

Prairie State Park's

Tallgrass Tribune

Fall 2016

Missouri State Parks

Prairie State Park's Mission Statement

To preserve and interpret the largest remaining example of original tallgrass prairie in Missouri. The park further provides healthy outdoor recreation for all visitors. The park is dedicated to sustaining a large tallgrass prairie in its native form for future generations to learn from and enjoy.

The Prairie Jubilee – A Celebration of Prairies

Every two years, it is time to share our love for prairies with others at the Prairie Jubilee. This year, it is Sept. 24 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Enjoy face painting and bison tours, learn in a one-room school, see wool being spun, make some rope, and throw an atlatl or tomahawk. All of this and more is available as you learn about prairie life, past and present.



Face painting



Get up close with a snake!

Wildheart will perform and get you involved in their message.



What ancient hunting weapon is being demonstrated here?



Send your answer to prairie.state.park@dnr.mo.gov and the person with the first correct answer will be acknowledged in the next newsletter.

~Mystery plant ~ Pale purple coneflower

Mary G. Brown correctly identified this plant as pale purple coneflower, *Echinacea pallida*. This is a common prairie, glade and open woodland species that is well adapted to surviving harsh, dry conditions. It is covered in hairs that act to conserve moisture loss. It does very well in wildflower gardens and seed and plants are readily available at many wildflower nurseries.

This plant has been used by Native Americans to combat sore mouth, toothaches, coughs, and for many other uses. It has been used as an immune stimulant and considered a cure all in recent years.

This plant was mainly responsible for a Missouri law being passed making it illegal to dig roadside plants. Because there is a market for *Echinacea* root, people were digging the plants on a large scale and devastating populations growing close to roads and on public and private lands.



This photo was taken off Drovers Trail several years ago and shows how well they respond after a burn the previous year. Keeping native landscapes like this one intact is important for all of us.

The One-Room Schoolhouse

By Rebecca Knox

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, most American students attended a one-room schoolhouse. A single teacher would teach many children of different ages and grade levels (first through eighth) all at the same time. The number of students varied from six to 40 or more. The youngest children sat in the front; the oldest students in the back. The teacher taught academic basics (reading, writing, arithmetic, history and geography) and students memorized and recited their lessons. Due to low pay, the teacher would usually board with a local family or in a room attached to the schoolhouse.

The teacher would need to arrive at the schoolhouse early to prepare the day's lessons. In the winter months, they would also have to start a fire in the pot belly stove to warm up the room for the students. On many occasions, they would prepare a hot, noon meal (usually soup or stew) on top of the stove.

A typical school day was from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. There would be morning and afternoon recesses of 15 minutes each and a one-hour period for lunch.

The older students were given the responsibility of bringing in water, or carrying in coal or wood for the stove; younger students would be given responsibilities according to size and gender such as cleaning the blackboard, taking the erasers outside for dusting plus other duties that they were capable of doing.

Transportation for children who lived too far to walk was often provided by horse-drawn carriages that could travel a limited distance in a reasonable amount of time each morning and evening. If they had one, students might ride a horse or bicycle to school.

The schoolhouse was the center and focus for thousands of rural communities and small towns. Many schools also served as the local chapel on Sundays and many town meetings and picnics were held there as well.

Prairie Jubilee Schedule

Scheduled Activities:

Guided bird hikes

10 a.m., 11 a.m., 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. - Get in Touch with Nature Tent

Music by Wildheart

10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. - Main Stage

String Quartet

Noon - Main Stage

Bison BBQ Lunch

11 a.m.-1 p.m. - Available for a small fee; under large tent

Bison Chip-Throwing Contest

2 p.m.-3 p.m. - behind nature center

The Ancient Sport of Falconry

Meagan Duffee-Yates

3 p.m. at main stage

All-day Activities:

Guided rides to view the bison

10 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. - Register at table north of nature center

Living History Loop includes:

- Cowboys
- Tomahawk throwing
- Atlatl throwing
- Osage lodge
- Civil War soldiers
- Missouri River Bird Observatory
- One- room school house

Get In Touch With Nature Tent:

- Reptiles and amphibians
- Mo. Dept. of Conservation
- Face painting
- Bison pieces and parts
- Missouri Prairie Foundation
- Native plant sale
- Missouri mammals

Plants and seeds for sale from the Missouri Wildflower Nursery.

