

*Welcome to my home...*

# Versailles State Park

Supplement to  
**The Versailles Republican**

35<sup>th</sup> Annual Edition

Thursday,  
May 23, 2019



## 2019 recreation fees

A visit to an Indiana state park or state forest remains a great bargain. A Hoosier family of four can spend an entire day in a park to picnic, bike, hike, swim and enjoy nature exhibits and programs for \$7/car.

All fees go to dedicated accounts to fund staffing, supplies and equipment. In Indiana state parks alone, more than 2,000 buildings, 700 miles of trails, 631 hotel/lodge rooms, 75 marinas, 16 swimming pools, 15 beaches, 8,400 campsites, 200 shelters, 160 play-

grounds and 149 cabins are managed. It takes staff and supplies to maintain these facilities.

Indiana's user-pay system has sustained Indiana's state parks for over 100 years. Approximately 70% of state parks' operating budget comes from user fees; only 30% comes from legislative appropriations. That translates to \$1.39 in taxes per Hoosier each year to support state parks (and 58¢ in taxes per Hoosier for state forests).

A conservative estimate of the impact of state park visitors on lo-

cal communities is approximately \$623 million, with a spending average of \$31.68 per visitor annually. More than 14,000 private sector jobs are created as a result.

Indiana state parks and state forests are places where memories are made naturally with families and friends. Families grow up at park properties, then bring their families back to discover what's new and introduce the next generation to their outdoor inheritance.

## On the cover...

A female American goldfinch perches on the dead flower stalk of common mullein in the certified Monarch Waystation at the park on Tuesday, May 14, 2019.

The waystation garden was created two years ago to provide a space to educate visitors about wildflowers and pollinators, and also serve as a relaxing place to enjoy the pristine environment at the park. It is located just behind the Nature Center / Camp Store building.

The garden area is an easily accessed location

to view pretty flowers, songbirds, and pollinating insects. Shorebirds along the lake and raptors flying overhead can also be spotted from there.

The bird in the photo was identified as a female as it is not as bright a shade of yellow as male goldfinches, particularly during breeding season, happening now, when the males glow almost as bright as a yellow highlighter.

Goldfinches are migratory birds, but Indiana is situated in the middle of their range, so they

can be found year-round here. They undergo a complete molt, meaning they replace all of their feathers once per year. In non-breeding season, the males are a duller olive color, while the females are a yellowish-brown color.

JARED ROGERS PHOTO



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## 2019 entrance fees

The daily entrance fee into the park is \$7 per vehicle for Indiana residents and \$9 per vehicle for non-residents. The Annual Entrance Pass, accepted at all Indiana DNR properties, is \$50 for Indiana residents and \$70 for non-residents. Indiana residents age 65 years or older can get the Golden Hoosier Pass for \$25. Daily fee for persons walking, riding a bike, or dropping someone off at the park is \$2 per person.

## DNR Lake Permit information

There is no longer a daily or annual boat launch fee for lakes at state parks, reservoirs and forests. The launch fees have been replaced by a DNR Lake Permit, which cost \$25/year for each motorized watercraft lake permit and \$5/year for each non-motorized watercraft lake permit. This information sheet answers a few of the questions you may have about this permit.

### 1. Who must have this permit?

All private watercraft using state park, reservoir or forestry lakes must have this permit. This includes personal watercraft, motorboats, canoes, paddle boats, rowboats and all watercraft moored at marinas, private docks, group docks or bank ties. State-owned watercraft and state-managed

boat rental concessions are exempt.

### 2. Which lakes actually require this permit?

This permit should be placed on any boat that will be on the water at Indiana state parks, state-managed reservoirs or state forests. This includes the main bodies of water and all fishing ponds/lakes at Patoka Lake, Brookville Lake, Hardy Lake, Monroe Lake, Salamonie Lake, Mississinewa Lake, Roush (Huntington) Lake, Cagles Mill (Lieber) Lake, and Cecil M. Harden (Raccoon) Lake.

It also includes Worcester Lake at Potato Creek State Park, Kunkel Lake at Ouabache State Park, Summit Lake at Summit Lake State Park, Versailles Lake at Versailles State Park, Ogle and Strahl Lakes at

Brown County State Park, Lakes Shakamak, Lenape and Kickapoo at Shakamak State Park, all lakes of Chain O'Lakes State Park, Spring Mill Lake at Spring Mill State Park, Whitewater Lake at Whitewater State Park, and Lake Lincoln and Weber Lake at Lincoln State Park.

It also includes all the lakes at state forest properties, including Dean Lake SRA, Ferdinand State Forest, Starve Hollow SRA, Harrison-Crawford State Forest, Clark State Forest, Greene-Sullivan State Forest, Jackson-Washington State Forest, Martin State Forest, Morgan-Monroe State Forest, Owen-Putnam State Forest, Pike State Forest and Yellowwood State Forest.

