



# READY, SET, EXPLORE!

## PROGRAM INFORMATION

This is a free, family-friendly program designed to inspire outdoor adventures and create unforgettable memories. This program will take place from November, 2024 - April, 2025. Each month, families are encouraged to step outside, discover the beauty of the natural world, and enjoy quality time together. Whether it's hiking through scenic trails, discovering local wildlife, or simply enjoying a picnic under the stars, "Ready, Set, Explore" brings families closer to nature—and to each other!

### HOW IT WORKS!

#### Each month, participants will:

1. Register to participate at:  
[https://bit.ly/ready\\_set\\_explore\\_registration](https://bit.ly/ready_set_explore_registration)  
**(only need to register once for the program!)**
1. Be emailed all Ready, Set, Explore information for the month: activities, extras, and questions.
2. Choose to do 4 or more of the activities listed for that month.
3. Answer the 4 activity questions.
4. Email your answers to the 4 activity questions along with 1-4 pictures from that month to:  
[readysetexplore.4h@gmail.com](mailto:readysetexplore.4h@gmail.com)

### EXTRAS!



**The fun doesn't stop there!** Each month participants will also be sent the following information that they are encouraged to do, but not required:

- Nature Journaling Prompt
- Vibrant Health Tip
- Snack Idea
- Leave No Trace Tip
- Natural Resource Handout

### WHAT YOU GET FOR COMPLETING THE MONTH!

For each month completed (see how does it work above) each family will be sent a monthly incentive!

**FAMILY ADVENTURES AWAIT!**

QUESTIONS?  307.568.4160  [gasvoda@uwyo.edu](mailto:gasvoda@uwyo.edu)

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## DECEMBER 2024

### Activities: Pick 4 or more:

1. Snow Designs! Make designs in the snow with water tinted with food coloring
2. Take a winter walk around your neighborhood or community and look at the holiday decorations.
3. Celebrate National Flashlight Day on December 21st and go on a flashlight adventure. Take your flashlight and explore the night around you. Whether it's in your backyard or local park see how many things you can see with your flashlight!
4. Enjoy a fun-filled day of sledding with the whole family. Ensure everyone has warm clothing, waterproof gloves, hats, scarves, and sturdy boots. Don't forget the sleds! Pack the essentials: Bring a thermos of hot cocoa, snacks like granola bars or cookies, and some extra layers in case it gets colder.
5. Organize a family snowball fight by dividing everyone into teams and setting clear boundaries to keep it safe. Start with a quick warm-up game, then let the fun begin with plenty of snowballs and laughter. Be sure to end with hot cocoa and a group photo to capture the snowy memories! No snow outside? Use wadded up pieces of paper or make yarn balls for indoor snowballs <https://simpleacresblog.com/yarn-pom-pom-snowballs/>
6. Embark on a snow hike for a delightful winter adventure! Bundle up and explore a snowy trail, making the hike fun with games like scavenger hunts or tracking animal footprints. The crisp air and snowy scenery make for a memorable outing and a great way to enjoy the winter sunshine together.
7. Go skiing or take a family lesson and learn to ski!
8. Make a list of outdoor winter items and go on a winter scavenger hunt.
9. Go outside when it's dark and look up at the night sky and look for constellations. This website will get you started: <https://extension.usu.edu/iort/cp-darkskies/learn/explore-the-night-sky/year-round-constellations>
10. Bundle up in warm clothing and go on a Holiday Lights Walk in your neighborhood.
11. Make paper bag snowflakes to decorate your home. Easy directions on how to make the snowflakes can be found on this YouTube video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9YN5Q\\_ws3c0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9YN5Q_ws3c0)
12. During a winter hike, collect objects to make a tree ornament.

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## DECEMBER 2024

### JOURNAL PROMPT

#### Winter Window

- This month, practice observing nature from your window. It may not be the same as going out for a hike, but it certainly helps us feel like we are still a part of what is going on right outside our homes.
- Find a window in your home with the best view and sit and observe what is happening outside. Draw or write to record your observations.

### VIBRANT HEALTH TIP

With shorter days and less sunlight, it's important to boost your vitamin D.

- Try to get outside during daylight, even if it's just for a brief walk.
- A snowball fight or sledding would be fun, too!
- It's a great way for both kids and adults to stay healthy and enjoy a bit of fresh air.

### LEAVE NO TRACE TIP

#### Principle 3- Dispose of Waste Properly

Pack it in- Pack it out!

When you're outside, remember to pick up all your trash and put it in a bag or a trash can. Don't leave wrappers, bottles, or crumbs behind—animals can't eat people food, and trash doesn't belong in nature!

### SNACK IDEA

#### Strawberry Santas

- 2 large strawberries
- 1 cup whipped cream cheese
- 2 tablespoons powdered sugar
- ¼ teaspoon vanilla
- Decorative red and black icing for the face.

1. Prepare the Strawberries: Wash the strawberries and cut them into three pieces: remove the stem, then slice the berry in half, keeping the top for the hat.



