

The Monarch's Journey



ERNIE MILLER NATURE CENTER

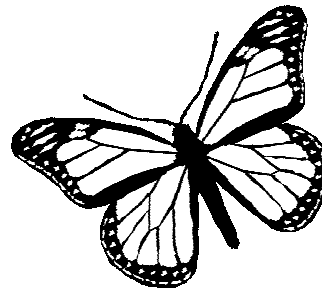


Tracks

On a warm, sunny, autumn day, keep your eyes open for an orange and black traveler who faces incredible odds against reaching his or her destination to the South. Is it a bird? No, it is the incredible monarch butterfly, and their mass fall migration to Mexico is truly an amazing feat and a sign that colder weather is coming.

Scientists are amazed that this last generation of the summer, which usually emerges in August in our region, can even find their final destination, a small, forested region in the mountains of central Mexico. Unlike birds and other species that migrate, the mon-

archs who leave here in the fall have no experienced navigators to help guide them to this location, since the last monarchs who made the journey have been dead for at least three generations.



Thus, this sets up one of the great mysteries of animal migration. How DO they know where to go? Is this information

passed on by means of DNA? It certainly is not learned.

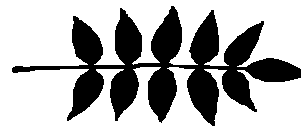
Getting to the right location is only one part of their struggle. The journey itself is quite dangerous, and only a very small percent of the monarchs that start this journey actually make it there. Along the way they face danger from vehicles and pesticides, and a sudden cold snap can easily kill great numbers of them.

Look for these marvels of migration this fall. If you are lucky, you may even find a monarch roost in a tree, where thousands of butterflies spend the night, waiting for the warmth of the sun to send them on their way South.

Fall Memories

by Park Naturalist, Molly Postlewait

Watching golden leaves fall lazily from a walnut tree, I am reminded of a childhood tradition. My family harvested the black walnuts that were abundant on our farm in the Missouri Ozarks. Loading the walnuts into



burlap gunny sacks, we would take them into town to a hulling operation. This is how we would earn money for Christmas.

Walnut gathering yielded stained hands and happy memories for me. Years later, the smell of walnuts here at Ernie Miller Park transports me back. We invite you to come enjoy the park and make your own fall memories.

We need your Help!
Ernie Miller Fall Park Cleanup
Saturday, Sept. 22, 9 am – Noon

Pitch-in with nature center staff and volunteers for a fall park cleanup. We will be doing trash pick-up, trail and flower garden maintenance. Sign up individually or in a group. Please call (913) 764-7759 to sign-up.

Volunteer Opportunities

Looking to do something new? Be a nature center volunteer. Share your talents or develop new skills. We're looking for adults to deliver environmental programs, staff the Nature Center and help us maintain our animals, props and parks. Training and support will be provided. For more information, call 764-7759.

Nature Center Programs

Preschool

Our preschool series emphasizes natural and cultural concepts and is intended to be both fun and educational. Instructors: Park Naturalists

Preschool Package - Fall Fun Series (Ages 4-5)

All preschool progs. begin at 9:30 am Don't miss out! Enroll in the series and enjoy all three of the following preschool programs offered this fall. Class will meet on Saturdays at 9:30 a.m.

3-90 min. sessions - \$28

14-2142-016-01 Sat. 9/15

The Fall Guys (Ages 4-5)

When winter approaches, many birds take flight for warmer places. Find out where these birds go, as well as how and why. Then make a feeder to take home for the birds who stay here in Kansas. Make your own binoculars for our hike – maybe we'll see a Cedar Waxwing, Barred Owl, or a Bobwhite Quail.

1-90 min. session - \$11

14-2142-016-02 Sat. 9/15



Pee-wee Pow-wow (Ages 4-5)

Learn about Native American culture through stories, games, and songs. Create your own shield to participate in a traditional dance.

1-90 min. session - \$11

14-2142-016-03 Sat. 10/6

The First Thanksgiving (Ages 4-5)

Meet Patience, a Pilgrim woman, who will teach you about the Mayflower, the Native Americans, and the many trying times of Plymouth. Help prepare a Thanksgiving snack for the whole class to enjoy.

1-90 min. session - \$11

14-2142-016-04 Sat. 11/10

Nature Tots (Age 3 with parent)

Enjoy a morning at the Nature Center with your toddler. Feel the dry scales of a snakeskin and see a salamander crawl. Watch a toad hop and an owl fly. Meet a shy rabbit and a ferret, too.

1-60 min. session - \$11

14-2142-016-05 Sat. 10/13

Animal Tales – Story Time

The following Nature Center programs require preregistration. Please call (913)831-3355 Voice or (913)831-3342 TDD for registration information. This newsletter is available in alternate formats.

