

Park Staff

- Jeff Robinson
Park Superintendent
- Richard Love
Asst. Park
Superintendent
- Andrea Grant
Asst. Park
Superintendent
- Dustin Hillis
Interpretive
Resource Specialist
- Ron Thurmon
Park Maintenance
Worker
- Tom Parsons
Park Maintenance
Worker
- Erik Veenstra
Park Maintenance
Worker
- Angela Carson
Park Ranger

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The Babler Babbble

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 3

FALL 2019

Babler Rocks

When you think of the resources that Babler State Park houses, you may think of the abundance of woodland creatures, the shady fragrant plant life, or the challenging hiking trails. You may not realize that a lot of the features in our park are reliant on the geology of the area.

Sedimentary rock, rock that forms when minerals or fragments become cemented through pressure and chemical reactions, is common to find throughout the park. This sedimentary rock is called limestone. Due to the warm shallow sea that once covered our region millions of years ago, large deposits of bone and shells were compressed into limestone. This creates fossiliferous limestone, which means you can find a variety

of sea fossils within our creek beds despite being landlocked! Thanks to the way that the limestone erodes, Babler is home to 5 of Missouri's 1,100 springs. Two of which you can visit hiking the Dogwood and the Paved Trails. The limestone at Babler State Park was quarried and used by the Civilian Conservation Corps to build the front gates as well as other structures within the park.

Limestone isn't the only rock that makes a big difference in this park. Dolomite, another type of sedimentary rock, also helps shape the landscape. Located along our scenic Hawthorn trail is a dolomite glade, which is a habitat that



Babler Spring is a small spring that has formed a cave entrance and can have a rate of flow during wet weather that is over 200+ gallons per minute!

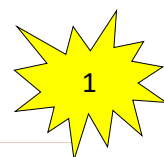
features almost desert like conditions. Due to the rocky and thin soil large trees are unable to grow, and instead wildflowers take over. These drought resistant plants thrive in the extra sunlight and heat while providing food for a unique group of animals. A glade is the ideal spot to look for reptiles such as lizards and snakes. Without the variety of rock types we wouldn't have the habitats available for so much wildlife.

Next time you're hiking through the woods, visiting the creek, or riding your bike up and down the hilly terrain, remember that it's the geology of Babler that makes it all possible.

-Rachael Meara,
Seasonal Interpreter



Fossiliferous limestone has an array of ancient sea life that has become fossilized in the rock. A prime example of this type of limestone is used on the patios of the Enclosed Shelter, which was built by the CCC.



The Legend of Wild Horse Creek

Wild Horse Creek winds along the western boundary of Babler State Park. Growing up in Chesterfield along Wild Horse creek Rd. I had always wondered where the name of the road came from. One day working at Babler I stumbled upon a document folder labeled “Wild Horse Creek” in the Archives Room. Inside this folder I had discovered an old set of documents detailing how



Wild Horse Creek

the creek was named. The story goes something like this.

Long ago, settlers in the Bonhomme Bottoms area were trying to figure out a name for this new creek that they discovered near their settlement. According to legend, one night settlers heard the mad pounding of hooves along the creek that woke them up and brought them to their windows. Gazing out their windows, they saw a mysterious white horse with a small odd man riding the horse backwards facing the tail. The rider was clinging on for dear life as the horse galloped wildly along the rocky creek bed, swiftly heading to an unknown destination.

The name “Wild Horse Creek” came from this legend of the phantom horse and its’ miniature night rider. The superstitious settlers were convinced that the legendary horse and its rider, made the wild night



“White Horse” artwork designed by Mark Coleman.

ride up this unnamed creek in order to provide a name for the stream. Over the years some settlers have reported seeing this phantom white horse grazing along the creek. For many generations this story was told around the camp fire, passed down from generation to generation.

