



Friends of Wild River State Park

# Newsletter

www.FriendsOfWildRiver.org ■ info@FriendsOfWildRiver.org ■ 651-583-2125

Fall 2012



## “Wild River Run 5K” Run/Walk to debut in October

Grab your walking or running shoes and hit the trail for the first annual Wild River Run sponsored by the Friends of Wild River State Park. The event will take place October 13 and will take participants on a scenic walk, jog, or run through the park and under the canopy of fall colors. This is one of several fundraisers the Friends host in order to support park activities, but participants are encouraged to register in advance for a discounted price and guarantee of taking home the first annual T-shirt. While event details are still in the works, people are already asking to sign up. If you and your family and friends would like to reserve your spot, simply fill this form out and send it in with a check made out to Friends of Wild River State Park. More details are soon to come at [www.friendsofwildriver.org](http://www.friendsofwildriver.org) and [mndnr.gov/wildriver](http://mndnr.gov/wildriver).

### Wild River Run 5K

Saturday, October 13, 2012  
Wild River State Park

Sponsored by the Friends of Wild River State Park  
and the Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email\*: \_\_\_\_\_

T-Shirt Size: \_\_\_\_\_ (Include a \$5 additional fee)

\*You will only be contacted with information regarding the Wild River Run – details and confirmations will be sent via email.

Cost: Before October 1, 2012: \$15 (\$20 with T-shirt)  
After October 1/Race Day: \$25 (\$35 with T-shirt)

\*\$5 daily or \$25 annual Minnesota State Park permit required on all vehicles entering the park – not included in Wild River Run registration fee.

Please send this registration form and a check made out to Friends of WRSP to:  
Friends of Wild River State Park  
RE: Wild River Run  
17190 410th St.  
North Branch, MN 55056  
Call 651-583-2125 x227 (Kacie) with questions

The Wild River Run 5K will route participants on both paved and non-paved surfaces. By participating in this event, you understand the risks involved with trail running and individually take all precautions necessary. Should injury occur, the Friends of Wild River State Park, nor the Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota, nor Wild River State Park will be held liable.

Signature of understanding to terms of liability: \_\_\_\_\_



## A Fun and Successful Canoe Cleanup Event Held in July



2012 Friends of Wild River Canoe Cleanup Crew

The Friends of Wild River held a very successful and fun second annual St. Croix River canoe trip and river cleanup on July 14th. The section that was cleaned is that part of the St. Croix between the Sunrise Landing and the main boat landing in the park.

A scout troop from Savage, Minnesota joined the Friends and with them quite a bit of garbage was found – see photo above. Biodegradable bags provided by the National Park Service were also handed out to general paddlers along the way. These river enthusiasts were happy to see the Friends cleaning the river and were very appreciative for the work they do and for the serene stretch of river. Park Naturalist, Kacie Carlson, brought out the 20-foot seine net after lunch and the scouts enjoyed dragging the river for minnows and other critters. It was a very educational, fun, and beneficial day for the participants, the park, and the river. Thanks to the scouts and Friends that participated, and we hope you'll be able to join us next year.

### Where is it?

This trail is in an area not highly visited by park users, but everyone gets quite near it without knowing it's there.

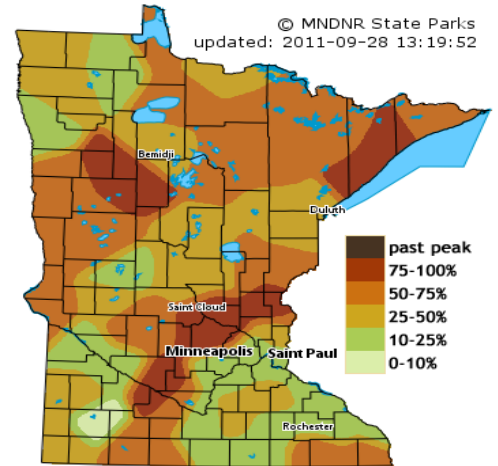
Find the answer to this "Where is it?" on Page 4.



# A Sneak Peak at the Jr. Friend Newsletter

The Friends of Wild River want to share the park with people of all ages so have recently established the "Jr. Friend" membership option. For just \$5 your little explorer, neighbor, or grandchild can get their very own newsletter from the Naturalist. A Jr. Friend membership also comes with a certificate of support and Kids For Saving Earth Action Guide. What better way to grant a child in your life the opportunity to leave their legacy at Wild River State Park? Sign up online or via the mail-in registration form on page 4.