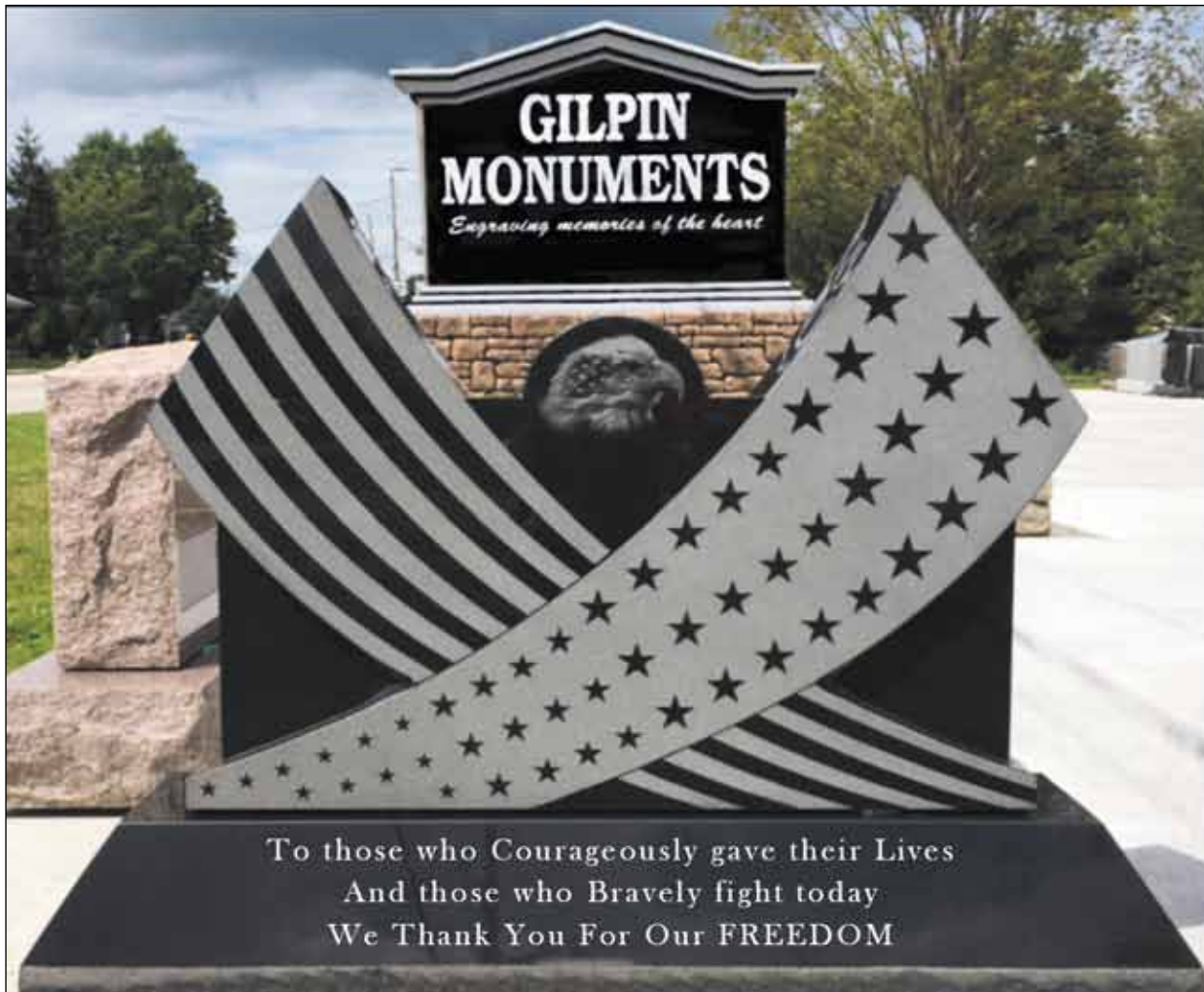


JARED ROGERS PHOTO

**In addition to fishing, getting out on the lake is a great way to see more wildlife, like the painted turtle pictured above.**

**The painted turtle is the most widespread native turtle of North America. They prefer slow-moving, fresh water, and have been known to live in the wild for over 55 years.**

**These and other turtles that call the park home are frequently found basking on logs and rocks in the water. Being cold-blooded, turtles rely on the warmth of the sun in order to move around.**



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## Reservations available year-round for campsites

To make a camping reservation, call 866-6CAMPIN (866-622-6746) or go on-line to make reservations at [www.camp.in.gov](http://www.camp.in.gov). These are the only two ways to make reservations. Campers can make reservations Monday through Friday from noon to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time and Saturday and Sunday between 12 noon to 5:00 p.m. You can log on to the internet 24 hours a day. Campsites can be reserved as early as six months in advance to the date of arrival and as late as noon on the date of arrival.