-Sean Flemming,
Seasonal Interpreter

The Power of Monarchs

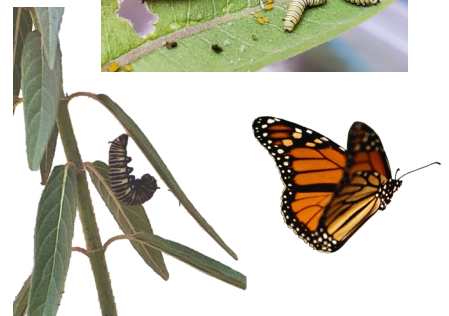
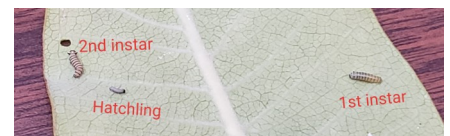
Every year nature enthusiasts are excited about a multitude of things, however, when August-October rolls around there is one thing on a lot of peoples minds. MONARCHS! Naturalists, teachers, entomologists, and so many others are entranced with these delicate winged creatures.

So why are monarch butterflies so special? They are one of the most well known butterflies in the world to the general public. They also only lay their eggs on species of milkweed, in which feeds their very hungry caterpillars. However, the most intriguing part of all, is that

they have one of the longest travel corridors of any insect. They overwinter in the jungles of Mexico and Central America, then start

their journey northward in waves. Monarch butterflies have four generations on their travel northward. The fourth generation just so happens to be the one that lives the longest of the four generations and flies all the way from the Canada border to Mexico! Talk about having sore wings.

Monarch Butterflies are being threatened across the U.S. by the lack of suitable habitat. One sure fire way to keep these amber colored gems from disappearing is to plant more native milkweeds. The next time you are outside keep an eye out for this unique butterfly.



Monarch Butterflies go through a variety of changes. Pictured above is the beginning stages and ending stages of their unique life cycle.

Ask the Interpreter!

Q: Why does the park burn the forests, but only in certain areas of the park?

A: Prescribed fire is very beneficial for our native flora by recycling the nitrogen back to the soil and helps some plants germinate to start their life cycles. Missouri, throughout history has been accustomed to the occasional fire on the landscape. Babler State Park is no different in this tale. The park has over 200 acres that are in what Missouri State Parks calls Burn Units. The park has three burn units on the western side of the park. These areas include the Hawthorn Trail and two other units are located on the same ridgeline as the Alta Shelter. The park chose these areas for their natural qualities.

The Hawthorn Burn Unit (which encompasses most of the Hawthorn Trail) has some of Babler's most notable open woodlands in which the park has been in the process of restoring. The restoration process is implemented by cutting and thinning out native trees such as Maples, which should not be growing on the ridgetops but should be found only in the

Questions for "Ask the Interpreter" can be submitted via e-mail to dustin.hillis@dnr.mo.gov or on Facebook!

bottoms, and invasive plants such as Bush Honeysuckle. Another natural feature in this unit is the Hawthorn Glade. The glade is a dolomite glade that is about 10 acres which is only a third of the whole burn unit (31 acres). The glade is home to many species such as snakes, insects, arachnids, and many different species of plants that are adapted for living in this harsh environment.

The two burn units below the Alta Shelter were chosen for their unique topography and woodland aspects. These units are approximately 150+ acres and are scheduled to be burned this Winter. It was first noted from these sites that they had remnant woodland species after a wildfire around the Alta Shelter took place (which burned the shelter).

The park has not added any new burn units, however, the park has looked into other areas that could be future burn units. These burn units would help increase the natural beauty of the park by regenerating the local native flora that inhabits this area.



The park doesn't just throw fire out on the landscape without prepping first. This gentleman is lighting fire along a blown out section of trail that encircles the entire burn unit.



Pictured above is the woodland floor of the Hawthorn Burn Unit after the fire swept up the hillside.

We do school programs!

Contact Dustin Hillis, Interpretive Resource Specialist at Babler State Park at 636-458-3813 ext. 223 to schedule your programs.

