



# Friends of Rocky Fork State Park

P.O. Box 1, Flag Pond, TN 37657

Website: [www.rockyforkfriends.org](http://www.rockyforkfriends.org)

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Spring is bird chirping, wildflower blooming, waking up weather. Go for a walk in the woods to see the first wildflowers! Called "spring ephemerals," these tiny flowers emerge in early spring and disappear when the tree canopies fill out!

## Park News

from RFSP Manager Tim Pharis

Its time again to lace up those shoes and tighten up the bow, the **Upper East TN Fiddlers Convention** is back! This 5th annual convention will be bigger and better than ever with workshops, contests, concerts, clogger exhibitions, meaning merriment for all.

Friday night we will kick it off with a **concert and a dance**. The legendary Dan Gellert will perform at 7 o'clock followed by a big square dance (and possibly a guest appearance from the Green Grass Cloggers!)

Saturday morning we will roll out of our tents, grab our coffee, and get the youth banjo & fiddle contests going at 10 o'clock. The main event will start at 1 o'clock with contests rolling all day. We will close up with finalists battling it out on stage, vying for a top spot and a hefty cash prize.

**Tennessee folk music workshops** also start at 1 o'clock. Want to learn more about fiddle, banjo, dance or song? We got a workshop for you!

So, talk this up to your friends & relations and come out to compete or to cheer on these talented pickers. Visit [otfiddlersconvention.com](http://otfiddlersconvention.com) for a complete schedule of the weekend.

**Enhancing Accessibility to Nature at Rocky Fork State Park** will launch this Spring with the addition of an All Terrain WheelChair, donated by the Friends of Rocky Fork through a grant from the Dana and Christopher Reeve Foundation. The program will add accessibility in the park for individuals living with paralysis and their families. Watch for a press release and announcements with more information.

**New Map feature:** You can now download the Rocky Fork State Park map using a QR code. (Included with this newsletter.)

## Upcoming Events

**April 10 & May 8**

FRF Board Meetings

RFSP Ranger Station 6 pm

**April 28 & 29**

Upper East TN Fiddlers Convention

Flag Pond School

**May 6**

Erwin Outdoor Festival

Downtown Erwin 10 AM to 4 PM

In addition, check out the Rocky Fork State Park website for Park sponsored hikes and activities:

[Rocky Fork State Park — Tennessee State Parks \(tnstateparks.com\)](http://Rocky Fork State Park — Tennessee State Parks (tnstateparks.com)) or

their Facebook page

[@RockyForkStateParkTn](https://www.facebook.com/RockyForkStateParkTn)



## Spring Green in the Park



Photo Credit: Will Skelton

## Park Insights

by RFSP Ranger Jeff Sweeney

### Featured Park Events

Wildflower hikes, Full Moon hikes, and more are being scheduled. In each visit to Rocky Fork you can witness Spring as the magnificent transition from winter to summer and the cycle of life.

**Wildflowers** start blooming in March and generally fade in June. Some flowers found at lower elevations in March will be found at higher elevations in April and May. The trees start blooming with buds and sunlight hits the forest floor allowing the flowers to quickly take over until the canopy blocks the sunlight in June.

### A checklist of wildflowers in Rocky Fork – how many will you find?

Violets - Smooth Yellow Violets, Halberd Yellow, Common Blue, Sweet White, Canada Violet  
Nodding Wakerobin  
Cutleaf Toothwort  
Several different species of Trillium including Red, White & Vasey's  
Trout Lilly  
Dutchman's Breeches  
Squirrel Corn  
Bloodroot  
May-Apple  
Star Chickweed  
Dwarf Cinquefoil  
Carolina Spring Beauties  
Wild Geranium  
Phlox  
Dwarf Crest Iris  
Bear Corn aka Cancer Corn

**TWRA stocks Rocky Fork Creek with rainbow trout.** Trout prefer clean cold water. Native brook trout live upstream at higher elevations. There are many aquatic invertebrates that hatch in late spring allowing trout to survive.

**Did you know?** The Sun is equally over the equator on March 20 at 5:24 EST. It is Spring to the north of the equator and Fall to the south of the Equator. As summer approaches the earth orbit continues to rotate on its axis at 23.5 degrees and the rays move north creating summer.

Check out **Rocky Fork's Facebook page** regularly to see what we have coming up, and feel free to offer your suggestions as well!

