

THE BABLER BABBLE

Official Newsletter of Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park

Wildflower Folklore

BY DUSTIN HILLIS

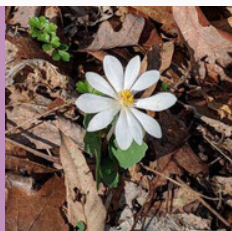
Have you ever wondered how wildflowers got their names? Many wildflowers earned their name through special features, but some got their names through myths that surrounded them. For example, bluebells are named aptly for their blue appearance and their bell-like shape. The origins of bluebells were also associated with fairies, who would use the bluebells to trap children. Another lore about bluebells is that one who wore a wreath of bluebells around their neck would be compelled to tell the truth.

Dogwoods earned their name from early colonials whom didn't like the fruits, which we know are poisonous for people. They mention that the fruits were not fit for a dog, hence the name dogwood. A prevalent Appalachian folktale about dogwood comes from the Christian tradition, where Jesus was said to be nailed to a cross of dogwood, and dogwood decided to never again grow tall enough to be made into a cross. See if you can come across some other name origins or legends for the wildflowers you see in the park.



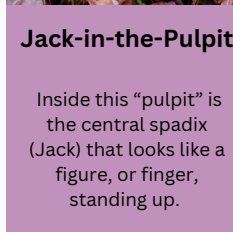
Dutchman's Breeches

The white flower heads look like colonial-style pantaloons hanging on a clothesline.



Bloodroot

Bloodroot describes the rootlike rhizome of this plant, which contains a bright red sap.



Jack-in-the-Pulpit

Inside this "pulpit" is the central spadix (Jack) that looks like a figure, or finger, standing up.



Wake Robin

The common name "wake robin" comes from the fact that trilliums bloom so early, even before robins return to their nests.



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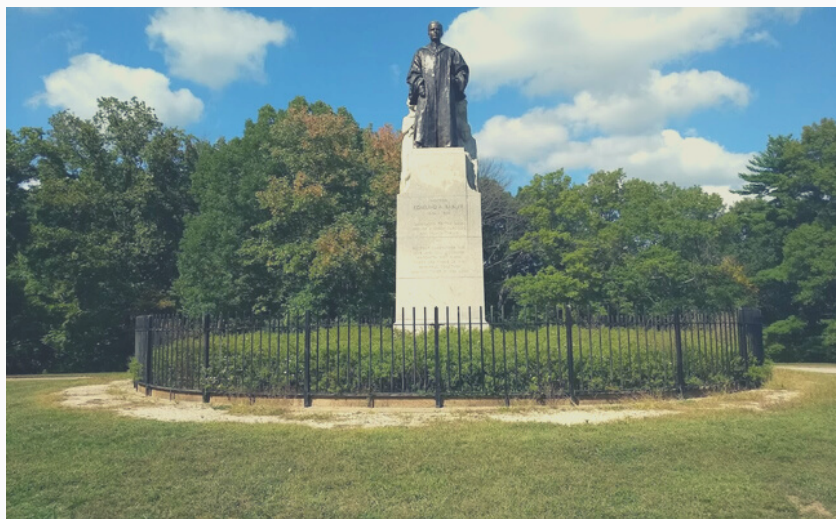
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Generations of Missourians have passed through Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park's massive stone gateway for cookouts and family get-togethers or to spend time with friends. The park's camping facilities, Civilian Conservation Corps architecture, 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-OCTOBER 7A.M.- 9P.M.
NOVEMBER-MARCH 7A.M.- 6P.M.

Visitor Center Hours

MARCH 17-31 9A.M.- 4:30P.M. FRI-SUN
APRIL-OCTOBER 9A.M.- 4:30P.M. WED-SUN
NOVEMBER-FEBRUARY CLOSED

Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park
800 Guy Park Drive
Wildwood, MO 63005

T: 636-458-3813
F: 636-458-9105
E: BablerStatePark@dnr.mo.gov

Park Staff

PARK MANAGER: CHRIS FERREE

ASST. MANAGER: RICH LOVE

ASST. MANAGER: ANDREA GRANT

NATURALIST: DUSTIN HILLIS

SR. MAINTENANCE: ERIK VEENSTRA

MAINTENANCE: JONAH COAKLEY

MAINTENANCE: MICAH FANSLER

RANGER: JONATHON THOMPSON





Special Events Schedule

ALL PROGRAMS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

PLEASE CONTACT THE VISITOR CENTER AT 636-458-3813 FOR MORE INFORMATION OR CHECK OUT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE.