Explorer Corner

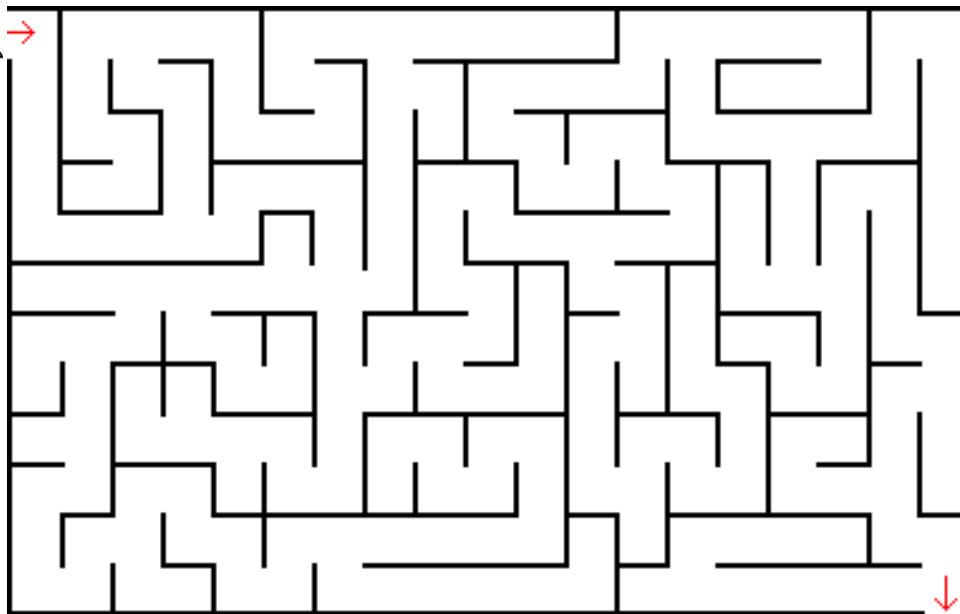
Mrs. Black Bear needs your help to reach her den

before Fall is over! Can you get her there in time?



Did you know?

In the past, bear meat provided considerable food for Native Americans and white settlers, and bear fat was valuable for numerous uses. Bear fur was used for bedding, coats, and rugs.



Did you know?

Young are born in late January or February — sometimes while the mother is still asleep. A litter usually has 2 or 3 cubs. Winter inactivity usually extends into April, when bears leave their winter quarters and feed heavily. Cubs stay with the mother through the summer and usually den with her the next winter.

Did you know?

Black bears eat a variety of foods. Plant matter includes grass, berries and other fruits, various seeds and nuts, the inner bark of trees and roots. Acorns are an important food source in the fall as bears prepare for winter. Animal food includes ants, bees and their honey, insects, fish, frogs, small rodents, fawns, bird eggs, and many kinds of carrion.



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 or check our Facebook page!

September

Interview with an Ant



Saturday, Sept. 21

8 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Missing your late night talk shows while camping? Come watch the 'Babler Twilight Talk Show' featuring our special guest, Annie the Ant. Learn about her life, play a strength test game, and meet her in person. Meet at the campground Amphitheater.

October

Night Skies Over Babler

Saturday, Oct. 19

7 p.m.—10 p.m.

Join Babler State Park as we spend the night under the stars with our friends from the Saint Louis Astronomical Society. Meet at the Visitor Center.

Babler's 2nd Annual Fall Festival

Saturday, Oct. 26th

9 a.m.—10 a.m.

Nature Stroll

Join an interpreter for a stroll through the woods and enjoy the scenery that Babler has to offer. We will be hiking the Hawthorn Trail and will travel through one of Missouri's most prized possessions, a dolomite glade. Meet at the Alta Shelter parking lot.

2 p.m.—3 p.m.

Slither Me Timbers

Slither on over to meet one of Babler's resident snakes and learn about snakes. Also find out why they are beneficial to you. Meet at the campground amphitheater.



