

# Prairie State Park's

# Tallgrass Tribune

Fall 2017

Missouri State Parks

## Prairie State Park's Mission Statement

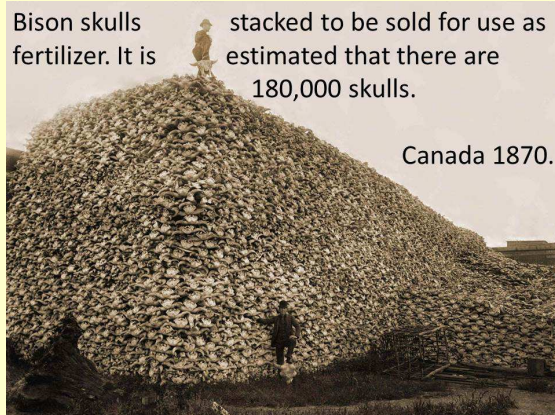
To preserve and interpret the largest remaining example of original tallgrass prairie in Missouri. The park further provides healthy outdoor recreation for all visitors. The park is dedicated to sustaining a large tallgrass prairie in its native form for future generations to learn from and enjoy.

## National Bison Day is November 4!

As of May 9, 2015, with the signing of the National Bison Legacy Act by former President Barack Obama, the bison is our official national mammal to be celebrated the first Saturday of November. Prairie State Park will help celebrate this momentous occasion with a day-long event starting with a guided bison hike at 10 a.m., followed with sampling bison chili at noon and educational bison activities and programs throughout the day. Learn how the Native Americans utilized this animal for food and tool making and how such an iconic animal was driven to the brink of extinction and the extraordinary efforts that were undertaken to save them.

Bison nearly became extinct in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Bison currently at Prairie State Park.



Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library. Author unknown. Text added by park staff.

We must not forget about the exploitation of bison in the past, lest we repeat it.



1901 \$10 bill. We should bring this back!



Which would you rather see?

~Mystery items ~

**Beard tongue and Katydid nymph**

We didn't receive any submissions this month for the mystery items. The insect was a Katydid nymph on Beardtongue. Beardtongue is a common spring wildflower with white tubular flowers. Some areas of the park have dense populations and others are more scattered. Foxglove beardtongue, (*Penstemon digitalis*) and Prairie beardtongue, (*Penstemon tubaeiflorus*) are both present, but occupy different areas of the park. Prairie beardtongue prefers drier soils, and grows 1-3 feet tall. Foxglove beardtongue likes slightly wetter areas and will grow to 3-5 feet tall.

They work well in wildflower gardens. Both have similar white flowers and will retain green basal leaves over the winter. After they are well established, they are easy to propagate by dividing the clumps. They often produce a more vigorous display after division.

Katydid nymphs are well known for their calling. This is done by rubbing the wing covers against each other. The link below shows an Oblong Winged Katydid in action, which may be the katydid we pictured.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ncq1HoFdvMg>

Occasionally, these insects are pink instead of green. The pink form has been seen by staff in the past. Keep your eyes open and you may see one as well!

<https://mdc.mo.gov/blogs/discover-nature-notes/katydid-song>

**Autumn's Angst**

By Dana Hoisington

If summer pulls us in for a closer look, autumn ushers us on towards winter. For nature, fall is the time for getting ready to survive the coming winter. Plants are producing seeds to ensure their own survival, but they also are essential for new generations of animal life. The warm season grasses have reached their peak height, with some attaining 8 feet or more. These towering plants give the tallgrass prairie its name. Stalwart grasses such as big bluestem, Indian grass and switch grass are prominently on display. They aren't the only ones that grow tall - Sawtooth sunflowers can reach 8-10 feet in height and provide food and cover for wildlife.

The vibrant colors of autumn are also a sign that winter can't be far away. The bronzes, ambers, blues, yellows and reds are signaling the arrival of cooler days and frosty nights. Come out and experience the prairie as it readies for winter. Autumn is nature's last gasp as winter prepares its icy grip on the landscape. Explore the prairie at the "height" of its glory.

