

Trout Talk

A young girl with brown hair, wearing a grey t-shirt, is smiling and holding a small, speckled trout. She is standing in a grassy area with other people and trees in the background. The title 'Trout Talk' is overlaid on the image, with 'Trout' in green and 'Talk' in black script.

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**Explorer camp at
Bennett Spring
Page 3**

"State Park hooks Lebanon youth" by Chris Roden

AUGUST 2022

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State park hooks Lebanon youth

**BY CHRIS RODEN
FOR THE LACLEDE COUNTY RECORD**

Ryne Emerick is co-teaching the Explorer Camp at Bennett Spring for the second year and partnering with the Missouri State Parks staff for some of the class's activities.

"The State Park has been a great partner. They help provide some of the programs, and we partner with them with a lot of the things we do – with special permits and the access to the facilities. It's a good partnership," Emerick said.

The class was a mix with mostly middle school kids and some high school kids.

Emerick, who is an LHS science teacher, also has a wildlife degree. Before he decided to teach, he was a park ranger with the Corps of Engineers.

"This is a real passion for sure having kids out in the outdoors experiencing everything. I really like that. It's nice to teach about cells and photosynthesis, but it's also nice to get out and do the wildlife stuff as well," Emerick said.

Edward Emerick, 8, was auditing the class and picking up some trout fishing secrets from his dad.



LCR Photo/Chris Roden

Between helping student detangle their lines and tie on different lures, Ryne Emerick, LHS science teacher and co-teacher of Explorer Camp at Bennett, gave his son, Edward, 8, some trout catching family secrets. Edward landed two very quickly by fishing in the shallow water.

"It's nice to have him out and get to experience some of this stuff that hopefully we'd be doing anyway. He seems to enjoy it for sure," Emerick said.

One technique was to fish in the clearer water of the shallows near the bank where the fish could be spotted easily. After a few failed attempts at setting the

hook, he had it mastered. Edward caught two trout in as many minutes using the shallow water technique.

"I think if you catch it right there, it's all about timing," Edward said.

The Explorer Camp includes a lot more than just fishing, which was enough to get the students excited by

a nibble or a fish on their hook.

On the morning of June 7, the morning activity was building a model bird's nest complete with clay eggs to be placed where the nest can be preyed upon by nest predators.

See 'EXPLORERS' / page 4

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Explorers from page 3

"We'll be able to go back and see what has preyed on the nest, various raccoons (for example), and there will be bite marks in the eggs. It will be a cool little thing for the kids to see," Emerick said.

Fishing fills out the remainder of the morning each day before the afternoon activity begins, which has included or will include hiking, building a model eagle's nest, a snake program by Justin Slye, another science teacher from LHS, trail work, fishing instruction from the Missouri Department of Conservation, chemical sampling of the stream, invertebrate sampling, kayaking at Ha Ha Tonka and a hike to the Natural Tunnel.

Emerick said the kids were welcome to keep the fish they caught to show what they have accomplished.

"The parents like to see that," Emerick said.

Hillary Stanley, Middle School science teacher and the class's co-teacher, created awards with a laser engraver on cedar chips for medals for various accomplishments.

She has seen the kids improve their fishing skills.

"The first day we did this, it seemed like half the kids were tangling their lines more than they were casting," Stanley said.

However, the one that knew how taught those who did not.

"That's the best when they can teach each other. We like them to cooperatively learn. Some of the kids have done a lot of fishing, and some have never held a rod and reel before. You can see the kids who get a lot of joy out of it," Stanley said.

The class was an opportunity for her to work on her line detangling and knot untying skills.

See 'EXPLORERS' / page 6



LCR Photo/Chris Roden

Lindsey Prince was only student fly fishing Tuesday morning. She learned how in the class about three years ago and enjoys it and the Explorer Camp at Bennett's other outdoor activities.

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Explorers

from page 4

"If I wasn't good at it before, I'm pretty good at it now," she said.

She said the Explorer Camp kids chose the class knowing what to expect, and it makes the class more enjoyable for her.

Emerick and Stanley are not the only ones to instruct their students.

"We also a lot of help from the State Park volunteers. Danny Goldsmith and Dan Slais are two that are really knowledgeable in their field," Emerick said.

Goldsmith is a retired teacher with fly tying knowledge.

See 'EXPLORERS' / page 7

LCR Photos/Chris Roden

Bottom left, Aiden Hanson focuses on catching trout. Hanson, 11, said he did not have a favorite activity in the outdoor class. "I love it all," he said, but kayaking at Ha Ha Tonka and fishing in Bennett Spring State Park were very enjoyable. Top right photo, Clayton Simmons waits for a bite during the summer Explorers Camp at Bennett Spring State Park. Bottom right, two Lebanon students pop a squat on Whistle Bridge while they practice their casts.





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Explorers

from page 6

Dan Slais, a former Park Ranger, was one of the volunteers who came out to help the students.

"I think the kids are having fun catching a few fish and learning a lot," Slais said.

