

The Babler Babble

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1

SPRING 2019

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Wildflower Race	1
Spring Gardening Recycling for Bees	2
Ask the Interpreter Explorer Corner	3
Programs & Events	4
Park Happenings	5
The People's Doctor	6
Put a Spring in your Step The Eagle's Nest	7
Park Info & Hours Highlighted Events	8



The Great Wildflower Race

Spring is here, and so are the first wildflowers! Many of the early wildflowers found in the forest are called spring “ephemerals,” which means “transitory, short-lived, or quickly fading.” This is because they appear suddenly, bloom for a relatively short period of time, and then fade away just as quickly. Why are they in such a hurry? They are racing against the trees.



Bird's Foot Violet (*Viola pedata*) can be found growing on rocky hillsides and glades.

It all comes down to sunlight. Any plant shorter than an oak tree has a very limited window of time in which to grow, flower and produce seeds. After that, the oak, hickory, or sugar maple trees will have grown leaves, which block out much of the sunlight. Everything from small trees to tiny plants are in a race to use the warmth and light during the short time it is

available. This means that trying to find spring wildflowers is a limited-time opportunity as well!

So, what should you look for, and when? There is a lot of variation within this timeframe, with some plants blooming earlier and some starting later. The earliest and most noticeable will be Eastern Redbud and Serviceberry trees, which can be seen from the road. Just as early, but less obvious, are Pawpaw trees and Spicebush. A little while later, the big white flowers of the Flowering Dogwood trees will be visible from a long way off.

On the forest floor, the very earliest flowers are Spring Beauty and the Harbinger-of-Spring. Soon afterwards, Bloodroot, Toothwort, Rue Anemone, Trout Lily, Rose Verbena, Hoary Puccoon, and May Apples appear. Later flowers will include Trillium or Wake Robins, Wild



Spring Beauty (*Claytonia virginica*) can be found growing on rock ledges and open forests.



Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*) can be found growing on rock ledges and shaded bluffs.

Geranium, Wild Bergamot, Wild Sweet William, Bird's Foot Violet, Bellwort, Jack-in-the-Pulpit, Columbine, Spiderworts, and Virginia Bluebells. This is just a general timeframe; there is no set schedule, and you may be surprised at what you find growing together!

Where to find certain flowers will vary as well. Some do better on rocky hillsides, while some prefer the low areas in between ridges, closer to water. All of the trails in the park will provide you with a wide range of wildflowers throughout the spring. The wildflower list is ever growing here at Babler, so let us know what you see out there!

-Brenda Appleby,
Seasonal Interpreter

A more complete list of wildflowers found at Babler is available in the Visitor Center and can be downloaded at the park's website, at

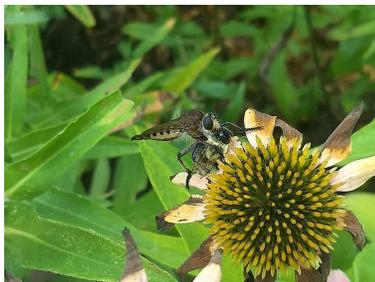
<https://mostateparks.com/sites/mostateparks/files/bablerwflist%5BI%5D.pdf>



Spring Gardening for Pollinators

Spring is a time when most people love to get outside and reconnect with the world around them through gardening. Spring gardening can be very therapeutic and benefit your overall health. Not only does gardening benefit your wellbeing, it can also benefit native wildlife. By planting native species into your garden, you will be establishing natural micro-habitats that will create small homes, food sources and nesting grounds. Planting natives will also provide you with a break, because they need less maintenance and less water.

Native flowers such as Sand Phlox (*Phlox bifida*), Spring Beauty (*Claytonia virginica*), and Virginia Bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*) are



Native gardens not only provide food for pollinators but also for other animals too, such as this Robber Fly eating a bee.

some examples of early to mid-spring wildflowers that provide ample amounts of nectar for a variety of pollinators. All of these

wildflowers provide nectar sources for native bees and butterflies; however, Virginia Bluebells feed an extra pollinator, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. Another mid to late spring wildflower is Bird's Foot Violet (*Viola pedata*). This native violet will attract bees and butterflies to your garden, and it is also the host plant of various Fritillary butterflies such as the Regal



In spring, it is best to have early blooming flowers because this gives many pollinators a quick nectar source to recover and start their reproductive processes, for example many of our native bees.

