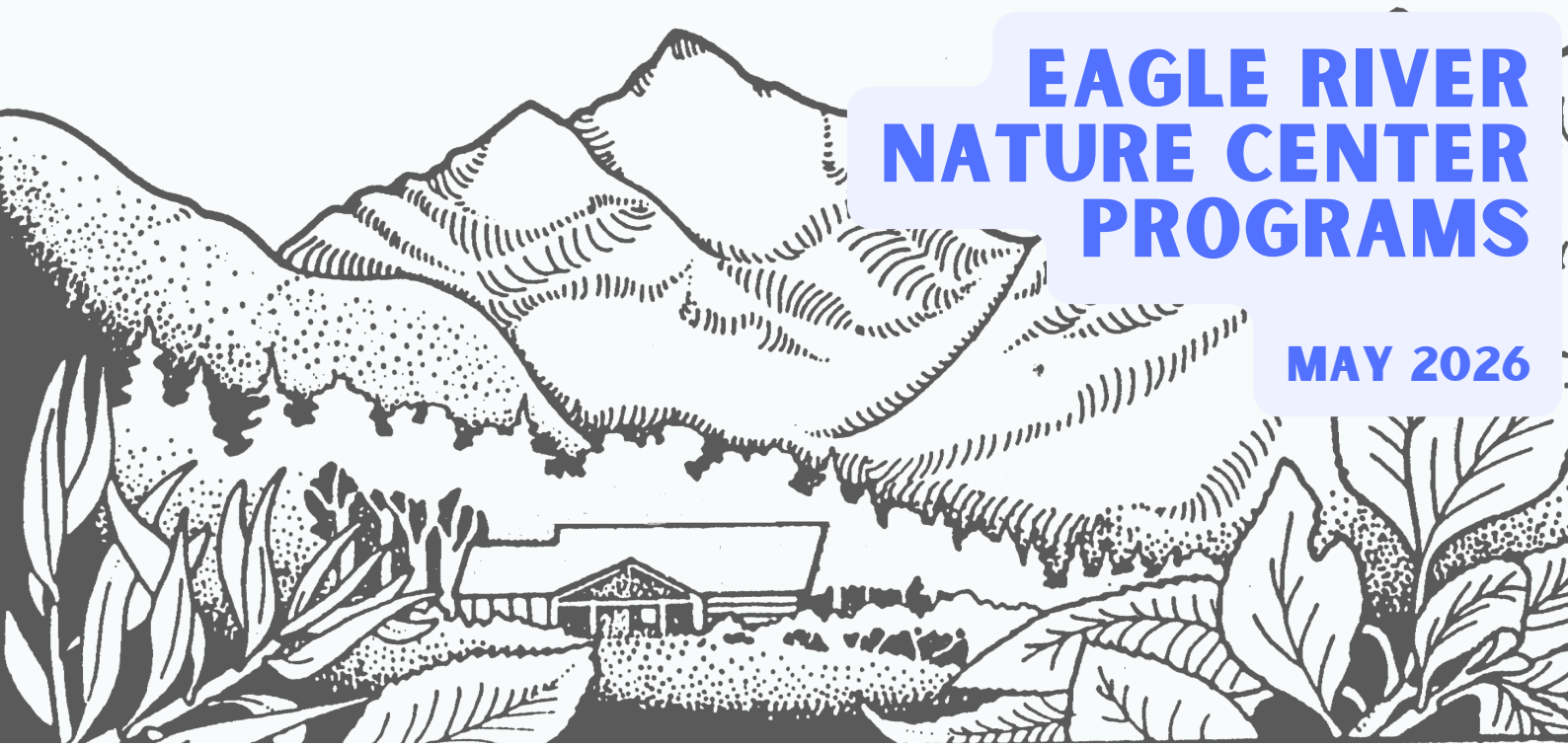


EAGLE RIVER NATURE CENTER PROGRAMS

MAY 2026



SUMMER BUILDING HOURS:

May thru September
Wednesday-Sunday
10am-5pm

Find out more about us
@ www.ernc.org

Contact us at:
907-694-2108 or
info@ernc.org

Location:
32750 Eagle River Rd.
Eagle River, AK 99577



Spring is upon us!
It's a good time of year to refresh
your bear awareness and ethical
wildlife viewing skills!

