

FATHER HENNEPIN STATE PARK



Fall/Winter
2012 - 2013



Keeping you updated on information and activities at Father Hennepin State Park

Hennepin Island

Two boulder islands, Hennepin Island and Spirit Island, together make up the Mille Lacs National Wildlife Refuge. This is the smallest NWR in the nation with less than one acre total land area. It is one of the last remaining nesting sites for the Common Tern in Minnesota. Due to the little to no soil or vegetation on the islands, the habitat is ideal for colonial nesting birds like the Common Tern.

The name "Common" is misleading because there are only a few places in MN where these birds nest. Loss of nesting habitat has caused their numbers to drop significantly in Minnesota. The Common Tern is presently listed as a "threatened species." This means that if the population decline continues, the bird will no longer exist in the state. Wildlife professionals from the Rice Lake National Wildlife Refuge and the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe are working to monitor and improve nesting conditions for these rare and interesting birds.

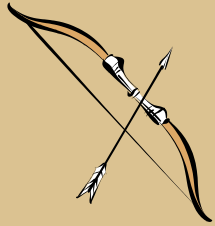
It is important that people not go near the islands. So the terns do not abandon their nest sites, marker buoys are placed to remind people to stay 200 feet from the island shore. The birds are easily disturbed, and too many visitors may cause them to desert their island nests.



Hike to Pope Point to see Hennepin Island from the shore.
There, a trailside sign tells more about the Common Tern.

Archery and Nature Tables a Summertime Hit!

Two naturalist-led programs were especially popular at Father Hennepin State Park this past summer.



This was the first year that Father Hennepin has offered the popular activity, Archery in the Park!

Archery was held three times this past summer;

once in June, July and August. Visitors were invited to join certified archery instructors for hands-on coaching and have a try at our temporary archery range. We provided the equipment and instructions.



Nature Table programs were also a big hit at Father Hennepin. Last year there was success with a "Bones & Skulls" wildlife display so this year the interpretive staff decided to expand the idea. A display table was set up in the busy beach picnic area for a 2 or 3-hour time period. The attending naturalist conducted discussions on the subject displayed. This summer there were various nature table topics including Fish of Mille Lacs, Bones & Skulls, Avian Anglers, Beads & Beadwork and Avian Predators.



Be sure to visit the park's website next summer to check out more naturalist programs...
http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks/father_hennepin/index.html



Summer Interns



Larissa Harris is a recent graduate of Minnesota State University Moorhead, with a degree in Anthropology. Larissa spent the summer working at Mille Lacs Kathio and Father Hennepin as an assistant naturalist through the Naturalist Corps program.

Larissa developed and presented programs about frogs, beads & beadwork, archaeology and a kids' program about tree bark. Her favorite program to present was one she developed called *Beading a Story*. While teaching about native beading heritage, Larissa enjoyed hearing about participants' fascination with the history of glass beads. She also enjoyed how much people loved the different examples of beadwork.

Larissa also researched and compiled information about the contact period between European explorers and the Dakota villagers of the Mille Lacs region.

