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Species Spotlight: *Trillium flexipes*

One of our jobs here at Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park, is to catalog and monitor plant, animal and fungi species that are found in the park. *Trillium flexipes*, or “white wake robin”, is one of these species. A beautiful white-blooming plant that flowers from about mid-April through May, it is



Trillium flexipes. Courtesy of BBC Gardeners World

part of the lily family and shares a genus with one of most abundant wildflowers, *Trillium sessile*, also known as “toadshade”. *T. flexipes* spreads in an area by way of rhizomes. This means that what you see in a given area might be only one individual, but it is hard to tell for sure. These wildflowers also produce seeds that are dispersed by ants and can take up to 10 years to flower!

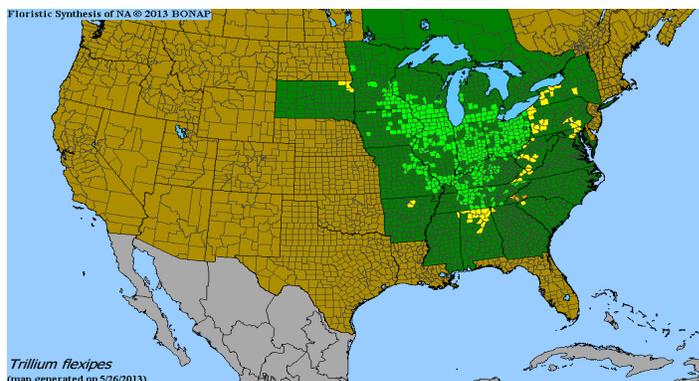
T. flexipes is a species of interest to us here at Babler, and our naturalist team surveyed areas of



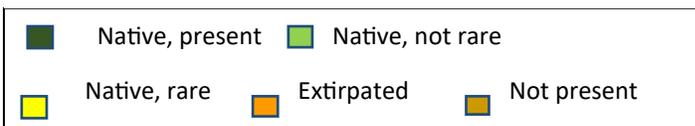
Trillium sessile. Courtesy of Keystone Wildflowers

known populations. While some proved to be stable, others were lost. The reason for this is not known at this time.

However, while exploring more of the park with our cultural volunteer, and through further surveys, we have identified several new populations within park boundaries. While the species is not considered rare in the St. Louis area, it is in much of its native range, and has been listed as endangered in Canada. This distribution map shows the native range of *Trillium flexipes*, with the lighter green showing stable



Map courtesy of Floristic Synthesis of North America (BONAP)



Continued on Pg. 2.



Species Spotlight Continued...

populations.

While these plants are very popular in shade gardens, they are hard to grow from seeds, which has led to unethical collecting. The Missouri Department of Conservation and Missouri State Parks would like to remind visitors that it is illegal to collect plants from public areas without a permit. It is also important to know where your garden plants are coming from. By purchasing from a reputable nursery, you are ensuring sure that this native species stays on the landscape.

-Kathryn Krydyski,
Seasonal Interpreter



Nodding White Trillium (*T. flexipes*) blooming along a creek bank.

Go With the Flow Volunteering

Dr. Edmund A. Babler State Park has almost 2,500 acres, with more than 7 miles of trails, and thousands of species of plants and animals. To most, this park provides the opportunity to hike, bike, camp, and enjoy a mostly terrestrial ecosystem. What you may not know about this park though is that it is home to an aquatic ecosystem too. Babler has two creeks that flow through its boundaries: Wild Horse

Creek and Bonhomme Creek. Wild Horse Creek can be found on the western border of the park and is fed by two tributaries that feed into it found in the middle and north end of the park. Meanwhile, Bonhomme Creek is located at the southeast end of the park. These creeks, along with a few springs found throughout the park, provide a water source for our land-roaming animals, as well as a home for our aquatic ones. Some creatures you might find in our creeks include aquatic worms, crayfish, sow bugs and many types of fish. Both creeks have excellent water quality and are a key resource here at the park. How do we know all of this about our creeks? Stream Team! Stream Team is an opportunity for people in Missouri



to help river conservation here in the state and to learn more about their local streams. A Stream Team event here at Babler consists of water quality checks on either of our creeks. We gauge what kind of habitat and life-forms are present, the stream flow and velocity, and over all wellness of the stream. Stream Team is a great way for people of all ages to get involved with their local river system and learn along the way. For more information about specific dates and details about upcoming Stream Team events at the park, head to Page 4 of the newsletter.

-Karson Miller,
Seasonal Interpreter



The park naturalist counts aquatic macroinvertebrates during a Stream Team Volunteering event.

The Naturalist's Journal: Citizen Science Projects

Have you ever wanted to learn more about birds? Well, here is an amazing way to do so while becoming a part of your community! Join the Celebrate Urban Birds project. This project teaches you how to monitor birds in urban settings and how to identify the most common birds in urban environments. The best part is you will be helping with bird counts. Find your spot and start counting!