Spring Wildflower Hikes

Saturdays from 10 a.m. to Noon

April 8

April 15

April 22

April 29

May 6

May 13

Join us for a Spring Wildflower Hike! We will be hiking the Hawthorn Trail. The Hawthorn Trail is approximately 1.25 miles long. We will explore the trail in search of the first flowers of spring 2023. Meet at the Alta Shelter Parking Lot.



Stream Team Volunteering

Sundays from 10 a.m. to Noon

March 26

April 9

May 14

Are you interested in volunteering with the park for a one-time event (or more) that allows you to help the park with a stream team activity? If you answered yes, then sign up for this event to be selected to help out. Seats are limited to 20. If you are not able to attend this program, that's okay—we will have more opportunities like this in the future. All participants will need to plan to get wet. Meet at the Visitor Center.



Sign up for these events via the link below:

icampmo1.usedirect.com/MSPWeb/Activities/Search.aspx

Spring Tram Tours

Sundays from 10 a.m. to Noon

April 23

April 30

Join us in celebrating Spring by touring Babler State Park through a Tram Ride. Each tour will host approximately 25 people. An interpretive guide with a PA system will provide a presentation on the history of Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park and give commentary on the local natural and cultural history. Meet at the Visitor Center.



All participants will need to sign up via

icampmo1.usedirect.com/MSPWeb/Activities/Search.aspx



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.





What's the Story ...

BY CARLEY WRIGHT

If you have entered Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park, you have been on Guy Park Drive. You've probably never even given it a thought, but who was Guy Park, and why is one of the roads in the park named after him?

Guy Brasfield Park was born in Platte City, Missouri on June 10, 1872. He was a student at Gaylord Institute (of which his mother was president) and went to the University of Missouri for law school. His graduating class included Miss Corey May Caroll of Independence, Missouri who was the first woman to graduate with a law degree from there. After leaving school, Park headed to Denver to work in a law practice, but by 1899 had returned to Platte City, where he would spend the rest of his life, excluding his years in Jefferson City.

In the early 1900s, Guy Park was listed in newspaper articles as both the prosecutor and defense attorney for various cases, and was elected in November 1906 as the prosecuting attorney for Platte County, an office he would hold for two terms. March of 1911 had Park proposing Francis M. Wilson, a Missouri state senator and family friend, for the Democratic nomination for governor. This was somewhat prophetic, as Wilson went on to win the party's nomination in both 1928 and 1932.

In December of 1921, Park was chosen as a delegate to the Missouri constitutional convention, a position he would have until he resigned after his election to circuit judge of the 5th Judicial District in November 1922. By all accounts, Park was a well-respected lawyer and judge. A couple of charming stories related in newspapers tell of him once fining himself \$7 for being seven minutes late to court - he couldn't tear himself away from his boarding house pancakes-and the time he took a group of boys fishing upon returning to their town. He had spoken of the dangers of smoking cigarettes to this group, and promised them that he would go fishing with them if they had refrained from smoking until his return.

Continued on Page 5.

Photo courtesy of the Missouri Valley
Special Collections.



Photo courtesy of the Missouri
State Archives



Thank you for your support by continuously 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.



We do off-site programs!

Contact Dustin Hillis, Senior Park Specialist, at Babler State Park to schedule your program(s). These can be for schools, assisted living facilities, etc.

E: dustin.hillis@dnr.mo.gov
T: 636-324-7064



What's the Story ... [Continued]

In October 1932, during Park's second term on the district court bench, Wilson died suddenly four weeks before the election for which he had secured the Democratic nomination for governor. There was a rush to nominate a successor, and after Lloyd Stark and Russell Dearmont dropped out of the running (possibly on the suggestion of Tom Pendergast, the notorious Kansas City political boss), the honorable Guy B. Park secured the nomination. There were a few weeks of rushed campaigning, and on November 8, 1932, Park was elected Missouri's 38th governor.

Per the Missouri State Archives: "During his administration, state government was restructured, the Missouri Conservation Commission was created, the State Board of Agriculture was abolished and a new Department of Agriculture was created. In 1933 during the regular session, the General Assembly ratified the 21st Amendment (abolishing prohibition) to the U.S. Constitution. On October 17, 1933, the governor called the General Assembly into special session to consider the Roosevelt New Deal programs. By 1936, the Works Projects Administration, the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Rural Resettlement Administration and the National Youth Administration operated in Missouri."