When you make reservations you will need the following information:

1. Arrival/Departure date.
2. Name, address and phone number.
3. Type of camping equipment you will be using: (tent, pop-up, RV, etc.). With an RV you will need to know the total length of the rig from the front to the back, including the tow rig.
4. Number in your party.
5. Method of payment (Visa or Master Card). Money orders are accepted if you are making a reservation 15 days or more before the date of arrival.

6. Class A Campsites are \$23 per night (Sun.-Wed.) and \$30 (Thu.-Sat.). Holidays are \$33 a night with required three night minimum. Tax is added to those prices.

There is no fee for making a reservation. You can reserve as many campsites as you like; all names are needed for the people reserving the campsites. The entire rental fee must be paid at the time of the reservation.

### IF YOU CANCEL YOUR RESERVATION

You will have to call 866-622-6746. If canceling before 8:00 p.m. on the day before, a \$10.00 cancellation fee is charged. If canceling after 8:00 p.m. on the day before arrival, a \$10.00 cancellation fee plus the first night rental fee is charged. No partial cancellation can be made. The entire reservations must be canceled.

A campsite can be occupied by only six people maximum. Each site may have two tents or one camper and one small tent. Each campsite may have only one mode of transportation. The campground office is open daily from 8:30 a.m. - 11:00 p.m. beginning Memorial Day until Labor Day. All

visitors must park in the visitor parking lot. You cannot set up for camping after 11:00 p.m. even if you have reservations.

### CLASS A CAMPGROUNDS

Versailles State Park has 220 campsites with an electrical outlet, 30 amp service, fire ring, picnic table and camper pad. There is a dump station and water hydrant in the immediate area for water, but NO water hookup. One camping unit per campsite; you may have one small additional tent and a dining fly per site. Occupancy is limited to 14 consecutive nights. Pets must be caged or kept on a leash no longer than six (6) feet and must be attended at all times. Please clean up after your pets!

### YOUTH TENT AREA

This is for youth group campers under 21 years of age. It is for tent camping only. Youth must have a minimum of 10 campers plus a sponsor. The cost is \$2.00 per person, per night. The area has picnic tables and a pit toilet. You can make telephone reservations with credit card only by calling 866-6CAMPIN (866-622-6746). No alcohol allowed in Youth Tent Area.

### EQUESTRIAN CAMPGROUNDS

Each equestrian campsite at Versailles State Park has a tie-up available for up to six horses. A daily or annual Horse Tag is required for each horse. Bridle trails are open from dawn to dusk. Electric campsites are \$20.33 per night Sun.-Wed., \$23.54 per night Thu.-Sat., and \$26.75 per night on holidays.

### CHECK OUT TIME

Check out time is 2:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 5 p.m. on Sunday and Holidays. If you plan to renew your registration, please do so by 10:00 a.m.

### FIRES & FIREWOOD

Fires may be built only in the fire rings provided. Collecting firewood in state parks is prohibited. Firewood from Indiana may be used if all bark has been removed. All other firewood must bear the USDA and/or state compliance stamp.

### TRASH

The Versailles State Park has a "carry in/carry out" trash program. Trash bags are available at the main gate.

# Crossroads

## Family Restaurant

615 W. U.S. Highway 50  
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- Lunch & Dinner Specials



Carry Out Also Available

Open everyday 7:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. See our complete menu on our website: [www.crossroadsfamilyrestaurant.com](http://www.crossroadsfamilyrestaurant.com)





## Sixth Annual Hassmer Fest scheduled for September 27-29

Hassmer Fest, a mountain bike festival at Versailles State Park, is set to be held for its sixth consecutive year from September 27-29. Festival goers can look forward to unlimited mountain biking opportunities, free camping, live music, kids events, cold beer, and a raffle in which all proceeds go towards developing and maintaining the trails at the park. Registration opens August 1. Register by visiting [bikereg.com](http://bikereg.com) or [bikesimba.org](http://bikesimba.org).

Before the festival date arrives, the DINO Xterra Southern Indiana Triathlon is to be held August 3 at 9 a.m. Registration will be from 6:00-8:00 p.m. on August 2, and 7:00-8:30 a.m. on August 3.

The race includes a 1-km swim, 13-mile mountain bike, and 5-mile trail run. There is an alternate kayak division as well, for a 2-km distance instead of the swim.

The swim start is from the beach to the east of the boat ramp. The course is a counterclockwise, triangular loop in the deepest part of Versailles Lake. Lifeguards will be patrolling the course on rowboats. Kayak division racers will complete a 2-km paddle extending to near the park dam.

The mountain bike segment is the highlight of the race. The most notable feature of the course is the amazing Cliffside trail, climbing high above the expansive valley below. The course will traverse scenic and fun single-track, including several climbs and descents with elevation changes over 200 vertical feet. The surface is nearly all dirt single-track.

