



Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds eNewsletter

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Every Fossil Needs a Friend

#29—September 2015

A Great Summer—A Summer Full of Learning and Fun

This summer's Friends' seminars were truly fun for all for the participants and those who hosted. The 8 seminars touched on natural resources, paleo, geo, archaeology, storytelling, geography and technology thus providing a large variety of topics to choose from.

These seminars provided Adams State University graduate credit and BOCES CE credit for teachers. 44 half graduate credits were earned by the participants and several teachers opted for BOCES credit.



Highlights of the seminars included: A hike on the new geologic trail showing us where the new waysides will be placed, great hands-on activities to do teaching students about archaeology, a hike with Enos Mills who came down from Rocky Mountain NP to spend the day with us and wildflowers galore filled two days with wonderful moments identifying well over one hundred different plants.

During the Follow a Fossil: Behind the Scenes of the Florissant Fossil Beds NM seminar, all participants met all of the paleontology interns



Summer Brings Many Projects for Paleo Staff

Dr. Herb Meyer

I'm Herb Meyer, the Paleontologist. We had seven interns in the Paleontology Division this summer who accomplished a lot, and we want to show you some of the results! Two of the interns worked on creating content and videos for a new kiosk exhibit and virtual lab tour for the visitor center. Two other interns developed four new wayside exhibits for a new Geology Trail. One of the interns collaborated with a scientist in Virginia to discover that Florissant has not only one but now two species of ostracods, a microscopic crustacean. We also had an intern shared with BLM who worked on a new kids' booklet about the geology of the Goldbelt Byway. Several of the interns worked on projects with our collections, one worked in the archive, and one worked to monitor the condition of our fossil sites. All of the interns shared in making a seminar presentation for the Friends on July 25th. Each of the interns applied their own creativity to achieve some amazing results!



Conni O'Connor



My name is Conni O'Connor and I have been the Museum Technician for Florissant Fossil Beds for the last 5 years. I am employed through the Pathways program that allows the opportunity to work for the National Park's Service while completing my education. I am working on my Bachelor's degree at UCCS in Biology (Ecology and Evolution option) with a minor in Museum Studies. I do many things within the Paleontology Department, including, but not limited to, collections management, preparation of specimens, directing intern projects, balancing the paleo division budget, and keeping Dr. Meyer organized. I am also working on research project using floral composition attempting to identify seasonality within a section of the Middle Shale Unit.

Dipa Desai



My name is Dipa Desai. I am a graduate of University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in Biology. I was the Mosaics Intern this year at the fossil beds and was involved in two main projects and assisted in several others. The first was creating content for the new touch screen kiosk. The second was an original research project investigating the ostracods which are small shrimp-like animals with clam-like shells. I also created a site bulletin about the microfossils of the Florissant area for visitors who show interest in fossils beyond what they can usually see with the naked eye. I also assisted with some of the Inventory and Monitoring program

which allowed me to see more of the park than I would have been able to do otherwise.

Emily Thorpe

My name is Emily Thorpe and I am an Environmental Geoscience major at Winona State University in Minnesota. My internship was sponsored by the



Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds. Throughout the summer I have been helping the Florissant Fossil Beds with the annual inventory and monitoring of paleontological resources in order to make sure they are not being disturbed. I have also assisted with the production of informational videos for a new touch-screen kiosk exhibit as well as creating a wayside for a new geologic trail that highlights the Pikes Peak Granite. I have learned much about how a paleontology lab runs as well as its workings within the National Park Service. I will be returning to Minnesota in the fall to finish my senior year, and the things I have learned here will give me an advantage not only in my classes, but also in looking for jobs once I graduate in the spring.

Mariah Slovacek

My name is Mariah Slovacek. I am currently a Masters in Paleontology student at South Dakota School of Mines and Technology planning to graduate this December. I use high-powered microscopes to look at tiny structures in the enamel of plesiosaurs, ancient marine reptiles often with long necks and flippers. I interned at Florissant Fossil Beds last summer as a GIP GeoCorps intern and returned this year as a Guest Scientist, also through GeoCorps. This year, I have been involved in a number of projects with more to come as I am here until the end of December. This summer I have mainly been focusing on the stability of the shale collections, designing three new waysides for the monument's new Geologic Trail, organizing bulk collections of fossils, and designing experiments to help future shale conservation and integration into collections.



