

NATURE NOTES



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From the Naturalist

It won't be long and the kids will be back in school, and the beautiful sights and smells that signal fall will be here. We have a lot planned for this fall at the park-we hope to have you out before the end of the season!

I've had a few new programs make their debut this year, and I'm going to offer them again before the end of the season. Make sure to check out "Inspector Insector" and "Bushwhacked." We had a blast with both of these programs!

I have a small special event I want to invite you to-it is St Francois Family Play Day on Saturday, Sept. 19. Today's children just don't get out and play like we did as kids. Their lives are busier-full of scheduled activities like sports, dance and other after school activities. We want to encourage you to take a "day off" from anything scheduled, and come out to the park and enjoy a day of play. We will schedule a few programs, but all will be very relaxed and focused on imagination and free play. To wrap up the day, *Wild Heart* will perform a family-friendly concert. See details on page 3.

Finally, don't forget about *Halloween Happenings* on Saturday, Oct. 24. We have had a HUGE response to this event, so **reservations are required for the "Creatures of the Night" walk portion.** Please don't miss your chance to be a part of this exciting event! We'll see you at the park!

Jamie Hubert-Park Naturalist

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DON'T FORGET!



The "Creatures of the Night" walk during "Halloween Happenings" requires a reservation this year. Call the park office at 573-358-2173 to reserve your spot during the walk.

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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

"Halloween Happenings" is a HUGE event for us. Would you like to be a part of this exciting event? Volunteers are needed to staff the snack table, lead the trail walk, help with setup-or if you are brave-GET ON STAGE with us! If you are interested in volunteering, call Jamie at 573-358-2173.

“Civil War Day” a huge success

On Saturday, July 18, 2009, St. Francois State Park held “Civil War Day” with much success. The whole day was filled with Civil War–related activities that gave visitors the opportunity to try on Civil War–era clothes, shoot a cannon and go on a bushwhacking adventure. The infamous local bushwhacker Sam Hildebrand even made an appearance.

The evening’s program, “Bushwhacked,” gave visitors some insight into the divisions that St. Francois county felt during the Civil War—and why many Missourians turned to a life of bushwhacking. The visitors were divided into two groups—Union militia and the bushwhackers—and they had to run through the campground area in search of supplies without getting caught by the other team. We had so much fun, we played for over an hour!

We learned a lot from this first attempt at the “Bushwhacked” program, and it will be even better next time. Join us on Saturday, Sept. 19 to experience this fun and interactive program! Bring long pants, good shoes and bug spray, as you may end up bushwhacking through the woods!



Visitors get to fire a replica Civil War cannon, demonstrated by Missouri State Museum director Kurt Senn.



During “Clothes of the Civil War”, visitors could try on a soldier’s uniform (above), and traditional women’s clothes (below).



Critter Corner

Monarch Butterfly



Each fall, the monarch butterfly makes an amazing journey—it travels more than 2,000 miles over the Gulf of Mexico to overwinter at Mexico’s Yucatan Peninsula. During the month of September, keep your eyes open for Monarchs on the move!

“Halloween Happenings” event scheduled for Oct. 24, 2009

For the past two years, St. Francois State Park has been fortunate to be able to host the “Halloween Happenings” event in October. This event was traditionally held at Johnson’s Shut-Ins State Park, but after the park’s closing, park naturalist Janet Price took the event “on the road.”

This event has become a huge success for St. Francois, and we are pleased to announce that the event will be held at the park again this year.

“Halloween Happenings” features a dreadful Halloween vaudeville at the amphitheater, followed by a trail walk to meet some “creatures of the night.” This event is family-friendly—the only thing scary about it might be our jokes! The vaudeville features skits, songs, jokes and general goofiness, and the trail walk includes stationed stops to meet the creatures.

While the format each year remains the same, the theme will change. You’ll also meet new creatures on the “Creatures of the Night” walk. We’ve not yet chosen this year’s theme, but it is sure to make you *howl* with laughter.

More details will come out on this event as it draws closer. **This event was so popular last year, we are requiring reservations for the “Creatures of the Night” trail walk portion of the event.** To register for the walk or to volunteer to help with the event, contact park naturalist Jamie Hubert at 573-358-2173. Duties can be as simple as helping us to decorate or being a trail leader. If you are *really* brave, you can even get up on stage with us!

So mark your calendars for Saturday, Oct. 24, 2009 at 7 p.m. and we’ll see you at “Halloween Happenings!”

Get Out and Play for “Play Day”

The week of Sept. 19–27 has officially been designated as National Play Days. St. Francois State Park will be celebrating with “St. Francois Family Play Day” on Saturday, Sept. 19.

Children today don’t get out and enjoy free, unstructured play like we did as children. Their lives are full of organized sports, structured playdates and homework. What little free time they have is often spent watching TV or playing video games.

During “St. Francois Family Play Day,” help your child discover the fun that awaits them with free play outdoors—and you may just rediscover the wonders of your own youth.

