

River-to-River Trail Society Announces Spring Hiking Schedule

Released February 27, 2022

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As part of its thirtieth year of operation, this spring the River-to-River Trail Society will once again offer a schedule of guided hikes in and near the Shawnee National Forest. All hikes are free and open to the public, although in order to comply with rules of the USDA Forest Service, the hike on May 7 will be by preregistration only. The hike on March 27 will be a shorter hike on a Sunday afternoon; all other hikes will be on Saturdays at 10:00 a.m. and typically average about four hours in length. 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.

The Society's first hike will be on Saturday, March 12, in the One Horse Gap area of Pope County. The leader will be Todd Carr. Meet at 10:00 a.m. at the parking lot of One Horse Gap Lake, about four miles north of Route 146 and about two and a half miles west of Route 34. For information or directions, call (618) 499-9629.

The Society's second hike will be on Saturday, March 19, in the Thacker Hollow area of Gallatin County. Sam Morales will lead the group. Meet at 10:00 a.m. at the green pole barn one quarter mile east of Double M Campground, 5320 Thacker Hollow Road, Junction, Illinois. For information or directions, call (618) 384-1321.

For the Society's third hike, on Saturday, March 26, Chris Drone will lead a waterfall hike along Cedar Creek, in Pope County. Meet at 10:00 a.m. at Ozark Baptist Church, 632 Ozark Road, Ozark, Illinois. For information or directions, call (618) 926-3250.

On Sunday, March 27, Mark Motsinger will lead a hike to the Rock House, in Pope County. Meet at 2:00 p.m. at the former Shawnee Mart on Route 145 in Eddyville, Illinois. Please note that this hike will be on a Sunday afternoon. For information or directions, call (618) 269-0369.

The Society's fifth hike will be on Saturday, April 2, at Fink Sandstone Barrens in Johnson County or across the road at Jackson Hollow in Pope County, depending on certain scheduled activities of the USDA Forest Service. In either case, hikers should meet at East Trigg Trailhead, on Trigg Tower Road, about one mile north of Trigg

observation tower and three miles northeast of Simpson, Illinois. Bill Gilmour will lead the hike. For information or directions, call (270) 331-1553.

On Saturday, April 9, Bob Mulcahy will lead the Society's sixth hike at Piney Creek Ravine Natural Area, on the boundary between Jackson and Randolph Counties. Meet at 10:00 a.m. at the intersection of Routes 4 and 151, in Ava, Illinois. For information or directions, call (708) 471-7500.

The Society's seventh hike of the season will be on Saturday, April 16. Susan Durfee will lead a hike into the northern part of Burden Falls Wilderness in Pope County. Meet at 10:00 a.m. at 418 Appel Road, Stonefort, Illinois. For information or directions, call (618) 922-2579.

The Society's eighth scheduled hike of the season will be on Saturday, April 23. This will be a wildflower hike, led by professional botanist Chris Benda, at Panther Den Wilderness in Union County. Hikers should meet at 10:00 a.m. at 840 Wayside Lane, Makanda, Illinois. For information or directions, call (217) 417-4145.

Fred Scott will lead the Society's ninth scheduled hike at Giant City State Park hike in Jackson County, on Saturday, April 30. Meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Giant City Visitors' Center, 235 Giant City Road, Makanda, Illinois. For information or directions, call (618) 841-4838.

The tenth and final scheduled hike of the spring season will be on Saturday, in the Lusk Creek Wilderness in Pope County. To comply with rules of the USDA Forest Service, this hike will be limited to twenty hikers, divided into two groups led by Marcus Owens and Steve Mitchell, respectively. Advance registration is therefore required. To register, call (618) 534-8139.

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 1992. 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. Because the Society is a federally recognized 501(c)(3) charitable organization, donations are tax deductible to the extent provided by law.