7 p.m.—8 p.m.

Camper Judging

Any camper that wants to participate in the Halloween decorating contest will be rated by a panel of judges. The winner will be announced late that night. Judging starts in the campground at 7 p.m.

November

National Take A Hike Day

Sunday, Nov. 17

9 a.m. - 11 a.m.

Join the interpreters for a hike through the forest on the Woodbine Trail. This 1.8 mile trail shows off some Babler's dry woodlands and possibly some beautiful fall colors. Meet at the Guy Park Trailhead.

Up Coming Programs:

December

Nature's Décor *Registration only*



Saturday, Dec. 7

10 a.m. - noon

Deck the halls with boughs of holly...the holidays are just around the corner and we're in the mood to decorate! We'll use nature's resources to create wonderful winter wreaths. You provide the grapevine wreath (you choose the size and shape you want) and pliers, and we'll provide everything else for decorating. Meet at the Visitor Center in the basement.

Registration starts November 1st, we are accepting the first 20 people. (Ages 14+, minors must be accompanied by an adult). Register for this program by November 25th by calling 636-458-3813 ext. 223 or emailing Dustin Hillis, Interpretive Resource Specialist III at dustin.hillis@dnr.mo.gov.

MO State Parks Explorer Program

Giving visitors a new appreciation and respect for the natural world and the historic setting around them, along with an interest in preserving them is the main goal of the Missouri State Parks and Historic Sites Explorer Program. The patches and stars earned are visible symbols of a person's commitment to preserving the living environment.



The program has three parts to complete to earn the patches:

1. Interpretive Study—complete two programs learning about an animal, building or history related to the park or historic site.
2. Interpretive Programs—complete four programs: guided tours, evening programs, hikes, etc.
3. Identification—identify 10 significant things to a park interpreter (objects, people or other living things), giving the proper name and its importance to the park or historic site.

Park Happenings

Babler State Park is on Facebook!

It is a great way to stay up-to-date on current program offerings, stay in contact with park staff, and post comments about the park. Please check us out on the social networking site at Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park and "Like" us.

Service Projects Available for Scouts

Park staff have recently compiled a new list of potential scout projects for the park. These projects include a variety of skill and time requirements, from a few hours to a full day, ongoing, group and individual projects. We have Eagle Scout projects available. Contact the Visitor Center for more information!

Military Discounts Now Available!

New for 2019, Missouri State Parks will offer a military discount on camping stays. Customers who are retired, veteran or active-duty military personnel (including active-duty family members) are eligible for a \$2 per camping night discount. Like the Senior/ADA discount, there are acceptable forms of identification for the Military Discount including-CAC card or the DD Form 1173. The proper military identification must be shown at time of check-in. This discount applies to camping only. The discount does not apply to lodging (i.e., cabins, yurts, etc.). The qualifying party must show proper identification upon check-in.

2019 Camping Rate Increase

In 2019, the rates for campsites with electricity increased by \$2 during the on-season only, beginning with arrivals May 1 and after. The funds generated from this increase will be earmarked to fund various electrification projects. This past season we had several campsites that were not available to our customers due to electrical issues. With these potential improvements and repairs, Missouri State Parks will better meet the needs of our guests.

Park Closure: December 14-15

Babler State Park will be totally closed to the general public for our annual deer hunt on December 14th & 15th. This Deer Hunt allows the park to control our rising deer herd and manage for high browsing rates in the park. The park will also be monitoring Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) by sampling the harvested deer within the park. This data will allow the Missouri Dept. of Conservation to know how far the disease has spread and will allow the park to monitor the health of our resident deer herd.

Volunteers Wanted:

Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park is looking for people to volunteer in the park. Volunteers will help with nature hikes, educational camps, park maintenance and so much more. Contact the park for more information at 636-458-3813.

Volunteers Make the Park Go Round



The Boyds have volunteered with MO State Parks for 7 years.



