

Prairie State Park's

Tallgrass Tribune

Summer 2014

Missouri State Parks

Prairie State Park's Mission Statement

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

Birds and Prairies in Peril

The prairie habitat offers birders opportunities to see birds that are not easily found elsewhere. The Henslow's sparrow, dickcissel, upland sandpiper, greater prairie chicken and the short-eared owl are a few of the birds that call Prairie State Park home at one time of the year or another. Of these five birds, only the greater prairie chicken is found here year-round. All of these birds have a declining population.

Why the decline? Habitat loss is a key component in every case. The Missouri landscape was once at least 33 percent prairie. Now less than 1 percent remains. So these birds are being forced to try and survive in smaller and smaller pieces of prairie. Some of these birds need large expanses of prairie to survive and it just isn't around any more.

Think of it in another way. Let's say you come home from vacation and the street you live on has had a catastrophe and your house is the only one standing. You are fortunate, but is there room for all your neighbors to live with you? It would be a bit crowded. Would there be enough food, space, water and shelter? There will certainly not be enough shelter, and enough food is going to be hard to find. Some are going to have to live elsewhere, but how do they get there? Some just won't survive. This is the predicament prairie plants and animals are in and it is hard to survive.

What can you do? Prairie State Park would not be what it is today without the help of organizations like The Nature Conservancy, www.nature.org/ and the Missouri Prairie Foundation www.moprairie.org. By supporting them, you will help prairies that are in peril, which in turn will benefit the wildlife. Missouri state parks also protect prairies, and you can support them by supporting the Missouri Parks Association. <http://parks.missouri.org/>

Wildlife Scene Investigation Academy---2014 Explorer Day Camp

Detective Catori Coyote is looking for new cadets who are ready and willing to learn! She will teach you about the tracks and scat that mammals leave behind. You will use this knowledge to help her solve some mysteries that have been happening in Prairie State Park. Police cadets and investigator cadets are encouraged to attend!

Highlights:

Learning tracks and scat, earning your academy "explorer" badge and solving mysteries

To register, please call: Detective Catori Coyote at 417-843-6711
Cadets, please bring a sack lunch and a drink! Snacks will be provided.



~Mystery item ~

Shooting Star

Once again **Jerry Decker** was the first person to respond to our mystery item and correctly identify it as shooting star. This flower gets its name from the likeness to shooting stars falling from the night sky. The flower petals are swept up and appear to defy gravity in the process.

They can be found in glades, and prairies as well as open woodlands. They come in shades of pink, purple and white. The predominant color at the park is white.



What prairie bird is this?



Send your answer to prairie.state.park@dnr.mo.gov and the person with the first correct answer will be listed in the next newsletter.

Calendar of Events

~All activities will meet at the nature center~

Saturday, June 7, 10 a.m.

Bison Hike

Take a hike and learn how well bison are adapted to this seemingly unforgiving landscape. Be prepared for a two-mile hike by bringing snacks, water and binoculars.

Saturday, June 14, 10 a.m.

Wildflower Hike

Enjoy the prairie in all of its beauty! Join a park naturalist on a hike and enjoy the beauty of the wildflowers during prime viewing time! Learn why these plants are so important to the ecosystem, Native American uses and their natural history.

Saturday, June 28, 10 a.m. -Noon

Basic Camping 101

Have you always been interested in the outdoors? Have you always wanted to know the basics of camping? Learn tent set-up, basic fire building, camping safety, plants and animals to be aware of, and necessary equipment. Bison burgers will be served.

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED! Limited to 25 people.

Saturday, July 5, 10 a.m.

Bison Hike

Take a walk on the prairie and maybe see some bison calves. Be prepared for a two-mile hike by bringing snacks, water and binoculars.

Saturday, July 12, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Explorer Day Camp

The Wildlife Scene Investigation Academy is looking for cadets to help solve some mysteries at Prairie State Park! Join Detective Catori Coyote in learning about scats and tracks and help her solve the mysteries! Call 417-843-6711 to register.

Saturday, July 19, 10 a.m.

Wildflower Hike

July is a good month to witness the beautiful display of wildflowers!

Bring a camera, some binoculars and water and be prepared to learn about the wonders of the prairie.

Wednesday, July 23, 6 p.m.

Public Meeting

The public is invited to hear what is happening at the park, voice their opinions and meet the park staff.

Saturday, Aug. 2 & Sept. 6, 10 a.m.

Bison Hike

These two months are prime time for watching the bulls fight during the rut! Join a park naturalist, bring some water and witness these amazing animals in action.

Saturday, Sept. 27, 10 a.m.- 4 p.m.

