

Dark Sky Happenings

Preserving Darkness at Arches National Park

By Rachel Joha

The arches of Arches National Park are like windows to the universe, allowing us to take a glimpse into the past as well as consider what the future may bring. The National Park Service recognizes a naturally dark night sky as more than just a scenic canvas. It is part of a complex ecosystem that supports both natural and cultural resources. The opportunities to experience the natural environment are endless at Arches from the solitude of the backcountry, its rich soundscape, and of course dark night skies.

Natural patterns of darkness are as important as the light of day to the functioning of ecosystems. Every creature on this planet has evolved in bright days, as well as dark nights. At least 30 percent of all vertebrates, and 60 percent of invertebrates are nocturnal with many of the rest being crepuscular. This means that the protection of naturally dark skies is essential for their survival, as well as ours. When we talk about light pollution, we talk about the health of ecosystems. However, no matter who we are or where we live, we live as part of one.

The skies over southeastern Utah are profoundly dark, especially at Canyonlands and Arches national parks. In July, Arches was certified as an international dark sky park by the International Dark-Sky Association. The award was given in recognition of the park's commitment to providing night sky outreach and preserving natural darkness in the park as well as in the surrounding communities. Arches is just one of a handful of internationally recognized parks, including Canyonlands National Park, Hovenweep National Monument, and Natural Bridges National Monument.

At the core of this achievement for Arches, is a number of dedicated employees, park partners, and community leaders that have led the charge in protecting the night sky. Their collaborative effort, over the course of the last five years, has made what once seemed impossible possible.

On Saturday, September 21, Arches will host a free nighttime event to celebrate their new international dark sky park status. Rangers from Arches and its neighboring parks will offer constellation tours and telescope viewings. Free shuttles will be provided. The local community and all members of the public are invited to take part in the festivities. For more details, visit Arches' website calendar: <https://www.nps.gov/arch/playyourvisit/calendar.htm>



The Moab Dark Skies was established by the Friends of Arches and Canyonlands Parks in conjunction with the National Park Service and Utah State Parks Division of Natural Resources.

Look up at the stars tonight!



Dark skies are a valuable and rare resource that millions of people throughout the world never get to see. Discover ways to appreciate and conserve Moab's unique and rare dark skies here at home. The universe is right overhead in our back yards!

DARK SKY DISCOVERIES

09/14 - FULL MOON, 8:00 - 9:30 PM
All things moon - myths, history of moon travel, geological features, orbital period and more!

09/28 - NEW MOON, 7:30 - 9:00 PM
The moon gets a lot of attention as the brightest object in our night sky; but come check out some of the dimmer objects while the moon is hidden in shadow.

FREE for CCDC Members
General Admission required for non-members

all events subject to weather and may be cancelled due to unfavorable conditions.

CANYON COUNTRY DISCOVERY CENTER HOURS:
MON - SAT 10:00AM - 7:00PM
435-587-2156 • ccdiscovery.org
1117 N Main St • Monticello, Utah 84532

SEPTEMBER SUNRISE & SUNSET TIMES

(The time of sunrise and sunset assumes a flat horizon. Actual time may vary depending upon the landscape.)

DATE	SUNRISE	SUNSET
1	6:48 am	7:47 pm
2	6:49 am	7:46 pm
3	6:49 am	7:44 pm
4	6:50 am	7:43 pm
5	6:51 am	7:41 pm
6	6:52 am	7:40 pm
7	6:53 am	7:38 pm
8	6:54 am	7:36 pm
9	6:55 am	7:35 pm
10	6:56 am	7:33 pm
11	6:56 am	7:32 pm
12	6:57 am	7:30 pm
13	6:58 am	7:29 pm
14	6:59 am	7:27 pm
15	7:00 am	7:25 pm
16	7:01 am	7:24 pm
17	7:02 am	7:22 pm
18	7:03 am	7:21 pm
19	7:03 am	7:19 pm
20	7:04 am	7:17 pm
21	7:05 am	7:16 pm
22	7:06 am	7:14 pm
23	7:07 am	7:13 pm
24	7:08 am	7:11 pm
25	7:09 am	7:09 pm
26	7:10 am	7:08 pm
27	7:11 am	7:06 pm
28	7:11 am	7:05 pm
29	7:12 am	7:03 pm
30	7:13 am	7:02 pm

MOON HAPPENINGS

Sep 5 - First Quarter at 9:10 pm
Sep 13 - Full Moon at 10:32 pm