2. Make the Filling: Mix cream cheese, powdered sugar, and vanilla in a bowl until smooth.

3. Pipe the Filling: Place the mixture in a piping bag.

4. Assemble the Santas: Put the bottom strawberry piece on a plate, pipe the filling on top, and place the top strawberry piece on it as the hat. Add a bit more filling on top for the hat's trim.

5. Serve or Store: Enjoy right away or refrigerate until ready to eat.

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# READY, SET, EXPLORE!

## WHAT IS NATURE JOURNALING?

A WAY TO ENGAGE IN OBSERVATION, CURIOSITY, AND CREATIVE THINKING IN NATURE!

NATURE JOURNALS ARE USED BY SCIENTISTS, NATURALISTS, THINKERS, POETS, WRITERS, ARTISTS, ENGINEERS, AND ANYONE ELSE WHO WANTS TO USE ONE!

### WHY DO WE DO IT?

#### WE NATURE JOURNAL TO:

- SLOW DOWN, PAY ATTENTION, AND EXPERIENCE WONDER
- DEVELOP CREATIVITY AND CRITICAL THINKING
- TO NURTURE CONNECTION TO NATURE
- TO HAVE FUN!



### MATERIALS

- NOTEBOOK
- PENCIL
- NOT REQUIRED, BUT CAN BE USED:
  - COLORED PENCILS
  - STICKERS
  - WATER COLOR PAINTS
  - RULER/MEASURING TAPE
  - ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT

### HOW DO YOU DO IT?

- EITHER BY YOURSELF OR WITH YOUR FAMILY, USE WORDS, PICTURES, AND NUMBERS TO RECORD WHAT YOU ARE EXPERIENCING

### STEP 1



#### RECORD METADATA

- METADATA- DATA THAT PROVIDES INFORMATION ABOUT OTHER DATA
- WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE FOR NATURE JOURNALING?
  - USUALLY IN TOP CORNER (OR WHEREVER YOU WANT!)
    - DATE
    - LOCATION
    - WEATHER
    - ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO RECORD

### STEP 2

**START JOURNALING!  
LOOK AT THIS MONTH'S PROMPT  
TO LEAD YOUR JOURNAL!**



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# BACKYARD BIRD WATCHING

Here are a few birds you might see this winter:

## Townsend's Solitaire

Grey bird with darker colors on wings and tail. They have a white eye ring and outer tail feathers. Eats insects and fruits from juniper trees, hackberry, mistletoe, and others. Similar in size to robins.



Northern Flicker



## House Finch

Brownish bird with blurry darker stripes over light colors on sides and underparts. Males have red eyebrows and throat. Diet consists mostly of seeds, buds, berries, and a few insects. Similar in size to sparrows.



## Chickadees

Grey to cream colored bird with black cap, bib, and tail. Mountain chickadees have a distinctive white eyebrow. Eats insects, seeds, and berries. Similar in size to sparrows.



Black-capped Chickadee



Mountain Chickadee

## American Tree Sparrow

5.5 - 6.5" tall. Body is white to gray. Typically have a rusty cap, two-toned bill, dark chest spot, and two white wing-bars. Diet consists mostly of weed and grass seeds, berries, and a few insects.



Create your own bird feeders by tying a string to pinecones and dipping in softened peanut butter or lard. Roll them in bird seed and place on a cookie sheet to cool overnight.

Hang them outside and watch for hungry visitors!



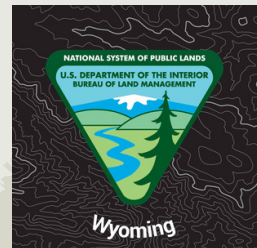
# READY, SET, EXPLORE!

## OUR PARTNERS

We couldn't make this program happen without the help from our amazing partners from around the state! Check out our partners below as well as more ways to Ready, Set, Explore Wyoming!

### PARTNERS

- Wyoming State Parks
- Wyoming Office of Outdoor Recreation
- Wyoming Game and Fish
- Wyoming Bureau of Land Management



### Wyoming Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

The Wyoming Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages over 18 million acres of public lands, providing endless opportunities for outdoor adventure. They work to conserve Wyoming's natural beauty while promoting responsible recreation. They encourage families to get outside and explore through programs like Junior Ranger activities, interactive events, and educational resources designed to inspire a love for the outdoors. By fostering connections to nature, the Wyoming BLM ensures public lands remain accessible and enjoyable for generations to come.

Check out more here!



<https://www.blm.gov/learn/kids/junior-ranger?page=1>

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## DECEMBER 2024

### ACTIVITY QUESTIONS

- Describe your favorite activity and what made it enjoyable for everyone.
- How did these activities help your family spend quality time together?
- How did these activities affect your family's physical and mental health and happiness?
- How many minutes/hours did you spend outside this month completing the Ready, Set, Explore activities?

Send your answered questions and 1 - 4 pictures by December 31 to:  
[READYSETEXPLORE.4H@GMAIL.COM](mailto:READYSETEXPLORE.4H@GMAIL.COM)

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