Prairie Jubilee

This biannual event celebrates the prairie in all of its wonders! Walk our living history loop, take a hay ride to the bison herd and learn all about why the prairie is an amazing place.

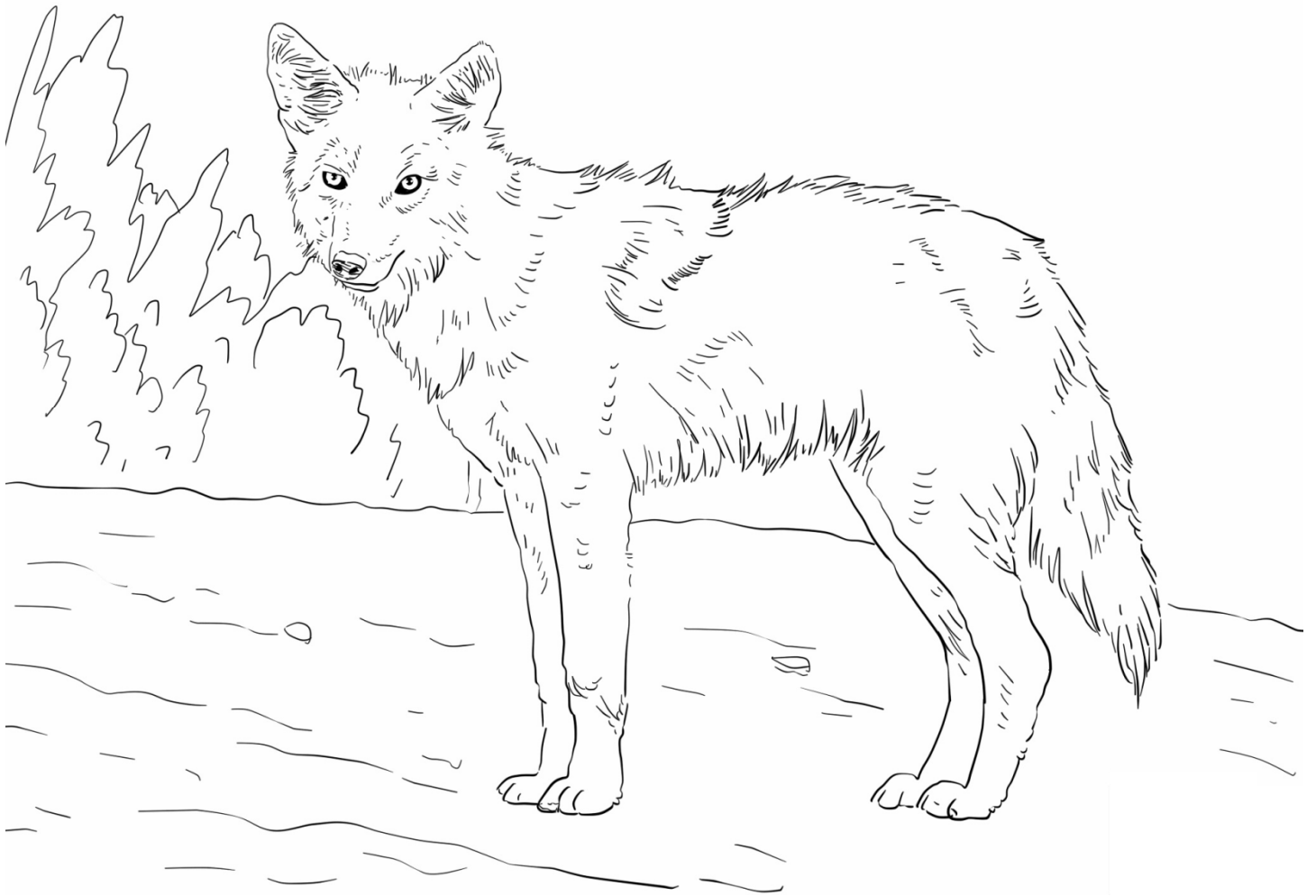
Check out our Facebook page for photos, interactive posts, information on upcoming programs and events.

Give us a "like".

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

Hey Kids!

Meet Catori Coyote, lead detective at the Wildlife Scene Investigation Academy. She needs your help solving mysteries at Prairie State Park! But first, add some color to her life. Be sure to register for Explorer Day Camp 2014!



Prairie Jubilee

Come out and help us celebrate the Prairie Jubilee, Prairie State Park's biannual event. This year, our jubilee will be held on Saturday, Sept. 17 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Come walk our living history loop, see if you can hunt like a native Osage tribesman, take a hay ride out to the bison herd and enjoy some pulled bison meat for lunch. WildHeart will be performing on the main stage. If you have any questions, call our staff at: 417-843-6711. We look forward to seeing you here!