Ryan Haupt



My name is Ryan Haupt. I'm a PhD candidate at the University of Wyoming studying paleontology. This summer I worked on a number of projects, mostly focused around the development of new digital content for the park. We are installing a new touch-screen kiosk in the visitors' center. I have been focusing on content, what the kiosk will actually display to the user. This involves writing scripts, shooting videos, and editing the videos that will be uploaded to the kiosk. The kiosk is especially neat because new videos can be uploaded at any time, allowing us to tailor new content as new discoveries about the park's fossil history are made. I am also developing augmented reality (AR) content for the park's waysides. Augmented reality in this sense refers to using a smartphone app that 'recognizes' the wayside exhibits. Once recognized, custom content can be delivered to the user. For example, for those who want to learn more about the geology of the region, the waysides could bring up a short audio recording from the park paleontologist where he explains more about that topic at each point. The app could also access videos, articles, graphics, animations; really anything we want. There are a lot of possibilities and we're really excited to implement it around the park. I have also been working to invigorate the social media presence of the park. I have been trying to streamline the way the park uses social media as well as make sure we're using it often enough that our followers feel en-

gaged, entertained, and informed about the goings on of the park. It is my hope that my endeavors this summer help raise the stature of the park and create a broader awareness of its wonderful resources.

Christine Johnson

My name is Christine Johnson. I am an undergraduate at the University of Colorado Boulder, studying integrated physiology. I work for the university's archives and interned at FLFO as the summer archivist intern. This past summer I worked primarily on correctly inventorying the paleontology publications relevant to Florissant. This included copying, scanning, and using OCR (Optical Character Recognition) to provide a searchable database of all the publications. Beyond this project, I helped the park staff find miscellaneous documentation about the park located in the archives and assisted the paleontology staff with other small tasks.



Paige Laterndresse



I am Paige Latendresse and I am finishing my Bachelor's degree at Northern Arizona University. I am majoring in Geology with a Paleontology emphasis and minoring in Biology, and I have my Associate of Science degree in Biology. I am passionate about art as well as science, and this summer I have been able to combine both passions into my projects as a GeoCorps intern. I am the first GeoCorps intern to experience a shared internship between two government agencies - the Bureau of Land Management and the National Park Service. I have spent 1/3 of my internship at Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument and 2/3 of my internship at the BLM Royal Gorge Field Office in Canon City. I have been working with both agencies on a few projects, focusing primarily on creating illustrations for a Jr. Explorer activity booklet on the Gold Belt Byway. I have also spent time working with the fossils in the museum collection, as well as assisting other interns with inventory and monitoring paleontological sites. I am so thrilled to have had this opportunity, and I am looking forward to applying what I have learned this summer to my upcoming classes.

It's a Double Header on October 17th 2015

And no, it's not Boys of October playing in the World Series.

It's time for the Friends' of the Florissant Fossil Beds annual general membership business meeting and the PPHS annual fundraiser auction. Both will be held on October 17th.

Start the day at 9:30 am in the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument Auditorium for the Friends annual Business Meeting. Friends' president Jeff Proper will recap the last year and discuss the way forward. Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument Superintendent Michelle Wheatley will highlight the monument's accomplishments and how the Friends can help during the upcoming year. The formal meeting will end with election of new Board of Directors.

If you've ever wanted to be involved in the governance of a charitable organization, now is the time! The Friends are looking to fill several vacancies on the board with enthusiastic volunteers who are not afraid to roll up their sleeves and pitch in. Upon completion of the formal meeting, Monument Paleontologist Dr. Herb Meyer and Trail Coordinator John Schwalbe will lead interested participants on a 45 minute geologic trail walk that will be highlighted by the new interpretive way station signage. The event will culminate in a potluck lunch starting at 11:30.

