

BLUE GHOST FIREFLY TOURS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

Should we bring a flashlight or a head lamp?

The only permitted light is a red light flashlight. This ensures the natural habitat will be protected and undisturbed by unnecessary white light. Red flashlights will be available for purchase at the event. (Standard flashlights, headlamps and cellphone flashlights will **not** be permitted.)

May I take photos during the tour?

Photography is not permitted during Blue Ghost Firefly tours. Due to the unique nature of these insects, it is very difficult to capture photos. Very specific camera equipment is needed and it is almost impossible to capture a photo with a phone camera. Flash from the cameras disturbs the natural habitat and because it is dark, other participants will not see your equipment and you run the risk of damage. Setting up a tripod in the cover of darkness and attempting to capture photos with 150 additional people on the nightly tour is very difficult and does not provide a positive experience for you or other tour attendees.

Are there any restrooms on the Trail?

The Cradle of Forestry Discovery Center will be open and available throughout the event and restrooms are located inside the building. In an emergency, please speak with any of our team members, who will direct you to the closest available option.

Can I bring my pet?

While we love pets, this evening event is not an appropriate environment for pets due to the number of participants, walking trails in the cover of darkness along with the impact on the natural resources and the quiet enjoyment of the event. Leashed well-behaved pets are welcome at the Cradle at other times.

What time should I arrive for this event?

The front gate to the Cradle of Forestry opens at 8:00 pm. You will need to check-in, so please arrive by 8:30 pm. Your group will have the opportunity to browse the Gift Shop and use the restroom, if needed. You will then make your way to the Outdoor Amphitheater for the evening briefing which starts promptly at 8:45 pm.

How long is the event?

Gates open at 8:00 pm. The trail briefing and program starts promptly at 8:45 pm and you can enjoy the trail and habitat from 9:00 pm to 10:30 pm. Team members will clear the trail and require everyone to depart the trail area by 10:30 pm.

Please do not wear light up shoes!

The light pollution emitted from "light up" shoes is very distracting and harmful to the natural habitat. The introduction of any extra unnecessary light also minimizes the chances of optimal viewing of the Blue Ghost Fireflies.

Are the trails handicap accessible?

While our trails are paved, you will be participating in a night event under the cover of darkness utilizing very low red light. The trails could potentially be impeded by tree roots, rocks and other hazards that make it more difficult at night.

Can I use a walker, wheelchair, or motorized scooter?

Since this is a night event, under the cover of darkness in very low red light, mobility assisted devices are not recommended or feasible. While the trails are paved, they could potentially be impeded by tree roots, rocks and other hazards that make traveling on them more difficult at night. Additionally, the trails have steep inclines and drops, turns and meanderings that make it more difficult to traverse at night.

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Will you provide a wheelchair?

Wheelchairs are not available for use at the Cradle of Forestry. See recommendation above regarding the use of mobility assistance devices.

A group member may not be able to walk the entire distance, if they would like to wait for the rest of the group can they return to the building or stay in the Discovery Center?

Yes, they are welcome to return to the Discovery Center building to wait for the return of other group members. There are benches along the trail as well that they can wait on to rejoin other group members. As a reminder, it will be dark at the benches with no light available on the trail other than the low red-light trail markers.

Will it be dark in the woods?

Yes, this is a twilight event and for optimal viewing, darkness void of light pollution is required.

Is there a light to guide our way?

Yes, the trails will be lined with red lights to guide you to optimal viewing sections. Additionally, team members will be dispersed throughout the trails to ensure you have the best experience possible.

Will we be on a paved trail?

All the trails at the Cradle are paved hard surfaces. However, these trails go deep into the forest, so expect tree roots, rocks, limbs, and other debris to be present. Some areas of the trails are not completely smooth due to these factors.

Will the Gift Shop be open?

The gift shop will be open and available prior to your tour for your shopping pleasure.

What do I do if I am running late for the event start?

Enter the main building (Cradle Discovery Center) and we will direct you to where you need to go.

If I am late will the entrance be locked?

The entrance gate will typically stay open until all registered visitors for the event have arrived. If you are registered for the evening event and find the gate closed, please call (828) 877-3130.

What information will I need to provide when I arrive?

Please bring the QR Code/ tickets you received via email following your purchase. We suggest saving or downloading these to be available offline in case of internet malfunction/connectivity issues onsite.

Will everyone in the group need to sign a waiver?

A waiver is needed for every participant going on the trail during the event.

If someone cannot walk back to the Cradle Discovery Center, can you provide transportation off the trail?

In the event someone is unable to walk back to the building we can utilize a golf cart for transportation back to the Discovery Center. This option is only for emergency situations or to avoid one. If you feel your health or mobility will limit your ability to walk back to the building, we will request that you not register to participate in this event.

How will we know who is a guide?

This is a self-guided event. You will receive a briefing and short presentation prior to going on the trails. Many team members will be stationed throughout the event and can be identified by the glowing necklace or bracelet they are wearing.

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Will we be going off trail?

All event participants are requested to stay on the paved trails. Going into the grass, wooded areas and off trail damages the natural habitat along with the fireflies so everyone is requested to stay on trail for the entirety of this event.

How far do I have to walk?

The trails at the Cradle of Forestry are 1 mile or more in length from the Discovery Center building. For optimal viewing, the deeper you go in the forested area, the better chance you have to see the Blue Ghost Fireflies.

Are the paved trails uneven?

Yes, the trails were paved several years ago and as the earth shifts, tree roots grow and as other natural challenges happen, the surface of the trails are affected as well. These trails are deep in the forest, so leaves, roots, limbs, rocks and debris are a natural occurrence.