



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

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- Richard Love
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(Asst.)
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Park Specialist
(Asst.)
- Dustin Hillis
Senior Park
Specialist (Naturalist)
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The Babler Babble

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FALL 2020

Leafy Business



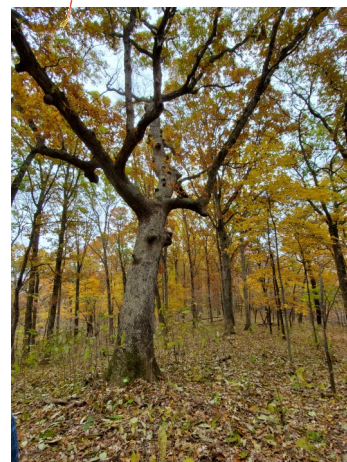
Have you ever thought about tree leaves? How do they change colors? What is their purpose? Why do they not all look the same? These are just some of the questions that scientists and naturalists try to answer.

First off, what is a leaf? A leaf or leaves are the main appendage of the vascular plant stem that is specialized for photosynthesis.

Photosynthesis is the process that plants use to create food or energy for themselves. Leaves are collectively referred to as foliage. Not all leaves look the same, however, most of the generalized "leaf" works the same. Leaves are the powerhouse of plants by aiding in food and water storage, absorbing atmospheric carbon dioxide and in turn releasing

atmospheric oxygen. Leaf shapes are dependent on climate, available light, but also other factors such as grazing animals (such as deer), available nutrients, and ecological competition from other plants.

Why do some trees lose their leaves and others don't? This in part due to the different types of leaves. Trees that lose their leaves here at Babler are considered deciduous trees (meaning they lose their leaves or they die off for the winter) and the trees that keep their leaves are called coniferous (meaning they keep their needles, modified leaves, year-round). Deciduous trees go through a process called abscission, which means they shed their leaves in the fall. During this process their leaves change color and turn yellow,



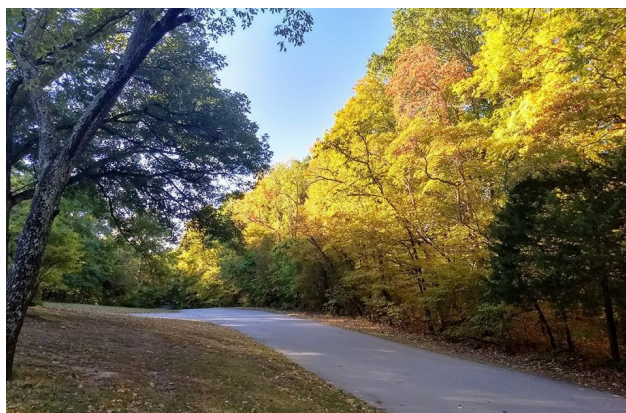
A large White Oak standing in the middle of a sea of maples.

orange, or red. During the growing season chlorophyll in the leaves creates the green color and as the year progresses and we move into fall they lose chlorophyll and allows us to see different pigments in the leaves. Chlorophyll is the chemicals inside the leaf that allows the plant to make food so they can grow using water, air, and light from the sun through the process of photosynthesis. Without photosynthesis there would be no plants or life on Earth.

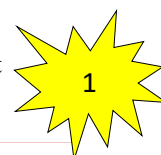
So the next time you look outside at the fall colors. Take the time to hug a tree and thank them for all the work they do to provide us with life.



-Dustin Hillis,
Senior Park Specialist



Maples and oaks showing their fall colors across from the Alta Shelter.



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!



Life inside a Log

Have you ever wondered what happens to a tree once it dies? It becomes part of the life cycle on the forest floor or serves as a standing hollow hotel. As a tree dies, certain plants, animals, and other organisms start to take residence inside.

For instance, what do you see in the rotting log below? Fungi, ferns, vines, and leaves all fill the voids in the rotting log. However, if you look closer you will find that there is more cool stuff to discover, such as ants, beetles & larvae, sometimes mammal nests, and even

worms! These items are what we call decomposers that help to break down the tree matter. Standing trees also provide shelter for animals such as birds, mammals, and insects.

The next time you come across a rotting log, take the time to investigate who is living inside. Take note of what you find and compare it to other finds. Did you find any decomposers, amphibians, or lots of fungi. Explore the world of the hidden superheroes inside the world of old.



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.