Continue your day by driving to the Lake George Charter School and attending the annual Pikes Peak Historical Society fundraiser auction. Doors open at noon for preview and the auction begins at 2:00 pm. There will be many gift certificates and miscellaneous items and a snack lunch available for purchase. Payment for items may be made by cash, check or credit card. The proceeds are critical to supporting the PPHS's museum in Florissant, paying for utilities and the mortgage. Bid early, bid often!!

You do not have to be a member of either organization to participate, but non-members are encouraged to hit a home run by joining on the spot!



GeoCorp GIP Intern—Thank You

Emily Thorpe
GIP GeoCorps Intern
Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument
8/6/2015

Dear Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds,

I would like to thank you for sponsoring me as an intern here at the Fossil Beds this summer. It has been an amazing experience and one that I will never forget. The people here have been so welcoming and indeed, a pleasure to work with. I will be returning to Winona State University in Minnesota in the fall to finish my undergraduate degree in environmental geoscience and I cannot wait to share my experiences from these past few months.

Throughout the summer I have completed the yearly inventory and monitoring of paleontological resources. This has included photo and written documentation of flooding around a few of the petrified stumps, as well as erosion from repeated days of heavy rainfall. I have also added one new site (#76) to those that will need monitoring in the future.

In addition to the yearly Inventory and Monitoring I have created a new wayside that focuses on the Pikes Peak Granite and will be placed next to the bridge on the Hornbeck Wildlife Loop Trail in front of an outcrop of that same granite. The wayside highlights the extent of the Pikes Peak Granite throughout Colorado as well as the rock's formation beneath the surface of the Earth and the connection between 1.08 billion years ago and the present day. The diagram of the Pikes Peak Granite intrusion is a completely original work. This was necessary in order to make it as geologically accurate to the Pikes Peak region as possible.

As the new touch screen kiosk exhibit will feature everyone in the paleontology department, I have also played a role in creating the films that will feature the people and the work we do. I have been featured in the Inventory and Monitoring video as well as the video explaining the excavation process here at the Florissant Fossil Beds.

By sponsoring me in this internship you have made it possible for these exhibits to go from an idea to a reality that will increase the visitor's knowledge of both the Paleontology Department and the geology of the Florissant area. I have learned much during my time here at the Fossil Beds including, but not limited to, the functions of a paleontology lab, how to convey scientific ideas to the public, and how to preserve and protect our fossil resources for generations to come. It has been a privilege to work here and for that I must thank you for giving me the opportunity to be a part of this community.

Yours Truly,

Emily Thorpe

GIP GeoCorps Participant 2015

Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument



Help!! Great News for the Friends of Florissant Fossil Beds

In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service, the Woodland Park Lighter Side of Christmas organization has selected the Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds to be the non-profit organization to benefit from the proceeds of the 2016 Lighter Side of Christmas Parade. This is a HUGE opportunity for the Friends to contribute to the community, be the recipient of a sizeable amount of donation \$, and increase the visibility of the Monument and the Friends.



But:

It's going to be a lot of work, starting right now!!

We immediately need a number of volunteers to serve on the Friends' LSOC Committee and to help put a modest float together this year. Then the work will REALLY start in January as we ramp up to sell advertisements, solicit parade participants, build our own float (after we decide what we want) and a dozen other activities. We will not be reinventing the wheel. The WLP Lighter Side of Christmas committee will provide us with a lot of "how to's", lessons learned and mentor us through the process. They will not do the work for us however. Board of Directors members Linda Laverty and Patty Glatfelter have agreed to Co-Chair the Friends' LSOC committee and are already attending meetings with this year's recipient organization (Woodland Park Kiwanis).