~Mystery critter~

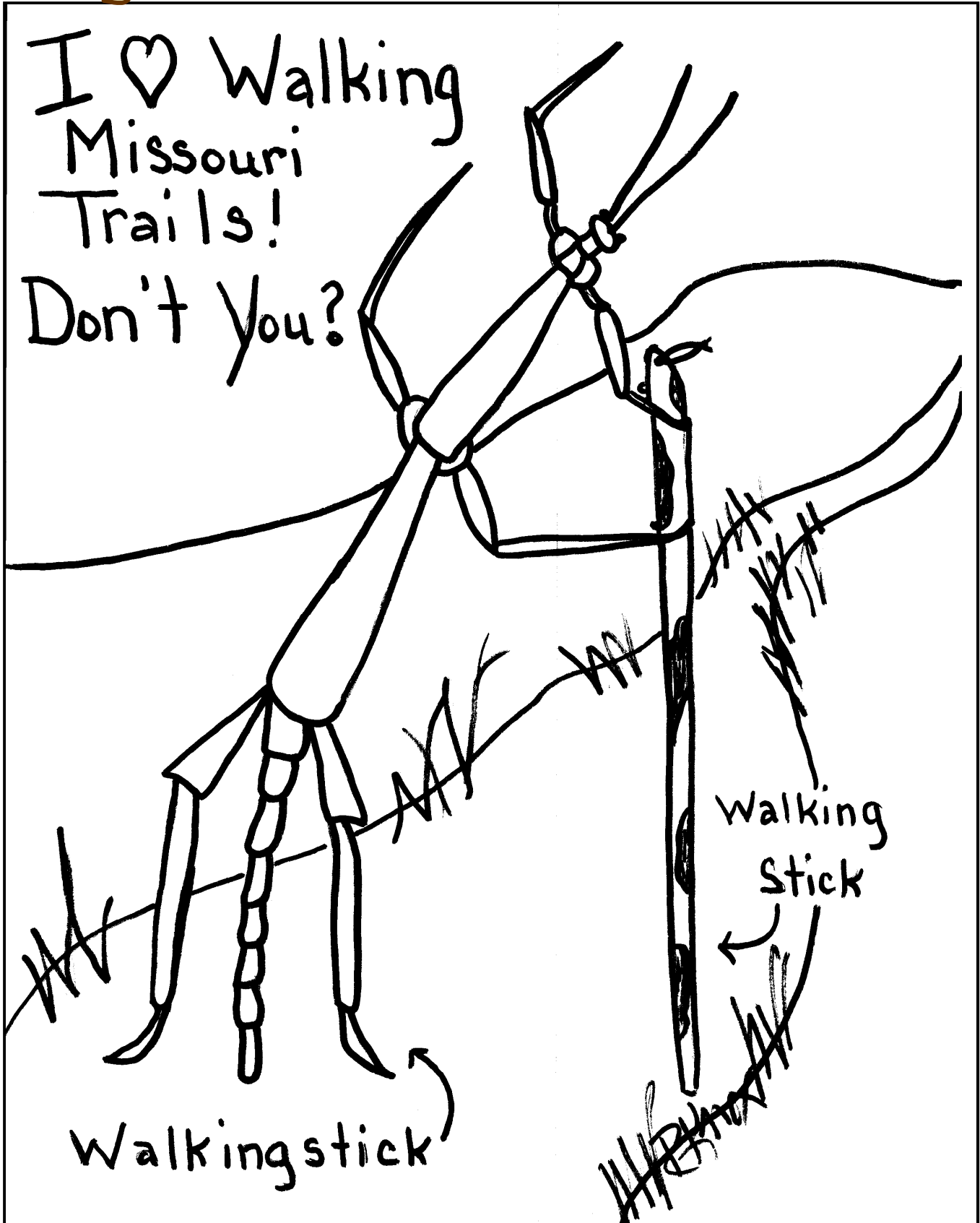
**What ferocious looking critter is this?**



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

# Hey Kids!

Fall is a wonderful time to get out and explore the park. Walking sticks are abundant this time of year. Rebecca Knox made this coloring page of a walking stick using a walking stick! Pick a trail and take a hike!