# Stay Tuned to Fall Colors



If you're a Friend that lives far away and can't make it to see Wild River's spectacular show of colors, you don't have to miss out! Wild River staff and visitors will be posting weekly updates, including photos, to the Minnesota Parks and Trails website. For those of you that will be visiting the park during the upcoming months, please post your pictures and highlights for all of us to see!

[www.mndnr.gov/fallcolors](http://www.mndnr.gov/fallcolors)

## Mark Your Calendars! For an Autumn of Outdoor Fun

It's a wonderful time of year to get outdoors and take in some fresh air. Naturalists at the park have activities planned every weekend to show you the best of fall. For a full list of Minnesota State Park activities, visit us at [mndnr.gov/wildriver](http://mndnr.gov/wildriver) or scan the QR code to the right using your Smartphone.



- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| I Can Camp! Overnight   | September 1                              |
| Autumn Harvest Day      | September 1                              |
| Monarch Tagging         | September 1                              |
| Mushrooms w/ Leslie Jo  | September 1                              |
| Music with Craig Willis | September 1                              |
| Landscape Photo Wrkshp  | October 13                               |
| Wild "Shiver" Weekend   | October 18-21                            |
| Archery in the Park     | October 20                               |
| Snowshoe Lacing Wrkshp  | November 17, 18 (Register by October 12) |



Details can be found at [www.mndnr.gov/wildriver](http://www.mndnr.gov/wildriver) or by calling 651-583-2125.

Do you know why leaves change color? Leaves are actually made up of green (chlorophyll), red (anthocyanin), orange (carotene), and yellow (xanthophyll) all year long. As the leaf absorbs water, sunlight, and carbon dioxide to make sugar, those ingredients are combined with chlorophyll. Are those science lessons on photosynthesis coming back to you? Think of each of those colors as individual balloons. With those sugar ingredients, chlorophyll grows bigger and bigger and masks the other colors – making the leaf look green. Now, as there is less water and sunlight entering the leaf, the chlorophyll is shrinking to reveal the other colors! And that's how we get fall colors. Have you ever noticed that Wild River State Park typically has two "peak" color periods? That's because the maple trees are less resilient to the lack of water and sunlight and therefore turn their colors first. The oak trees are a bit harder and will be among the last trees to fade into brown. Can you see this pattern happening already around you?

## Wild River State Park Monarchs Being Tracked on Migration to Mexico

Being cold-blooded, monarchs cannot withstand the cold temperatures that their milkweed-rich breeding grounds endure. Therefore, they migrate. All (roughly 100 million) monarchs east of the Rocky Mountains will migrate up to 3,000 miles to the same 12 mountains in Mexico. Those west of the Rocky Mountains will winter along the California coast. Unlike their spring and summer-born predecessors who live only 2-4 weeks, fall-born monarchs will live 3-8 months – long enough to migrate south before laying eggs and completing their life cycle.

For the second year now, Wild River State Park visitors are getting the opportunity to catch and tag Minnesota monarchs as participants in Monarch Watch – a University of Kansas research project which tracks monarch migration and population. Once tagged, if that monarch is ever found, its location will be reported. To see where WRSP monarchs are being found, visit [monarchwatch.org/tagmig/recoveries](http://monarchwatch.org/tagmig/recoveries).



## Species Spotlight

### Canada Goldenrod

**Latin Name:** *Solidago Canadensis*

**Habitat:** Throughout Minnesota and temperate North America. Commonly seen in open fields, pastures and roadsides.

**Size:** 2 to 5 feet tall.

**Bloom date:** August through October



**Identification:** Plumes of yellow flower heads nod at the tip and have arching side branches. Often grow in clumps or patches. The upper leafy part of the stem is hairy. The leaves decrease gradually in size upward on the stem, are coarsely toothed, and have three main veins. It is the most common of the many goldenrod species.

**Notes:** Goldenrods are pollinated by insects, not by the wind. Therefore they do not contribute to human allergies as they are often falsely accused. Ragweed, pigweed, nettle, cocklebur and many other plants that disperse pollen into the wind do this at the same time that goldenrod blooms, so people often incorrectly blame goldenrod for their allergies.

## Naturalist Notes

By Kacie Carlson, Park Naturalist



What a summer it's been! As I begin to look back and reflect on all that has happened in the past few months I can't help but be so proud of all that is Wild River State Park: the resources, the visitors, the staff, and the volunteers.