Fritillary, giving you an added bonus to your garden. This violet also has projectile seed pods which ants collect and carry back to feed their growing colonies.

By planting natives, you also will provide pollinators with a place to raise their young. Some bees and wasps will overwinter as pupa in the



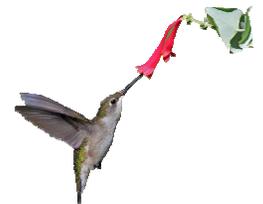
Bumble bees love to visit flowers such as this Goldenrod. Plant goldenrods early to enjoy them in summer.

stalks of both live and dead plants. Some insects, such as Monarch butterflies, lay a predetermined number of eggs on a single milkweed plant to ensure that they will have enough food for their offspring, which only eat milkweeds.

Try your hand at planting native and see where it can take you this spring.

-Dustin Hillis,

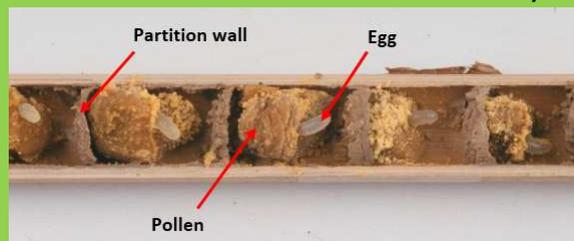
Interpretive Resource Specialist III



Recycling for Bees

If you love to watch bees in your backyard but cannot afford fancy bee hotels, try this simple idea that recycle everyday objects.

- Try reusing empty tin cans or plastic bottles. Just punch two holes in one side to allow a string to pass through for hanging in a tree or from a hook. Then fill the can with either native bamboo or recycled straws of different sizes. This allows solitary bees to build their nest inside the straw or bamboo.



Inside view of straws or bamboo (right) with each individual egg cell.

Ask the Interpreter!

Q: What types of salamanders can be found at Babler State Park?

A: There are seven species of salamanders that have been found within the park: Ringed, Spotted, Long-tailed, Cave, Western Slimy, Southern Red-backed Salamanders and the Central Newt. However, our species list for the park is always growing.

Spotted Salamanders (*Ambystoma maculatum*) and Southern Red-backed Salamanders (*Plethodon serratus*) are Babler's most common salamanders found in the park. They are generally found in wet, forested areas under rocks, logs and small burrows. All seven salamanders share similar habitats and feeding habits, such as eating insects, worms, and small land snails.

Each of the seven salamanders have certain times of the year when they will lay eggs. Spring breeders are the Spotted Salamander and the Central Newt. Summer breeders are the Cave and Western Slimy Salamander. Autumn breeders are the Ringed and Southern Red-backed Salamander, and the Long-tailed Salamander lays eggs between November and March.

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



Ringed Salamander



Spotted Salamander



Western Slimy Salamander



Southern Red-backed Salamander



Cave Salamander



Long-tailed Salamander



Central Newt

We do school programs!

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

Bumble Bees

(Bombus spp.)

Bumble bees are important pollinators and are significant for humans agriculturally and environmentally. Some plants can only be pollinated by bumble bees. Bumble bees are capable of stinging if disturbed or if their nest is endangered. However, you do not need to fear them, as they are not aggressive. Many bumble bees species are declining, if you find a bumble bee nest on your property, leave them alone and consider yourself lucky.



Explorer Corner

We need your help! Mrs. Bumble Bee needs to get to the flowers in order to pollinate them and drink their nectar.