If you have a creative mind, a strong back, a warm smile and selling personality, we need you to contact Linda or Patty (use "Linda Laverty Membership committee chairman" e-mail on the Friends Contact Us web page <http://www.fossilbeds.org/contact/>) and let Linda know how you can help.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument News Release

Release date: Immediate
Contact(s): Jeff Wolin
Phone number: (719) 748 – 3253 ext. 202
Date: 9/11/2015

Teen Hiking Challenge and Fee Free Day at Florissant Fossil Beds To Celebrate National Public Lands Day, Saturday September 26, 2015

Celebrate National Public Lands Day by visiting the Pikes Peak region’s closest national park area – Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument on Saturday, September 26, 2015. In honor of National Public Lands Day, fees will be waived at Florissant Fossil Beds as well as the 400 plus other national park units across the United States.

Calling all teens! Any teens (13-19yrs) that come to the park this day and complete a hiking challenge (The Hornbek Wildlife Loop, 4 miles round trip) receive a free t-shirt. The teen hiking challenge is part of the Trails4Teens program at Florissant Fossil Beds. This program encourages teens to explore the Monument’s trails through hiking, playing, serving, and working.

Public Lands Day will include the following programs:

- 10:00 AM** **Interpretive Talk:** Join a Ranger in the amphitheater behind the visitor center for a 25 minute talk about the area’s natural and human history.
- 10:00AM –** **Teen Hiking Challenge:** Sign up in the visitor center to hike the 4 mile Hornbek
4:00 PM Wildlife loop. 2 – 3 hours. Complete the challenge and earn a t-shirt.
- 11:00 AM** **Ranger Guided Hike:** Learn about the Monument’s trails on a 1 hour guided hike.
- 1:00 PM** **Awards Ceremony:** Come to the amphitheater behind the visitor center and learn about and celebrate the success of the teens that worked and hiked at the Monument this summer. Cake, fruit, and refreshments will be served by the Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds. 1 hour.
- 1:00 PM-3:00PM** **Fossil Learning Lab:** Join a Park Ranger in the Yurt (tent) in the picnic area of the visitor center and see how fossils are discovered in the fragile lake shales of the Florissant valley.

For more information please call the Monument at (719) 748 – 3253 ext 202 or email at flfo_information@nps.gov.

The Monument is located at 15807 Teller County Road#1 in Florissant, CO. The park is approximately 35 miles (1 hour) west of Colorado Springs off of Highway 24.

Follow us on Twitter at @FlorissantNPS and on Facebook/FlorissantNPS or visit the park's website at www.nps.gov/flfo

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

About the National Park Service. More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 408 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. Learn more at www.nps.gov.



Join Us



Happy 99th Birthday!



This month, the National Park Service celebrates its 99th birthday! On August 25, we will kick off the one-year countdown to the National Park Service's 100th anniversary. The national parks belong to all Americans, and we invite everyone to join us in celebrating this special day. In honor of its 99th birthday, the National Park Service created a list of 99 ways to #FindYourPark. [Check out the list today!](#)

Join the Expedition of a Lifetime #FYPx



Last month, the National Park Foundation announced the launch of the [Find Your Park Expedition](#), a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that will take eight lucky social media superstars and online influencers on a weeklong trip through [Mesa Verde National Park](#).

But after four weeks and hundreds of applications submitted, the window to apply is coming to an end. Be sure to [submit your application](#) by **Friday, August 21** to be eligible for this amazing program. In the meantime, be on the lookout for updates and announcements on the expedition by following the hashtag #FYPx.

Protecting Our Parks

The National Park Foundation grants help protect our national parks for generations to come. Our programs support the expansion and rehabilitation of trails, restore landscapes, protect threatened wildlife and habitats, and preserve historic places.



Tenaya Lake, located in [Yosemite National Park](#), is an important part of the Merced River system. It is one of Yosemite's most popular attractions — over a million visitors enjoy the lake each year — which means the lake and surrounding trails are heavily impacted by visitor volume. Leveraging funds from both NPF and the Yosemite Conservancy donors, the approximately 3,000 foot-long trail along the south shore of Tenaya Lake was improved, including rebuilding rock wall failures and restoring a fifty foot-long retaining wall. This rehabilitation project will allow visitors to appreciate and continue to enjoy the lake's beauty for generations to come. Read more about the Tenaya Lake project of the trail on our [blog](#).