The Gibsons have volunteered with MO State Parks for 11 years.

Thank you for your support by continually voting to renew the 1/10 of 1% Parks, Soils & Water Sales Tax.

It is through this constitutional tax, in which half of the funding generated is earmarked for the Division of Missouri State Parks. This provides about three-fourths of the division's budget for the operation and development of state parks. All additional funding comes from revenues generated in the state park system and some federal funds.

River Hills Visitor Center Gift Shop

Swing on by the gift shop to see what's new! We have apparel, food items, hiking sticks and so much more! We now sell drinks!



The Boys Who Built Babler State Park

Babler State Park was the temporary home to two Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camps during the development of the park during the 1930s. The young men that called these camps home for next couple of years learned how read, write, and valuable trades to help them later on in life. The "CCC Boys," as some call them, helped build the park by building roadways, buildings, culverts, ditches, retaining walls along Wild Horse Creek, and many more structures.



This is one of the groups of young men that comprised CCC Camp #3763 here at Babler.

The boys harvested timber from the park grounds to build the hand hewn timbers of our three shelters: Alta, Cochran, and the Enclosed Shelter. They also hand chiseled the limestone from the limestone quarry on the western boundary of the park to create the foundations of the stone gates, buildings, bridges, and hand laid gutters. However, their work didn't stop there. They also learned how to become a blacksmith and created cast iron weathervanes for some of the buildings and created cast iron chandeliers for buildings such as the Dining Lodge (the modern-day DYS building in the northeast corner).

Babler State Park owes its' existence to these hard working young men. Although most of the men are older or no longer with us, Babler still pays homage to their work through the interpretation of the structures and stories that they have left the park. They are forever intertwined into the fabric of Babler's history.

-Dustin Hillis,

Interpretive Resource Specialist III



Pictured below is the encampment of CCC Camp #2729 which was stationed in front of the present day Visitor Center on the hillside.

Pictured above is the encampment of CCC Camp #3763, which was stationed in the valley of the park near the old pool and tennis court.



Looking to join the MO State Parks team?

You can look for full-time and seasonal position openings at:

<https://dnr.mo.gov/hr/vacancy.htm>

For seasonal positions you can also contact the parks you would like to work for directly to submit your resume. Seasonal positions are for 1000 working hours at varying starting pays.

Hello Deer!

Let's face it, summer is fading away. Our animals are still out and about, but a bit busier than usual. They are foraging for food before winter comes to freeze everything out. One of these busy mammals is our very own white-tailed deer. You may see them more often at Babler than any other animal, due to their higher population. The park is bordered by two thriving cities, so the deer are being forced to push towards the woodland safe haven that is Babler State Park. However, if we aren't careful, the number of deer roaming the park could come to tip the balance of nature.



Small herd of does standing in the field at Walnut Grove Shelter. They are very unsure about our naturalist taking their picture.

Population control can make or break the balance of not only Babler's ecosystems, but many other natural areas as well. With each year, about half of the female deer (does) will have babies. Usually a single doe will birth two fawns a season and can repeat the process for many years if conditions are right. Imagine having a growing deer population in Babler! The park would be overrun and in certain areas, it may be dangerous with

numerous deer crossings. Some of our more sensitive native plants such as White Trillium (*Trillium grandiflorum*) would be destroyed due to the over browsing of the large deer herd. Many flowers and small plants, like moss and lichens, would disappear from woodlands across the area. Consequently, the lack of vegetation in the area would mean the end of many other animal populations and the prolific growth of invasive species such as Bush Honeysuckle. From this point on, the lack and surplus of different plants and creatures within the woods would affect each other. The delicate balance of these ecosystems are much like that of a game of Jenga. If you pull out a piece, the tower is at a higher risk of crumbling down.

