Fireflies in Utah: A Guide to Observing Nature's Light Show | Swaner EcoCenter

06/30/2025

Fireflies, also known as lightning bugs, are soft-bodied beetles. These bioluminescent beetles emit light to communicate to mates and deter predators. While they are commonly associated with the eastern United States, fireflies can also be found during the summer in Utah's marshes and wetlands!

Viewing Fireflies

- **Seasonality:** During the summer, May to July.
- **Timing:** Typically start flashing around dusk or later.
- **Conditions:** Choose a warm summer night with little to no wind—fireflies are most active when temperatures are mild and the air is calm.
- **Habitat:** Fireflies love wetland habitat and dark areas where they can perch on tall grasses. Try looking at areas with standing water that are far from city lights!

Observing Fireflies Responsibly

- **Minimize Light Pollution:** Avoid using flashlights or phone screens. If necessary, use red lights, which are less disruptive.
- **Stay on Designated Paths:** Stick to trails to help protect wetlands and other habitats!
- **Limit Catching:** Observe fireflies with your eyes! Please refrain from catching fireflies as it can disturb them.
- **Participate in Community Science:** Report sightings to the **Western Firefly Project** to aid in the research and conservation of fireflies.

Fireflies on the Swaner Preserve

One of the best publicly accessible places to see fireflies is on the south side of the Preserve along the trail between Cutter Lane and Swaner's fenceline. This scenic path is open 24/7 and offers a nice spot away from the road, perfect for watching fireflies light up the night! Fireflies on the Preserve are typically most active from **mid-June through early-July**, with peak viewing between **9:30 and 10:30 PM**, just after dark.

Parking

Parking can be tricky near Cutter Lane, so we recommend parking in Kimball Junction and then walking or biking along the trail to reach the best viewing areas.


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(function() { document.querySelectorAll('.carousel-
control[data-slide="prev"]').forEach(function(prevControl)
{ prevControl.setAttribute('aria-label', 'Previous'); });
document.querySelectorAll('.carousel-control[data-
slide="next"]').forEach(function(nextControl)
{ nextControl.setAttribute('aria-label', 'Next'); });
document.addEventListener('DOMContentLoaded',
function() { // Query all images within the
fourColumnCarousel inside embed-feed const
images = document.querySelectorAll('.embed-
feed .fourColumnCarousel .img-fluid'); images.forEach(img
=> { // If the image alt attribute is empty or missing,
set it to "Article thumbnail" if (!img.getAttribute('alt') ||
img.getAttribute('alt').trim() === '') { img.setAttribute('alt',
"Article thumbnail"); } }); }); })(); // Closes the IIFE
```

Location, Hours & Contact

Physical & Mailing Address
1258 Center Drive
Park City, Utah 84098

EcoCenter Hours
Wednesday – Sunday, 10 am – 4 pm

Email
swanerecocenter@usu.edu

Phone
435-649-1767

Directions, Parking, & Transit View Staff Directory

- Swaner EcoCenter Facebook page
- Swaner EcoCenter Instagram page

Events

<script type="text/javascript" src="//www.trumba.com/scripts/spuds.js"></script> <script type="text/javascript">
$Trumba.addSpud({ webName: "extension-swaner-ecocenter", spudType : "upcomingpreview" , spudConfig : "SpudConfig2" , teaserBase : "https://extension.usu.edu/swaner/calendar" }); </script> View Full Swaner Preserve & EcoCenter Calendar