

The BRIDGE

Volume 24: Issue 10 October 2011

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

President's Letter - Kevin Roberson, President: Lengthening the Chain of Nature Appreciation

Greetings! What a wonderful streak of weather we have been having and isn't our park a wonderful place to enjoy it. Just because we all recognize that this is a wonderful opportunity to enjoy the park and all that we can do there, let us not take that recognition for granted.

We all love the park and all that we can do there because we were introduced to these activities and beliefs by someone that took the time to share with us this love of things natural. I was instilled with a great appreciation for the natural world in general and parks specifically by my parents and grandparents. The introduction was natural and probably not planned, but it was very important in who I am and what I appreciate as an adult. This appreciation is linked generation to generation as links in a chain. Let us not break this chain. It may not be as easy, or as natural as it was 50 years ago, but it is every bit as important to pass on this appreciation to the next generation to allow for continued support of our parks and natural world.

Let us make the effort to spend time out-of-doors, in the park with a child or grandchild, a niece or nephew, or a friend of the family. By taking time to teach, enjoy, nurture, and connect we can assure that the chain is lengthened another link. As we commit ourselves and our time to supporting Rock Bridge Memorial State Park, let's also commit to passing on our love of all things natural to the next generation.

Kevin

FRIENDS BOARD MEETING: Monday October 17, 6:00 pm, at the Park Office, 5901 S Hwy 163

FRIENDS PROGRAM – Adopt a Hwy Cleanup: Saturday October 22, 9:00 am, Devil's Icebox Parking Lot

This month's "program" is a stewardship activity. Kevin Roberson will be coordinating the semi-annual clean-up of the section of 163 that runs through the park. Please let Kevin know if you are planning on helping with this project by emailing him at kwrcdr@aol.com.

Previous FoRB Program –Jon Rapp, Park Volunteer: Friends of *Butterflies*

Had a beautiful day for our Friends of Rock Bridge presentation on how we do our Butterfly Survey. Attendees included Andy & Katherine Matera, Kathleen & Harold Anderson, Sandy Elbert, Jim Gast & Donna Brunet, Anthony Zukoff, Jon & Nancy Rapp. A few Butterflies answered the call as well, even though our weather has been a bit on the cool side for their liking. This included Eastern Tailed Blue, Buckeye, Orange Sulphur, Wood Nymph, Pearl Crescent, Great Spangled Fritillary. And we can't forget the I O Moth caterpillar who showed up for a photo op.

Web Resources for Butterfly Images

- Donna Brunet Macro Photography - <http://donnabrunet.com/>
- Anthony Zukoff Flickr site - <http://www.flickr.com/photos/voodooosnakes/sets/72157601515980375/>
- Jon & Nancy Flickr site - <http://www.flickr.com/photos/jrpix4u/sets/72157626668643392/> (moths) and <http://www.flickr.com/photos/jrpix4u/sets/72157626626031840/> (butterflies)

FoRB Website Temporarily Down

Due to the closing of the COIN system that hosted the FoRB website, our site is temporarily closed. Jan Weaver will be setting up a new site on a new host sometime in the next month. Once she does that she will let everyone know.

REMINDER: The NEW ADDRESS for FoRB is: Friends of Rock Bridge MSP, P.O. Box 7642, Columbia MO, 65205-7642. Calls can be directed to Jan at 573-424-9438 and emails can go to weaverjc@missouri.edu .

2011-2012 Officers and Directors

2011 - 2012 Officers: President: Kevin Roberson; V.P.: Jeffrey Friel, Treasurer: Jan Weaver, Secretary: Brennan Van Matre

2010 - 2012 Directors: Bill Hobbs, Sue Tillema

2011 - 2013 Directors: Jon Rapp, Nick Recker, Scott Schulte

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

Park News - Jim Gast, Park Superintendent: New Trail Signs, Managed Deer Hunt December 11

We've begun putting up new signs in the park. The first ones to go up were the new trail signs. These signs show the name of the trail, what color blaze was used to mark the trail (trail blazes on trees are replacing the Carsonite signs we used to use), the distance, the permitted uses (hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding) and the approximate time it takes to walk the trail at a normal pace. The signs also tell the user what to expect on the trail—bridges, stream crossing without bridges, rocks and tree stumps in the trail surface, grades of greater than 10 percent, proximity to bluffs, etc.

There will be new park signs going up on Highway 163 as well. These signs are mostly directional and replace the existing signs. A sign for the Special Use Area is a new one that we will be installing. Then there are interior park signs that direct people to the Billy Gilbert or Rockbridge Mills shelters, the playground, toilets, park office and store, Wild Cave Tour center, Devil's Icebox and the Rock Bridge, and various trailheads.

Here's a reminder that the park will be closed to visitors on Saturday, December 10th and Sunday, December 11th for a managed deer hunt. This is the first hunt we've had since 2006. There are currently 103 hunters signed up to participate in this year's hunt.

Park Natural History/History – Roxie Campbell, Park Naturalist: The Pink Planarians are Back!

On September 24th, staff and volunteers conducted a research trip into Devil's Icebox Cave and found that the numbers of pink planarians have finally rebounded! Their numbers had been low since 2009 when a drastic decline in their prey animals was recorded. The prey animals returned to normal numbers within months, but the pink planarian numbers stayed low. As the park naturalist, I have been quite concerned and was afraid that we'd be discouraged once again on this survey trip. My concern was met with relief! It was fun to find so many and it felt refreshing to spot one when not even looking for one (at Corner Rapids walking by).

Here are the results: The total count for the 3 survey plots was 15. This is still well below the average of 29 (from the four fall surveys held 2004-2007), but it is up from a total of 2 or 3 which is what we found in fall 2009, spring 2010, fall 2010 and spring 2011 (we do the survey twice a year). The most exciting news came from timed counts which added another 37 pink planarians! That makes the day's total 52! Typically, we saw a large pink planarian and near it 2 or 3 small ones, so it appears that they have been reproducing! The drought and low clear water conditions have probably been helpful. We're just happy for good news for this cave dweller that has been found to live only in the Devil's Icebox Cave system.

Park Events - Reservations are required for all park events - Call 573-449-7400 to reserve a spot

October 2 – Rock Bridge Revenge 7 mile – 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, Rock Bridge Memorial State Park - <http://ctc.coin.org/calendar.html>
October 15 – Fall Colors In Wildflowers – 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm, Grassland Trail -

FoRB Membership - To join, *Clip and Mail* this section with check made out to FoRB, P.O. Box 7642, Columbia MO 65205-7642

\$15	Park Staff/Vol, Student, Senior	Name _____
\$20	Individual	Address _____
\$35	Family	Phone _____, Email _____
\$100	Supporting	

FoRB is a 501.c.3 organization. That means your donations to us are tax deductible!

FoRB
P.O. Box 7642
Columbia MO 65205-7642

October 2011 Issue

President's News: Nature Appreciation
Park News: Trail Signs, Deer Hunt
Naturalist News: Pink Planarians are Back!