



Newsletter

Parks, Natural Lands, Urban Forestry, and Trails

Visit our Website

Yappy Hour Events

Yappy Hour is one of our favorite summer events. Every year it attracts more and more excited dog owners to Salt Lake City Parks. So far in 2019, the event has been held at two of the City's most beloved parks, Liberty Park and Fairmont Park. The events were well attended by hundreds of park visitors and their furry friends. Many pet vendors, including veterinarian offices, pet boarding and training businesses, rescue services, and supply stores attended to help educate new pet owners and introduce helpful resources for dogs of all shapes and sizes. The Parks Division was also on site to encourage responsible pet ownership. Being a responsible pet owner in a public park begins with cleaning up your pet's waste and keeping them leashed when not in an off-leash area. Check out the list of off-leash dog parks on our website [here](#).



Don't miss out on the next Yappy Hour at Pioneer Park on Tuesday, August 13th. Then on Thursday, September 12th, the event will return to Fairmont Park for your last puppy playdate at Yappy Hour, until next year.



#GoatheadFreeSLC

Salt Lake City's Trails & Natural Lands Division is excited to announce an initiative to eliminate goat

heads on Salt Lake City trail corridors and natural areas. Goat heads, also known as 'puncture vine' or *tribulus terrestris*, is an invasive weed which grows in disturbed vegetation areas. The plant produces spiked seed heads that are a nightmare to many trail users. The thorns easily lodge into bike tires, shoes and dog's paws, making recreation unpleasant or even impossible when the plant overruns an area. Goat head is common along areas of the Jordan River Parkway Trail, and several other trails and natural areas around the city. In 2019, Trails & Natural Lands is asking for the public's help to make a #GoatHeadFreeSLC. Special goat head removal and disposal bins are being placed at strategic locations along the Jordan River Parkway Trail, to allow 'goat busters' and good Samaritans to pull and eliminate the thorns along the trail.



Visit www.slc.gov/parks/trails-natural-lands/PuncturevineFree/ for links to an interactive map of goat head locations, videos on how to identify and remove goat head, information on official goat head volunteer events, and even a catchy theme song for #NoMorePunctureVine. We hope you'll join us in ridding SLC of this nasty plant and 'be a goat buster'!

Natural Area Vegetation Management Practices

With summer in full swing, the Trails and Natural Lands Division is receiving calls regarding concerns about fires, tall grasses, and mowing requests for many Trails and Natural Lands properties. The Trails and Natural Lands Division responds to these calls based on land management goals and service capacity. The primary land management goal is to increase the ecological health, sustainability, and resiliency of the properties that are managed by the Division.

You may see natural areas that appear "overrun" by weeds or tall grasses; however, mid-summer mowing often has the opposite of the intended effect. Mowing can spread weed seeds and encourage the growth of invasive species that burn hotter and faster than native grasses when a fire happens. Mowing can also encourage proliferation of opportunistic weeds like puncturevine (goat head). Vegetation control requires a delicate balance when it comes to maintenance practices. Mowing too infrequently can cause desirable native plants to get insufficient sunlight and wither. Mowing too frequently causes the ground surface to dry out and creates a perfect environment for undesirable weeds like puncturevine and cheatgrass to grow. The timing of mowing also has to be orchestrated carefully to avoid destroying the seed heads that come from desirable vegetation, while doing the opposite for noxious weeds. Herbicide use on the property is limited to minimal spot spraying for a variety of reasons and most removal of weeds is conducted by hand.



Our Trails and Natural Lands team is continuing to observe natural vegetation areas around the City to make balanced decisions about vegetation maintenance. When compared to 2018, a shift toward less mowing to combat weeds has resulted in a tremendous decline in the most problematic weed species, including Scotch thistle and Puncturevine. Trails and Natural Lands staff are now dealing with less-concerning plant invasions from plants like sweet clover. Over the next several years, we expect the proportion of desirable plants to increase, while the proportion of weedy species will gradually decrease.

Re-establishment of desirable vegetation is an arduous, complex, and labor-intensive process. This process is much more likely to succeed with the help of community volunteers. Already this year, community volunteers have invested hundreds of hours digging and bagging weeds along this section of the 9Line Trail, and every additional pair of hands helps! To help steward and care for this property, we encourage people to call our volunteer coordinator at (801) 972-7809.

Salt Lake City Trails and Natural Lands Division recently launched a new program to help children throughout the City experience nature.

Helping our youth enjoy the natural wonders around them is what Salt Lake City Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights is all about. The result of collective efforts from SLC's Trails & Natural Lands, SLC's Division of Youth & Family, and other diverse service providers, this unique citywide program aims to help our children get outside and experience our great outdoors.

The program identifies 10 outdoor experiences that every child in Utah has a right to, including:

1. Catch a Bug
2. Follow a Foothill Trail
3. Listen to the Sound of Nature
4. Observe a Starry Sky
5. Play in the Snow
6. Splash in a Stream
7. Identify a Wild Plant
8. Spot and Identify a Wild Animal
9. Visit a Mountaintop
10. See the Great Salt Lake
11. Climb a Rock
12. Paddle a Boat
13. Explore a Cave

Stickers are awarded for each activity after a child completes the experience. Opportunities for independent adventures can be found on our website by visiting

<https://www.slc.gov/parks/cobr/>.



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