

**Dr. Edmund A.  
Babler Memorial  
State Park**

# River Hills Current

**Volume 5, Issue 4**

**Fall 2012**

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<b>Drought</b>	<b>1-2</b>
<b>Pioneer Profile</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Programs &amp; Events</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>In the Next Issue</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Save the Date</b>	<b>4</b>

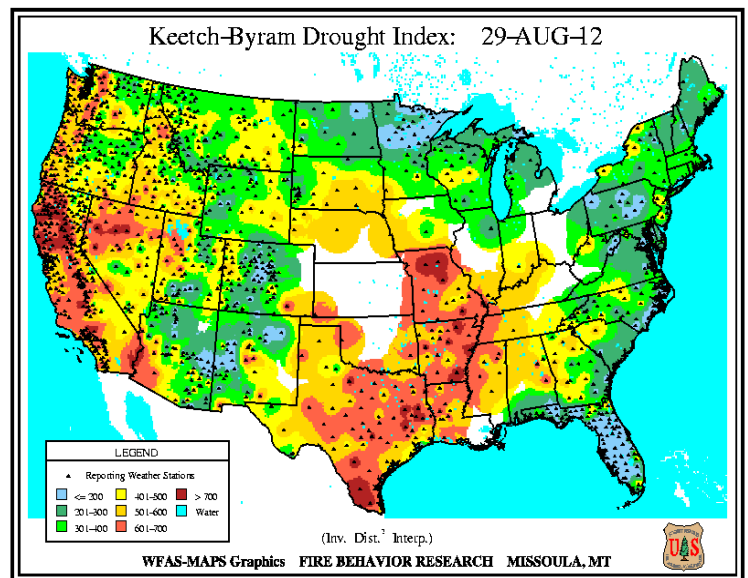
## Drought's Toll on Trees

This summer's drought has many people concerned about their crops, lawns and gardens. Natural resource managers are just as concerned about their parks and conservations areas, including the staff at Babler State Park. Severe drought is very stressful to Missouri's trees; even those with the deepest root systems are affected. Stressed trees typically produce little color. Their leaves often go directly to brown and fall from the tree. With severe drought, many trees will also start to shed green leaves early (July/August), losing as much as 50% of their foliage before fall even arrives. This, though, is a good sign the tree will survive to see another year. Those trees whose foliage turned brown in July and August (like numerous oaks and maples in the park) have essentially dried from the inside out and are very likely already dead. Sadly, the rain that has been received in late summer can only help to a minimal extent. Our trees may produce a little more color than originally anticipated this fall, but most will see little recovery before winter. These conditions bring forth concerns of another kind for Missouri landscapes...wildfire! Throughout much of the summer Missouri has seen sky-high fire danger levels. These levels were so high in parts of the state that

live fuels (green plants) would have actively burn due to the lack of moisture within the plants and the intensity of heat and flame from the burning of dead plants. This means a forest, such a Babler State Park, could not only have seen the burning of leaf litter and dead trees, but also the loss of a large amount of live trees as well! For this reason Missouri State Parks implemented a

### Park Staff

- Jeff Robinson,  
Park Superintendent
- Richard Love  
Asst. Park Superintendent
- Kendra Swee  
Interpretive Resource Specialist
- Angie Edwards  
Sr. Office Support Assistant
- Ron Thurmon  
Park Maintenance Worker
- Gary Simon  
Park Maintenance Worker
- Joseph Lee  
Park Maintenance Worker
- Brandon Bartz  
Park Ranger



burn ban in July which will continued through Labor Day weekend. Moisture levels are still being monitored for the state and precautions will be taken if we slip back into a severe drought situation. A great tool used by many groups and agencies to track drought levels is the Keetch-Byram Drought Index