Activities will be held from 1 p.m.–3 p.m., each emphasizing free, unstructured play. Explore a creek, go on an insect safari, and wind down with a fun concert from the educational band *Wild Heart*. The final schedule of activities will be announced shortly—watch the Web site for details!

Wild Heart uses music to teach children about nature. Their fun concerts even give children a chance to get up on stage with them. Bring your lawn chairs as they “bring the heart of the wild to the heart of a child!”



Wild Heart aims to “bring the heart of the wild to the heart of a child” through song.

Night Sky Over St. Francois

Each year around Aug. 12, the sky is ablaze with meteors as the Perseid meteor shower reaches its peak. The peak will actually happen very early in the morning of Aug. 12, but since the moon will rise around midnight, the viewing will be best during the evening hours on Tuesday and Wednesday. Go outside and enjoy the show!

St. Francois State Park will host a "Night Sky Over St. Francois" program on Saturday, Aug. 15 at 9:00 p.m. at Shelter #2.

Telescopes will be available for viewing planets and other deep-space objects. You can also bring a blanket to lay on—the Perseids will not be as active as they would have been on Tuesday, but we are still likely to see some meteors streak across the sky.

St. Francois Annual Public Meeting to be held Oct. 17

Every year, St. Francois State Park holds a public meeting at the amphitheater in the campground. This gives us the opportunity to tell constituents about what we've accomplished that year at the park, and what plans are in the works for future development.

The park superintendant and I will be on hand to provide information and answer questions. This is a great opportunity for the public to provide input on what they feel the future of the park should be.

The meeting will be held at 7 p.m. If you have any questions, please feel free to call the park office at 573-358-2173.

Amphibian Watch

Did you know that amphibians all over the world are disappearing? Habitat loss, pollution, and an amphibian fungus called chytrid are devastating amphibian populations. At this rate, HALF of all amphibians on the planet could be extinct in our lifetime! People who study amphibians, called herpetologists, are working to find ways that we can help save the amphibians. Watch for these common Missouri amphibians, and visit www.amphibianark.org for more information



Bullfrog



Spotted salamander



Grey Treefrog



Eastern hellbender

ST. FRANCOIS STATE PARK INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM SCHEDULE AUGUST SEPTEMBER



ALL PROGRAMS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. CALL THE PARK OFFICE
FOR THE MOST UP TO DATE PROGRAM SCHEDULE.

SATURDAY, AUG. 1

2PM: EVERYONE LIVES
DOWNSTREAM

8PM: OWL PROWL*

SATURDAY, SEPT. 5

2PM: BUGGY CRAFTS

8PM: INSPECTOR INSECTOR

SATURDAY, AUG. 8

2PM: HERPETOLOGY HOUR

8PM: WHO WANTS TO BE A
MISSOURIAN?

SUNDAY, SEPT. 6

2PM: EXPLORER HOUR

8PM: WHAT A BUNCH OF
BIRD BRAINS!

SATURDAY, AUG. 15

2PM: STARRY CRAFTS

9PM: NIGHT SKY OVER ST.
FRANCOIS
MEET AT SHELTER 2

SATURDAY, SEPT. 12

2PM: CLOTHES OF THE
CIVIL WAR

6PM: BUSHWHACKED!

SATURDAY, AUG. 22

2PM: PREDATOR OR PREY?

8:30PM: NATURE'S NIGHT
SHIFT: NIGHT WALK*

SATURDAY, SEPT. 19

FAMILY PLAY DAY!

1-3PM: PLAY DAY
ACTIVITIES

6:30PM: WILDHEART
CONCERT

SATURDAY, AUG. 29

2PM: MAKING TRACKS

8PM: WHOSE PARK IS IT,
ANYWAY?

SATURDAY, SEPT. 26

2PM: HERPETOLOGY HOUR

8PM: MOTH MANIA!*



Missouri
Department of
Natural Resources

ST. FRANCOIS STATE PARK INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM SCHEDULE OCTOBER



ALL PROGRAMS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. CALL THE PARK OFFICE
FOR THE MOST UP TO DATE PROGRAM SCHEDULE.

SATURDAY, OCT. 3

2PM: HERPETOLOGY HOUR

8PM: NATURE JEOPARDY

SATURDAY, OCT. 24

7PM: HALLOWEEN HAPPENINGS!
VAUDEVILLE

8PM: CREATURES OF THE NIGHT
WALK*

SATURDAY, OCT. 10

2PM: BATTY CRAFTS

8PM: BATS: MYTH AND
REALITY

SATURDAY, OCT. 31

HAPPY HALLOWEEN!!

NO PROGRAMS SCHEDULED.
THANKS FOR A GREAT
CAMPING YEAR! COME SEE
US AGAIN NEXT SEASON!

SATURDAY, OCT. 17

2PM: INSECT SAFARI

7PM: PUBLIC MEETING

8PM: INSPECTOR INSECTOR

* Bring a flashlight

- 🍁 All programs meet at the Amphitheater in the campground unless otherwise specified.
- 🍁 Wear your costumes for "Halloween Happenings!"



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