boxes



American Kestrels live at forest preserve prairie and wetland areas. They nest in the boxes ( above) and in tree cavities.

### Natural Resources

Finished up seed weighing and processing

Built and planted seed propagation boxes





The *Frank O'Barski Memorial Bench* was recently placed at Sycamore Forest Preserve. Memorial Bench dedication and Sycamore Tree planting will take place this Spring. The bench will have a beautiful view of the prairie, pond and river. Also, another "Jeff's Trees" bench was installed and 3 more memorial benches are being donated to Sycamore Forest Preserve.





**Also at Sycamore Forest Preserve, forest preserve maintenance staff Bob Knuuutila carved another one of his beautiful forest preserve "stump art" chainsaw wood carvings. (a Black Bear carving is in progress and will join his owl and morel mushroom wood carvings )**



Every weekend scouts and others use the many forest preserve enclosed shelters for winter recreation. In photo are scout leader's in a warm wood fire heated shelter at Chief Shabbona Forest Preserve



And some scouts prefer to "rough it "







When winter conditions are good, sledding at Russell Woods and Sannauk is a popular winter activity.





**Snowmobiling on the Great Western Trail**



**Many people enjoy cross country skiing at Nehring Forest Preserve and many other forest preserve areas**







**Enjoy the winter season and landscape in DeKalb County.**