Dustin Hillis,
Senior Park Specialist



Celebrate Urban Birds

Celebrate Urban Birds strives to co-create bilingual inclusive, equity-based community science projects that serve communities that have been historically underrepresented or excluded from birding, conservation, and citizen science. The project seeks to promote better science through the equitable exchange of knowledge, increased access, centering missing voices and experiences, and by intentionally advocating for community ownership and leadership of scientific research. Together with participating communities the project has co-developed processes to co-design, pilot, and implement research and scientific programming while centering race and equity.

CEBs starts by working side-by-side with local communities to co-create goals, research priorities and frameworks, accessible educational support materials, and communication channels that make sense to the communities involved. We center different ways of knowing and value community expertise. Taking time to address power and privilege, develop trust and transparency, and strengthen long-term collaborations is essential to our work. Celebrate Urban Birds works throughout South, Central, and North America in urban, suburban, and rural locations.

For more information about this project, visit:
<https://celebrateurbanbirds.org/cub/instructions>

We do school programs!

Contact Dustin Hillis, Senior Park Specialist at Babler State Park at 636-324-7064 to schedule your programs.

Explorer Corner

Can you solve our camping word scrambles?

1. GKINHI _____
2. NTET _____
3. CMRAEP _____
4. AFMICREP _____
5. SMROSE _____
6. MNUTOASIN _____
7. LFISHTLAGH _____
8. STEER _____
9. FIGSHNI _____
10. UBGs _____

Did you know?

Babler State Park has 75 campsites that can be reserved, while Missouri's entire state park system has a over 3,500 campsites throughout the state!

Did you know?

Babler State Park has over 16 miles of trails that guests can hike, while, Missouri's entire state park system offers almost 1,000 miles of managed trails, and the state claims more than 500 miles of National Recreation Trails designated by the U.S. Department of Interior.

Answers: 1. hiking, 2. tent, 3. camper, 4. campfire, 5. s'mores, 6. mountains, 7. flashlight, 8. trees, 9. fishing, 10. bugs



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!



June

National Trails Day Hike

Saturday, June 4 10 a.m.

Join us for a hike on Dogwood Trail to celebrate National Trails Day. Dogwood Trail is approximately 2 miles long and is of moderate grade. We will meet at the trailhead found at the Guy Park Trailhead parking lot.

Creatures of Myth and Legend

Sunday, June 19 2 p.m.

Join Babler in welcoming the World Bird Sanctuary for a Father's Day program. The WBS will be showcasing creatures of myth and legend. So, bring your own myth – the legend, your dad – to celebrate his special day. We will be meeting at the Henry Babler Enclosed Shelter at the Guy Park Trailhead; follow the signs.

Stream Team Volunteering

Sundays from 10a.m.—Noon

June 5

June 19

July 3

July 17

Aug 7

Aug 21

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, 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 should plan to get wet.

Sign up for these events via the link below:

<https://icampmo1.usedirect.com/MSPWeb/Activities/Search.aspx>



August

Night Skies Over Babler

Saturday, August 13 8:45 p.m.—11 p.m.

Come explore the night sky at the park. Members of the St. Louis Astronomical Society will set up telescopes in the monument field to offer visitors a view of the night sky. Telescopes will be pointed at a variety of objects, including Jupiter and its moons; Saturn and its rings; and the many star clusters, nebulae and galaxies.

Everyone is encouraged to bring chairs, blankets and binoculars.

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

New Reservation System

In 2022, as part of the new reservation system, there will be a \$2 decrease in reservation fees for reservations made online and a 50 cent decrease in reservation fees for reservations made through the call center. Beginning 7 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 15, making an advanced reservation for campsites and group tent areas will result in the following nonrefundable reservation fees: \$6.50 for reservations made online at icampmo.com and \$8 for reservations made through the call center at 877-422-6766. Same-day reservations for campsites are accepted and do not incur a reservation fee.



2023 Camping Rate Increase

For reservations made with an arrival date of Sunday, Jan. 1, 2023, or later, camping rates will increase \$2 per night for basic and electric campsites and \$3 per night for 50 AMP electric/water sites and 50 AMP sewer/electric/water sites.

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. This discount applies to camping only. It does not apply to lodging (i.e., cabins, yurts, etc.). Like the Senior/ADA discount, there are acceptable forms of identification for the Military Discount, including CAC card or the DD Form 1173. The qualifying party must show proper identification upon check-in.

Babler State Park is on Facebook!

This 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 full—day, ongoing, group and individual projects. Contact the Visitor Center for more information!

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

Start your spring adventures inside our store, which has—beverages, collapsible dog bowls, snacks, hiking sticks, apparel, plush toys, Frisbees, kids wristbands, souvenirs, insect spray 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.

Evidence of the Past

All of the First Families left evidence of their time spent on the land that would eventually become Dr. Edmund A Babler Memorial State Park. If you know where to look, and some of the signs to look for, you can see some of this evidence: the foundation where the Gaehle home once stood, road beds that led to the Bates cabin, and more. Let's see how to identify places where some of this history can be found. The yucca plant (Picture 1) can be seen along Dogwood Trail. While Missouri does have a native yucca, it is only found in the northwestern corner of the state. This plant, and others found in the park, is here because someone intentionally brought it here.



