



# Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds eNewsletter

#15—April 11, 2013

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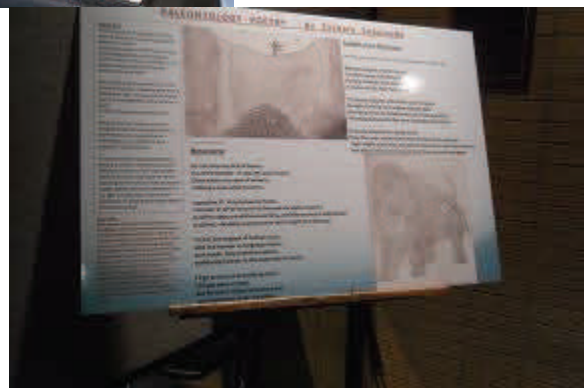
**John Schwabe**  
Project Coordinator

## Western Interior Paleontology Society Symposium

On the weekend of March 16 -17, 2013, Friends' members and Board members attended

the Western Interior Paleontology Society Symposium at the School of Mines in Golden, Colorado. Those pictured manned the booth for the Florissant Fossil Beds NM and the Friends. The Symposium this year was entitled "Ice Worlds and Their Fossils." The presentations were all very amazing, presented by people like Dr. Emmett Evanoff who has done seminars for the Friends before. Many people visited the Florissant Fossil Beds NM

booth. Much fun was had by everyone. This Symposium is held every 2 years and is well worth going to if fossils are your interest.

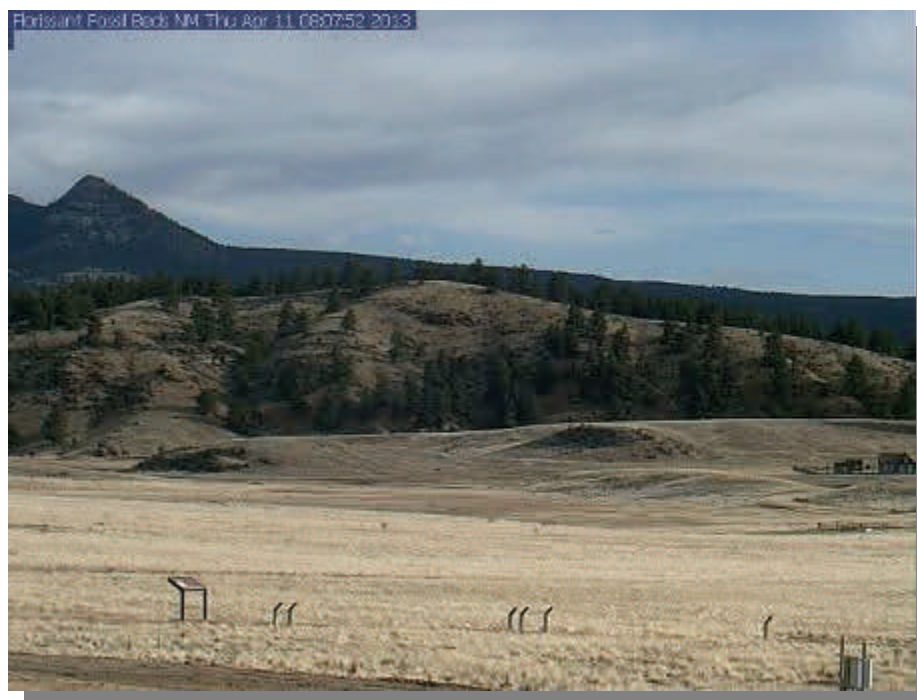


## Upcoming Dates

**On Sunday, April 14, 2013, Dr. Herb Meyer** will present a program at the Florissant Library at 2 PM on the new book, "Saved in Time: The Fight to Establish the Florissant Fossil Beds" by Dr. Estella Leopold and Dr. Meyer. Dr. Meyer's presentation will highlight the story told in the book of the unsung heroes of the Florissant Fossil Beds NM. The book itself exposes the villains as the story of the establishment of the Monument unfolds. This program is the monthly Chautauqua program held by the Pikes Peak Historical Society. The Friends are co-sponsoring the program and will have copies of the book available for a donation. The copies available have been signed by both authors. Dr. Meyer is the paleontologist for the Monument, Adjunct Curator, University of Colorado at Boulder and a Research Associate at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Dr. Meyer will be available for personal autographs at the end of the program. Please join us for a very interesting program. Admission is free but seating is limited.

**On June 14 - 16, 2013, the "Opening Celebration" for the new visitor center** at the Florissant Fossil Beds will be held. It will be a fee free 3 day celebration. The ribbon cutting will be on Friday with many activities scheduled for all three days including tours of the paleo lab and the sustainable energy components of the building. Please watch the Friends e-newsletters for a complete listing of all events.

Live Webacam at the Park. Click [HERE](#) to see the current view.



*View of the Florissant valley and Crystal Peak*

## National Park Week

### **Celebrate National Park Week at Florissant Fossil Beds, April 20 – 28, 2013 with 5 free days, ranger programs, and a new photography exhibit**

Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument, the National Park Service, and the [National Park Foundation](#) invite everyone to get to know their national parks during [National Park Week](#).