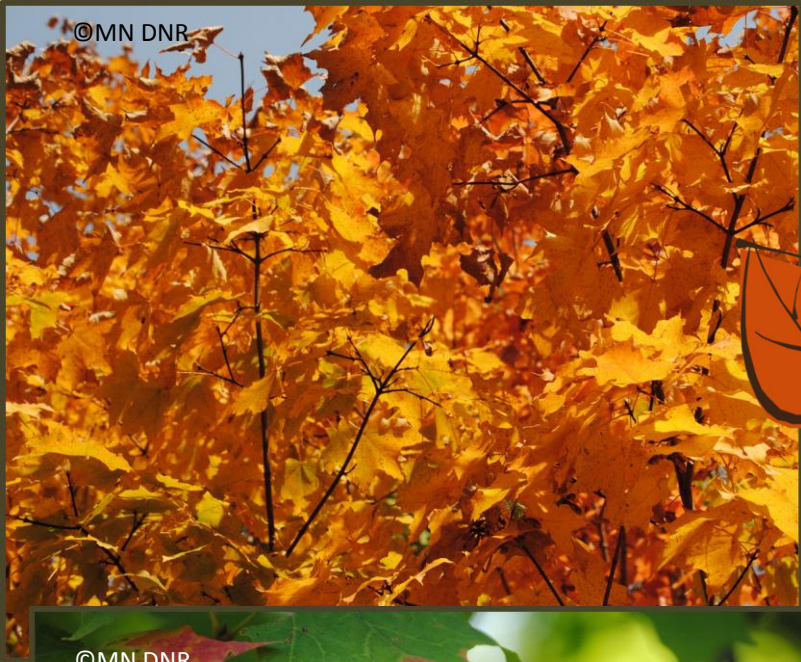


Kyle Arola is a graduate student at Saint Cloud State University, concentrating on Ecology and Natural Resources. This summer was Kyle's second season as an assistant naturalist through the Naturalist Corps program.

Kyle developed educational activities about bears, predators, avian anglers, forest ecology and bats. He also taught fishing and archery at Father Hennepin and Mille Lacs Kathio this past summer.

Kyle is conducting research at Kathio for his Master's Thesis. In 2011 he planted hundreds of white pine seedlings in the park. This year he monitored the seedlings, recording their growth and health. His thesis project will help efforts to restore pine forest in the region.

Kyle also researched and compiled information about Mille Lacs area forest ecology. His work will be used for park visitor information and education.



Fall



All of these pictures were taken at Father Hennepin. If you would like to see more fall photos or upload your own visit...

http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/fall_colors

KID'S CORNER

Hey Kids!!! Want to look at the shapes of different snowflakes? Here are two activities that you can try at home.

- 1) Find a piece of black construction paper or fabric and take it outside to collect snowflakes. Make sure to store this paper or fabric in a cold place previous to going outside, because if the snowflakes land on a warm surface they will melt quickly. Try using a magnifying glass to help you get a closer look.
- 2) If you have more time here is a fun project where you can preserve a snowflake. *Be sure to ask your parents for help on this one.*

Materials you will need:

- A flat piece of glass or glass microscope slides
- A can of plastic spray (Krylon Spray Coating)
- Small shallow boxes to carry glass in
- Magnifying glass
- Microscope (optional)

Directions:

- 1) Clean off the piece of glass.
- 2) Chill the spray and piece of glass in the refrigerator or in the cold outside.
- 3) When it snows, put the glass in the shallow box, grab the spray and go outside. Coat the glass lightly with the plastic spray.
- 4) Catch a few snowflakes on the glass, and then quickly hold something over the glass to keep too many flakes from landing on it.
- 5) Go inside and let the glass sit in the box for 15 minutes without touching it.

The snowflakes will melt, but their shape will be there permanently! Using a magnifying glass compare the ice crystal shapes. You can even frame it and hang it on the wall. Your artwork will truly be one-of-a-kind!

From Environmental Education for Kids! Website, Wisconsin DNR: <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/caer/ce/ee/teacher/snowflake.htm>

A few more things you may want to know:

- The park is open 365 days a year, from 8a.m. to 10p.m. In the fall, the Park Office is open daily from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. In the winter, the office hours are limited due to staffing, for more information call (320)676-8763.



- The water will be turned off in the Maple Grove campground on October 1, 2012 and in the Lakeview campground, dump station and day use areas on Oct. 22, 2012.
- Drinking water is available year-round at the park maintenance shop and park office.
- Camping is available till snowfall. The park's group camp will be available for use until October 31, 2012.



*The Friends of Father Hennepin State
Park invite you to enjoy the annual
candlelight ski!*



Date: Saturday, February 16

Time: 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Join us for a candle light ski through the winter woods of Father Hennepin State Park. Refreshments will be served at Lakeview Picnic Shelter. We will also have a bonfire, so bring your roasting forks and marshmallows and join the fun! The event is sponsored by the Friends of Father Hennepin State Park.

For more information call: (320) 676 – 8763.