*Continued on pg. 2*

# Pioneer Profile: The Gaehle Family

Large numbers of immigrants from Germany moved to the area between 1830 and 1854. This period of settlement roughly corresponds to a period of adverse economic conditions in Germany brought about by a growing population, rising land costs, and decreasing farm sizes. It is believed Frederick Gaehle may have followed these enticements and came to the area during this time period. Frederick Gaehle married Henrietta Puellman in 1839 and owned land along the southeastern border of what is now Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park. The couple had six children: Henry, Augusta, Louisa, Henrietta, Wilhelmina, and William. Most of their children stayed close, marrying into families of other land owners within the park boundaries or purchasing land of their own. Wilhelmina married Charles Puellman in 1872 and is buried in the Puellman cemetery along what is now

the bicycle trail within the park. Henrietta married Henry Bates in 1860. Their son, Martin Bates, along with his wife Magdelane owned land in the northeastern part of the park and is buried within



Henry W. Gaehle family in front of home within park

the Bates cemetery on park property. Remnants of their cabin still stand in this part of the park. Frederick and Henrietta's son, Henry, married Sophia Elebeck of Germany in 1865. Henry set up a

home and farmed 200 acres near what is now the entrance of the park and the Babler monument. He and his wife had five sons, three of which survived into adulthood. Henry, Sophia, and their two sons who died in infancy/early childhood are buried within the park boundaries on the land that they owned. Unfortunately, the executor of the estate, their second oldest son John H., never erected headstones for his parents nor brothers.

John H. Gaehle married Dorothea Rieger in 1893, the same year he purchased a general merchandise store south of what is now the park near Manchester Road. He also began the Wild Horse Creek Express, buying and transporting goods outright or hauling on commission. He was a prominent business man in the area for many years and well-known in social

## Drought...

(<http://www.wfas.net/index.php/keetch-byram-index-moisture--drought-49>). This site is updated daily and takes into consideration current precipitation totals. The index measures from 0-800 KBDI. Zero represents no moisture deficiency and 800 represents the maximum drought possible. In mid-August the St. Louis area was listed at a KBDI of over 700. These numbers represent, more or less, the amount of rainfall needed for drought to cease. When St. Lou-

is was listed at 800 KBDI 8 inches of rain would have been needed overnight to bring the soil layer to



Drought stricken trees at Babler State Park

## (cont'd from page 1)

full saturation (no drought). Currently most of Missouri is still within the 400-500 KBDI, meaning the state needs 4-5 inches of rain in a day to bring the drought to an end. These numbers though are very typical of late summer and early fall. Unless the state sees another long stretch of dry weather, the road to recovery is well underway.

# Program and Special Event Schedule

All programs are FREE and open to the public

Please contact the visitor center at (636) 458-3813 for more program details!

## October 2012

### Virginia Day Trail Hike

Saturday, Oct. 6

10 a.m.

#### River Hills Visitor Center

Enjoy fall in Missouri with a hike on Virginia Day Trail. Join a park naturalist to learn about the park's natural and cultural history. This will be a moderate hike of two miles and will begin at the visitor center.

### Night Sky Over Babler

Saturday, Oct. 20

6 p.m. - 10 p.m.

#### River Hills Visitor Center

Come out to Babler State Park for a fun evening under the stars. The evening will kick off at 6 p.m. at the visitor center with a hands-on program by the St. Louis Science Center exploring the elements that make up our solar system. Then head outside at 7:30 p.m. where St. Louis Astronomical Society members will have telescopes available for viewing the night sky. Please bring your binoculars, lawn chairs, blankets and flashlights!

### Creatures of the Night

Saturday, Oct. 27

6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

#### River Hills Visitor Center

A rustling of leaves, a "whoop whoop" in the distance...who are the creatures who go bump in the night? Take part in an evening of games, crafts, and hikes while learning about the Missouri's nocturnal animals. Hikes will begin at 6:15 p.m. and 7 p.m. Come in costume if you'd like and remember to bring a flashlight and clothes for a fall evening hike!

## November 2012

### Woodbine Trail Hike

Saturday, Nov. 10

10 a.m.

#### Guy Park Trailhead

Enjoy fall in Missouri with a hike on Woodbine Trail. Join a park naturalist to learn about the park's natural habitat and how Missouri's wild flora and fauna are gearing up for winter. This will be a moderate hike of 1 3/4 miles and will begin at the Guy Park Trailhead in the center valley of the park.