The run course utilizes most of the park's hiking trails, including #1, #2 and #3. There will be several steep up and downhills, rooty sections, and stairs. It is a challenging course. An aid station will be located at the transition area and at approximately miles one and three on the run course (road crossings).

Finally, the SRAM DINO Mountain Bike Series race will be held August 4. This biking only race is open to all riders regardless of age or ability. A host of racing categories fit any rider wishing to ride the scenic trails of Versailles State Park, considered one of the best courses in the state.

For more information, rules and regulations for the DINO triathlon and mountain bike race visit [www.dinoseries.com](http://www.dinoseries.com).

## Local mountain-bikers invited to join SIMBA

The Southeast Indiana Mountain Bike Association, headquartered at Versailles State Park, has a goal to build new trails and maintain existing trails within the park. SIMBA hosts the annual Hassmer Fest, set for September 27-29 in 2019. Membership dues are \$20 per year, all of which goes to pay insurance, trail building supplies, and maintenance costs for the trails at Versailles State Park. A higher membership also gives SIMBA greater chances in receiving grant-funding awards. Dues are tax-deductible. Visit [bikesimba.org](http://bikesimba.org) for more information.



JARED ROGERS PHOTO

A new information kiosk is under construction at the trailhead to the mountain biking paths in the park. The kiosk, planned to be finished soon, will feature a large map of all the trails and a bulletin board to keep SIMBA members and mountain bike enthusiasts up to date on relevant happenings.

The park currently hosts nine mountain bike trails ranging from one mile long to six miles long. Altogether, they make up nearly 20 miles of trail, through varied terrain, weaving all throughout the park's woodlands and along Laughery Creek.

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## Pool offers relief from heat

Now celebrating its 33rd year of operation, the swimming pool at Versailles State Park continues its popularity with a 25-meter pool, two water slides, children's pool and wading fountain.

The pool, considered by many to be the main reason to visit the park on a sweltering summer day, opened for operation in May 1987. Officially, its capacity is 615 swimmers and park officials say it has been filled to that level several times since its opening. In addition, the sun deck around the pool has enough space for 600 sun lovers trying for a perfect tan.

The beauty of the pool for a lot of parents is the fact that it is accommodating to small children. At the south end is a 35x15 foot children's pool, which sits beside the mushroom shaped "rain maker" wading fountain that showers down on children.

For a challenge for swimmers at the pool, there is a one-meter springboard and a 100-foot figure-eight water slide, one of the few and one of the largest at all of Indiana's state parks.

In keeping with these fine attractions, the rest of the pool facilities and staff are top-notch, too. Recent upgrades include a new low diving board, new water-chute slide, new pool deck grating and lifeguard stands. A new chlorinator has also been installed for the 2019 season. The facility is 3,700 square feet of space and includes

men's and women's showers and locker rooms. There is also a first aid station, storage room, cashier's alcove and equipment rooms.

The pool features a concession area that is open as long as the pool is open. Food and beverages are not permitted in the pool area, so the concession area has tables for its patrons.

The staff of lifeguards and attendants are prepared to handle any situation. Besides making sure that all is safe, they supervise swimmers and arrange for them to have scheduled rest breaks during the day. Swimming is allowed only when lifeguards are on duty.

The pool officially opens the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend (weather permitting) with a full-time opening scheduled for mid-June. When the complex is open, hours will be 12 noon to 6 p.m., seven days a week until August. Days open during August are pending.

The daily swimming charge for the pool will be \$3 per person for ages three and older. Children at the age of two and younger will be admitted free of charge.

Swimming is allowed only when lifeguards are on duty. Swim suits are mandatory. No flotation devices are allowed and all children still in diapers must wear a swimming approved diaper to be allowed in the pool.

For more information about the pool call 812-689-6424 (park office).

## Park mission statement

The Versailles State Park shares the same mission as all Indiana State Parks: To conserve, manage, and interpret our resources while creating memorable experiences for everyone.

**Vision:** Excellence in stewardship, recreational diversity, interpretation, service and growth resulting in unique places that people respectfully use, enjoy and cherish.

## A good place for summer work

The Versailles State Park is a good place to acquire hands-on experience, and at the same time, work in a beautiful natural setting. Several college students work at the park in the summer.

The state park hires over 30 seasonal workers to work the pool, campgrounds, trails and more. There are currently six full-time staff members. Anyone looking for summer work is encouraged to get in applications by March or April. Employment information can be found online at <http://www.in.gov/dnr/>.

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## Hit the trail!



JARED ROGERS PHOTO

Great sights and sounds, like this small waterfall, can be found along the several types of trails in the park. They include eight miles of hiking trails, 20 miles of mountain bike trails, and 25 miles of horse trails.

