

Friends of Wild River State Park

# Newsletter

[www.FriendsOfWildRiver.org](http://www.FriendsOfWildRiver.org) ■ [info@FriendsOfWildRiver.org](mailto:info@FriendsOfWildRiver.org) ■ 651-583-2923

Fall 2013



## 3 Big Events Coming Up:

**Sept. 22:** Joint meeting with the St. Croix River Assoc. – see page 2.

**Oct. 12:** Wild River 5K Run/Walk – the “Bear Tear” – see page 3.

**Feb. 15:** Candlelight Ski/Snowshoe/Hike – moving from Jan. to Feb. this winter.

## Monarch Decline at Wild River

Most of you have probably heard of or witnessed the extreme decline of Monarch butterflies in the area this summer. But is a protected area like Wild River State Park affected quite as much? The answer is a resounding Yes! There has been a Monarch tagging program at the park the last few years so we have good statistics: two years ago we tagged 100 monarchs, last year we tagged 30, and this year we’ve only seen 7 so far. On a more positive note, the park has seen more Giant Swallowtails than ever, a good number of Great Spangled Fritillaries, but few monarchs or other species of butterflies.

The reasons for this decline, like most events in nature, are many and varied. Most experts blame the recent drought along the flyway and deforestation of the monarch’s winter habitat in Mexico. But another factor is increased planting of genetically modified corn in the U.S. Midwest, which has led to greater use of herbicides, which in turn kills the milkweed that is a prime food source for the butterflies.

## Where is it?

It’s a well-marked, very informative but somewhat out of the way exhibit that the entire family will enjoy.

Find the answer to this “Where is it?” on Page 6.



## Canoe Cleanup Gets the Garbage Out



The Friends of Wild River State Park held a very successful and fun 3rd annual St. Croix River cleanup on July 13<sup>th</sup> in cooperation with the St. Croix River Association’s River Awareness Week. With much help from the scouts from Savage, Minnesota, the crew was able to clean roughly 80 pounds of garbage out of the section of river between Sunrise and the main landing.

This year’s interpretive stop focused on the water quality of the St. Croix River. Participants drew water samples for oxygen, pH, and phosphorus testing. While the St. Croix is a protected Wild and Scenic Riverway, it is faced with a silent and deadly threat – phosphorus. Phosphorus is a stimulant to plant and algae growth, which when over-abundant, reduces the amount of oxygen in water and has been known to decimate habitats. In recent years this deadly element has caused the EPA to declare the St. Croix as impaired waters and has become the focus of researchers and alliance teams alike. With EPA approval, these teams are committed to reducing phosphorus by 100 tons every year with a goal of a 20% reduction by 2020.

Phosphorus is naturally occurring, but its abundance has been dramatically compounded since its use in lawn fertilizers, pesticides, shampoos, soaps, hair dyes, make up, skin care products, toothpaste, oils and auto exhaust to name a few commonly-used products. Runoff of these and animal waste has caused parts of the St. Croix to become thick with algae bloom.

The good news is that there are ways to stop this threat before it gets worse. Help continue to preserve and protect the St. Croix River as it was meant to be in 1968 and other bodies of our local waters by taking a few simple steps such as reducing your use of these products, evaluating rainwater runoff around your property, and planting native plants along waters edges to act as buffers to these pollutants. You can learn more at [www.stcroix360.com/topics/phosphorus](http://www.stcroix360.com/topics/phosphorus).

## Joint meeting of the Friends and St. Croix River Assoc. coming in Sept.

Dave Kozlovsky, President of the Friends of Wild River State Park, and I would like to cordially invite you to attend a joint gathering of the Friends of Wild River State Park (WRSP) and the St. Croix River Association (SCRA). Find out what the other organization is about, meet some new Friends, enjoy a catered lunch at the Wild River Trail Center, learn about some amazing snake research going on at WRSP, take a logging history hike or paddle the St. Croix River. What an afternoon of fun and learning in a beautiful Minnesota State Park! Please fill in the form below or register online at <http://stcroixriverassociation.org/> to reserve your spot.

A specific goal of SCRA is to get to know the many Friends groups in the watershed, to better understand their missions, to find ways to cooperate and to assist in efforts relating to the St. Croix River. So let the discussions begin. Hope to see you on September 22<sup>nd</sup>!