Thus, during Park's tenure as governor, the state accepted the donation of the land for Babler State Park from Henry and Jacob Babler, and the CCC and WPA were brought in to mold the landscape into what we enjoy today.

Twelve governors from across the U.S. wait at a train station to be picked up and taken to a Los Angeles convention. Park is located fourth from the right. Picture is courtesy of UCLA Charles E. Young Research Library Department of Special Collections.



Volunteers in Parks

VIPs provide invaluable assistance to Missouri State Parks on a wide variety of tasks and projects around the state. Volunteers assist people in visitor centers and contact stations. They help catalog historic items and documents, and they serve as natural history interpreters and tour guides. Some VIPs perform maintenance or light construction tasks, or help with building or renovating trails. There is almost no limit to the types of work that volunteers can perform. The main requirement is a willingness to serve.

Contact the park for more information at
636-324-7064.

Or sign up at the following:
mostateparks.com/page/57872/volunteer-parks-program





Explorer Corner

Do you know the life cycle of a frog or toad? Try your hand at finding all of the hidden life cycle words.



Frog Life Cycle

C I Q B K E Q B O P R T N H J K T W O L E G S L
T I T W A K G Y D A T H F F D V Z S W I Y Z R M
K X H G Z E X A E D P H M L S K S O I U U G W H
D X O P B F E Z T U C L Q A R O S O I I S V M H
N W Y Z R L D C F S J Q R N V U F L H H A O F F
N X F X E O S W L R S P H D D P H L L M S R E Y
D L R X D U M B K C L I U Q H P R P W I O M H Y
V A O H O T Z A T V S W T A D P O L E G G T Y E
F R G P E J O J T B O N I Z N D X O L S Y H G H
L V D E A K M R P E S E Q C F R D E L N N J F U
N A K U D V E D Y J M W G J W C T B S T F H E L
L L F C K E G P Z X B V P G A N L G H G Q E H H
A A B D Y N O P L I A T A P H T N R C S V A I T
M H C V Z S U L X F K A W Z V U K O V G N U K L
H K U H P S V J V S R T Q Q L H S R R M V X V A
Z M J T B X S G U P T B R R E M V C H Q P N B P
D F C Q K O G H K W F W J S F E T S Q H R O I I
X S D M M Z A Y M Q S O T Q S F D N I O F X C R
W A I P A X Y W X U K C U O O I P F T S I M Y S
M W Z R C E U E D E E S N R T L C J E Z E D C R
S X I E O V B X V S H E Y U L Y P I M Z D Z L H
F L X T M W R J N C N F W K X E C E H T Q T E M
G T E A R L O I W B L O K W Y N G P W J A S U N
B C P W K W J J P K W K T I F H L S Y H Y K K H

CYCLE	EGG	FOUR LEGS	FROG
FROGLET	GILLS	INSECTS	LAND
LARVAL	LIFE	LUNGS	METAMORPHIC
STAGE	SWIM	TADPOLE	TAIL
TWO LEGS	WATER		

Did you know?

Frogs drink water through their skin.

Did you know?

Female frogs cannot produce calls.

Did you know?

A group of frogs is called an army.

The Naturalist's Journal

FROGWATCH: SPRING PEEPER PROJECT

You do not have to be a frog or toad expert to be help with frog and toad conservation. All you need is an interest in these amphibians and a willingness to participate at the level of commitment that works for you.

The Saint Louis Zoo WildCare Institute Spring Peeper Program is working to identify remaining populations of urban frogs and toads in the watersheds located within the Interstate 270 beltway. Causes for the decline of spring peepers, boreal chorus frogs and cricket frogs in these areas are currently being studied with the hope of reestablishing viable and sustainable breeding populations in the future. Data from FrogWatch St. Louis volunteers may contribute to this conservation program.