Plus lots of other fun events!!

Prairie State Park 2016 Fall programs

Because staff must buy supplies for most programs, we need to know how many people to expect at each program and have a way to contact you with information needed prior to each one. Please register by calling 417-843-6711 with the name and age of each participant, a contact number, and an e-mail address by the registration date indicated for the events below.

August 20 – Nature Bingo 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. – Come on out and learn about plants and animals while playing a fun bingo game. Prizes are awarded!

September 3 – Nature Bingo 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. – Come on out and learn about plants and animals while playing a fun bingo game. Prizes are awarded!

September 10 – Guided Bison walk 10 a.m. -- This should be a great time to get some photos. Join us to take a hike on the prairie and see bison. Meet at the Regal Tallgrass Prairie Nature Center. Be prepared for a two-mile hike over uneven terrain. Bring water, snacks, insect repellent, a hat and sunscreen, and wear sturdy shoes.. Binoculars will be useful in looking at bison as well as other wildlife.

September 17 – Wildflower walk 10 a.m. – Join us for a look at fall flowers such as goldenrods and aster that steal the show along with hidden gems like downy gentian. Meet at the Regal Tallgrass Prairie Nature Center.

September 24 – Prairie Jubilee – 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. – Since there are so many activities available at this event (living history loop, wagon train, cowboys, tram rides out to view the bison, music, bison lunch, etc.), we always count this as our September Homeschool Program. Bring your family and spend a few hours enjoying the sights and sounds of the prairie at Prairie Jubilee! This event is open to the public and no registration is required.

September 30 – Preschool Program at 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. – First Impressions – Ages three to seven - Designed to make children aware of their first reaction to different animals and then to see whether their reaction changes when they learn more about the animal. **Please contact us at 417-843-6711 by Thursday, September 29 if you and your child plan to attend.**

October 14 - Medicinal Plants Homeschool Program – 9:30 a.m. to Noon – Plants are pretty, but they also produce oxygen, feed us, and clothe us. Many of them can also be used to help us stay healthy and well or help us to feel better when we are ill. At this program, we will explore some of the prairie plants that have such medicinal properties. This program is geared toward and designed for homeschooling families, but anyone is welcome to join us. **Registration is required, so please contact us at 417-843-6711 no later than Saturday, October 1 if you and your family plan to attend.**

October 21 – Preschool Program at 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. – Spider Web Wonders - Ages three to seven -- Children will learn about spiders and the wonders of their intricate webs. **Please contact us at 417-843-6711 by Thursday, October 20 if you and your child plan to attend.**

October 22 -- Nature Bingo 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. – Come on out and learn about plants and animals while playing a fun bingo game. Prizes are awarded!

October 28 – Nature Journaling Class – 10:00 a.m. to Noon – Please bring your own nature journal, colored pencils, art pencils, sharpener, and other supplies as we explore the beauty of autumn in nature. **Please contact us at 417-843-6711 by Friday, October 21 if you and your child plan to attend.**

November 4 – Preschool Program at 10 a.m. – Terrific Turkeys – Ages three to seven -- Children have fun while learning about wild turkeys. **Please contact us at 417-843-6711 by Thursday, November 3 if you and your child plan to attend.**

November 5 – Guided Bison Hike/National Bison Day 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. – Fall is here and the cooler temperatures are great for hiking. Enjoy a guided hike to see the bison. After the hike, stick around and have some bison chili and learn even more about bison. Meet at the Regal Tallgrass Prairie Nature Center. Be prepared for a two-mile hike over uneven terrain. Bring water, snacks, insect repellent, a hat and sunscreen, and wear sturdy shoes. Binoculars will be useful in looking at bison as well as other wildlife that we may see. Dress for the weather; the prairie winds can be rather harsh.