## Our Mission

Support and assist Rocky Fork State Park management and staff to protect, preserve, promote, and enhance Rocky Fork State Park. (Non Profit 501-C3)

## 2023 Board of Directors

John Beudet – Vice President  
Andrea Bowman  
Luke Carter  
Bob Fuller  
Emily Goepel  
Carrie Hovey –President  
Lisa Hazlett  
Joe Morris  
Lotta Murray – Secretary  
Teresa Pickett - Treasurer  
Roger Rice

## Wonderful Wildflowers



## Trail Ways

**Rocky Fork Trails can use your help.** The Friends of Rocky Fork State Park have, for several years now, organized “**Trail Adopters**” to help with routine- yet *vital*- maintenance of the park's trail system. To enhance this already successful program we would like to **add more adopters** to cover some of the more remote sections of trail and to ensure that all trail sections have more than one adopter, eliminating the need to work alone and making a rewarding experience that much more enjoyable. This is easy, light work primarily walking along with loppers and trimming bushes and removing tree limbs that have fallen three or four times a year. Heavier work is done by a trail crew or park staff.

**Contact Trails Committee Chair John Beaudet, [bodaciousat@gmail.com](mailto:bodaciousat@gmail.com) if you want to help out or for more info.**

## Member News and Events

**The Friends of Rocky Fork** support the Park and Park staff with projects and funding.

We're **gearing up** for our busy spring events. We cleaned out a lot of old merchandise inventory last year and are ready for some fresh new items. We sent out a message for entries for logos, photographs and other creatives and are deciding on the best use for all the great things we received. Watch for T-shirts, stickers, magnets, note cards, postcards, and more. **Thank you to all the great creative Friends** who shared their talents showcasing what we all love about Rocky Fork State Park!

The **Upper East Tennessee Fiddlers Convention (April 28-30)** kicks off the season with music, song and dance celebrating our area of Appalachia. The Friends will be setting up, collecting tickets, directing parking, and supporting the event. This year, the Friends will also **host a hike in the park on Saturday morning** to kick off the day and give visitors a chance to experience and enjoy Rocky Fork.

**The Erwin Outdoor Festival (May 6)** is a local festival that celebrates all outdoors, and is a perfect venue to share information about Rocky Fork State Park. It's a fun day for all!

**Will you Volunteer to help at events this year ??**



### Fiddlers Convention



The **Fireflies** will put on a show – dates to be determined in May and June – and the Park will set Lottery nights for the public.

We will support the Park with two Volunteers per night and we will once again have a **Friends Only Social and Firefly Viewing Event**.



### **VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION !!**

As always, great big **THANKS** to our Friends members who take the time to volunteer in the Park, at events and at our booth at festivals!

Don't forget **logging Your Hours Helps The Park!** Proof that we are invested in Rocky Fork is very important for gaining grant funding, justifying needs to TN State Parks and securing other types of support.

### **All Terrain Wheelchair in the Park**

Plans are progressing with press releases and information to announce and promote the new All Terrain Wheelchair the Friends are donating to Rocky Fork State Park.

Registration will be by an email process. Training will be provided and a feedback process will help guide this exciting new feature in the park.

### **Park Kiosks and Benches**

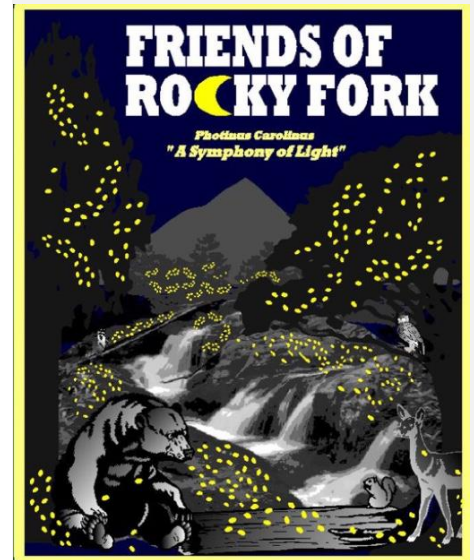
The second Friends-built **Kiosk** is in progress and will be installed at the base of the Whitehouse Cliffs Trail. Kiosk work days will be announced via email for Friends who would like to join in this constructive project.

**Rustic benches** placed around the park provide resting points for visitors.

### **Board and Member Meetings**

Board meetings are held at the Rocky Fork Ranger Station, 280 Jennie Moore Road, Flag Pond, 37657. Meetings are open to all members and the public.

### **Fireflies in the Park**



### **Tim testing out the All Terrain WheelChair!**



### **Have you renewed your Friends of Rocky Fork State Park Membership?**

Find info on the Friends website  
[www.rockyforkfriends.org](http://www.rockyforkfriends.org)