Visit our [website](#) to find out how you can support programs that restore and protect our parks for future generations.

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**Don't Miss Travel Channel's "America. The Beautiful."
Sundays at 7pm / 6c**



In advance of the National Park Service's 2016 centennial celebration, Travel Channel has premiered "[America. The Beautiful.](#)," narrated by Robert Redford. The series showcases immersive experiences in some of America's most beloved national parks. Through first-person exploration and adrenaline-pumping adventures at Yosemite, Canyonlands, Virgin Islands, Crater Lake, and Yellowstone, viewers experience the rich history and breathtaking landscapes these magnificent places have to offer. Tune in at 7pm / 6c and climb Devils Tower in Wyoming, take in the spectacular views from 3,000 feet above California's storied Yosemite Valley from Glacier Point, or ride the bioluminescent Caribbean waves of Puerto Rico's Mosquito Bay as marine biologists examine the rare ecosystem that gives birth to this natural phenomenon.

Tune in, get inspired, and then share your own unique park story at www.findyourpark.com!

Be a National Park VIP!



Volunteering is an American tradition that has made immeasurable contributions to the National Park System. Every year, hundreds of thousands of people across America take the time to show their love for national parks through volunteering. American Express — a premier partner of the Find Your Park campaign — is supporting efforts to build volunteer coalitions to preserve and sustain America's public lands. [Learn more](#) about how you can make a difference in our national parks, and [find a volunteer opportunity](#) near you today!

A Beginner's Guide to Backcountry Hiking Prep

Backcountry hiking offers some off-the-beaten-path adventures, but in order to reach the untouched beauty of our national parks, you have to prepare.

There are a lot of steps between a casual day-hike and graduating to overnight backpacking trips. What's the rule of thumb? Be prepared. Learn about the area you plan on exploring, pack smart, eat right, and know your skill level before heading out.

But that's just the start of it! Want to know all of our tips on how to prepare for a backcountry hike through the national parks? Check out our [blog](#) and learn everything you need to do in order to stay safe and enjoy your adventure.



In a Galaxy Far, Far Away



This summer, our longtime partner and stargazing outfitter Celestron is helping park visitors get a clearer view of the mesmerizing nighttime sky by sharing some of its best resources — super smart staff and top-of-the-line telescopes — with national parks across the country for night sky festivals. Three of these festivals are coming up in September at [Acadia National Park](#), [Great Basin National Park](#), and [Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks](#). Don't miss out on all there is to see, do, and learn in these parks, long after the sun sets! Interested in learning more about national park night sky programming in addition to these events? We've got you covered, just check out this recent [blog](#) post.

Assateague Island Alliance

Just off the coast of Maryland and Virginia lies the idyllic Assateague Island National Seashore. With sandy beaches, misty air, and wild horses, this island seems like an untouched oasis.

But just because the area is untouched doesn't mean it can go without help. That's what brought together the Assateague Island Alliance, the park's official nonprofit Friends Group. This group is dedicated to enhancing visitor experience with educational, interpretive, scientific, and recreational programs for the park.



The Assateague Island Alliance has greatly improved the park's regular programming and helped make exciting plans for their upcoming 50th birthday! To learn more about what this Friends Group has done, check out our recent [blog](#) post.

This Month's Quiz



In 1968, Congress passed the National Trails System Act to help prevent commercial development. Name the first trail to fall under this new act.

[Submit Your Answer](#)

And congratulations to last month's winners, Gene and Carol Schaffer from Andover, MN, who knew that the most recently added national park unit was Waco Mammoth National Monument. Way to go, Gene and Carol!

We sent you this email because you requested our monthly newsletter about national parks. If you'd rather not receive GoParks from the National Park Foundation, you can delete your name from our subscription list by [clicking here](#). In addition to our monthly newsletters, the National Park Foundation may periodically send out special editions of GoParks to alert our readers of news and events. Please see our revised Terms of Agreement [here](#).



The National Park Foundation is the national charitable partner of the National Park Service.