The Naturalist's Journal

The fall is the best time of year to go hiking. It's not too hot and not too cold. I challenge you to take a hike at least twice a month (.....or more if you like). Take a hike to a place you've never been to or on a trail at your favorite park that you haven't been on in a while. Keep a journal of what you see on your hikes. How does each hike differ from the last? What did you see on your hike? Did you hike longer or shorter than the last hike?

By answering questions like these you will be able to put together a story of your hikes throughout the fall that you can then compare to either previous or later years. See how things have changed, did you hike farther, or were you able to hike at all due to weather. These are some the things that you can do to keep yourselves active during these unusual times.

Dustin Hillis,
Senior Park Specialist



2020 Celestial Events

- **September 11 - Neptune at Opposition.** The blue giant planet will be at its closest approach to Earth and its face will be fully illuminated by the Sun. It will be brighter than any other time of the year and will be visible all night long. This is the best time to view and photograph Neptune. Due to its extreme distance from Earth, it will only appear as a tiny blue dot in all but the most powerful telescopes.
- **October 7 - Draconids Meteor Shower.** The Draconids is a minor meteor shower producing only about 10 meteors per hour. It is produced by dust grains left behind by comet 21P Giacobini-Zinner, which was first discovered in 1900. The Draconids is an unusual shower in that the best viewing is in the early evening instead of early morning like most other showers. The shower runs annually from October 6-10 and peaks this year on the night of the 7th. Best viewing will be in the early evening from a dark location far away from city lights. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Draco, but can appear anywhere in the sky.
- **October 31 - Uranus at Opposition.** The blue-green planet will be at its closest approach to Earth and its face will be fully illuminated by the Sun. It will be brighter than any other time of the year and will be visible all night long. Due to its distance, it will only appear as a tiny blue-green dot in all but the most powerful telescopes.
- **November 30 - Penumbral Lunar Eclipse.** A penumbral lunar eclipse occurs when the Moon passes through the Earth's partial shadow, or penumbra. During this type of eclipse the Moon will darken slightly but not completely. The eclipse will be visible throughout most of North America, the Pacific Ocean, and northeastern Asia including Japan.

2020 Natural Events

- **Sept 4**—Jewelweed seedpods explode when touched.
- **Sept 7**—Monarch butterflies starting migrating south in large numbers.
- **Sept 12**—White-tailed deer breed now through November.
- **Sept 29**—Pawpaw fruit ripens.
- **Oct 5**—Peak of fall color begins.
- **Oct 6**—Look for hen of the woods mushrooms.
- **Oct 20**—Peak fall color begins in maples, oaks, and hickories. Now is a great time to hike a trail.
- **Oct 24**—Juncos arrive from Canada.
- **Nov 5**—Pecans begin to ripen.
- **Nov 13**—Look for "frost flowers" with the first hard frost.
- **Nov 27**—Milkweed pods open.

We do school programs!

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

Explorer Corner

Help the Pileated Woodpecker reach the tasty insect at the center of the tree ring.

How old is this tree? _____
(Hint: count its rings starting here and counting to the middle.)



Did you know?

The science of tree rings is called dendrochronology.

Did you know?