Earlier this spring, a burn was sent through roughly 150 acres of prairie. Today, those prairies are the richest we've seen in years and the Henslow's Sparrow population (which the burn was carefully organized around) seemed unaffected, if not to have benefitted from it. The pines near the horse camp and along the Sunrise Trail were thinned in July which has made those areas look more natural. The increased spacing between trees will allow the remaining ones to grow larger and provide better habitat.

If I could capture every smile and positive comment received by visitors this summer I would send them your way. Even through a hot and buggy July, families were taking advantage of the time to get outside. 41 kids have become Junior Naturalists, hours have been spent reading books in Barb Nelson's library, and we're seeing more and more return visitors. Some of you may have seen this story posted on our Facebook page or in my bi-weekly email update, but the young boy who donated his change of 80 cents to "save this place" sums up our success in making this a place everyone is proud to be part of.

This year the staff here committed to the challenge of reducing our energy consumption 20% by 2015. We hit the ground running with replacing the most-used truck with a hybrid vehicle. Motion censored lights have been activated in most buildings, on-demand hot water heaters are going in, and installation of a solar array that will power the park office is on schedule. All 18 summer employees have stepped up to this and the many other tasks that have made this the safe and well-maintained park that it is.

Last, but certainly not least, I continue to be amazed by the outpouring of volunteerism that takes place at Wild River. With the help of volunteers, the Visitor Center has been open for visitors to enjoy every day this summer; special events like Seegwan, Archery in the Park, and the Canoe Cleanup have been possible; the bluebirds were extremely well cared for (noted by 126 fledglings!); the Special Concern Species, Whorled Loosestrife, was discovered and is now being protected; and pages of phenology data has been collected on various plants and animals including the Blue and Golden-winged Warblers, Bullsnares, Star Onion, and Heart-shaped Golden Alexanders.

As always, thanks for all you do to support these smiles that I'm so proud to see every day. We look forward to seeing you on the soon-to-be leaf-littered trails of Wild River.

# Remember to Renew!

Membership dues are the Friends' main source of funding for programs that we sponsor at the park. Please send in the form at the right or sign-up online and help support the great programs the Friends provide.

## Still getting the paper newsletter?

To save paper, mailing costs, and time we encourage you to have your name added to the Friends' secure non-spam email list.

To be added to the email list, please visit our website at:  
[www.FriendsOfWildRiver.org](http://www.FriendsOfWildRiver.org)  
or contact us at [info@friendsofwildriver.org](mailto:info@friendsofwildriver.org)

## Answer to **WHERE IS IT?**

### The Aspen Knob Trail N41 31.353 W092 44.957

Most trails in Wild River State Park are quite level – either on prairie or river bottomland. This one is a bit more challenging, going up and down 8-9 short but rather steep hills and valleys. It is ranked a s “difficult” on the park map, and is also an “advanced ski trail” in late fall and winter. The trail starts right behind the park office and is a 2 ½ mile loop that contains most of the major ecosystems in the park: Deciduous forest (including Sugar Maples that provide great fall color and then are tapped in April for maple syrup), some pine, various bushes, many wildflowers, and even some small open prairie areas. There are a few nice overlooks for views of the valleys south of the park and of steep creek valleys right off the trail. Need more time to soak it all in? There are two walk-in campsites out there!



# WILD RIVER State Park Friends Membership Dues

- Junior **Friend**, 12 and under – \$5 / year  
*Includes an “Action Guide” and other benefits*
- Individual **Friend** – \$20 / year
- Family **Friend** – \$35 / year
- Silver **Friend** – \$50 / year
- Gold **Friend** – \$100 / year
- Platinum **Friend** – \$250+ / year  
*Add an additional \$10 and be a member of MN Parks and Trails Council*

|          |  |      |  |
|----------|--|------|--|
| Name:    |  |      |  |
| Address: |  |      |  |
| City:    |  |      |  |
| State:   |  | Zip: |  |
| Email:   |  |      |  |

We will never sell or trade your email address

## Your favorite activities at the park include:

**Option 1:** Mail above with check to:  
Friends of Wild River State Park  
c/o Bob Walz, Treasurer  
39168 Riverside Court  
North Branch, MN 55056



**Option 2:** Sign-up Online and use your credit card:  
[www.FriendsOfWildRiver.org](http://www.FriendsOfWildRiver.org)

*Thank you for your support!*



The road past the WRSP Sugar Bush – September 28, 2010