

Anderson Park News

Irving & John Anderson County Park – 27201 Furman St. NE, North Branch

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A Winter Wonderland

Anderson Park offers a myriad of winter experiences and natural beauty right in our own back yard. Visitors can stroll or ski along glistening snow trails. Even though the annual Christmas bird count is over, you can still pull out a bird book and binoculars to identify which species brave the Minnesota winter.



Hoary Redpoll

Watch for graceful flocks of Snow Buntings or Redpolls (both Common and the more elusive Hoary) mixing with friendly Pine Siskins, as they glide up and down in waves against a clear, cold blue sky or perch to watch you.



Pine Siskin

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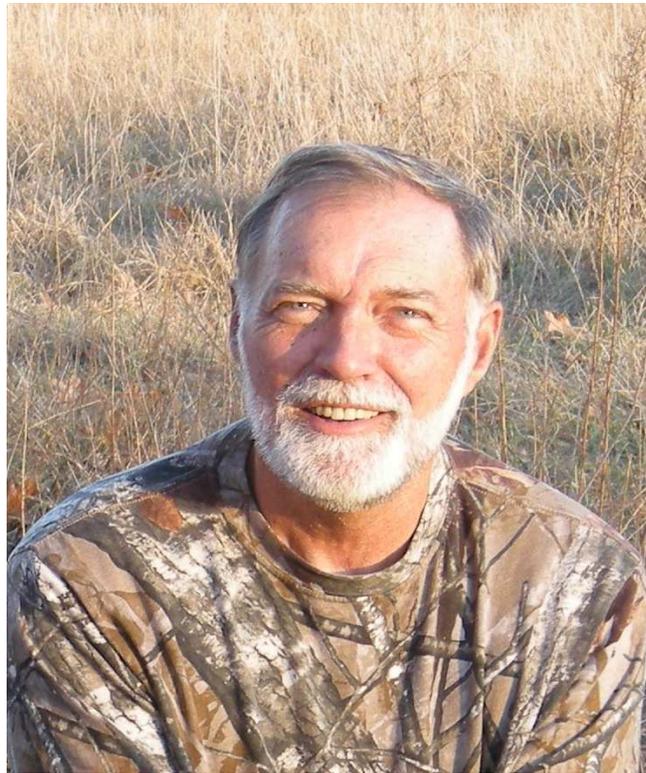
Enjoy a beautiful sunset or sunrise, or observe the human and animal tracks winding in, out and around the trails. Some trails are manmade for cross country skiing; other tracks tell of deer, coyote, squirrel, mouse or rabbit travels across the drifting snow fields.

Pack a lunch, deck yourself out in warm comforting clothes and walk the park's road and trails. For more exercise, don snowshoes to hike through the virgin snow fields and usually inaccessible marsh. Be adventurous. Make your own cross-country ski trail across the lake and through the woods.

Stop at the picnic shelter and watch nature unfold while sipping hot chocolate from a thermos. Grill a hamburger or roast marshmallows. No matter what age you are, making snow angels is a fun way to top off a winter visit to Anderson Park.



Anderson Park Friend Makes a Difference Year Round



Joe Sausen

Joe Sausen, nature lover, bird enthusiast, garden cultivator, photographer and Friend of Anderson and Wild River Parks makes service projects an integral part of who he is and what he does. Joe steps up throughout the year to share his passions, expertise and love of nature.

He grew up on a farm west of Wyoming, has a degree in Comprehensive Earth Science; has taught high school science and math; built solar houses; worked with computers, and now is retired – sort of. His retirement consists of consulting, bird watching, photography and working with Chisago Parks and Trails, the Boy Scouts, the Wild River Audubon society and the Friends of Wild River and Anderson Parks. He also organizes birding and photography trips to Nicaragua.

This year Joe shared his passions and expertise often at Anderson Park. He co-led the annual bird hike in May, organized an outing at the park for the North Branch Garden Club in July, facilitated North Branch Special Education field trips and organized geocaching sessions at the park's annual fall event. Joe serves the community well by sharing his love of nature and the great outdoors. It is his nature.

Winter Busy for Park Staff

By Barry Wendorf, Isanti County Park Director

Isanti County has six parks with more than 775 acres of parkland featuring the wild and scenic Rum River, old growth stands of White Pine, restored prairies, lakes, wetlands, and wildlife. With snow covering the landscape and cold weather in the forecast for a few more months, park users dwindle in number. This provides park staff with new and different opportunities to improve our parks.

The first priority is to complete maintenance on equipment used throughout the spring, summer and fall months. Winter also offers the chance to manage the parks forested areas by thinning out pine stands and removing invasive species, as well as burning the brush piles that have accumulated throughout the year to help keep warm!



A frozen landscape provides the perfect opportunity to repair the 2,000 feet of boardwalks within our parks.

The really cold days of winter are spent on planning, budgeting, networking, and promoting Isanti County Parks for the coming year. It seems there is never a shortage of work to be done, with each changing season comes new opportunities.

For information on all six Isanti County parks see www.co.isanti.mn.us/parksrechome.html.





Black-capped Chickadee



Hooded Mergansers

Nature Notes

February: Usually a pleasant month with mild temps, big storms are possible.
 White-tailed deer shed antlers.
 American Goldfinches begin to display a few new bright yellow feathers.
 Squirrels, coyotes and timber wolves begin mating.

March: Skunks and rabbits start to move around.
 Chipmunks and woodchucks are out and about.
 Bluebirds, Song Sparrows, Egrets, Peregrine Falcons, Tundra Swans, Robins, Red-winged Blackbirds and Sandhill Cranes begin to arrive.

April: Every prairie, marsh and forest is full of the signs of spring:
 Birds are migrating, mating and nesting;
 Buds and new leaves can be seen on trees;
 Wild flowers appear;
 Frogs begin singing in ponds and marshes;
 Wood ducks begin laying their eggs and
 Garter snakes come out to sun themselves.

Source: *Freshwater Society of Minnesota Weatherguide Environment Calendar*

Irving & John Anderson
County Park
27201 Furman St NE,
North Branch



Our mission is to preserve the natural beauty and primitive nature of Anderson Park and to assist Isanti County with its planning, development, and maintenance of facilities.

We're on the Web!

<http://andersonparkfriends-isanti.org>

Become a Friend of Anderson Park

All donations are tax deductible and 100% of the donations will go toward Anderson Park programs and development

- Individual Friend - \$25 /year
- Family Friend - \$50/year
- Business Friend - \$50/year
- Add \$10 and be a member of MN Parks & Trails

**Make check payable to: Parks and Trails Council of MN
(Write "Anderson Park" in the memo line)**

Mail to: Friends of Anderson Park

C/o Diana Horrigan
27440 Vassar St. NE
Stacy, MN 55079

The park is located in the southeast corner of Isanti County in Minnesota. It lies on both sides of County Road 18, a quarter mile north of County Road 9 and two miles south of County Road 5.

andersonparkfriends@frontiernet.net

Dark-eyed or "slate-colored" Junco



Dark-eyed Juncos are one of the most abundant forest birds in winter. They are dark gray or brown with a white belly, have a pink bill and white outer tail feathers. You are likely to see this flashy little sparrow as you walk on the park's woodland trails. Watch for it hopping around on the forest floor as it forages for its favorite food – fallen seeds.