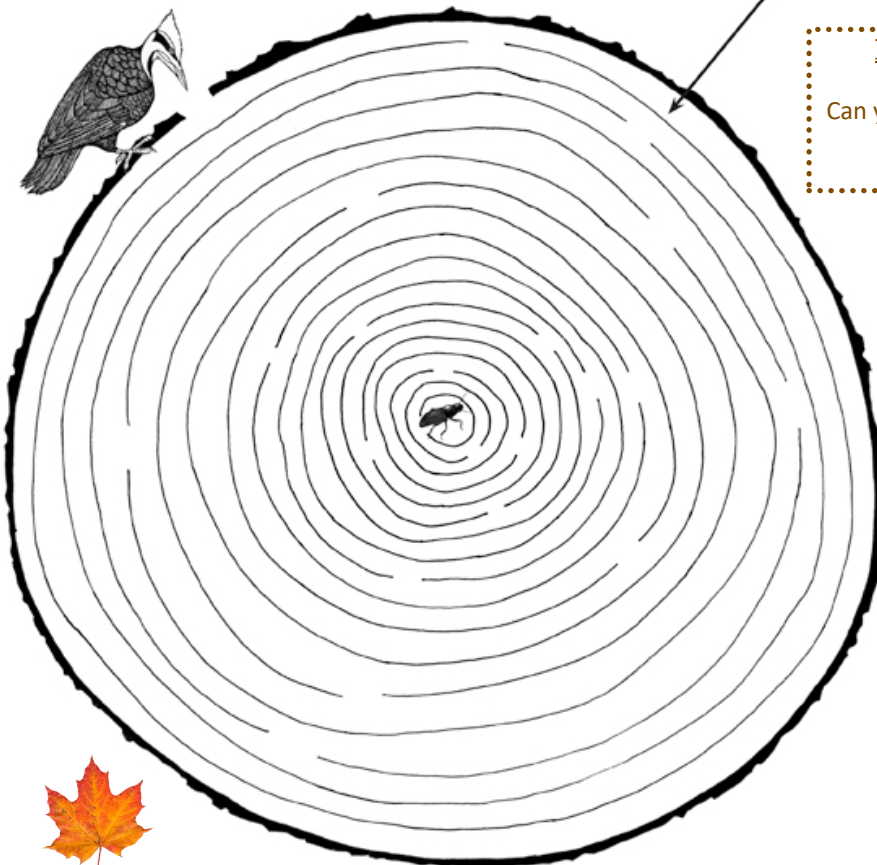
If you know when the tree was planted, you can easily and accurately determine its age. The second most accurate way to estimate tree age is to count the annual rings of wood growth. For trees that are dead and have been cut down, you can count the rings on the stump.

Hidden Finds

Can you find all 37 leaves in this newsletter?

Did you know?

Trees are sensitive to local climate conditions, such as rain and temperature. They give scientists some information about that area's local climate in the past. For example, tree rings usually grow wider in warm, wet years and are thinner in years when it is cold and dry.





Special Event Schedule

**** special Covid-19
guidelines may apply.**

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

National Public Lands Day

Saturday, Sept. 26

10 a.m.—11 a.m.

Join us in celebrating National Public Lands Day by helping the park remove invasive bush honeysuckle. All tools and herbicides will be provided. Meet at the Visitor Center, we will be working along the Virginia Day Trail.

***This program may be subject to changes/ cancellation due to Covid-19 guidelines. All updates will be made available via the park's Facebook page.*



October

Babler's 3rd Annual Fall Festival

Saturday, Oct. 31st

Nature Stroll

9 a.m.

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.



Slither Me Timbers

2 p.m.

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

Camper Judging

8 p.m.

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 8 p.m.



Babler's "Howl"-oween

Saturday, Oct. 31st

4 p.m.—8 p.m.

Are you looking for a place to trick or treat? Stop by the park's Visitor Center from 4pm to 8pm for some fun activities and learn about things in Missouri that make people howl, campfire, s'mores, animal interactions, and most of all...CANDY! This event will provide a safe environment for kids of all ages to enjoy Halloween and visit Babler State Park.

***This program may be subject to changes/ cancellation due to Covid-19 guidelines. All updates will be made available via the park's Facebook page.*



November

National Take A Hike Day

Sunday, Nov. 15

9 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.



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.



Follow us on Facebook to check for program updates and the Labor Day weekend holiday programs.

Up Coming Programs:

December

Nature's Décor *Registration only*

Saturday, Dec. 5

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 14-17 must be accompanied by an adult). Register for this program by November 25th by calling 636-458-3813 ext. 223 or emailing Dustin Hillis, Senior Park Specialist (Park Naturalist) at dustin.hillis@dnr.mo.gov.

***This program may be subject to changes/ cancellation due to Covid-19 guidelines.
All updates will be made available via the park's Facebook page.*



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.

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. Contact the Visitor Center for more information!
636-458-3813

Military Discounts Now Available!

In 2019, Missouri State Parks started offering a military discount on camping stays. For stays beginning on April 1, customers who are retired, veteran or active-duty military personnel (including active-duty family members) are eligible for a \$2 per night camping 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. The revenue 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 its guests.

Park Closure: December 12-13

Babler State Park will be totally closed to the general public for our annual managed deer hunt on December 12th & 13th. 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.

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.