This year's dates are April 20 – 28, with free admission to all national parks, including Florissant Fossil Beds from April 22 – 26.

Florissant Fossil Beds will kick off this year's celebration with a free, children's music concert at the Woodland Park Library on Saturday April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013 at 1pm. Come dance, sing, and learn about our parks. Participating children will receive a Junior Ranger Badge.

Monday through Friday of National Park Week will be free admission to Florissant Fossil Beds where you will be able to see the park's new visitor center and research facility, hike some of the park's 14 miles of trails, visit the grounds of a historic homestead, and see the park film. Children can participate in the Junior Ranger Program at any time.

On Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, the park will host the opening of a new, travelling photography exhibit that was created by teens from the youth center at Fort Carson. The opening of the exhibit will take place from 10AM - 12PM.

On Sunday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, volunteer interpretive ranger Allan Studer will lead an interpretive talk and hike at Florissant Fossil Beds from 11 AM until 1 PM.

For more information about Florissant Fossil Beds' activities, please call (719) 748 – 3253 or visit the website at [www.nps.gov/flfo](http://www.nps.gov/flfo).

To find a list of ranger-led programs at other National Parks and to plan your adventures visit [www.nationalparkweek.org](http://www.nationalparkweek.org).

National Park Week is a perfect time to celebrate America's best idea – our national parks," said Neil Mulholland, President and CEO of the National Park Foundation. "We are proud to stand with our partners at the National Park Service in presenting this annual event and hope everyone takes advantage of this opportunity to enjoy and support these outstanding places."



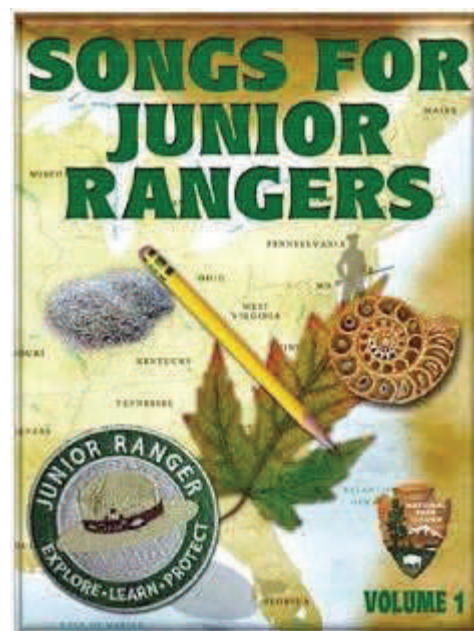
## Songs For Junior Rangers: An Interview With Jeff Wolin

Submitted by [NPT Staff \(/users/npt-staff\)](#) on March 26, 2013 - 2:03am

Have you heard about the new award-winning Songs for Junior Rangers CD? Written by Ranger Jeff Wolin of Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument, this collection of kid-friendly songs was released recently by the National Park Service, and will have kids singing, dancing, and laughing as they learn fun facts about history and nature.

The songs cover a variety of subjects, including elk in "Wapiti Hoppity," caving in "Spelunka Funka," glaciers in "Frozen Bulldozin'," and Mount Rushmore in "Four Presidents." Musical elements include hip hop, reggae, blues, jazz, rock, zydeco, funk, and even polka. The CD was made possible through a grant from the National Park Foundation and is distributed and marketed by Eastern National. Song samples are available on Eastern National's YouTube website, [here](#).

The 20-song CD includes a poster map with a special Junior Ranger game, and a booklet with the lyrics to each song, so kids can sing along. Proceeds from the sales of Songs for Junior Rangers support educational and interpretive programs in national parks.



Along with Ranger Jef Wolin, Rangers Matt Hampsey and Bruce Barnes from New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park appear on the album, as well as many talented New Orleans musicians. Navajo singer/songwriter Krishel Augustine and the Youth Ambassador Program from New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park are featured on the CD, in addition to celebrity guests such as the A Capella group Committed, Grammy Award-nominated children's group Trout Fishing in America, and PBS personality Aaron Nigel Smith. The CD has already won several prestigious awards, including the National Park Service's Freeman Tilden Award and a top honor from DadNabbit, a popular children's music blogger. Songs for Junior Rangers also recently won the Parents' Choice Gold Award®.

"These witty songs are a great way for children to discover the wonders of national parks," said National Park Service Director Jonathan B. Jarvis. "The official motto of the Junior Ranger Program is 'Explore, Learn, and Protect' national parks and I think this music will certainly inspire children to do just that."

We recently interviewed Ranger Jeff Wolin to learn more about his music and how the Songs for Junior Rangers CD came to fruition.

***Hi Jeff, and thanks for talking with us today. We love the new Songs for Junior Rangers CD!***

Thanks! We are all really excited about it too.

***Where are you from originally? Which college did you attend?***

I was born and raised in Elmhurst, Illinois a suburb of Chicago. I went to the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana and studied Geography.