What's the solution to this problem? Hunting. This conservational tool allows the park to control the amount of deer that can reproduce and leaves the park with an adequate population to continue the next generations of white-tailed deer. The park has an optimum amount of deer per



Two does standing in the old pasture of the OEC Stables.

square mile ratio that it tries to reach with the deer hunt. The park has enough habitat to support 25 deer per one square mile, however, through years of surveys the park has found that their deer ratio is about 80 deer per one square mile. This unbalanced population can and has wrecked havoc on Babler's native



Young buck (four point) who is bounding after the does that just left the old pasture at the OEC Stables.

vegetation. Without the interference of people, the population of deer would be out of control. Hunting dates back so far in history, that without this action nature would be left unchecked. This is why the park has their own drawn deer hunt during the winter. This year the hunt is taking place December 14th and 15th. Our park, in return, will be left beautiful and balanced for all visitors to enjoy.

-Lauren Baker,
Seasonal Interpreter

Babler's First Families

Before Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State park was a state park, there were several pioneer families that called this land home. Each with their own background, stories and history.

The first family I want to share with you is the Puellman family. We know very little about this family. The Puellman family has a small family cemetery here at Babler State Park. In this cemetery there are two grave sites shared with one head stone. Charles H. Puellman and his wife Minnie Puellman. Charles was born in 1848 and Minnie was born in 1851. However, Minnie died at a quite young at the age of 41. Her husband, Charles died forty years later at age 82. We are unsure where the family came from or if they had any other relatives.

The next family I would like to share with you is the Bates/ Gaehle family. If you are familiar with Babler State Park, you might realize that we have a road within the park named Bates road, this is for this founding family. Maria Magdalene Kayer and her two brothers Alexander and Henry

came to the United States and purchased 127 acres, including parts of Babler State Park. The family used the 127 acres to farm. Martin Bates and his mother Elizabeth Bates came to the United States from Prussia in the early 1800's. Martin later marries Maria Magdalene Kayer and they become the Bates Family. Together Martin and Maria have one son Henry E. Bates. In the midst of the American Civil War Henry and his father Martin join the side of the Union. Martin and Henry were part of a militia unit that protected the Union Pacific railroad. Now the family has a small family cemetery here at Babler State Park. Elizabeth, Martin and Maria Magdalena are all buried there. Elizabeth died in 1872, Martin died in 1902 and Maria Magdalena died in 1881.

The last family I am going to discuss is the Coleman/ Tyler Family. The Coleman/ Tyler family moved to Missouri from Virginia. They came to Missouri in covered wagons and carriages with their 100 slaves. The family was led by Rev. Robert



Babler State Park has around five cemeteries within the park boundaries. However, only two are accessible to the public: Coleman/Tyler and Puellman cemeteries. Pictured above is the Bothe/Glaser cemetery which is five family members that are of German descent. This family unit homesteaded the eastern section of the park near the park entrance.

Goodwin Coleman. The family arrived in Saint Louis in 1837. They built a log cabin home on Wild Horse Creek. Rev. Robert Coleman then established the Antioch Baptist church (Which is still in operation), where he later preached. Rev. Robert Coleman with his son William Coleman and relative Henry Tyler purchased land and began plantations. The plantation grew hemp, corn, wheat, and oats. After the death of Rev. Robert Coleman his sons Robert Jr. and William ran the plantation. When the Civil War breaks out the Coleman/ Tyler family supported the confederacy. Which conflicted with their neighbors the Bates family. The Coleman/ Tyler family has a family cemetery in Babler State park right across from the stables. In this cemetery is fifteen members of the Coleman/ Tyler family.

Today Babler State Park uses these families and their stories as reminders of what Babler State park use to be and how life once was.

-Shelly Hesselbein,
Seasonal Interpreter



The Coleman/Tyler Cemetery is located across from the OEC Out Post (the old Stables) and is Babler State Park's most visited cemetery. This cemetery also has modern-day family members that still visit from time to time.

A New Chapter Begins

We would like to take the time to say goodbye to one of our Full-time maintenance workers, Ron Thurman.

