



Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds eNewsletter

#3—February 13, 2012

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Please don't forget to join us for the Great Backyard Bird Count this Saturday, February 18th from 9 AM to Noon at the Florissant Fossil Beds NM. There will be a brief introduction to the event and then you can do your count for as long as you wish anywhere from 15 minutes to the full 3 hours. We will be based in the yurt where we will have a fire in the stove and hot chocolate and "goodies." Please call Sally McCracken at 687-9204 to reserve a spot. Thank you and hope to see you there.

What is the GBBC? The GBBC is an annual event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the continent. Anyone can participate, from beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for long as you like for each day of the event.

National Trails Day - Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument Saturday, June 2nd 9 am-3 pm

Join us for National Trails Day at the **Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument**, sponsored by **The Friends of the Fossil Beds** and **The Coalition for the Upper South Platte**. Help complete trail maintenance on a one mile section of the **Hornbek Wildlife Loop Trail**, to include:

- construction of rolling dips and rock water bars
- bridge maintenance on Grape Creek
- rock staircase construction
- building an elevated retaining wall

When completed, the **Hornbek Wildlife Loop** will be restored to a safer trail with less erosion - a culmination of two year's work by numerous volunteers, partners and park staff. This is a free even and great learning experience. Tasks will range from moderate to strenuous. Participants will receive free admission to the monument *on that day* and a guided interpretative tour of the Hornbeck Homestead following the project. Minimum age: is 10, and must have adult supervision – pets are not allowed. **Registration is required**, please contact: Lisa@uppersouthplatte.org or call CUSP at: 719- 748-0033.

Don't forget to mark you calendars for the Friends 25th Anniversary on Saturday, August 18, 2012



“POST TO PARKS” PROJECT AT FLORISSANT FOSSIL BEDS NATIONAL MONUMENT RECEIVES NATIONAL

AWARD FOR ENGAGING FORT CARSON YOUTH IN ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS



The Mile High Youth Corps (MHYC) involvement in the “Post to Parks” project will receive national recognition as The Corps Network’s Project of the Year. This award will be presented as part of The Corps Network National Conference at a ceremony on Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C., on Wednesday, February 15, 2012. Mile High Youth Corps Southern Front Range Site Director Nancy Wilson shared, *“We were thrilled to receive this recognition and share it with our friends at the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument. We hope it will spur other Corps and parks to take a look at creative opportunities to introduce more young people to the outdoors as well.”*

The Post to Parks program is an effort by Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument to reach out to and engage the military community to promote connections with our national parks. The Post to Parks program seeks to provide relevant, recreational, and healthy experiences that benefit the military community and foster a sense of stewardship for our public lands.

This past summer, MHYC Corpsmembers brought 17 youth from Fort Carson on a four-day educational adventure at Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument. The young people from Fort Carson were actively involved in service learning activities, fossil labs, environmental education, and interpretive hikes. They worked each day with MHYC Corpsmembers on trail maintenance land conservation projects. The Fort Carson youth also had the opportunity to interact with National Park staff and learn about both volunteer and career opportunities in the National Park System.

“Our goal was to inspire everyone to the next level. We had rangers and volunteers comprised of college students as the coordinators for the project while Mile High Youth Corps stepped up as the work leaders and instructors, and the Fort Carson youth got a good look





at life in MHYC and the National Park Service. The Mile High Youth Corps team led, trained, and cared for the teens and there was a great connection there. We've been working with the Mile High Youth Corps for years and we were confident they were the right team for this project, they did an outstanding job. At the end of the project, everyone was already building momentum for next summer and we've had many of the teens back in the park already," said Florissant Fossil Bed National Monument's facility manager Troy Fuhrman.

The Post to Parks program was rewarding for MHYC Corpsmembers, park staff, and Fort Carson youth alike. MHYC Corpsmember, Melanie Weber-Sauer, commented, *"It's been really great working with the kids from Carson, a lot of them seem eager to learn about the outdoors and the national park. It has been great for us, it gives us the chance to exercise some leadership and repeat some of the knowledge we have learned."* Fort Carson youth participant Marvin Gray agreed with Melanie's sentiment, he said, *"It's been a great experience to come out here and look at the beauty, work on the trails, and gain a new life experience."*

About Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument and the Post to Parks Program

Florissant Fossil Beds is a 6,000 acre national park area in south central Colorado. It was set aside to protect and preserve one of the richest fossil deposits in the world. It's location near Colorado Springs, a strong military community, led to the creation of Post to Parks in 2009.