(Ages 2-6 with adult)

Visit the Nature Center for stories, songs, and surprises geared to preschool children. Come listen and learn. Meet a special animal friend every time. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Join us at Ernie Miller Nature Center at 10:30 a.m. on Sept. 12, 26 & Oct. 10, 24. No preregistration required.

1-30 min. session \$1.50 per person

Animal Hide-N-Seek New

(Ages 3-5)

Peek-a-boo! Where are you? Who's hiding in the woods? Preschoolers and kindergartners will enjoy an interactive romp on the trails of Ernie Miller Nature Park. A variety of animals will be highlighted in different habitats. Hands-on clues will reveal the secrets of the animals all around. For scheduling call (913) 764-7759. At Ernie Miller Nature Center.

1-45 min. session

Groups of 5-15 children: \$25

Youth

(For a complete listing of youth programs, see our brochure or the JCPRD catalog.)

Autumn Nature Walks (Ages 6-14)

Experience autumn's beauty on a guided walk through Ernie Miller Park. Our walks can be tailored for special interests and/or specific scout requirements. Fall nature walks are popular so call early. For scheduling, call (913) 764-7759.

1-45 min. session

1-10 people-\$20

11-15 people-\$25

Outdoor Adventures

Cancellation Policy: No refunds within ten business days of trip unless a replacement can be found.

Devil's Ice Box Cave Trip

(Ages 18 & older)

Join us for a high adventure to Rock Bridge Memorial State Park where we will explore Devil's Ice Box Cave, which boasts over 30,000 feet of mapped passages. This park teems with geologic features. Within 200 yards of the cave entrance are: a natural bridge, a pirated stream course, a canyon where a cavern roof once stood and sinkholes providing windows into the underground corridors. Participants must be in **GOOD** physical condition as we will be hiking in the cave for about 5 ½ hours. Please wear boots with Vibram or lug soles; bring a small flashlight and a sack lunch; and take a change of clothes for the trip home. Cave guide, admission fee, and van transportation are included in the fee. We will stop for dinner on the return trip and arrive at Antioch Park by 10 p.m. In the event of heavy rain, an alternate date of Saturday, November 3 is reserved. A mandatory pre-trip meeting will be held on Wednesday, Sept. 12 at 7 p.m. at the Ernie Miller Nature Center. For more information contact Park Naturalist Molly Postlewait at (913) 764-8580 ext.26.

1-1 day trip - \$48

14-2119-011-02 Sat. 10/6

Swan Lake Bird Watching Trip

(Ages 18 & older and children accompanied by parent or guardian)

Experience an exciting day of bird watching at Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge near Summer, MO. This is the time of year Canada geese and other waterfowl start arriving at the refuge during their fall migration. This 10,000-acre refuge is one of the primary wintering areas for Canada geese in the Midwest and is home for other wildlife such as white-tailed deer, turkey, ducks, beaver, etc. We will tour the refuge. We will depart from Antioch Park on Saturday, October 20 at 6:30 a.m. and return around 2:30 p.m. Van transportation and a wonderful sack lunch will be provided. Remember to bring binoculars and your bird book. For more information call 438-7275.

(continued on next page)

Nature Center Programs

Outdoor Adventures

(continued)

Instructor: Park Ranger Stuart Foland.
Max: 11.

1-8 hr. trip - \$29

14-2109-011-01 Sat. 10/20 6:30 am

Squaw Creek Eagle Days Trip

(Ages 18 & older and children

accompanied by parent or guardian)

Visit the yearly celebration of "Eagle Days" at Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge. This is always a participant favorite, allowing everyone to view our national bird up close. When we arrive at the refuge area, we will attend a special presentation which will include a close-up look at a mature Bald Eagle. We will tour the refuge and look through spotting scopes to view this amazing bird. It is not unusual to observe 150-200 Bald Eagles on the refuge and surrounding area including other wildlife such as ducks, geese, deer, etc. For lunch we will eat at Camp Rulo in Rulo, Nebraska located along the banks of the Missouri River. We will leave Antioch Park at 6:45 a.m. and return around 2 p.m. Van transportation is provided. Participants must provide meal expenses and should bring binoculars for better viewing. For more information call (913) 438-7275. Instructor: Park Ranger Stuart Foland.

1-7 hr. trip - \$25

21-2109-011-01 Sat. 12/1 6:45am



Special Events

Moonlight Canoe Excursion

(Ages 10 & older & must be accompanied by parent or guardian)

Shawnee Mission Park Lake

Fee: \$10 per person

Explore Shawnee Mission Lake by canoe and hear the croaks and splash of frogs and the hooting of owls. Park Naturalists will interpret nocturnal animal activity as we canoe along the shoreline. Enjoy the stars twinkling while having an evening snack and listening to stories. Basic swimming and canoeing skills are required. Instructor: Park Naturalists.