To learn more about the Spring Peeper Project and the Saint Louis Zoo FrogWatch chapter, use the link provided.

stlzoo.org/education/school-programs/frogwatch-usa





Alien Invaders

BY DUSTIN HILLIS

As spring progresses, park staff will be racing against one individual plant; invasive garlic mustard. Invasive plants are one of the leading causes of declines in plant biodiversity, and sometimes in animal biodiversity as well. The park has a variety of invasive plants that are managed by park staff. Examples are bush honeysuckle, garlic mustard, and Japanese stiltgrass. Even though bush honeysuckle looks to be the most aggressive invasive plant the park has, it has nothing on garlic mustard.

Garlic mustard is a super hardy plant and is also not palatable to most animals. Typically, prescribed fires can help control invasive species by knocking them back; however, garlic mustard loves fire because it creates disturbed areas where the thousands of seeds it produces can take root and outcompete the native flora (as seen in the header photo). You're probably thinking, "Just pull it out and throw it down to dry out and die." Well that may work in the short term, but the plant will eventually reroot itself. This leaves park staff only two ways to remove and manage it: chemical application and hand removal.

Hand removal is the best option as long as the entire plant is placed into a trash bag and thrown into the dumpster (with bag closed of course- these invasives will even produce seeds after being pulled during flower). Now, there is a good side to removal of garlic mustard; You can eat it! The leaves are great for making a pesto.

Chemical application is a last-case scenario for areas where hand pulling is not feasible. These are cases where the dominant plant is your invasive and not sensitive flora such as ginger, white trillium, etc. During this scenario, the park uses a 2-3% glyphosate solution. This is in combination with pinching the new flowering heads off of the adult plants. Beheading the plant allows the chemical to do its job in killing the plant and also slows the flowering and seed production.

If you're looking for a way to give back to your community or just to volunteer your time, give the park a call or email the naturalist to set up a time to help remove this nasty invasive.



Scout Projects

Park staff have compiled a list of potential scout projects for the park. These projects include a variety of skill and time requirements, from a few hours to full-day, ongoing, group and individual projects. Scout projects are available now.

Contact the Visitor Center for more information!

636-458-3813



2022 Managed Hunt Results

The November 2022 deer hunt allowed the park to remove 36 deer, while 19 were removed during the December hunt. During the hunts, park naturalists sampled a total of 55 deer were harvested from the park through these managed hunts. Of the 55 deer harvested through these hunts, 38 samples were collected, and all came back negative for CWD. This means that the park's deer herd is healthy.



Manager's Notes

BY CHRIS FERREE

Time keeps moving, and at times it seems to speed up. Again we find ourselves at the cusp of spring here at the park. It seems like yesterday we were celebrating the end of 2022. I am, however, very excited for warmer temperatures, green reappearing on the park landscape, and birds singing in our woods.

I mentioned last time a few of the larger projects that are happening here, such as the lodge renovation, campground improvements, tying into municipal water, and paved trail rehabilitation. Those are still all moving along, but I want to focus in on another piece of the park's infrastructure: the playground at the Guy Park Trailhead.

In late summer of 2021, we had a severe thunderstorm topple a large maple tree directly onto the playground. The unit was not worth salvaging, so it was removed. Commercial playgrounds are not cheap to replace—a comparable unit would have been around \$150,000. It is something the park's normal operation budget cannot fund.

We also want to take the opportunity to not just replace the playground but to upgrade it. Due to the increased dollar amount required for this project, it needs to go into a budget request.

Just to give some explanation of our budget request process (not the most thrilling of topics but important to understand why some larger projects take time to accomplish); the state's fiscal year starts in July of each year, and before then, we submit a myriad of projects from our park for consideration. All of our wants for the park are part of the same process that occurs at 92 other parks and historic sites. Missouri State Parks budget requests are ultimately reviewed and approved by the state legislature against all other priorities and needs submitted.

As this was not a planned replacement, we have only had one attempt at securing funding. It will be on budget requests coming due this late winter and also placed on our capital improvement request list. We hope to have some direction by mid-summer 2023. That playground unit is part of the larger redevelopment of the stretch of park from the area around the enclosed shelter going north past the old pool and tennis courts and to the Walnut Grove Shelter area.

If you have any questions about our playground or anything else going on at the park, don't hesitate to contact us. We are more than happy to share this information with you.

I hope as the weather breaks you all find yourselves out in the park more and enjoying what can be found here at Babler.

River Hills Gift Shop

Start your spring adventures inside our store. We have beverages, collapsible dog bowls, snacks, hiking sticks, apparel, plush toys, Frisbees, kids wristbands, souvenirs, insect spray and so much more!