Hiking is permitted on all trails, but hikers must yield to mountain bikers or horses. The horse trails are for horses brought to the park, as no horses are available for rent. Annual Horse Tags are \$20 for each horse and the daily horse permit is \$5.

Maps of all trails are provided at the park office and main gate.

## 2019 Upcoming special events

June 1	National Trail Day
June 1-2	Free Fishing Days
June 29	Stargazing in VSP
July 6	Fireworks Lakefront at dusk
August 3	DINO Xterra Triathlon (9:00 a.m.) Registration required
August 10	Volksmarch Series 2019 Walk Oak Grove shelter
August 31	Stargazing in VSP
Sept. 27-29	Hassmer Fest
September 28	National Public Lands Day
October 26	Halloween Trick-or-Treat Campsite Decorating Contest Following Trick-or-Treat (1st, 2nd, 3rd prizes)

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## Friends of Versailles State Park invite motorcyclists to June 29 fundraiser



JARED ROGERS PHOTO

Motorcyclists cross the bridge over Versailles Lake during the 2018 ride. Last year's route began at Hardy Lake with breakfast, continued to Charlestown State Park to ride across the historic bridge, included a poker run at Versailles State Park, and finished with dinner at Clifty Falls. All proceeds raised from the ride were to benefit Friends groups at each park.

The date for 2019's ride has been set for Saturday, June 29. Details regarding routes and parks are still forthcoming. Stay tuned to the newspaper for future details.



JARED ROGERS PHOTO

The Friends of Versailles State Park won overall best float and best float in its class at the 2018 Pumpkin Show parade. The Friends group is active throughout the year, taking educational hikes in the park, hosting walks for kids and families, raising money for park improvements, and sprucing up park landscaping.

The Friends continually welcome new members. Annual memberships are open to individuals (\$15), families (\$25), and sponsors (\$100). Lifetime memberships are also open to individuals (\$150) and families (\$250). Registration brochures are available at the park office during open hours.



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Monday - Friday 8 am - 5:30 pm  
Saturday 8 am - 1 pm  
Closed Sunday**

### Enjoy your stay at Versailles State Park!

*Be sure to come back for these special events:*


- June 8-16** Friendship NMLRA and Flea Markets
- June 22** Versailles Courthouse Day - 5-K Walk/Run, Car Show, Lions Club Chicken BBQ, Farmers Market, and More
- June 27-29** F.A.R.M. Antique Machinery Show Demolition Derby (28th) & Truck Dirt Drags (29th)
- July 6** Star-Spangled Symphony - Batesville
- July 27** American Legion "Taste of Versailles"
- August 3-4** XTERRA & DINO Mountain Bike Series
- September 13-14** Oktoberfest Street Festival - Batesville
- September 14-22** Friendship NMLRA and Flea Markets
- September 25-29** Versailles Pumpkin Show
- October 4-5** Ertel Cellars Wine Festival

*Looking for fresh produce, homemade jellies, etc.?*

- Main Street Versailles Farmers Market - Courthouse Square - Saturdays 9-noon, June 1-Sept. 21**
- Ripley County Farmers Market - Buckeye St., Osgood - Saturdays 8-noon, June-Oct.; Wednesday 2:30-5:30 pm July-Sept.**

**Also take time to see:**

Milan '54 Hoosiers Basketball Museum, Indiana Wine Trail, John Hunt Morgan Trail, Southern Indiana Bicycle Trails, Regional Art Trails, Underground Railroad Trails, and more!



**Stop by the Welcome Center in  
Versailles for more information:**  
 220 East U.S. 50, Versailles  
 812-689-7431 • ripleycountytourism.com



## Visitors channel their inner artist



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Art in the Park, a program organized by the Ripley County Tourism Bureau and hosted at Versailles State Park, was enjoyed by many in April of 2019. Among various art forms shared, participants enjoyed painting, as pictured. The program is possible thanks to grant funding by the Indiana Arts Commission. At the conclusion of the art series, a show was held to display participants' created works.

## VSP welcomes new staff



JARED ROGERS PHOTO

Meet Katy Brower, office manager, and Garrett McAdams, assistant property manager for Versailles State Park. Brower, originally from Hanover, joined the park in March of 2019, moving with her husband and three kids to Holton. McAdams, originally from Brownstown, joined the park in December of 2018 after graduating from Ball State University. Both expressed a love for the outdoors and are excited to help visitors make lasting memories at the park.



# NMLRA NATIONAL SHOOTS

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U.S. 50 - Versailles

Turn right at the park entrance.  
Top of the hill on the right  
*(between the stoplight & UCB Bank)*



## Lake ideal for fishing, boating

Versailles Lake is 230 acres and great for boating or fishing. The lake supports crappie, catfish, bluegill, largemouth bass, carp and suckers.

