

# ENCOUNTERS with NATURE

Make your visit to Missouri State Parks an enjoyable one.

Ensure safe encounters with nature  
with these helpful tips!

## HIKERS

**Make sure you are properly prepared for your hike.**

- Bring plenty of water and a park/trail map.
- Apply insect repellent before beginning your hike.
- Wearing pants and long sleeves decreases your chances of tick and mosquito bites.
- Light-colored clothing makes ticks easier to spot and deters mosquitoes.
- When your hike is over, make sure to do a thorough tick check of your body and clothes.

## SUN

To better avoid mosquitoes, plan your hike in the late morning or afternoon.

## TRAIL

Staying on the trail is one of the best ways to avoid ticks, poison ivy and other unpleasant encounters with nature.

## POISON IVY

Although irritating for many people, poison ivy is a great food source for Missouri wildlife!

- Poison ivy can be a bush or a vine.
- Three leaflets make up the poison ivy leaf, which can be remembered by the saying "Leaflets three, leave them be!"
- The smaller side leaflets are lobed and often look like a child's mittens.
- The center leaflet is on a longer stalk; the side leaflets look as if they grow directly from the stem.