Daffodils are sometimes the only markers for a cemetery in the park (Picture 2). They were most likely planted by the family to mark their loved ones' final resting place.

Picture 3, found below, is obviously the foundation for a home—it's the Kelpel home—but if you look closely at Picture 4, you can see the outline of a structure that could have been a cistern. These bricks in a circular pattern are located near a known homestead, which has few other traces of its existence remaining.



There are several remnants of the CCC camps that were located in the park. Picture 5 shows the remnants of the showerhouse for Camp 2729 in the valley.

In addition, many old road-beds can be seen from trails—look for an unnaturally flat section (it's REALLY hard to photograph flat!).

Finally, have fun! Look around as you make your way through our beloved park and see what evidence was left by past inhabitants. But remember: Take only memories, leave only footprints. Some of these items have been around for over 150 years, and we want them to remain for future visitors to enjoy.

-Carley Wright,
Volunteer



Space Invaders

If you've hiked any of the trails here at Babler or any other Missouri state park, you've probably been introduced to a couple of our native space invaders. Space invaders found in Missouri include pests such as chiggers, ticks, mosquitoes and poison ivy. Learning how to protect yourself from these pesky critters can limit your exposure to itchy scenarios or potentially life-changing diseases.



ticks found at Babler (left). Poison ivy has three leaves with the mild, jagged edges along the leaf (right).



This is a lone star tick, one of the most common

Poison Ivy

You can limit your exposure to poison ivy by first learning how to identify the plant. Lots of naturalists learn how to identify the plant by using a simple phrase: "Leaves of three, let it be." The oils on these itchy plants is what causes the annoying and sometimes painful rashes on your skin, along with oozing boils. The oils can be past onto the victim by directly touching the plant or from indirect means. For example, burning the plant can cause the oils to become an aerosol and cause dermatitis of both the skin and the inside of the throat. You can also obtain poison ivy from pets that have unknowingly tromped through the plants vines/leaves. To prevent or easing the effects of poison ivy, use topical washes to remove any oils. If you currently have poison ivy you can also take Benadryl and topical ointments to ease the itching. In severe cases, you may need to seek medical attention to receive a steroid shot.

For more information on poison ivy, visit:

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/poison-ivy/symptoms-causes/syc-20376485>

Chiggers, Mosquitoes, and Ticks

You can limit your exposure to these pesky critters by wearing long sleeved shirts, pants, and insect repellent with at least ten percent DEET. Products with concentrations around 10 percent are effective for periods of approximately two hours. As the concentration of DEET increases, the duration of protection increases. You can also use a permethrin treatment to your clothes only that will also help deter ticks and chiggers. Once you return home or to your campsite, check for ticks to minimize your chances of contracting a tick-borne illness. Illnesses can be transferred to hosts after 48 hours of being attached. If you notice a bulls-eye or a rash, you should talk to your primary care provider as soon as possible. Chiggers are long gone by the time the itching starts. There are topical ointments you can use to limit the annoying itching, the same can be used for mosquito bites.

For more information on treating insect bites, visit:

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/first-aid/first-aid-insect-bites/basics/art-20056593#:~:text=Apply%20a%20cloth%20dampened%20with,%25%20or%201%25%20hydrocortisone%20cream.>

The Eagle's Nest: Manager's Comments



Here it is ... another May and I am still wondering where the tail end of winter went, and it's almost summer. The seasons go by faster and faster...

We are operating at our on-season hours and services through October. We also have all of our drinking fountains open this year after having them off for the past two years due to COVID-19 restrictions. We are still experiencing record numbers of visitors utilizing our day-use areas and campground. Our outdoor education center, run in partnership with Parkway-Rockwood Community Ed, is also seeing reservation and usage numbers come back to pre-pandemic use patterns. We are all excited to see guests fully utilizing Babler once again.

Our current budget cycle comes to a close at the end of June, and we look forward to moving on to our next set of projects for approval. This past year, we replaced various heating and cooling systems in multiple buildings, entire electrical and control panels for some of our sewer lift stations, and an aging tractor that did a bulk of the mowing in the park.

This summer, we will be planning and designing both campground infrastructure improvements as well as the lodge renovation. We are aiming to begin construction at the campground in summer of 2023, and we hope to have work on the lodge start that year as well.

Another major project is the repaving of the paved bicycle trail that goes from the campground to the Guy Park Trailhead parking lot. We are in the final design process for this, with construction tentatively expected to begin early next spring. This project has taken a lot more time in the design aspect than initially thought, as many of the culverts that run underneath the trail are collapsing and need to be replaced before repaving can begin.

On top of all of that, our summer interpretive programming is getting into full swing, and we have added many new retail items to our store here at the Visitor Center. I encourage you to come take a look and to join us on one of our naturalist-led programs.

Have a safe and enjoyable summer. We hope to see you in the park!

-Chris Ferree

Park Superintendent



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

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Fax: 636-458-9105

Email: dustin.hillis@dnr.mo.gov

River Hills Visitor Center Hours:

April-October: 9 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.—Wednesday-Sunday
November & March: 9 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/>



WBS: Creatures of Myth & Legend



SUN, June 19

2PM @ Enclosed Shelter