Since then, the Monument has helped connect thousands from the military community to their national parks through youth education programs, employment, volunteer projects, family getaways, community programs, and by providing disabled veterans with lifetime passes to their public lands.

The name "Post to Parks" refers to the close and special relationship that the military and the National Park Service has shared since the late 1800's when army rangers protected Yellowstone, Sequoia, and Yosemite. Since their inception, national park areas have been places where the military community has trained, relaxed, visited with their families, and sought recreation and healing. Post to



Parks aims to continue to grow this relationship and invites new generations of military families to enjoy and take part in the protection of our nation's parks, the places that they all defend. More information can be found at <http://www.nps.gov>.

Post to Parks Photos courtesy of Troy Fuhrman, Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument.

Our congratulations to the Friends' Board member, Mr. John Schwabe who just received the Teller County Cheers award for the Environmental Volunteer of the Year for his work on the Post to Parks Project.

About Mile High Youth Corps

Mile High Youth Corps (MHYC) helps youth make a difference in themselves and their community through meaningful service opportunities and educational experiences. The Corps employs young adults on projects in neighborhoods, public lands and open spaces throughout Metro Denver and the Southern Front Range. By integrating paid work experience on community projects with career exploration, education, and lifeskills training, MHYC helps youth gain the knowledge, skills and motivation they need to make positive changes in their community, their own lives and the world. For more information, contact Alexandra Lee at alexandral@mhyc.net or 720.407.7281 (ext. 333) or visit www.milehighyouthcorps.org.

Media Contact:

Mile High Youth Corps: Alexandra Lee / 303.641.1435 / <mailto:alexandral@mhyc.net>

Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument: Jeff Wolin / 719.748. 3253 / mailto:jeff_wolin@nps.gov

Photo and Interview Opportunity: - Southern Front Range Site Director is available for interview -
Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument Park Staff are available for interview

Sexi, Peru and the Monument

Over the last several years, the Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds have developed a very unique relationship with a fossil area in Sexi, Peru. Working with Dr. Herb Meyer, the paleontologist at the Fossil Beds and his summer interns, the Friends have established a partnership with a similar group in Sexi making it the first of such relationships within the National Park Service. We have helped finance a museum and public relation material. We hope to share a variety of articles about Sexi in the next e-letters.



History of Events

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- 1994** • First fossil specimens from Sexi brought to the Natural History Museum of the Universidad Nacional Mayor San Marcos in Lima, Peru
- 1995-6** • Guillermo Morales and Isabel Prado travel to Sexi. Their reports stress the scientific importance of the fossils, the need to protect the site and fossils, and the potential of tourism to improve socioeconomic conditions in Sexi.
- 1997** • Peruvian law protects the fossils as part of patrimony of the nation.
- 2000** • The Peruvian postal service issues a stamp featuring the fossil forest (pictured right).
 • Grant received from the American Philosophical Society
- 2004** • Research grant from the The National Science Foundation
- 2005** • First survey of the extent and vulnerability of the fossils conducted
 • Samples taken to date the rocks containing fossil wood
 • Fossil woods and leaves collected for scientific analysis with permit from the Peruvian government
 • The modern flora of Sexi surveyed
- 2007** • Inventory and assessment report of fossils presented to the National Institute of Culture and town officials of Sexi
 • Additional fossil leaves collected for scientific study
- 2008** • International Agreement signed governing the scientific study and curation of the fossils, as well as the administration of the fossil site
- 2009** • Interpretive brochures and exhibit posters prepared
 • The Association for the Preservation and Defense of the Fossils of the District of Sexi (APDFS) founded
 • A database of modern flora at Sexi made available online through Clark University
 • Partnership between APDFS and The Friends of Florissant Fossils Beds established
- 2011** • Geologists from the Instituto Geológico Minero y Metalúrgico (INGEMMET) carry out additional geological survey work.



Photographs on the stamp featuring the fossil forest were taken by Heinz Plenge, a renowned Peruvian nature photographer. The stamp was issued on December 29, 2000.



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<http://peru.fossilbeds.org>