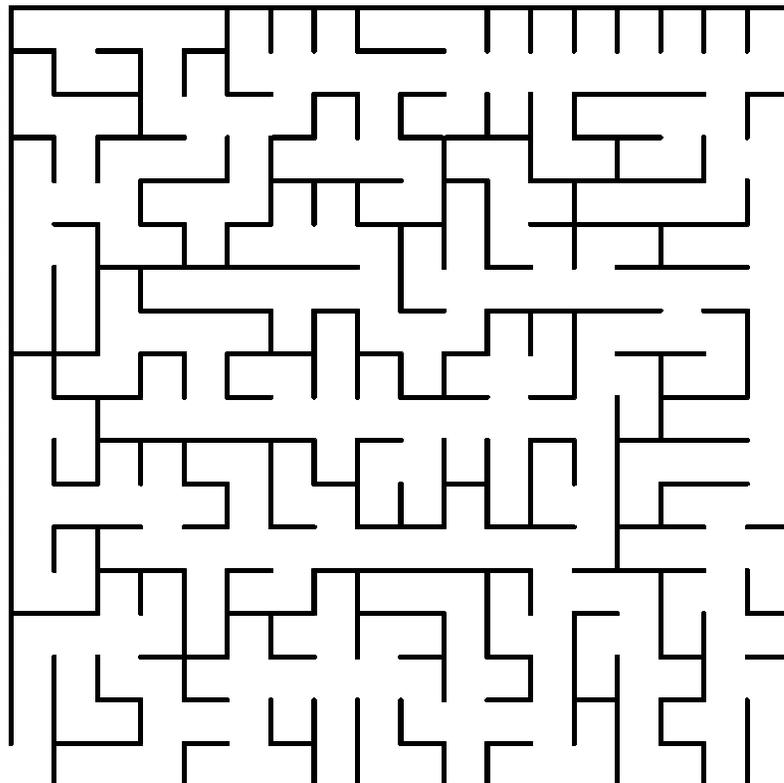
Did You Know?

At least six species of bumble bees can be found in Missouri.



Did You Know?

In our area, the whole bee colony dies during the winter. Only young queens survive the winter by hibernating in the ground. The next spring, these fertilized queens begin a new colony.



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!

Spring Wildflower Hike

Saturdays from 9—11 a.m.

March 9

March 23

April 6

April 20

May 4

Join us for a Spring Wildflower hike! We will be hiking the Dogwood Trail. The Dogwood Trail is approximately two-miles long. We will explore the trail in search of the first flowers of spring 2019. Meet at the Guy Park Trailhead.



Babler Rocks

Sunday, April 7th

10 am - Noon

Join us in celebrating Geologist's Day by exploring the geologic history of Babler. We will have a fossil hunt, explore Babler Spring, an interactive stream table, and so much more. Meet at the Guy Park Trailhead. We will be stationed out of the Henry Babler Enclosed Shelter.

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.



Limestone with fossilized shells and crinoids.

Follow us on Facebook to check for program updates and the Memorial Weekend holiday programs.

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. With 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 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 will increase 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.

2018 Deer Hunt Results

The results from the 2018 deer hunt allowed the park to remove 42 deer from the rapidly growing herd. During the hunt, park naturalists sampled 25 yearling and adult harvested deer for Chronic Wasting Disease. The 25 samples came back negative for Chronic Wasting Disease infection, meaning that our deer herd inside the park is healthy.

Volunteers Wanted:

Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park is looking for people to help in the Visitor Center. Volunteers will help with nature hikes, educational camps, school groups and so much more.

Contact the park for more information at 636-458-3813.

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!



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.

The People's Doctor

Dr. Edmund Adam Babler was a prominent intestinal and reconstructive surgeon. Edmund Babler was particularly well-known for helping the unfortunate and poverty stricken. It is said that he did seventy-five percent of his work for free for the needy.

Babler came from a large family. He was one of six children. He had two older sisters, Mary and Anna, and an older brother, Jacob. He also had a younger brother, Henry and a younger sister,

Emma. Both his parents were from Glaus, Switzerland and moved to New Glaus, Wisconsin. After they married, they moved to Appleton, Mo., where his father owned a farm supply store.



Dr. Edmund A. Babler



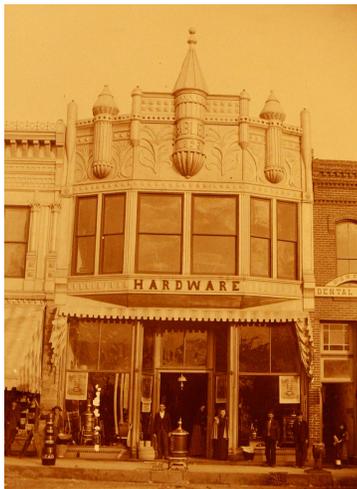
Edmund A. Babler with two nurses standing outside of Deaconess Hospital.