November 18 – Bison Homeschool Program – 9:30 a.m. to Noon – Come have fun while learning some interesting things about our official and federally recognized national mammal – the bison! **Registration is required, so please contact us at 417-843-6711 no later than Saturday, November 5 if you and your family plan to attend.**

December 3 --Guided Bison Walk – 1 p.m. Winter is on its way. Get the jump on it and come out to the park to take a guided hike to see the bison. Don't forget your cameras! Meet at the Regal Tallgrass Prairie Nature Center. Be prepared for a two-mile hike over uneven terrain. Bring water, snacks, insect repellent, a hat and sunscreen, and wear sturdy shoes. Binoculars will be useful in looking at bison as well as other wildlife that we may see. Dress for the weather; the prairie winds can be rather harsh.

December 9 – Preschool Program at 10 a.m. – Bird Beak Buffet – Ages three to seven -- Children will learn about the special functions of bird beaks. **Please contact us at 417-843-6711 by Thursday, December 8 if you and your child plan to attend.**

Hey Kids!

Wagons Ho! was a cry that was heard as the wagon trains headed west. The Conestoga wagon, also known as a prairie schooner, was filled with supplies that a pioneer family would need to set up a new home. Color the wagon as it heads out on the Oregon Trail.



RaisingOurKids.com

The heavy wagons with their white canvas covers were called prairie schooners.

The Prairie Schooner

By Rebecca Knox

The prairie schooner was the vehicle of choice for pioneer families traveling west, especially those following the Oregon Trail. From a distance, the wagon's billowy white cover, or bonnet, gave it the appearance of a sailing ship at sea, thus giving it the name prairie schooner.

The prairie schooner was smaller and lighter than the Conestoga wagons that were popular for hauling freight in the east and was, therefore, more suitable for long-distance travel. The wagon had a flat, rectangular body that measured about 4 feet wide, 9 to 11 feet long, and 2 to 3 feet deep. With the bonnet, the wagon stood about 10 feet tall, and the total length of the wagon from tongue and yoke to rear measured approximately 23 feet long. The box sat on two sets of wheels of different sizes. The rear wheels were about 50 inches in diameter, and the front wheels about 44 inches. The smaller wheels on the front made turning easier. The wheels were made of wood with iron bands fastened to the outside of the rims.

The double-thick, cotton canvas cover protected the inside of the wagon from rain or dust and provided privacy when needed. The wagon was waterproofed by painting or oiling it. Storage chests were often built into the wagon box and sometimes extra storage space was created by partitioning out an area under a false floor and by sewing pockets onto the inside of the cover.

A typical prairie schooner weighed about 1,300 pounds. The general goal was to keep the weight of added cargo to no more than 2,000 pounds. The wagon was pulled by teams of 10 to 12 horses or mules or six yoked oxen. Ideally, several more animals would be kept in reserve to replace those that became lame or worn out along the route.

Prairie schooners had no suspension and the trails west were very rough. This made for a lot of jolting and lurching, so most travelers preferred to walk alongside the wagon or ride a horse if they had one. Ox teams were not controlled with reins, so the driver walked alongside the animals guiding them with verbal commands. The prairie schooner on the Oregon Trail generally travelled at a rate of 2 miles per hour with the average distance covered each day being 15 to 20 miles per day.

The prairie schooner was not only the chief means for the transportation of the goods, but it also provided a home for pioneer families as they journeyed west in search of land.



Check out our Facebook page for photos, interactive posts, information on upcoming programs and events.

Give us a "like".

<https://www.facebook.com/PrairieStatePark>

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