

The BRIDGE

Volume 29: Issue 7 July 2016

The Newsletter of the Friends of Rock Bridge Memorial State Park

News from the Friends of Rock Bridge Memorial State Park (FoRB)

Friends of Rock Bridge Memorial State Park is a membership supported 501 (c)(3) organized to promote understanding, appreciation, enjoyment and preservation of Rock Bridge Memorial State Park and the surrounding area. email: weaverjc@missouri.edu, address: FoRB, P.O. Box 7642, Columbia MO 65205-7642 website: <http://www.friendsofrockbridgemp.org/>

Board News, Jan Weaver - Thanks to Jim Weaver and welcome to Lynne Hooper

The Board of Friends of Rock Bridge Memorial State Park wishes to thank Jim Weaver for his service on the board the last year and a half. He brought a lot of previous board experience with him as a former board member of Central Missouri Area Agency on Aging. He also brought a long-standing attachment to the park from when his daughters introduced him to Rock Bridge MSP nearly 40 years ago when they started school at Mizzou. He will be missed!

The Board would also like to introduce new board member Lynne Hooper. Lynn recently organized the spring Rock Bridge Renewal with its emphasis on water protection (cleaning out sinkholes!). She works for the county in storm water management and water quality protection and her technical knowledge will be a great asset for the board. Welcome about Lynne!

Missouri DNR Photo Contest

Amateur photographers of all ages may enter the MissouriDNR Photo Contest hosted by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources. The MissouriDNR Photo Contest offers you the opportunity to capture your favorite moments in Missouri's rich natural and cultural resources and share them for all to enjoy. The contest runs from April 1 through Sept. 1, 2016. Contest winners will have their winning photographs featured in the Winter 2017 issue of the **Missouri Resources** magazine, announced on the department's website at dnr.mo.gov/photocontest and displayed throughout the department. View the winning photographs selected in the 2015 photo contest, visit the department's **Winter 2016 Issue** of Missouri Resources magazine. So, grab your camera, capture the moment and submit your entries! Thank you for helping capture Missouri's natural and cultural resources. <http://dnr.mo.gov/photocontest/>

FoRB Officers and Directors – 2016 Officers: President: Kevin Roberson; Treasurer: Jan Weaver, Secretary: Sara Whiting ; 2016 Directors: Sue Tillema, Scott Schulte, Lynne Hooper

NEXT FRIENDS BOARD MEETING: Monday July 11, 6:30 pm, Park Office

News from Rock Bridge Memorial State Park

Rock Bridge Memorial State Park is managed by the Department of Natural Resources, Missouri State Parks, and is primarily funded by 1/2 of 1/10 of a per cent State Parks-and-Soils Sales Tax. It is located at 5901 S. Highway 163, Columbia, MO 65203. phone: 573-449-7400; Website: <http://www.mostateparks.com/rockbridge.htm>, email: rock.bridge.memorial.state.park@dnr.mo.gov

A Superintendent's View of the Park, Sarah Jones – Keeping Cool Like the Animals Do!

As the summer heat bores down on us, we began to wonder how the forest creatures are handling the rising temperatures. We have nice air-conditioned houses and work places to help keep us cool. What do the animals and birds do? The animals and birds I have observed are pretty smart. They find a cool, quiet place to hang out when the heat is at its highest.

One animal that has caught my eye this past week has been the Cotton Tail Rabbit. I have come to work just as the sun has been rising. I have found rabbits eating throughout the Day Use Area. By the time the heat rises, they have had their fill of green leafy foods and have found a nice, cool, shaded spot under a bush to hang out till it cools down. Once the sun sets low in the sky and starts leaving shadows, the rabbits are back out doing their business.

The birds have been doing the same. Though, I will have to say their songs have greeted me nicely each morning. Even before sunrise, the birds will be chattering back and forth. Once the heat sets in, the birds chill out in a tree's shade and wait for the sun to drop down. Even the insects follow the same pattern.

So for all you die-hard summer visitors to the park, please plan your visits wisely. Take the advice from the creatures of the park. Get out and enjoy the park during the morning, late afternoon, and daylight evening hours. You will see a lot more park creatures and keep yourself from getting over heated.

Till next time, Stay Safe and Keep Cool!

Naturalist News, Roxie Campbell – Turkey Vulture Babies Protect Themselves and Other Wildlife



This and another turkey vulture baby were discovered in the park on 6-29-16. This guy might look cute and cuddly, but he is ready to protect himself in ways that might surprise you! Baby turkey vultures protect themselves by hissing, opening their wings to look large and if need be, by vomiting on their would-be-attackers! Fortunately, Sarah and I kept our distance and didn't have to experience that first-hand. The aroma in the area was enough to move us along.

Imagine the smell of regurgitated dead animals mixed with stomach acids! Those strong stomach acids prevent turkey vultures from getting sick by killing off disease organisms, including anthrax, and enable them to serve as nature's janitors, cleaning up dead animals before germs can infect other wildlife.

Turkey vultures don't build nests; rather they use the rocky ledges of bluffs, caves, burrows, hollow logs and abandoned buildings. As baby turkey vultures mature, their soft fluffy feathers will turn black, stiff and strong; their beaks will turn red; their wingspans will reach 6 ft. and they will soar high on thermals.

By mid-August, you will be able to watch and listen to a short video of this turkey vulture baby hissing on the Missouri State Park Facebook page. Sarah is working on getting a Facebook page set up for the park and when that happens, we'll post it there as well.

Programs!

Connor's Cave Tours – Saturdays 1-4 pm through August 28, weather permitting

Bats and Caves of Devil's Icebox - July 8, 9, 29 and 30. Watch endangered gray bats fly out of Devil's Icebox Cave. Explore Connor's Cave with a guide. Learn about bats' unique characteristics and awesome abilities. Learn about White Nose Syndrome. Play a family-friendly game about bats. Free. Recommended for ages 7 to adult. **Registration is required: 573-449-7400**

Water Festival & Superintendent Meet and Greet– Saturday, July 16, 9 am to Noon, Devil's Icebox Parking Lot. Have fun with water and learn about animals that live in streams through activities designed for children and families. Naturalists at several stations will guide participant in: catching (and releasing) stream animals, using an interactive stream model, finding the watershed you live in, exploring Connor's Cave and hiking Little Bonne Femme Creek (hike at 10:30). Free and open to the public.

Jr. Naturalist Day Camp – Tuesday through Friday August 2-5, 9 am to 1:30 pm. **Registration Required** 573-449-7400 or email roxie.campbell@dnor.mo.gov after April 1. For ages 9 to 11. Participants will earn a Missouri State Parks Explorer patch by participating in four days of hands-on activities, including hiking, cave exploring, and wading in streams while learning about wildlife and ecology. Free.

To join FoRB, send your name, address, phone and email with a check to: FoRB, P.O. Box 7642, Columbia MO 65205.

Membership levels: \$15 park staff/volunteer, senior or student; \$20 individual; \$35 family; \$100 supporting

FoRB is a 501 (c) (3) organization and donations (but not memberships!) are deductible to the extent allowed by law

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P.O. Box 7642
Columbia MO 65205-7642