

## **Itasca State Park Nature Programs and special event for June July 3-9**

Hello Itasca Friends!

We are now marching into July and summer is well on its way. Flowers are moving into mid-July blooms, new baby birds and baby animals are growing and moving about freely! The weather has been lovely and the mosquitos and deer flies aren't too bad (knock on wood and a little bug spray would help). The lady slipper season is over for the most part, with scattered individual flowers here and there. But the white water lilies and yellow water lilies are coming up in full force, making the surface of our park lakes stunning with their showy blooms. We hope you can come out and enjoy the park as we get ready to celebrate the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Enjoy the colorful red, whites and blues in our wildflowers, including blue-flag iris, Canada anemone, Indian paintbrush and white water lilies. The wild rice is starting to lift off the surface of the lakes. The birds are busy on their nests and many are starting to sing for their second nesting. The veery's continue to sing their melodic downward spiral song throughout the park and the ovenbirds call out teacher, Teacher, TEACHER! And the white-throated sparrows are calling out 'Old man Peabody, Peabody, Peabody.' Watch for young eagles as they cry from their nest, begging for food. They are nearing the size of the adults.

### **Dining in the Park: NEW menu at Douglas Lodge:**

Douglas Lodge is open for the season. Manager Gina and Assistant Manager Jeff are excited for you to come out and try the all-new menu. They are offering scrumptious homemade meals and appetizers including many items that feature Minnesota foods (walleye, wild rice, maple syrup and blueberries). The Lavosh and Walleye Ceviche are excellent appetizers! New this year are fish tacos made with Red Lake walleye (a BIG hit!) Try the homemade Seafood Lasagna, made with Red Lake Walleye, or the Spaghetti and Meatballs with homemade wild rice meatballs. Classic favorites are still on the menu including: the Itasca Burger, Wild Turkey, the Reuben and the famous Itasca Malts. Now you can buy the famous Itasca sugar cookies whenever you want them. Cookies will be available for purchase daily. Great family food served from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. NEW: the lunch menu service has been extended...order off the lunch menu from 11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Hours: Breakfast: 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.; Lunch: 11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Dinner: 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

### **Dining in the Park: the Mary Gibbs Café:**

Looking for a quick meal before heading out on the trail, or a cooling ice cream cone after a long day on the trail, the Mary Gibbs Café will be offering new items as well as soup and salad bar, pizza and ice cream. Hours for the café will be 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday thru Thursday and 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday thru Sunday.

### **Take Home a Memory: Souvenirs and More!**

Snuggle into a wearable memory from Itasca—check out the new line-up of sweatshirts and t-shirts. The ever-popular Douglas Lodge China is still available for purchase. Stop at Douglas Lodge to see the display of available pieces. The china is sold at the Forest Inn gift shop. (Forest Inn features books and northwoods themed apparel and gifts). The Mary Gibbs Gift shop,

featuring food stuffs and Mississippi Headwaters items, opens on Friday, May 25 and is open daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. For those looking for a northwoods themed item, check out Forest Inn Gift Shop (across from Douglas Lodge). Use your receipt from dining at Douglas Lodge for a 20% discount off of one clothing item at Forest Inn Gift Shop (exceptions apply; refer to your receipt for details). Forest Inn opens for the season on Saturday, May 26; open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Enjoy a music concert by Bill and Julie Kaiser, Sunday, July 8—**

**Itasca's Music Under the Pines: Julie and Bill Kaiser**

**Sunday, July 8, 2018 from 7-9 p.m.**

**Meet at Forest Inn across from Douglas Lodge**

From the Minnesota northwoods, Bill and Julie Kaiser will be performing a concert inside historic Forest Inn. Bill and Julie's music has been described as acoustic "folkgrass" with a mix of bluegrass, folk, and original. You are invited to come and enjoy a wonderful night of music!

**Headwaters in Summer—Watch the Webcam!**

Summer is here and the wild rice is floating on the surface of Lake Itasca. Watch for bass as they leap out of the water, attempting to catch dragonflies that are laying eggs. Check out the webcam. Is your family going to the park but you can't join them? Have them text you when they are at the headwaters and watch them from home! Watch the webcam and see if you can spot any beavers making their way towards the headwaters in evening.

Go to: [Mississippi Headwaters Webcam](#) *Side note: some users with Android systems might have problems viewing the webcam.*

**Featured nature sighting report for the dates of June 20-27:**

- White-tailed deer bucks are seen at dawn and dusk by the Mississippi River, their newly growing antlers covered in velvet.
- Dragonflies can be seen flying over the lakes, laying eggs on the submerged plants.
- Young mallard ducks are now half the size of the adult
- Monarch butterfly caterpillars are seen feeding on milkweed leaves, the milkweed blossoms just getting ready to open.
- Summer flowers are coming out in full force including white water lilies, brown-eyed Susan, giant blue hyssop, daisy fleabane, tall meadow-rue, cow parsnip, cleavers, ox-eye daisy, Indian paintbrush, yellow bullhead water lilies, vetch and more!