-- Gary Noren, Friends Board member and SCRA Board Chair



## FALL GATHERING SEPTEMBER 22, 2013

### Schedule of Events

Noon Lunch

12:45 p.m. Welcome & Volunteer Thank You

1:00 p.m. Photo Contest Winners



1:15 p.m. Program: Wild River State Park Snake Research, Dave Crawford

The bullsnake (aka gophersnake) is a species of special concern in Minnesota, but because of efforts to restore dry prairie, Wild River State Park (WRSP) has become host to one of the largest populations in the state. Dave Crawford's study at WRSP tells where snakes spend the winter, how far they travel, when they hibernate and when they come out. Several hidden cameras throughout the park and pit tagging have led to better understanding bullsnakes. Learning more about their behavior will allow resource managers to preserve and restore their habitat in a way that will benefit the species for years to come.



2:00 p.m. Concurrent Options-Registration is Required

1. Logging History Hike with John Eret: Learn more about the late 1800s logging era along the St. Croix River. Ranger John Eret will entertain with stories from the logging camp, and you'll visit the site of Nevers Dam, known to be the largest pile driven dam of its time.
2. River Paddle with Kacie Carlson: SCRA is collaborating with Friends of Wild River for a guided tour on the St. Croix. Naturalist Kacie Carlson, will lead the tour from Sunrise Landing back to WRSP boat landing. There is an additional cost for this option; \*a few scholarships are available to cover rental, contact [info@scramail.com](mailto:info@scramail.com) if you'd like to apply.

		<b>SCRA Fall Gathering, In Collaboration with Friends of WRSP</b> <b>SEPTEMBER 22, 2013</b> <b>Reservation Deadline is September 13, 2013</b> Reservations and payments can also be made online at: <a href="http://www.stcroixriverassociation.org">www.stcroixriverassociation.org</a>			
Name (s) _____					
Mailing address _____					
City _____		State _____		Zip _____	
Email _____		Phone _____			
# _____	Adults X \$35, SCRA or Friends of WRSP Members, includes the lunch & program	\$ _____			
# _____	Adults X \$45, Non-members includes the lunch & program	\$ _____			
# _____	Children 4-12 years**, X \$5, with adult registration	\$ _____			
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I need a <u>one day park pass</u> (included in the registration fee)					
Increase your fun by registering for these <b>options</b>					
# _____	People, Logging History Hike, free with registration	\$ _____ 0			
# _____	People x \$20*, River Tour (includes canoe, life vest, & paddle; call about family discount)	\$ _____			
# _____	People x \$10, I'm bringing my own vessel, paddle & PFD but need a shuttle back to my car	\$ _____			
				Amount Enclosed \$ _____	
**Children 3 & under are admitted free with registered adults					
<b>Return payment to: SCRA, PO Box 655, St. Croix Falls, WI 54024</b> Question? 715-483-3300 or <a href="mailto:info@scramail.com">info@scramail.com</a>					

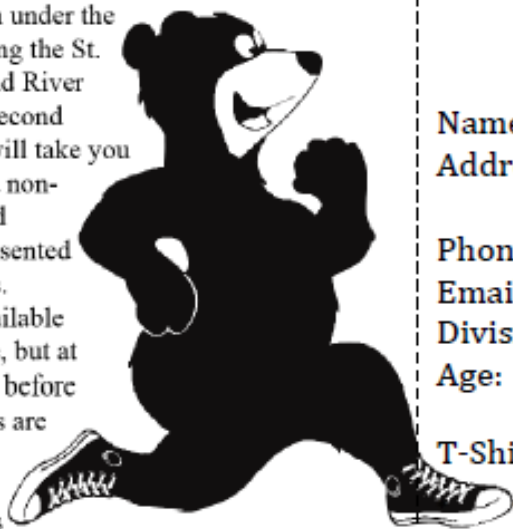


FRIENDS OF WILD RIVER STATE PARK  
SECOND ANNUAL

# WILD RIVER RUN

BEAR TEAR 2013!