Visit our website for more info:

<https://www.ernc.org/outdoor-safety.html>



ERNC NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Music in the Mountains featuring the Casey Smith Project!

Saturday, 6/6/2025, 6pm-10pm.

Music, beer, and food all in the surrounding beauty
of the Chugach mountains.

More info coming soon at www.ernc.org.



Celebrating 30 Years of Connecting People to Nature in Alaska: the Next Chapter

Building on generations of history, from the Dena'ina people to the Barclay homestead, the next chapter began in April 1980, when Alaska State Parks acquired the property and set out to transform it into a visitor center.

With just one year and a tight budget, park ranger Dale Bingham and a small Chugach State Park crew took on the challenge. Facing sagging foundations, wavering walls, and full system replacements, they relied on grit, creativity (and likely plenty of coffee) to get the job done.

Just 355 days later, the former Paradise Haven lodge reopened as the Eagle River Visitor Center in Chugach State Park. Featuring hands-on exhibits like the still-beloved "trapper's cabin," it served both as an educational hub and a working ranger station. By 1983, the center was thriving, with strong funding, improved road access, and growing visitation. But when oil prices fell, budgets followed. By 1995, funding had dropped to just \$16,000, leaving minimal staffing and an uncertain future.

From that challenge, a new chapter emerged: the formation of the Friends of the Eagle River Nature Center (stay tuned!). Now, 30 years on, the Eagle River Nature Center continues to honor its roots while bringing people together for learning, stewardship, and connection—along the banks of Nuk'elehitnu, where fish run again, and so do the people.

MAY 2026 PROGRAMS

FRIDAY, MAY 1, 8, 15, 22, & 29, 11AM GUIDED HIKE | NO REGISTRATION LITTLE EXPLORERS

Join in for an hour(ish) long hike on or near the Rodak trail at a toddler's pace! No registration necessary, just check in by 11am in the main ERNC building. *The target audience for this program is babies & children up to age 6 accompanied by an adult. Older siblings are welcome to join in. Please leave furry friends at home.*

- NATURE CENTER PROGRAM SCHEDULE ON REVERSE -

MAY 2026 PROGRAMS

SATURDAY, MAY 2, 1PM-3PM JUNIOR NATURALIST SEEDS ON THE MOVE

Seeds are amazing packages of life! Learn how plants produce and distribute seeds through interactive activities in the Ed Yurt.

THURSDAY, MAY 7, 12PM-3PM ALL AGES PROGRAM TRAILSIDE TALK: FERNS

Stop by the back deck of the nature center any time between 12 and 3 to chat with one of our volunteer naturalists about a different topic (almost) every Thursday! This week: Ferns of Alaska.

SATURDAY, MAY 9, 1PM-3PM JUNIOR NATURALIST UNBE-LEAF-ABLE

Meet at the Ed Yurt for a short, guided hike to practice identifying trees, learn how Alaska's trees are built to survive, and make a craft to take home. You won't be-LEAF how much fun you'll have!

SUNDAY, MAY 10, 2PM GUIDED HIKE | REGISTRATION REQUIRED | \$5 FEE STING OF THE WILD

While Alaska doesn't have poison ivy or poison oak, there are still some flora that can cause irritation. Join ERNC staff to uncover the secrets of these prickly plants. *Registration is limited to 15 participants. Register at www.ernc.org/public-programs. Guided hikes cost \$5; free for ERNC members. A \$2 cancellation fee applies, and no refunds are given within 48 hours.*

THURSDAY, MAY 14, 12PM-3PM ALL AGES PROGRAM TRAILSIDE TALK: CELEBRATE NATIVE PLANT MONTH

Stop by the back deck of the nature center and chat with one of our volunteer naturalists about a different topic (almost) every Thursday! This week we're looking at the Native Plant of the Year- Cotton Grass!

