

River-to River Trail Society Announces Fall Hiking Schedule

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The River-to-River Trail Society announces that this fall it will once again offer a series of guided hikes in and near the Shawnee National Forest. All hikes are free and open to the public. Although the hikes vary in level of difficulty, all are intended for people in good health who have done some hiking in the past. Hiking sticks and boots or sturdy shoes are strongly recommended. All hikers should bring their own water and a snack. No dogs, please.

In order to protect the health of leaders and hikers, all hikes will be either a loop or out-and-back, so as not to require group transportation. All hikers will be responsible for transporting themselves to the trailhead, and all will be expected to sign a waiver of liability. Wherever possible, social distancing is expected and, wherever appropriate, masks are recommended. Any other conditions required by executive order of the Governor or recommendations of the CDC must be complied with.

The Society's first hike will be on Saturday, October 9. Shawn Gossman will lead a hike at Jackson Falls in Pope County. Hikers should gather at 10:00 a.m. at the Jackson Falls parking lot, about four miles east of Ozark, Illinois, and about two miles south of Ozark Road.

The Society's second hike will be on Saturday, October 16, at the Twin Towers area of Gallatin and Hardin Counties. Society President Bill Gilmour will be the leader. Hikers should meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Knights of the Golden Circle parking lot, east of Forest Road, 3/4 miles north of the entrance to Garden of the Gods. Forest Road is closed north of the parking lot, so hikers should approach from the south.

For the Society's third hike, on Saturday, October 23, Chris Drone will lead a hike at Ferne Clyffe State Park in Johnson County. Hikers should meet at 10:00 a.m. at the parking lot near the main waterfall trailhead.

The Society's fourth hike will be on Saturday, October 30, at Dutchman Lake in Johnson County. Bill Gilmour will lead. Meet at 10:00 a.m. at the parking lot for Dutchman Lake.

On Saturday, November 6, Fred Scott will lead the Society's fifth hike in the High Knob area of Gallatin County., on Trails 153, 180, 180C, and 185, as well as a portion of the River-to-River Trail Hikers should meet at 10:00 a.m. at the parking lot atop High Knob. Please drive slowly as you pass through the horse campground.

On Saturday, November 13, Mart Watson will lead a hike in Pope County at the west side of Jackson Hollow and Cove Hollow, an area known to rock climbers as "the Promised Land." Hikers should meet at 10:00 a.m., at East Trigg Trailhead, on the east side of Trigg Tower Road, a mile north of Trigg Tower, and about four miles northeast of Simpson, Illinois.

The Society's seventh hike of the season, and its final scheduled hike of the year, will be on Saturday, November 27. Gillum and Vicki Ferguson will lead a post-Thanksgiving hike at a location to be announced later.

The River-to-River Trail is a hiking and equestrian trail which stretches 157 miles through Southern Illinois between Elizabethtown on the Ohio River and Grand Tower on the Mississippi. The River-to-River Trail Society is an Illinois not-for-profit corporation, founded by John O'Dell in 1993. All its work is done by unpaid volunteers. Besides its program of free public hikes, the Society engages in trail maintenance and advocacy, and publishes an online guidebook to the entire River-to-River Trail, which can be downloaded free of charge at the Society's website: rivertorivertrail.net. Patches for the Society can be purchased for \$5.00 during the Society's public hikes.