Take a walk or run under the fall colors and along the St. Croix River at Wild River State Park. This second annual 5K event will take you on both paved and non-paved surfaces and awards will be presented to the top finishers. Registration is available the day of the race, but at a discounted price before October 1 (T-shirts are available race day while supplies last). All proceeds go to the Friends of Wild River State Park to help support park programs.



**EARLY REGISTRATION DISCOUNT –  
REGISTER BY OCTOBER 1!**

**Race Day:**

**Saturday, October 12, 2013**

**Registration: 7:30-8:45 at Picnic Shelter**

**Race begins at 9 am**

**Wild River State Park  
39797 Park Trail  
Center City, MN 55012**

(15 miles east of North Branch, 12 miles north of Taylors Falls)

**651-583-2125**



**WILD RIVER STATE PARK  
ALMELUND, MINNESOTA**

SPONSORED BY FRIENDS OF WILD RIVER STATE PARK  
AND THE PARKS & TRAILS COUNCIL OF MINNESOTA

## Wild River Run 5K

**Saturday, October 12, 2013**

**Registration: 7:30-8:45 am - Race Begins at 9 am  
Wild River State Park**

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

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

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

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

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

**Division:** ☐ Female ☐ Male

**Age:** ☐ under 10 ☐ 11-20 ☐ 21-40

☐ 41-60 ☐ 61 and over

**T-Shirt Size:** \_\_\_\_\_ (Requires a \$7 additional fee)

\*Email will only be used to relay information regarding the Wild River Run

☐ Check here to be added to park and Friends email lists.

**Cost:** Before October 1, 2013: **\$15 (\$22 with T-shirt)**  
After October 1/Race Day: **\$25 (\$35 with T-shirt)**  
Friends Member Discount **Free T-Shirt (\$7 discount)**

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

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:

\_\_\_\_\_

# Early Fall Bird Migration in MN

By Ann Kessen

Past President, Minnesota Ornithologists' Union

One of the exciting features of autumn in Minnesota is the fall migration of birds. Throughout the fall, many of our breeding species depart, and many species pass through from their breeding grounds farther north. While we're all familiar with the passage of waterfowl late in the season, many people don't realize that some species actually start their fall migration in summer and are gone as early as mid-September.

For instance, in Chisago County, where Wild River State Park is located, the peak fall migration for common nighthawks is often during the last week of August, with the last stragglers disappearing by the middle of September. Some other species whose departure peaks during the last two weeks of August are the blue-gray gnatcatcher and the golden-winged warbler. Both of these species are typically gone from Chisago County by mid-September. A slightly different pattern is seen in the eastern kingbird, whose fall migration peaks around the first of September, and whose departure from the county is complete, on average, by September 11. This burst of migratory activity contrasts with the more leisurely departure of the yellow warbler and the Baltimore oriole. These two species start to leave in small numbers as early as June and continue to trickle away throughout the summer, until they're gone by mid-September.

To learn more about when birds in Minnesota are migrating, visit the web site of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union at [moumn.org](http://moumn.org). This site is the source for the dates mentioned in this article.

## Species Spotlight

### Black Bear (our Oct. 5K Run mascot)

**Latin Name:** *Ursus Americanus*

**Habitat:** In our area, they are generally restricted to forested areas in the northern one-third of MN and WI. But as this photo shows, a few have visited the bird feeders at the WRSP Visitor Center.

**Length:** 5 to 6 feet long.

**Weight:** Adults vary in weight from 150 (small female) to 500 (large male) pounds.

**Color:** Black, dark or light brown. In Minnesota, less than 10% are brown, so our friend in this photo is quite uncommon.

**Population:** There are roughly 20,000 black bears in Minnesota.

**Notes:** There are an estimated 15 bears that call Wild River State Park home. Each year visitors see them at the Visitor Center bird feeders or waddling across a trail. Being 90% vegetarians, they're out looking for the ripest berry and often flee at the sight of humans. Bears have an extra good sense of smell, sticky tongues to get the most ants under logs, and are not true hibernators since they are able to wake up mid-winter – some to give birth to cubs in January.



## Naturalist Notes

By Kacie Carlson, Park Naturalist



Lately, how many times have you been caught saying "summer has flown by!"? With the delayed start this spring, we all seem to be holding on to the last weeks of summer while not really feeling that we've done all we need to do before taking the plunge into winter. I'm writing today so that you can rest assured that it's not over!