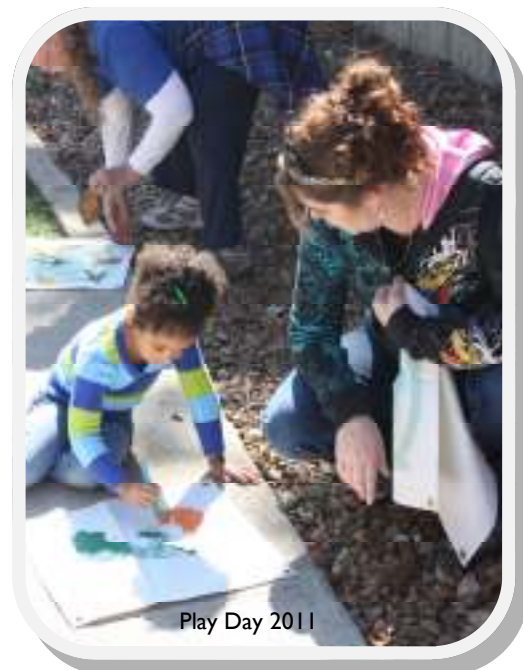
### Get Out & Play Day!

Saturday, Nov. 24

10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

#### River Hills Visitor Center

Just because the weather is cooler doesn't mean you can't have fun outdoors! Get out and play at Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park with fun activities for the whole family. Activities will include making nature bandanas, scavenger hikes, orienteering, outdoor games, and a mini-habitat exploration!



Play Day 2011



**Visitor Center Hours**

April - October: 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. Wed - Sun.  
March & November: 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. Sat - Sun  
December - February: CLOSED

**Park Hours**

April - October: 7 a.m. - 9 p.m. Daily  
November - March: 7 a.m. - 6 p.m. Daily

**DR. EDMUND A. BABLER  
MEMORIAL STATE PARK**

800 Guy Park Drive  
Wildwood, MO 63005  
Phone: (636) 458-3813  
E-mail: kendra.swee@dnr.mo.gov

**We're On The Web!**

[www.mostateparks.com/babler](http://www.mostateparks.com/babler)

**Save The Date!**

(more information will be available in the Winter 2012/2013 newsletter)

- Even though the visitor center will be closed, stay tuned for the winter newsletter— we will offer some weekend programming in December, January and February!

**In The Next Issue:**

*Missouri's Deer Population*

*Pioneer Profile: Bothe/Glaser*

Check out Missouri State Parks newly renovated website and Babler State Park's new webpage at [www.mostateparks.com](http://www.mostateparks.com)

&

Follow us on Facebook!

\*\*\*\*\*

Looking for a place to share your talents and time? Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park is looking for **volunteers!** Please feel free to stop by or call the visitor center to learn more about the opportunities available.

**2012: A Year of Amazing Opportunities  
(Part Four)**

**Oct. 20:** Orionids Meteor Shower— This is an average meteor shower to observe, producing up to 20 meteors per hour at peak, but you may be able to see some meteors any time from Oct. 17 - Oct. 25. Join Babler State Park on Oct. 20 for Night Sky Over Babler for a good viewing opportunity!

**Nov. 17 & 18:** Leonids Meteor Shower- The Leonids is one of the better meteor showers to observe, producing an average of 40 meteors per hour at their peak, but you may see some meteors from Nov. 13 - 20. The crescent moon will set early in the evening leaving dark skies for what should be an excellent show. Look for the shower radiating from the constellation Leo after midnight, and be sure to find a dark location for viewing.

**Nov. 27:** Conjunction of Venus and

Saturn- These two bright planets will be within 1 degree of each other in the morning sky. Look to the east around sunrise.

**Nov. 28:** Penumbral Lunar Eclipse- The eclipse will be visible throughout most of North America.

**Dec. 13 & 14:** Geminids Meteor Shower- Considered by many to be the best meteor shower. The Geminids are known for producing up to 60 multicolored meteors per hour at their peak, although some meteors should be visible from Dec. 6 - 19. The radiant point for this shower will be in the constellation Gemini. This year the new moon will guarantee a dark sky for what should be an awesome show.

**Dec. 21:** December Solstice. The South Pole of the earth will be tilted

toward the Sun, which will have reached its southernmost position in the sky and will be the shortest day of the year. This is the first day of winter (winter solstice) in the northern hemisphere.