You must have an Indiana fishing license if you are 18 years of age or older. Indiana residents born before April 1, 1943 do not need a fishing license. Li-

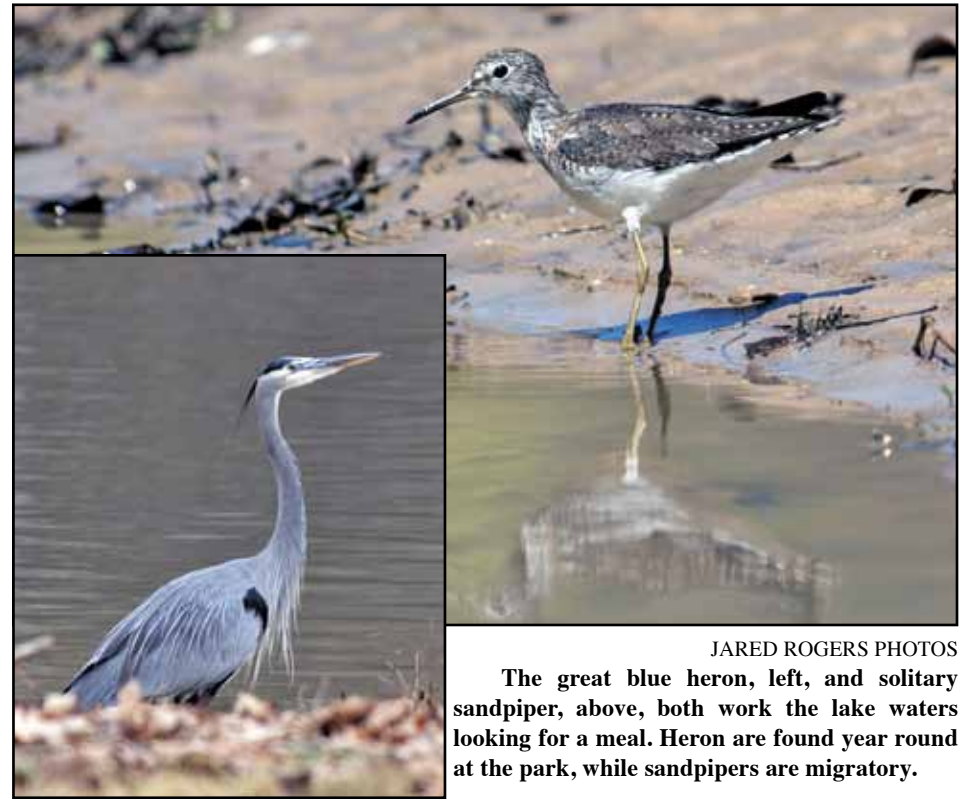
censes are sold at the park office.

Rowboats and canoes can be rented for \$5 per hour or \$20 for the day, plus tax. Kayaks can be rented for \$8 per hour or \$20 for the day, plus tax. Tandem (double) kayaks can be rented for \$12 per hour or \$25 for the day. Life jackets are required and are fur-

nished for all boat rentals.

If you bring your own boat, you will need to purchase an Annual Lake Permit. Annual Lake Permits for motorized boats are \$25 and for non-motorized are \$5. Only electric trolling motors are allowed on the lake.

JARED ROGERS PHOTO



JARED ROGERS PHOTOS

The great blue heron, left, and solitary sandpiper, above, both work the lake waters looking for a meal. Heron are found year round at the park, while sandpipers are migratory.

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## Group Camp great for large parties, reunions

Planning a large gathering; family, or friends reunion? The Versailles State Park features excellent group camping facilities in a pristine atmosphere.

The Laughery Group Camp features 12 cabins with 10 single beds in them. These are not family cabins; they are reserved only for groups. Each cabin has electric, but is not heated. There is a central shower house with bathroom facilities, as well as a dining hall, kitchen, and a recreation hall. The kitchen has a large stove, a walk-in refrigerator, a walk-in freezer, a reach-in refrigerator, and a reach-in freezer. The dining hall seats 120 people.

Groups are responsible for cleaning the camp prior to departure. Each group must bring their own cleaning supplies, with the park furnishing brooms, mops, garbage bags, and toilet paper. When you are ready to check out, please notify the park office at least one hour in advance. Upon checking out, a park employee will inspect the facility with you.

[www.ripleynews.com](http://www.ripleynews.com)

## How can I spot more wildlife?

The Versailles State Park is home to numerous wildlife, from big to small and all shapes and sizes in between. For many, spotting wildlife is the highlight of their trip. The national non-profit group, The Wilderness Society, offers the following tips for increasing your chances to spot more species:

- Many animals feed at dawn and dusk, making these prime viewing times.
- Many bird species migrate in spring and fall, offering a window to see them as they pass through.
- Move slowly and quietly; better yet, pick a comfortable spot to sit still. Listen closely to your surroundings.
- Bring along a good pair of binoculars.
- Blend in by wearing earth tones rather than bright colors.

