



June 2021



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Let's Get Outside!

I love the arrival of summer! The warm sun invites us outdoors for sporting events, outdoor recreation activities, and even yard work. Visiting a city park is a great way to enjoy a summer day. It has been said that “parks and playgrounds are the soul of a city.” A friend of mine whose house backs one of our city parks refers to the sounds of the park as “fun noise,” the sound of people of all ages enjoying the outdoor amenities.

Murray City has a long history of providing outstanding parks and recreation facilities and related programs. We enjoy ten city-owned parks in addition to our popular and well-maintained section of the Jordan River Parkway. But it's much more than just having great parks, it's also the programming that brings people to these amenities. There's something fun for nearly everyone who visits our parks.

For those looking for passive activities, there is great bird watching on the Jordan River Parkway and the wooded areas of Murray Park. Over 100 different species of birds can be found including the Bald Eagle, Golden Eagle, Osprey, Cooper's Hawk, Wood Duck, Barn owl, and the list keeps going. The Arboretum in Murray Park is a popular place for visitors to stroll and observe the cacti garden, hybrid iris bed, water ponds, shrubbery beds, seasonal flower plantings, and many varieties of trees. The rose garden on the west end of Murray Park near State Street shows off multiple varieties of roses.

Murray's park system boasts of 21 miles of trails and paths, both paved and unpaved. The addition of the Canal Trail from Wheeler Farm to Fontaine Bleu Drive a few years ago has proven to be a very popular addition to the trail system. You can also walk around the pond at Willow Pond Park and take your fishing pole if you want to take advantage of our urban fishery. You can also fish in Little Cottonwood Creek in Murray Park.

All of Murray's parks have playgrounds for the kids. The city has endeavored to provide a variety of playground equipment from traditional ladders and slides in some of the parks to a climbing wall at Southwood Park and the newest addition of a boulder climbing playground at Winchester Park. This boulder climbing playground is already becoming popular and we have received a lot of positive feedback.



There are many more passive activities available in our parks, but for those looking for more active activities and entertainment, we've got you covered! The Murray "Arts in the Parks" series is back for the 2021 season! Check out the free Lunch Concerts every Tuesday in June and July, featuring artists such as the Wasatch Jazz Syndicate, Time Cruisers (oldies), Wendy and the Lost Boys, and others. The Murray Library presents "Summer Shorts" every Wednesday at 1:00 pm in June and July, featuring entertainment such as a juggling show, Irish step dancing, and the ever-popular firefighter's soak on July 28 at the softball field. The Children Matinees are every Thursday in June and July (except July 1) at 2:00 pm in Murray Park. In addition to these activities, there will be four family night concerts on the second Monday of the month in June through September at 7:00 pm at the Senior Recreation Center. These are free of charge and are a lot of fun to attend.

One of the most attractive venues in Murray Park is the Murray Amphitheater near Little Cottonwood Creek at 495 East 5300 South. The "Evening Series" at the Amphitheater runs from June 4 through September 11, with tickets ranging from \$3.00 to \$15.00 each, depending on the event.

Stop by the outdoor fitness area in Murray Park on your way to our very popular Pickleball courts. Also watch for our Movies in the Park series and visit the Food Trucks every Tuesday evening through September. These are just some of the great opportunities offered by the extraordinary Parks and Recreation Department. As Murray residents, we enjoy a great system of parks and trails. Not only do I express my appreciation to the amazing parks and recreation staff, but also to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board for their valuable contributions. Former Arizona Governor Bruce Babbitt is quoted as saying, "City parks serve, day in and day out, as the primary green spaces for the majority of Americans."

Please visit the Parks and Recreation page on our website at murray.utah.gov for additional information, times and locations of events, park pavilion reservations, recreation programs, or any questions you may have.