Summer technically lasts until September 21, but, even then, that only means it's the beginning of fall, which can be just as good, if not better, for getting outdoors. Here are 5 reasons why you don't have to pack summer up quite yet:

### Reason #1: Fewer Bugs

Most of us would probably agree that the worst parts of being in the Minnesota outdoors are the mosquitoes. Drier conditions in the fall mean fewer puddles for mosquito eggs to thrive in, and therefore fewer mosquitoes! Late summer and fall are the best times for a relaxing hike or bike ride.

### Reason #2: Colorful Landscapes

As you'll read on the next page, the leaves will soon start to lose their chlorophyll and reveal their inner colors. The kids will enjoy dragging their feet through leaf-piled trails while you photographers will get that perfect family photo.

### Reason #3: Warm Days and Cool Nights

As we continue our orbit around the sun, we're beginning to angle in a way that makes our sunlight less direct. Although we're losing a bit of that sunlight, too, we're not losing as much light as we are heat. These are the weeks you can have the best of both sunlight and heat for getting outside.

### Reason #4: You've Always Had Weekends Off

We all say that summer is over because school has started, but I bet the kids would agree that homework would be way more fun sitting around the campfire! You've always camped on weekends, right? So why stop now?

### Reason #5: There's still So Much to Do!

The lower water level of the St. Croix River makes for great wildlife watching, the geocaches never hibernate, just as many wildflowers species are blooming now as have all summer, the animals are more active preparing for winter in the cooler conditions, and we've still got weekends full of fun activities! So, don't hang that kayak up, pack the tent away, or give in to "summer being over" quite yet.

Take advantage of these fall perks and you might find that the family has the "best time ever" in these cooler, quieter, more colorful, and less buggy conditions. Then, when you've exhausted summer and fall I'll give you just as many reasons to make the most out of winter! Here's wishing you all a wonderful start to the school year and hoping that we continue to see you out at Wild River State Park.





## Upcoming Activities and Events

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 [at.mndnr.gov/wildriver](http://at.mndnr.gov/wildriver) or scan the QR code with a smartphone!

Autumn Harvest Day	August 31
Monarch Tagging	August 31
Mushrooms w/ Leslie Jo	August 31

Full Moon Paddle	September 19
FWRSP & SCRA Get-Together	September 22
Fall Colors Paddle	September 29

Wild River Run 5K	October 12 (Register for discount Oct 1)
Wild "Shiver" Weekend	October 17-19

Snowshoe Lacing Wrkshp	November 16-17 (Register by Oct 20)
2014 Candlelight Event	February 15



**Details can be found at [www.mndnr.gov/wildriver](http://www.mndnr.gov/wildriver)**

## Stay Tuned to the Fall Colors

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

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!

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 hardier and will be among the last trees to fade into brown.



Thank you for your  
Membership

## FWRSP Membership Options

- ☐ 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  
Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota

Name:			
Address:			
City:			
State:		Zip:	
Email:			

*We will never sell or trade your email address*

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

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



Each month paddlers enjoy a Naturalist-guided canoe trek under the full moon at Wild River State Park.

### Friends of Wild River State Park Board -- Working for You in 2013

<b>President</b>	Dave Kozlovsky
<b>Vice President</b>	Tessa Hill
<b>Treasurer</b>	Bob Walz
<b>Secretary</b>	Bonnie Patrick
<b>Communications</b>	Bob Kessen
<b>Pres. Emeritus</b>	Gary Noren

#### Board Members

Bill Carlson	Tom Dickhudt
John Eret	Dennis Johnson
Brad Bjorklund	Elizabeth Huselid
Jacque Zita	Dave Crawford
Jeske Noordergraaf	

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

#### The Vanishing Forest Exhibit

It can be found by taking the Trail Center road and turning left at the first entrance to the parking area. A large sign marks the start of the paved trail through 60-70 year old white pines.

Very interesting markers guide you past an imaginary 200 ft. white pine which were common in the St. Croix valley 200 years ago. Many amazing facts about this vanished huge forest are presented.