FRIDAY, MAY 15, 6:30PM ALL AGES LECTURE CROW PASS 101

Join Crow Pass Trail expert Pete Panarese for an informational program on hiking Crow Pass Trail. Get insider tips, learn about the trail itself, and talk through advice for fording the Eagle River.

SATURDAY, MAY 16, 1PM-3PM JUNIOR NATURALIST | REGISTRATION REQUIRED PLANT LIFE AROUND THE POND

Join us for a hike around the Rodak Trail and discover what creatures make a life around the pond. For Native Plant Month, we will focus on plant life found around the Rodak Trail! *Register online at www.ernc.org/public-programs.*

SUNDAY, MAY 17, 10AM-1:00PM 18 YEARS+ PROGRAM | REGISTRATION REQUIRED | FEE TRAIL RUNNING 101

Lace up your shoes and join us at the Eagle River Nature Center for trail running 101! There will be a quick introduction to trail etiquette and safety, and then the group will hit the trails. Plan for an average pace of 12/13 minute miles and get to know our trails in a low stress environment! *Registration is limited to 20 participants (18 years and older). Register at www.ernc.org/public-programs. Guided hikes cost \$5; free for ERNC members. A \$2 cancellation fee applies, and no refunds are given within 48 hours.*

SUNDAY, MAY 17, 5PM-7 PM TEEN PROGRAM | REGISTRATION REQUIRED VENTURE VIBES: INVASIVE SPECIES TRAINING

Join us in the Education Yurt to learn how to identify invasive Bird Vetch and how it impacts its environment. Any youth between 6th-11th grade have the opportunity to earn a stipend removing vetch after attending this training! This program is sponsored by a grant from Anchorage Soil and Water Conservation District to the Greater Eagle River Garden Club. *More information and registration at www.ernc.org/public-programs.*

THURSDAY, MAY 21, 12PM-3PM ALL AGES PROGRAM TRAILSIDE TALK: MONKSHOOD

Stop by the back deck of the nature center and chat with one of our volunteer naturalists about a different topic (almost) every Thursday! This week: Monkshood.

SATURDAY, MAY 23, 1PM-3PM JUNIOR NATURALIST WILDFLOWER WANDER

Alaska is home to over 1,500 species of wildflowers! Learn how to ID some of these local beauties and discover what makes them special.

SUNDAY, MAY 24, 11AM ALL AGES PROGRAM RODAK RANGER SEASONAL LAUNCH PARTY

Celebrate the start of summer break by becoming a Rodak Ranger! Join us for a summer launch of the Rodak Rangers Booklet. Hear from local artist Georgia Mckenzie of Tiny Nest Studio and take a booklet out on the trail.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 27, 6-8PM GUIDED HIKE | REGISTRATION REQUIRED | FEE ALASKA NATIVE PLANT MONTH: RODAK LOOP HIKE SPRING IS SPRUNG, THE GRASS IS RIZ, I WONDER WHERE THE FLOWERS IS.

The green is here and maybe some early flowers too! We will hike the Rodak Loop searching for flowers, even if the flowers are delaying their appearance, we will identify plants with just leaves. This hike is in celebration of May for Alaska Native Plant Month! *Registration is limited to 20 participants. Register at www.ernc.org/public-programs. Guided hikes cost \$5; free for ERNC members. A \$2 cancellation fee applies, and no refunds are given within 48 hours.*

THURSDAY, MAY 28, 12PM-3PM ALL AGES PROGRAM TRAILSIDE TALK: DEVIL'S CLUB VS COW PARSNIP

Stop by the back deck of the nature center and chat with one of our volunteer naturalists about a different topic (almost) every Thursday! This week: Devil's Club and Cow Parsnip.

SATURDAY, MAY 30, 1PM-3PM JUNIOR NATURALIST DEVILISH JEWELRY

Come decorate beads made from Devil's Club and make a bracelet or necklace with them. Information on how to harvest and make your own will be provided!

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