

Outdoor Adventures with Solano Land Trust in February

Experience our local oak woodlands, grasslands, tidal marsh and vernal pools during this time of year. The hillsides are green, creeks are flowing and vernal pools are filled from winter rains. At the same time, the earliest of spring flowers like California buttercups are beginning to bloom, aquatic invertebrate like the Conservancy Fairy Shrimp have hatched and are eating and growing, and soon it will be mating and nesting season for birds like the Great-horned Owl. Participants can train to become a Jepson Prairie docent, prepare nest boxes for the Western Bluebird, use traditional blacksmithing tools to create a keepsake, or go on guided hikes. For important details, including each event's meeting location, directions and registration information, visit the events calendar at solanolandtrust.org. For additional questions, call 707-432-0150. February opportunities include:

Sat. Feb. 4 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the King-Swett Ranches

Nature Hike: Explore the hills between Fairfield, Benicia, and Vallejo. Learn about the birds and other wildlife that call this area home, and get a great workout. Take advantage of this special opportunity if possible because the King-Swett Ranches are otherwise closed. Up to six miles. Space is limited. Pre-registration recommended. Free!

RSVP by Mon. Feb. 6 to attend a training series to become a Jepson Prairie docent

Docent Training Volunteer Opportunity: Become a Jepson Prairie tour guide, known as a docent, by attending a series of trainings starting the evening of Tues. Feb. 7 and ending in early March. The seven-day training series includes four indoor lessons on Tuesday evenings, Feb. 7, 14, 21 and 28 from 7 p.m. to approximately 9 p.m. in the City of Davis. The three outdoor trainings are Saturday mornings, starting Feb. 11 from 10 a.m. to approximately noon at Jepson Prairie Preserve. The second and third Saturday dates are still being confirmed. No prior experience is necessary and perfect attendance is not required. You'll learn about vernal pools, and the aquatic invertebrate and flowering plants that depend on them. You'll then be part of the docent team that offers tours of Jepson Prairie each spring. \$25 per person for the training program. RSVP by Mon. Feb. 6 to Kate at wfm-kfm@pacbell.net.

Fri. Feb. 10 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (location varies)

Citizen Science Volunteer Opportunity: Help prepare boxes for Western bluebirds to build their nests. This includes repairing and cleaning last year's boxes. No experience necessary. You'll learn while volunteering. Space is limited. RSVP two or more days in advance to Sue at sue@solanolandtrust.org. Free!

Sat. Feb. 11 from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at Lynch Canyon

Trail Crew Volunteer Opportunity: Help take care of Lynch Canyon's 1,000-plus acres. Projects include improving trails, fixing fences, weeding and more. No experience necessary. Participants learn while volunteering. No RSVP necessary. Free parking pass for the day at check-in, and free pizza while supplies last!



Sat. Feb. 11 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Rockville Trails Preserve

Valentine's Hike: Learn about historical relationships and nature's valentines at Rockville Trails Preserve. Bring your own valentine along! See sweeping views of Solano County and beyond. Take advantage of this opportunity if you can because Rockville Trails Preserve is otherwise closed. Up to five miles. Space is limited. Pre-registration recommended. Free!

Sun. Feb. 12 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Lynch Canyon

Eagles, Hawks & Other Birds of Prey Hike: Lynch Canyon is a magnet for birds of prey. It provides them with over 1,000 undeveloped acres where they can hunt and rest. Join Larry Broderick and team to spot resident and over-wintering raptors. Birds of prey seen this winter at Lynch Canyon include Red-tailed, Red-shouldered, Ferruginous, Cooper's, and Sharp-shinned Hawks; White-tailed Kite; Northern Harrier; American Kestrel; Prairie Falcon; Turkey Vulture; Burrowing Owl; and Bald and Golden Eagles. Four miles. Pre-registration recommended. The guided hike is free as part of the San Francisco Bay Flyway Festival! Parking is \$6 per vehicle.

Sat. Feb. 18 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Rush Ranch

Blacksmithing: Travel back in time by entering a traditional blacksmith shop in action. You may even have the opportunity to make your own iron nail or other keepsake. Sponsored by the Rush Ranch Educational Council and part of this month's *Get the Rush!* – a series of family-friendly activities offered on the third Saturday of every month at Rush Ranch. No RSVP necessary. Free!

Sat. Feb. 18 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Rush Ranch

Science Discovery Labs: Explore learning stations with engaging science and engineering activities designed for kids and their families. Part of this month's *Get the Rush!* No RSVP necessary. Free!

Mon. Feb. 20 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Rockville Trails Preserve

Holiday Hike: Hike through the hills and oak woodlands between Green Valley and Suisun Valley on this Presidents' Day holiday. Enjoy views of the valleys, marsh, delta, and Mt. Diablo. Up to six miles. Space is limited. Pre-registration required. Free!

Ongoing at Lynch Canyon and Rockville Trails Preserve

Guided rides on your horse: Tours of Rockville Trails Preserve and Lynch Canyon for experienced trail riders with fit horses that are both trail- and road-trained. Contact Mindi at splish@sbcglobal.net or Christine at cnken13@juno.com. The guided rides are free! Parking is \$6 at Lynch Canyon.

Ongoing at Rush Ranch

Horse Feeding Volunteer Opportunity: <u>Access Adventure</u> is seeking volunteers who enjoy physical outdoor work on a ranch and are available one or more times a week throughout the year to feed the horses at Rush Ranch. Contact Tom at tmuehleise@aol.com about training. Free!

Explore on your own

<u>Lynch Canyon</u> is open Fridays through Mondays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. to picnic, fly a kite, see cows and wildlife, and travel the trails on foot, mountain bike or horse. Parking is \$6. <u>Rush Ranch</u> is open every day from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. to picnic, explore exhibits, see horses and cows, and walk alongside the tidal marsh or hike up hills. Parking is free. Both locations offer sweeping views of Solano County and the Bay Area.

Save the date

Mark your calendar for the annual <u>Rush Ranch Open House</u> on Sat. April 29, the annual <u>Lynch Canyon Kite Festival</u> on Sat. May 6, and the annual <u>Lynch Canyon Trail Run & Community Hike</u> on Sat. June 3.

Solano Land Trust protects land to ensure a healthy environment, keep ranching and farming families on their properties, and inspire a love of the land. For more information about Solano Land Trust, its upcoming events and to make a donation, visit solanolandtrust.org.

