



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

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## Congaree National Park News Release

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### **National Park Week at Congaree National Park Park Programs to Showcase Wilderness and the Great Outdoors**

HOPKINS, SOUTH CAROLINA – As the temperatures begin to warm and the forests turn a soft shade of green, park rangers at Congaree National Park are preparing for a celebration of National Park Week with a variety of special programs and activities geared toward wilderness and the great outdoors.

National Park Week will kick off at Congaree National Park on Saturday, April 15 with Junior Ranger Day. Kids and “kids at heart” are encouraged to participate in the official Congaree National Park Junior Ranger program. Participants that day will receive a special gift in addition to the official Junior Ranger badge or patch. Throughout the week there will be a wide range of programs, displays and activities offered. The week will culminate with a very special weekend April 22 and 23 which will include programs on wilderness, a health fair and the connections of prominent naturalists to the wilderness including Henry David Thoreau.

Saturday, April 22 will be a flurry of activity with a celebration of Earth Day and an emphasis on the life and works of Thoreau. “2017 marks the bicentennial of the birth of Henry David Thoreau,” says Park Ranger Jon Manchester, “Living History hikes will focus on his life and will feature drama students from Dreher High School in Columbia who will be in costume.” A number of special programs will be offered including guided naturalist hikes, Mid19<sup>th</sup> Century music and an evening Owl Prowl.

The weekend celebration continues on Sunday, April 23 with activities celebrating Thoreau and the wilderness including readings of Thoreau’s works and naturalist hikes. Area health providers and first responders will be on hand as part of a National Park Rx day. Outdoor booths will offer free health screenings, kid’s activities and special programs related to safely enjoying the great outdoors.

“We are really looking forward to celebrating National Park Week and encourage everyone to come out to the park and participate,” says Manchester, “With lots of family activities, special displays and programs, there is a little bit of something for everyone!”

For more information about National Park Week activities please call the Harry Hampton Visitor Center at (803)776-4396 or visit the park website at [www.nps.gov/cong](http://www.nps.gov/cong).

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