It is also of the utmost importance to let wildlife stay wild. This means refraining from offering food, keeping a safe distance, and practicing "Leave No Trace" principles while visiting parks and other natural areas. Good luck out there!

## Principles of Leave No Trace

According to the Center for Outdoor Ethics, the seven principles of Leave No Trace provide an easily understood framework of minimum impact practices for anyone visiting the outdoors.

**1. Plan ahead and prepare.** Being well prepared helps everyone stay safe and enjoy their time outdoors, while protecting natural and cultural resources from damage.

**2. Travel and camp on durable surfaces.** Avoid trampling delicate vegetation by staying on marked trails and utilizing appropriate campsites.

**3. Dispose of waste properly.** If you brought it in, plan to pack it out. Never, ever litter.

**4. Leave what you find.** As many mothers instruct, "leave an area in better shape than you found it."

**5. Minimize campfire impacts.** A Leave No Trace fire leaves no evidence behind, such as a burn scar.

**6. Respect wildlife.** Observe wildlife quietly and from a safe distance. Never feed or harass.

**7. Be considerate of other visitors.** Be courteous so that all people in a shared area can enjoy the tranquility of the outdoors.

For more information, visit [LNT.org](http://LNT.org).



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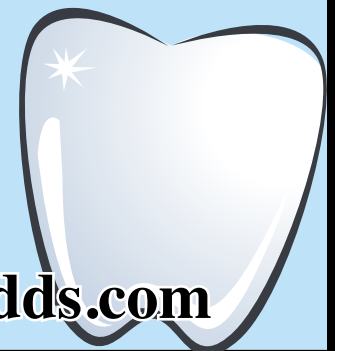


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# Common raptors of Versailles State Park lake

Anglers around Versailles State Park lake aren't the only ones who enjoy catching a fish. Several species of raptors, or birds of prey, live around the lake and hunt its waters regularly. For the past few years, a family of bald eagles has been thriving. They enjoy the lake so much that they've built three nests there over the years and have raised at least three young. Hawks, most commonly the red-tail, but also red-shouldered, broad-winged, and Cooper's have all been sighted around the area. In the summer months, even the osprey can be seen diving into the lake waters vying for a meal.

The photos and information on this page will give advice on identifying some of the likely birds encountered at the lake. Bring binoculars on your next trip to the park to get an even closer look at some of these impressive creatures. For more in-depth information, consider picking up a field-guide on birds of North America, or more specifically the Midwest. Park staff can make specific recommendations for guides on birds as well as other common creatures around the park. Species specific identifiers on this page were gleaned in part from *National Geographic's Field Guide to the Birds of North America* by Jon L. Dunn and Jonathan Alderfer.



JARED ROGERS PHOTO

**A mature bald eagle is identified by its all white head and white tail, while being solid brown throughout its wing span. Its span is larger than any hawk, and displays "finger" like feathers fanning out at the tips. Contrary to a hawk's piercing screech, eagle vocalizations are more staggered, twittering like sounds. They like to fish but will also eat carrion.**

**This characteristic for eating carrion, in addition to stealing food from other birds, led Ben Franklin to lament the fact it was chosen as the national bird. Franklin is said to have thought the wild turkey was a more respectful and courageous creature.**



JARED ROGERS PHOTO

**An immature bald eagle can be confused with a hawk, due to the fact that it has various degrees of brownish, mottled colors underneath. Eagles take about five years to fully mature and develop their white head and tail. Along the way, they will show various, streaky colors. Juveniles, like the one pictured above, will behave similarly to adults and be nearly as large. White patches under the wings also help discriminate the young eagle from a hawk. As the immature eagle nears maturity, its head slowly begins to become brighter shades of white.**



JARED ROGERS PHOTO

**A red-tailed hawk's key identifier is found in its name: its glowing, amber colored tail feathers. They shine brighter in sunlight, as seen above, but will still appear reddish any time. The hawk's wingspan is shorter than an eagle's, has more rounded wing tips, and has brown strips to the side of the head. Hawks are known to more readily eat rodents, reptiles, and amphibians rather than fish.**

**Compared to a red-tailed hawk, a red-shouldered hawk is smaller. The shoulders, to the side of the head, will be overall more amber colored than white, while its tail is more brownish.**

**The broad-winged hawk resembles the red-shouldered in size and general appearance, but is more likely to be found in woodland areas.**



JARED ROGERS PHOTO

**An osprey will display a significant amount of white colored feathers on its underside, as well as a brown streak behind its eye and down its neck. It is smaller than a bald eagle, and behaviorally, spends less time soaring high in the sky. The osprey is commonly seen hovering over water, and it dives feet first to catch prey, as seen in the photo.**



JARED ROGERS PHOTO

**The turkey vulture often gets a bad wrap as humans find its carrion-eating habits "gross." However, the vulture plays an incredibly important role in the ecosystem by cleaning up what might otherwise fester and spread disease.**

**The turkey vulture can be identified by its bare, red head, and blocked, two-tone wings (dark brown above and lighter below). Unlike hawks and eagles, it will rarely flap its wings more than 10 times in a row in flight, preferring instead to soar silently overhead.**



## Archeologists dig up the past



JARED ROGERS PHOTO

Throughout the summer of 2018, archeologists from Ball State University surveyed several sites in the park to learn about early settlers. They presented their findings to the public in the spring of 2019. Pictured, Kevin Nolan shows an artifact to students from South Ripley Elementary School.