Ron started his career with Missouri State Parks long before he was hired at Babler as our head of maintenance. He volunteered with parks as a campground host for 2 years. In 2007, Ron joined the Babler staff as the Park Maintenance Worker III, head of our maintenance crew. He has helped the park through multiple tornado cleanups, prescribed burns and a few wildfires, and the park's managed deer hunts. Ron was also honored as one of Missouri State Park's Employees of the Month in 2013.

We here at Babler would like to thank Ron for his dedicated service and hard work that he has given to Missouri State Parks. We hope that you enjoy retirement!

Thanks,

The Babler State Park Staff



The Eagle's Nest: Manager's Comments



As summer comes to an end and autumn is around the corner, the park continues to be a great place to visit, learn and experience the wonders of the outdoors. As the seasons change, the park has received its yearly budget and park management is busy planning the year's projects and goals for the new fiscal year. During this summer we had to contend with lots of weather including six months of 6" or more of rainfall each month. We spent a good portion of the summer removing hazardous trees and lifting the canopy off the roads. Unfortunately Mother Nature took several of our prized oaks that had been enjoyed over the years. The wet conditions just could not hold their massive weight. Maintenance staff has had their hands full trying to just keep the park mowed and trimmed due to these saturated conditions. We have had two flash flood events that washed two sections of the equestrian trail out. Unfortunately we closed the equestrian trails for safety concerns for a good part of the summer. I am pleased to announce the equestrian trails have been reopened except the two washed out areas we hope to fix this fall.

As the seasons change we are starting to dry out and get things ready for what is our busiest time of the year: the cool days of autumn and the beautiful fall colors our forest provides. Rockwood School District will soon be hosting 6th grade science camp at the outdoor education center. The interpreters are still providing programming, doing surveys of plants and animals located in the park, assisting our maintenance crew with trimming the bike path, trail maintenance and planning for the special events being held in the coming months. Management staff is working on identifying projects, maintenance issues, bidding out an AC project to replace the unit in the visitor center auditorium, bidding two roof projects one of which will replace a roof on one of our CCC buildings that was damaged by a direct hit from a tree falling.

Management is working on the three initiatives discussed during our public meeting back in June. The first is the proposal from Gateway off Road Cyclist to develop an off road recreational trail system for mountain bikes. The second is the improvement of the parking area for our equestrian users. The last is repairs to the paved trail. The park applied for and will receive in October a grant to repave the two mile bike trail which is currently closed to bikes making it hiking only. Our hope is we will have the bike trail repaved within the next two years.

Autumn is my favorite time of the year. Babler has some of the best fall colors in this area of the state. The heat of the summer is over and the cool dry autumn days provide a great opportunity for you to come and enjoy what nature has provided, make memories and experience the adventure and wonderment of the outdoors. If you happen to be in the visitor center enjoying our exhibits or shopping in our gift shop, please stop by the front desk and say hi. We are always looking for your input on how we can make your visit better.

-Jeff Robinson,

Park Superintendent



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

800 Guy Park Drive
Wildwood, MO 63005

Phone: 636-458-3813

Fax: 636-458-9105

Email: dustin.hillis@dnr.mo.gov

River Hills Visitor Center Hours:

April-October: 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.—Wednesday-Sunday

November & March: 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.—Saturday & Sunday

December-February: CLOSED

Generations of Missourians have passed through Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park's massive stone gateway for cookouts and family get-togethers or to spend time with friends. The park's camping facilities, Civilian Conservation Corps architecture, and hiking, bicycling and equestrian trails help all visitors find their place to get away from it all, just minutes from St. Louis.

Park Hours:

April 1 – Oct. 31: 7 a.m.-9 p.m.

Nov. 1—March 30: 7 a.m.-6 p.m.

We're on the web!

mostateparks.com/babler

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



Night Skies Over Babler

**October 19th
7pm to 10pm**