Babler graduated high school in Appleton, then went on to the Missouri Medical College (now Washington University) to pursue his medical degree. After his graduation in 1902, he began working for the Deaconess Hospital in St. Louis.

Babler later went on to open his own practice, which became the largest private practice in St. Louis.

When Babler died unexpectedly at the young age of 55, his siblings wanted to make sure all of Edmund's noble work was not forgotten. With the help of the Civilian Conservation Corp and the National Park Service, Jacob and Henry Babler donated the land and funds to create Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State park. The park officially opened on Oct. 10, 1938. The park now spans 2,439 acres, with six hiking trails, three picnic shelters and twenty two historical structures. Come and see the work of this amazing legacy!

-Shelly Payne,
Seasonal Interpreter



Babler family hardware store in Appleton, Mo.



The dedication of the Edmund A. Babler memorial statue Oct. 10, 1938.

Put a Spring in your Step

Spring is full of exciting new life every year! There are baby birds feeling the warmth of the sun for the first time, frogs and toads starting to call, and small fawns grazing by their mother's side. There is no better way to experience these sights than hitting the trails and experiencing it all for yourself. So grab some water, a sturdy pair of sneakers or boots, and bring your favorite hiking buddy to Babler State Park (dogs are welcome too, just keep them on a leash).



Walking along the trails here at Babler, you never know who you might come across, such as this Barred Owl.

There are six different trails to choose from throughout the park. Most of them are 1-2 mile hiking trails, but we also



Waling along the Woodbine Trail you can come across many spring wildflowers such as this Wild Sweet William.

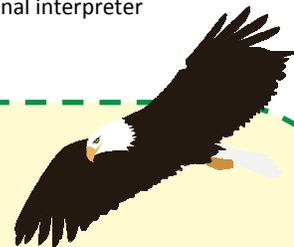
have a longer trail that is wide and clear for you to ride horses on. If you'd like a quick stroll through the woods, you might be interested in the Hawthorn Trail. It's full length runs 1.25 miles with some slightly variable terrain. This trail will take you through our Dolomite Glade in the southwestern portion of

the trail, and offers a lovely view of the surrounding hills and Wild Horse Creek at the halfway point. The Alta shelter is across the street from the trailhead, which makes a great place for a family picnic at the end of your hike!

For those of you looking to delve deeper into nature, the Dogwood Trail may be the best way to spend an afternoon. The loop covers about 2 miles, and offers some steeper walking with winding switchbacks. On your walk you will notice remnants of old stone structures, presumably from the era in which the Civilian Conservation Corps helped build the foundation for this beautiful park. There are a few points where the Dogwood Trail intersects with the Horse Trail, so be mindful to keep following the green blazes and arrows.

Be sure to pick up a trail map and souvenir at the Visitor Center. Happy Trails!

-Madison Poe,
Seasonal interpreter



The Eagle's Nest: Manager's Comments

As winter lay its blankets of snow and bitter cold over the park, we remained open for all to enjoy. Many activities were available for park visitors during the cold months including hiking, wildlife viewing and participating in special events such as our native wreath program, first day hike, meetings of the St. Louis Orienteering Club, and our managed deer hunt. You are always invited to visit and experience the beauty of Babler during the winter season.

The management staff is pleased to announce we have completed a number of projects earlier than expected. Here is a partial list: installation of two new uni-strut metal racks for campground electric panels, replacement of a new roof on one of the park's many buildings, replacement of grills in the campground, and a hot water heater in the campground shower house. We also installed a new HVAC system in the Administration Building at the Outdoor Education Center. In addition, the naturalist staff continues to work aggressively on exotic/invasive plant control and controlled burns to ensure future enjoyment of the natural beauty that Babler has to offer.

Spring is just around the corner and we are beginning to prepare the park for another busy season. We look forward to welcoming campers, the sixth grade science camp at the Outdoor Education Center, the spring programs, and the beautiful Dogwoods and Redbuds waking from their winter slumber. There is something to do at the park in all seasons, so come out and enjoy. It's your park. If you happen to be in the Visitor Center viewing the exhibits, stop by the front desk and say hello. We are always anxious to hear your input on how we can make your visit better!

-Jeff Robinson,
Park Superintendent





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

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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/>



Babler Rocks

April 7

10 a.m. - noon

