

Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park

Autumn 2009 Notes

From April 1 until Nov. 1, Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park is open daily from 7 a.m. until 9 p.m. The visitor center is open daily from 8:30 a.m. until 4 p.m.

Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park visitor center presents free nature films during regular business hours in the Owl's Eye Theater. Stop by the visitor center between 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. to see the feature film of the week.

Campground amphitheater programs are offered every Saturday at 7 p.m. from Memorial Day until the end of September. Contact the visitor center to find out this week's topic. You don't have to be a camper to enjoy these awesome programs!

What are those purple boxes hanging from trees in the campground? They are research traps for emerald ash borers. These traps can help us determine whether or not the park has a problem with this invasive beetle. The emerald ash borer has plagued nearby states. These non-native beetles are very invasive and destroy all species of ash trees. Emerald ash borers like to hitch a ride in firewood. Emerald ash borers were found in southern Missouri last summer. Please help maintain the ash trees in the area by not bringing wood into the park. You may purchase wood for campfires from the campground host. If you do bring your own wood, please take any "leftovers" home with you!

Are you interested in a nature or history program for your school field trip or your Scout group? Park interpreters do programs on a wide variety of topics. The autumn and winter schedules are filling up, so contact park interpreters to schedule a program for your group today!

Enjoy nature overnight! Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park has 75 campsites, 31 basic sites and 44 electric sites. Reservations can be made on-line at www.mostateparks.com or by calling the reservation system at 877-422-6766.

Leave No Trace isn't just for the backcountry! Make sure you pack out what you pack in - it can make a huge difference to the health and beauty of a forest! Want to do a little extra? Take a trash bag with you when you hike and help keep the trails clean.

Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park has two shelters available for daily rental from April 1 until Oct. 31. These shelters provide a perfect setting for family picnics or friendly get-togethers. Shelter reservations can be made during regular business hours at the visitor center.

Gain a new appreciation and respect for the natural world and the historic settings of Missouri state parks and historic sites by participating in the Explorer Program. Earn your Explorer patch during Explorer Hours at the visitor center every Saturday and Sunday through the end of September at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. For details about the Explorer Program or more information, contact the visitor center or check out the Web at <http://www.mostateparks.com/explorer.htm>.

Visitor Center Hours

April 1 – Nov. 1

8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Sunday – Saturday

phone: 636-458-3813

For more information:

www.mostateparks.com

800-334-6946 (voice)

800-379-2479(TDD)



**Missouri Department of
Natural Resources**

Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park

Autumn 2009 Events

Aug. 8, 2009 - Bug Day and Open House – 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Open House: Representatives from the park will be on hand to review recent activities and projects at the facility. Visitors will be invited to share comments regarding park operations and future plans for development.

Bug Day: Activities will include exhibits, buggy Olympics, craft activities, fun facts on insects and an insect zoo. The Tyson Research Center and Sophia M. Sachs Butterfly House will provide an up-close look at some fascinating insects. This activity will be fun for all ages!

Sept. 26, 2009 - Babler Play Day – 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Celebrate National Play Days by getting out into the park to play. Interpreters will have a variety of self-guided activities available at the visitor center to help you Get Out and Play!

Oct. 10, 2009 - Night Sky over Babler – 7 p.m. – 10 p.m.

Join the St. Louis Astronomical Society to wish upon a star and study the fall sky. Telescopes will be set up at the field next to the Babler statue. You are encouraged to bring binoculars.

Oct. 24, 2009 - World Bird Sanctuary presents All About Owls - 1 p.m.

More than 200 different species of owls share our earth. Meet several of these different types while learning the importance of their existence in this outstanding owl program presented by the World Bird Sanctuary. In this program, live owls will give you insight into these mysterious birds of the night. Reservations are recommended for this program – call the park's visitor center to reserve your spot today!

***** All Babler State Park programs are free and open to the public. *****

On Nov. 7, 2008, a fire devastated the Alta Shelter Picnic Pavilion at Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park. The main rock work still stands and plans are being made to restore the shelter with the same design and materials used by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC).

The Alta Shelter was built in the late 1930s by the CCC, one of Franklin Roosevelt's work programs during the Great Depression. The men in the CCC lived and worked in parks, including Babler State Park, building structures, roads and trails and re-establishing healthy forests and wilderness areas. The heavy timber posts, cross-gabled roof, hand chiseled stone walls and four fireplaces at the Alta Shelter were a beautiful example of the workmanship of the CCC - buildings and structures designed to blend in and enhance the natural atmosphere of their environment.

Although many of the buildings still stand proud and tall, not many of the CCC men are still around - the youngest of them would be in their 90s. But any CCC member still around would probably tell you that the CCC changed his life. Most of the men came from families struggling to survive during the Great Depression. Not only did the CCC provide them with beds to sleep in, three filling meals a day, educational opportunities and confidence in their abilities, the men, aged 18-25, also learned to have a strong work ethic and a determination that everything worth doing is worth doing well.

Although fire destroyed portions of the Alta Shelter (see pictures), many other buildings at Babler State Park continue to demonstrate the superb craftsmanship of these hard working young men. The Cochran Shelter, bridges throughout the park, the old nature center, the historic stables, and many other buildings remain as beautiful, functional examples of the expertise and skills of the CCC. Many other parks throughout the Missouri state park system have a similar history and also display structures built by the CCC.

Next time you visit Babler State Park, give a second look to these picturesque structures and appreciate the exceptional skill and work that makes our park what it is today.

- Hannah Rennard, Interpretive Resource Specialist



Top: A view of the interior of the Alta Shelter in the late 1930s.

Middle: Side view of the Alta Shelter before the fire, during the summer of 2008.

Bottom: Side view of the Alta Shelter after the fire on Nov. 7, 2008.