Babler's First Families: The Gaehles



Friedrich Conrad Gaehle was born in the Hannover region of Germany in 1814. In 1839 he married Harriette Puellmann, who may have immigrated here in 1837 from Hannover, Germany. By 1846, Friedrich had purchased 2 tracts of land (73 acres total) with Harriette's brother Lewis. This land is located just south of the current park boundary, where Shiloh Subdivision sits along Rieger Road. Harriette and Friedrich (or Fred, as he was sometimes known) had 5 (possibly 6) children. Their son Henry married Sophia Marie Ehlebeck (Elebeck), who came to the area in 1844 from Bremen, Germany with her parents and 5 siblings. Henry and Sophia owned the land where the current visitor center and monument sit. Their home was along Pine Rd. just south of the CCC concession building. The family cemetery is near there, but is not signed and has no

headstones. The 4 graves are found only by looking for daffodils in the spring, as long as you know the general area of where to look. Henry and Sophia Gaehle had 5 sons, 3 of whom lived to adulthood - Charles Martin, John Henry, Fred William. Henry A. and an infant brother are buried with their parents in the family cemetery. Charles and Fred married sisters Katie and Stephanie "Fanny" Bernard. These families both farmed on the land south of the park, while John opened a successful merchandise business on Wild Horse Creek Road near Manchester. John married Sophia Dorothea "Dora" Rieger in 1893, and in addition to the store they operated the Wild Horse Creek Express, a large truck which carried farm products to the city and brought back items to sell in the store. Sometimes the load would be family members



Sophia & Henry Gaehle

going to county fairs or other outings. Dances were held at the John H. Gaehle Hall, and the Gaehle Grove was one of the finest picnic areas in the county. Also of note in the Gaehle family tree - Friedrich and Harriette's daughter Wilhelmina Sophia married Charles Henry August Puellmann, her first cousin on her mother's side. The Puellmann's lived in the south central area of the park, and have a small family cemetery there.

Friedrich and Harriette's daughter Henrietta Johanna married Henry Bates from the northeast portion of the park. They operated a store along Wild Horse Creek Road in that area.

-Carley Wright,
Volunteer

If you have any information on the families that once called Babler home, please contact either the park naturalist or the cultural resource volunteer at the following email addresses:

**dustin.hillis@dnr.mo.gov
parkpool20@gmail.com**



Gaehles in front of Wildhorse Creek Express truck. Photo courtesy of the Wildwood Historical Society.





Albert Gaele and Emma Mottert on their wedding day, March 25, 1915. This photo was taken at the Bates Photography Studio, which was located along Wildhorse Creek Road. The property is now within Babler State Park.



Gaele family in front of their family house off of Pine Road (above). Frank Gaele with mules on his father William's farm on Rieger Rd—c. 1920 (bottom left). This double wedding of Nellie and Clara Gaele took place on April 17, 1921, at Bethany Evangelical Church on Wildhorse Creek Rd (bottom right). Left to right—Henry Krueger, Nellie Gaele, flower girl Albertha Gaele Jaeger, Fred C. Poertner, and Clara Gaele.



The Eagle's Nest: Manager's Comments



Autumn, my favorite season of all. I look forward to this time of year and the changing of the leaves, cool nights around a campfire, and watching nature get ready for the onset of winter. It always seems to be one of the shorter seasons so I try and take in every day. I hope that you all do as well. I am especially looking forward to experiencing my first fall here at Babler.

It has been a busy summer, one still full of uncertainty with the current events continuing to unfold around us. We appreciate all of our guests being flexible and understanding as we navigate some of these ongoing changes. As we continued our phased reopening approach many facilities reopened, cleaning frequency was increased, in person programming resumed in a safe way, and our campground welcomed back campers in late spring and has been busy throughout the summer.

As our mowing and trimming slow down we shift focus onto some of our projects we are wanting to get accomplished. Some of these are not the big flashy items but ones that are needed to keep the park functioning. This can range from replacing benches and picnic tables to fixing aging heating and air conditioning systems, roofs and the like. Look for these small improvements as we move through the fall.

Keep in mind a few of our scheduled events, notably our annual public meeting which will be on October 24th at the Visitor Center 10 AM, also be sure to keep visiting our Facebook page for information and our ever changing virtual and in person program offerings.

I hope you all continue to spend some of your time with us, be it on one of our trails, driving through on our park roads as the leaves change, or grabbing a picnic table and enjoy some fresh air.

Hope to see you out there,

-Chris Ferree,

Park Manager





**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/>



Camper Judging Contest

**October 31
8pm**