## History of Versailles State Park

In August of 1934, the National Park Service announced plans to develop a federal park on 1,700 acres of marginal Ripley County farmland. The following January, more than 200 young men known as Company 596 arrived to begin work. After building barracks, a mess hall, administration building, and recreation building, the CCC crew developed the park through tree planting, native stone masonry, wood construction, road construction, watershed and erosion control, and water construction projects. Most of their original work is still present throughout Versailles State Park. To-

day the park is 5,988 acres, making it the second largest state park in Indiana.

The dam was built in 1954 across Laughery Creek to form Versailles Lake, which served as a water source for Versailles and recreation area for visitors to the park. A swimming pool complex opened in 1987. Laughery Creek runs through the park, slowly carving its way through Silurian reef limestone, creating rugged cliffs and exposing fossil-rich, 475-million year old Ordovician rock. The park's beautiful hardwood forests provide habitat for songbirds and a variety of wildlife.

## Firewood on DNR Properties

Over 140 pests can be moved in firewood. To conserve our Hoosier forests and campground shade trees, please adhere to a few rules. You can bring firewood from any tree species into a state park, reservoir, state forest, or state fish and wildlife area if:

- It is from your home in Indiana and all bark has been removed. Remove a quarter-inch of sapwood beneath the bark, too, if possible.
- It is bundled and bears a USDA compliance stamp.
- It is purchased from a local firewood vendor outside the property and has the state compliance stamp.
- It is purchased from the property camp store or on-site firewood vendor and has the state compliance stamp.
- The firewood is kiln-dried scrap lumber.



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# Park doing its part for pollinator preservation



Beginning in the early spring, Versailles State Park is one of the best local sites to see wildflower blooms and the pollinating insects they attract.

Just as the forest floor begins to warm, spring ephemerals pop through the leaf litter, enticing ants as well as early bees, beetles, and flies. Bloodroot, pictured above, was one of several woodland ephemeral wildflowers seen creating a carpet of color along park trails in April. These woodland perennials take advantage of the lengthening days of spring, soaking in sunlight before the trees have begun to push out new leaves. By the time the canopy is unfurled, many of the woodland wildflowers have receded back into the soil, where they lie in wait to bloom again next spring.

As spring progresses into summer, more wildflow-



er blooms are found along forest edges and in prairies, where more sunlight is available.

The bumblebee, seen above, is just one of several types of bees that are found buzzing from flower to flower throughout the warm season. Additionally, as the season progresses, more and more butterflies emerge from their cocoons to flit about the fields and feed on nectar.

At right, a great spangled fritillary enjoys common milkweed in bloom just behind the nature center at the park last summer. In addition to hosting the monarch caterpillar, milkweed provides food and shelter to dozens of local insects. Along with being found at the park's Monarch Waystation, the plant is also commonly found in the sections of prairie maintained throughout the park grounds.



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SUBMITTED PHOTO

Halloween in the campgrounds is a perennial favorite for kids, adults and staff alike. Campers go all out with their spooky and fun decorations. Reserve a site well in advance if you'd like to camp throughout the weekend's festivities.

Saturday, October 26 is the 2019 date set for trick-or-treating and the campsite decorating contest. Follow the Versailles State Park and the Friends of Versailles State Park on Facebook for more information as the time nears.

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## Still time to save ash trees

Ash trees compose almost 20% of Indiana's forests. Within the next 10 years, 95% of all the ash trees in the state will have been lost to the Emerald Ash Borer. The Indiana Parks Alliance is working with the Division of State Parks and the Division of Nature Preserves to protect 100 mature, seed-producing ash trees in our state parks and state-owned nature preserves for the future. Selected trees will receive a chemical treatment that kills the borer, yet does not harm the tree. To donate to the "Save Our Ash Trees" campaign, visit [IndianaParksAlliance.com](http://IndianaParksAlliance.com).



JARED ROGERS PHOTOS

## Silly critters

Geese and squirrels are two of the more comical species of wildlife seen in the park.

Although geese are migratory birds, many call the park home year-round. This time of mid-to-late spring is when they are often seen with their chicks in tow.

Squirrels can be spotted year-round, often hopping around the forest floor and traipsing from tree to tree.



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