

PARKS PRESCRIPTION

An Austin Parks and Recreation Health Promotions Program



The time has come, a new year, 2024. The chance to start anew, to achieve the goals we have set aside to help us become healthier. We have the confidence, encouragement and optimism to work towards a greater self. Nature is there to guide us in our endeavors! We are fortunate enough to live in a city that has many outlets for outdoor enjoyment. Follow along on our google calendar for just a few suggestions this month to help get you outside. Whether it's taking a stroll at your local park, joining in the annual [Polar Bear Plunge at Barton Springs](#), enjoying outdoor art exhibitions like [Moonlauf at The Umlauf Sculpture garden](#), joining in the local live music scene or participating outdoor yoga, there is something for everyone. We are updating the calendar often. The best way to stay in the know is to click the plus button and add the google calendar to your calendar.

[Outdoor Activities Google Calendar](#)

The New Year might be a time to start new traditions for you and your family. This might be a resolution to go for a walk outside after dinner or try to take a family hike on the weekend. You might try something new like learning to play a sport or giving yourself 30 minutes to sit outside and have a warm drink and read a book. It's never too late or too early to start a healthy tradition that will benefit your mind and body.

A fun activity that gets us outside is exploring nature's plants and animals. We love using the iNaturalist App also the Seek app by iNaturalist. You can take a photo of a bug, creature, plant, tree, etc. and upload it to the app and it will give you information and suggestions on what species it may be. You can also look up anywhere in the city and see the observations that have been made by other Austinites and where they saw it. You can even earn badges. <https://www.inaturalist.org>

Keeping a Nature Journal

Keeping a Nature Journal can also be a great way of tracking your progress and finding the beauty and fun in being outdoors. Nature Journaling has been shown to relieve stress and boost your well being. You can write about what you saw, collect leaves, flowers, etc., draw pictures. There are so many ways of journaling your time outdoors.

Keeping a nature journal helps to:

- see the world with new eyes
- understand how everything is connected
- stimulate curiosity, and a sense of wonder
- boost creativity
- show us our unique place in the world
- understand the importance of local nature
- make us more aware and grateful
- improve our well being!

January Highlighted Outdoor Events

[Calendar](#)



Polar Bear Splash!

Save Our Springs Alliance

Monday, January 1st
8:30 AM - 2:30 PM
Barton Springs

FREE

We invite you and your loved ones to come out to Barton Springs between 8:30 AM and 2 PM on New Year's Day to wash off the old and dive into 2024. It's more fun than you can imagine! Find us at the front gate with free coffee & donuts and a **commemorative t-shirt** for sale to celebrate the year ahead. Come soak up the community news and splash with your neighbors!



Family Day Umlaufville: Toon Time!

<https://umlaufsculpture.app.neoncrm.com/clients/umlaufsculpture/event.jsp?events=1391>

Sunday, January 14th
11 AM - 4 PM

605 Azie Morton Rd, Austin, TX 78704, USA

FREE

On this family Day we are unraveling the secrets of cartoon art, inviting kids and families to join us on an educational journey.

We will dive into a series of captivating activities that will unveil the magic of cartooning and comics. Through interactive sessions, young learners will have the opportunity to engage in the art of drawing their own cartoon characters, unlocking the hidden artistry in each of them.

- We are thrilled to have Ryan Otto, Caricature Artist, a true virtuoso that has 25 years of professional experience at multiple theme parks-Six Flags, Sea World, Knott's Berry Farm, and Disneyland. He would be on hand from 12:30-2:30 PM to craft delightful portraits of families. These cherished portraits will serve as keepsakes, preserving the memories of this enriching day for years to come.
- Dynamic Character Design Workshop by Alex Porter
- Goldfish Swim School Table + Face Painting
- Toon Making Craft
- Sculpture Searches

[Reserve Tickets Here](#)

January Health Observance



The month of January is designated as National Blood Donor Month in the United States. Due to holiday celebrations, inclement weather, and cold and flu season, the winter months are often a time of reduced donations and an increased risk for blood shortages. National Blood Donor Month celebrates blood donors during this critical time and reminds people of the importance of donating blood.

Help ensure that this lifesaving resource is readily available to patients during this time. [Find a location](#) to give blood and schedule your life-saving donation appointment today.

[Learn More](#)

Get into Nature with the Austin Parks and Recreation Department.

- [Lamar Senior Activity Center](#)
- [Conley-Guerrero Senior Activity Center](#)
- [South Austin Senior Activity Center](#)
- [Tennis](#)
- [Golfing at Golf ATX](#)
- [Softball, flag football, Basketball Leagues](#)
- [Disc Golf](#)
- [Pickleball](#)
- [Trail Directory](#)
- [Skate Parks](#)
- [Zilker Botanical Garden](#)
- [Pools](#)
- [Playgrounds](#)
- [Picnic Sites](#)
- [Austin Nature Science Center](#)

Other Organizations Around Austin with Upcoming Outdoor Events:

- [Texas Farmers Market at Lakeline](#)
- [SFC Farmer's Market Downtown](#)
- [Mueller Farmer's Market](#)
- [Boggy Creek Farm](#)
- [Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center](#)
gardening, yoga, etc.
- [Nature Rocks Austin](#)
 - [Find Activities in Green Spaces & Parks in Your Community](#)
- [Austin Parks Foundation](#)
 - [Movies in the Park](#)
- [Texas State Parks](#)
- [Tree Folks](#)
 - [Volunteer & Calendar of events](#)
- [Peace Park Conservancy](#)
- [Waterloo Greenway and Moody Amphitheatre](#)
- [Austin Public Library](#)
 - [Outdoor Storytime](#)

Keep a look out for our monthly newsletter highlighting outdoor events around Austin and fun facts on how nature can benefit your health.

Click the logo for more information on our website.