## 2017 Calendar of Events

~Activities will meet at the nature center~

**September 9, 10 a.m.**

### **Bison Hike**

Fall is nearly upon us and cooler temperatures can't be far off. Enjoy a guided hike to see the bison. Meet at the Regal Tallgrass Prairie Nature Center. Be prepared for a two-mile hike over uneven terrain. We recommend bringing water, snacks, a hat and sunscreen, and wearing sturdy shoes. Binoculars will be useful for looking at bison and other wildlife. Bring your cameras, the wildflowers will be in full bloom!

**September 15, 9:30 a.m. - Noon**

### **\*Tallgrasses HS**

Learn about the namesakes for this prairie.- grasses that are taller than we are! Preregistration by September 1<sup>st</sup> is required. Call 417-843-6711 to register.

**September 16, 10 a.m.**

### **Wildflower walk**

As the prairie heads into fall, the prairie is ripe with color. Asters and goldenrods dominate the floral display. Join a park naturalist at Prairie State Park's Regal Tallgrass Prairie Nature Center for a walk among green grasses and colorful flowers to learn more about the amazing prairie ecosystem. Dress for the weather and hiking across the prairie; long pants, water, insect repellent, and sturdy shoes are recommended. The hike will last about two hours covering 1.6 miles. Bring a camera!

**September 30, 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.**

### **Nature Bingo**

Come play nature bingo. Learn about Missouri plants and animals and win a prize!

**October 14, 10 a.m.**

### **Wildflower Walk**

Fall arrives with a color palette of amber, bronze, yellow, gold, blue, red and pink. Join a park naturalist at Prairie State Park's Regal Tallgrass Prairie Nature Center for a walk among green grasses and colorful flowers to learn more about the amazing prairie ecosystem. Dress for the weather and hiking across the prairie; long pants, water, insect repellent and sturdy shoes are recommended. The hike will last about two hours covering 1.6 miles. Bring a camera!

**October 20, 9:30 a.m. - noon**

### **\*Fun with Fungi HS**

Learn about fall fungi. The role they play as decomposers is essential! Preregistration by October 6 is required. Call 417-843-6711 to register.

**October 28, 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.**

### **Nature Bingo**

Come play nature bingo. Learn about Missouri plants and animals and win a prize!

**November 4 10 a.m.**

### **Bison Hike**

Fall is here and the cooler temperatures are great for hiking. Enjoy a guided hike to see the bison. Meet at the Regal Tallgrass Prairie Nature Center. Don't forget your cameras! Be prepared for a two-mile hike over uneven terrain. We recommend bringing water, snacks, a hat and sunscreen, and wearing sturdy shoes. Binoculars will be useful for looking at bison and other wildlife. Dress for the weather; the prairie winds can be rather nasty.

**November 4, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.**

### **National Bison Day!**

As of May 9, 2015, with the signing of the National Bison Legacy Act by former President Barack Obama, the bison is our official national mammal to be celebrated the first Saturday of November. Prairie State Park will help celebrate this momentous occasion with a day-long event starting with a guided bison hike, followed with sampling bison chili at noon and educational bison activities and programs. Learn how the Native Americans utilized this animal for food and tool making and how such an iconic animal was driven to the brink of extinction.

**November 17, 9:30 a.m. - Noon**

### **\*Terrific Turkeys HS**

Learn the habits and habitats of wild turkeys!  
Preregistration by November 3 is required. Call 417-843-6711 to register.

**November 25, 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.**

### **Nature Bingo**

Come play nature bingo. Learn about Missouri plants and animals and win a prize!

**HS denotes Homeschool programs.**

**\* Denotes preregistration required.**



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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