***What inspired you to become a park ranger? How long have you been with the National Park Service? What is your favorite part of the job?***

I did an internship through an organization called the

Student Conservation Association at Isle Royale National Park. After a summer living on an island in Lake Superior and hanging out with lots of moose I had no doubt that I would be a Park Ranger for the rest of my career. I've been a Park Ranger for 18 years. It's really hard to pick one "favorite" part of the job. I LOVE my job. All I can do is give you a list of favorite things: working in beautiful and historic places, the sense of mission to protect the beautiful and historic places, that passionate and fun people that I work with, and the amazing people I meet in the visitor center and out on the trails, and finally being able to tell the stories of these powerful places.

***How long have you been at Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument? Which other parks have you worked? Which park was your favorite and why?***

I have been at Florissant Fossil Beds for 10 years. Again, a tough one to nail down...so here is another list for you. Wind Cave because it was my first park as a seasonal and I got married there! The Everglades because it was so ALIVE, Canyonlands because of the magic landscape, and Florissant because of the fun and creative things we are doing.

***How long have you been a musician? Which instruments do you play and how did you get started playing?***

My mom would tell you that I began my musical career singing in the shower when I was little. I started playing guitar when I was in college but not seriously. I began writing children's music in 2002 with my guitar teacher and friend and we made a science album called, "In Your Backyard." The National Park music started in 2009. I still continue to take guitar and vocal lessons. I'm still learning. I feel like I'm barely a musician. I mostly play guitar, but I'm learning blues harmonica.

***How did you go about initiating the Songs for Junior Rangers CD? Did it start with one song?***

Yes, in fact, Songs for Junior Rangers started with just one song. I wrote Explore, Learn, and Protect for my son who was working on his Junior Ranger book one day in our living room. The Wash-



ington Office supported the recording of the song and it was put on WebRangers. Then we decided to have a Junior Ranger Concert on the Mall and I wrote 6 more songs to have a set. The floodgates opened and songs kept coming. At some point, I proposed the album idea to Julia Washburn (Associate Director of Interpretation and Education, NPS) and she liked the idea. She helped connect me to Eastern National and the National Park Foundation. At



about the same time, I met Ranger Matt Hampsey from New Orleans Jazz. He said to me, "We can produce your album, that's what we do at JAZZ!!!" The partnership formed and it was awesome!

***What was it like to collaborate with other rangers and musicians?***

It is probably one of the most fun things I have ever done in my life. It was also a great honor to be amongst such great musicians. I really have to thank Ranger Matt Hampsey again and again because he produced the album and helped take the songs I wrote to amazing levels. All of the rangers at New Orleans Jazz are amazing. There were so many guests and contributors, there is hardly enough time to thank them all. I'm a real extrovert and people person so I loved making millions of phone calls and making connections all over the country.

***How does it feel to hear Grammy Award winning artists performing your songs?***

Again, it was a great honor to have amazing guest musicians on the album. Trout Fishing in America is a four-time Grammy nominated children's group, Aaron Nigel Smith is an award winning musician and PBS personality, Committed won NBC's Sing – Off and an NAACP nomination, and Johnette Downing is another award winning children's musician. As far as Grammy winners, I believe that a couple of our engineers on the album had been on Grammy Award winning albums. Everyone involved in the production of this album is hoping that we win the Grammy for Best Children's Album in 2013.

***Which song on the CD is your favorite and why?***

Yet another tough question to answer. It really changes on what mood I'm in I guess. If I absolutely had to pick one...it would probably be Turtle Up Turtle Down. I've been a lifelong Parrothead (Jimmy Buffett fan) and that was my attempt at a Jimmy Buffett style song....for kids.

***How do you think the Songs for Junior Rangers CD encourages kids to appreciate national parks and lead a healthy lifestyle?***

Music is powerful. It has the ability to connect us intellectual and emotionally to concepts. And it does so on many levels. Songs can lift us up, inspire us to run and workout, and or make us think and reflect. I'm hoping

***How do kids react when you perform for them?***

I try to keep my performances as interactive as possible and get kids and families moving. So, I guess I would answer that question by saying that kids react to the performances by: doing the limbo, acting like a bison, singing, laughing, pretending they are in a cave, dancing in a parade, etc.

***Do you have any notable stories about any of the songs, the creation of the CD or performing the songs that you would like to share?***

It has been three years of unbridled creativity and joy. A part of my heart and soul are in that album somewhere. During the process, I met some amazingly inspiring people. I fell in love with New Orleans. I believe I have become a better musician and songwriter.

***The CD has won several prestigious awards, including the NPS's Freeman Tilden Award and most recently, the Parents' Choice Gold Award®. How does that make you feel?***

I feel honored and grateful!

***Anything else you would like to share?***

Enjoy, Enjoy, Enjoy – that's what my grandmother used to say.

*For more information about the Songs for Junior Rangers CD, please contact Ranger Jeff Wolin at (719) 748-3253. To purchase the Songs for Junior Rangers CD, [click here](#) or call 877-NAT-PARK. To download a digital copy of the CD, [click here](#) for Amazon, or [here](#) for iTunes. For wholesale opportunities, email Mark Vineburg at [markvineburg@easternnational.org](mailto:markvineburg@easternnational.org).*