1-2 hr. session - \$10 per person

14-2125-012-01 Fri., 9/14 7 pm

14-2125-012-02 Fri., 9/21 7 pm

Owl Prowl

(Ages 16 & older and children ages 5 & up accompanied by parent or guardian)

Hoot, Hoot, Whoooo makes his home in Ernie Miller Nature Park? Who else but the Great Horned, Barred, and Screech Owls. Come for an informative talk featuring two live owls and an evening hike through the park. You'll never know who you might spot! Come dressed for the weather and warm up with a cup of hot cider after the hike. Instructor: Interpretive Staff.

1-90 min. session - \$6 per person

14-2108-016-01 Fri., 10/19 7:30 pm

14-2108-016-02 Fri., 11/2 6:30 pm

14-2108-016-03 Sat., 11/3 6:30 pm

Fall Frights & Folklore

(Ages 4 and up)

Saturday, Oct. 27, 1-4:30 pm

Fee: \$3 per person

Enjoy a day outdoors with this award-winning event! Your family will walk into the woods and meet a variety of 'characters'. Meet the Big Bad Wolf and hear his side of the famous story. Learn American Indian myths of warriors battling monsters. Meet the one and only Batman. Along came a spider, but don't be frightened away. This program is designed to be informative, entertaining, and fun. For reservations call (913) 764-7759.



Pumpkin Carving Contest NEW

Show off your artistic abilities! Dazzle and decorate your pumpkins with designs and win prizes. Spooky, silly and creative displays welcome. Pumpkins will be on display during Fall Frights and Folklore at Ernie Miller Nature Park on Saturday, October 27. Call 913-764-7759 for details. This would be a great group project for families or youths.

Campfire Thrills & Chills- Scary Stories from Halloweens

Past (Ages 9 and older & must be accompanied by parent or guardian)

Saturday, Oct. 27, 6:30-8 pm

Fee: \$3 per person

Mysterious lights, haunted places, unexplained events. Everyone loves a spooky story. Your imagination will be sparked with chilling tales told by the fireside. Old-fashioned storytelling promises to bring out spine-tingling, wide-eyed reactions. Listen as bewitching wonders, shadowy goblins, ghouls, and the creepy things come alive. These stories may be too vivid for young children. Suggested age nine years and older. Call (913) 764-7759 for reservations.

Tellabration I2001

Saturday, Nov. 17, 10 am

Fee: \$2 per person

Want to hear a good story? Come celebrate the international day of storytelling at the Ernie Miller Nature Center.

Animal Stories, 10 a.m.

Hear nature stories with live animals. These stories will combine themes of environmental awareness and ancient myths. They will delight audiences of all ages.

Stories From Around the World,

2 p.m.

Hear stories from around the world as live animals highlight tales from many cultures. African, Korean, and Native American stories will involve and entertain listeners.



ERNIE MILLER NATURE CENTER

909 North Highway 7
Olathe, Kansas 66061

Phone: (913)764-7759

<http://www.erniemiller.com>

Hours

Tuesday — Saturday

9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Sunday

1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Closed Monday

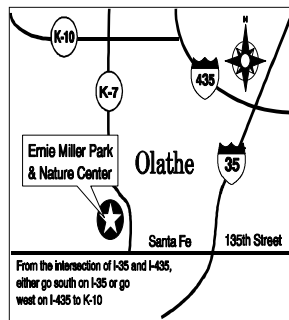
**Park trails open every day
dawn to dusk**



Nature Center Staff

Bill McGowan.....Interpretive
Program Manager
Leon Gordon.....Park Supervisor
Molly Postlewait.....Naturalist
Chris PistoleNaturalist
Andree Ables.....Secretary

Johnson County Park and Recreation District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age and handicapped status in employment or the provision of programs and services.



From the intersection of I-35 and I-435,
either go south on I-35 or go
west on I-435 to K-10

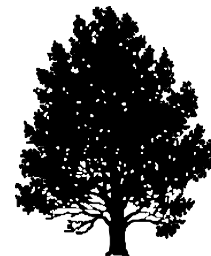
Ernie Miller Nature Center

909 North Highway 7
Olathe, Kansas 66061
(1 mile north of 135th Street)

Nature's Corner Gift Shop at the Ernie Miller Nature Center

Looking for something natu-
rally unique?

Edible bug treats ❖Books❖Jewelry❖
Rocks



Mastercard/Visa accepted

Ernie Miller Nature Park