"Just working with the kids is interesting to see what their thinking is and how they're doing stuff, and it's really fun to watch them nail one for the first or second time."

Lindsey Prince, 16, started fly fishing three or four years when she took the Explorer Camp class for the first time.

"They taught me all the casting stuff, how to tie flies, all the basic fishing things," Prince said.

"I do enjoy it. It's probably one of my favorite outdoor activities," she added.

"I like outdoor things. It's very fun ... This is a great learning experience."

Her sister and three cousins also took the class, so it was a class and a small family outing for her.

Clayton Simmons was happy to take a class that included fishing. He hopes to be an angler for life even on a slow day after catching three fish last week.

And he knows what success demands for the fishing portion of Explorer Camp at Bennett Spring and just maybe in life.

"Part of fishing is you've got to be patient," Simmons said.

Photo courtesy of Ryne Emerick

LHS science teacher Justin Slye shows summer school students in the Explorer Camp at Bennett Spring State Park what a snake's skin is like.



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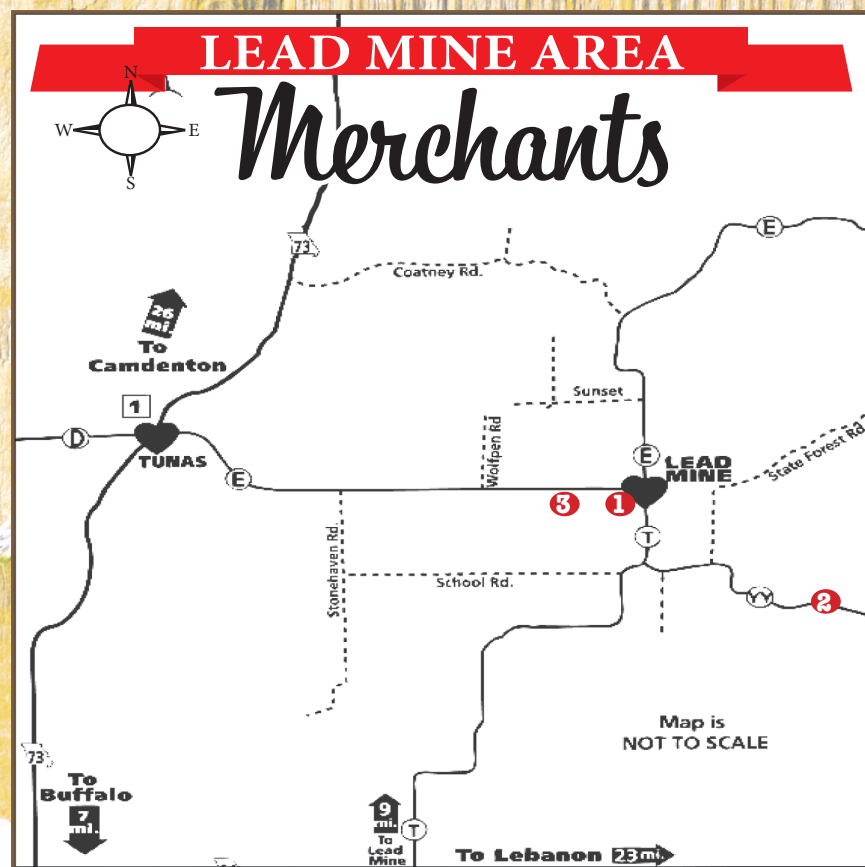


Photo courtesy of Bennett Spring Park Store

Danny Beredick from Smithton, IL holds his July catch from Zone 2, weighing 3.3 lbs.

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Get in the zone

A look at Bennett Spring State Park rules and regulations:

FISHING REGULATIONS

The spring branch is stocked daily during the regular fishing season, which is March 1 through Oct. 31. Daily permits are required to fish on the spring branch and zones are set aside for different kinds of lures. Permits are available at the park store. For more information, call (417) 532-4307.

ZONE 1: From the hatchery dam upstream to the end of the area. Only flies are permitted.

ZONE 2: From the hatchery

dam to the whistle bridge. Only flies and artificial lures are permitted.

ZONE 3: From the whistle bridge to the Niangua River. Only soft plastic bait (unscented), natural and scented bait are permitted. All flies and artificial lures are prohibited, even if natural bait or scent has been added.

Zone areas are marked in the park and maps are also available in the Park Store.

Park hours

Trout Fishing Hours

July: 6:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

August: 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

September: 7:30 a.m. to 7:15 p.m.

October: 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

PARK HOURS

Park Grounds: Sunrise to one hour past sunset, daily

DINING LODGE HOURS

7 a.m. to one hour after the whistle during trout season

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Photos courtesy of Bennet Spring Park Store

Summertime is spent at the state park for many kids in the area. A large number of them take up fishing and reel in more than trout at Bennett Spring... they often catch a few smiles as well!



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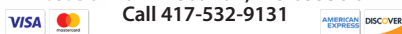
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Trout Talk

BENNETT SPRING STATE PARK AND SURROUNDING AREA



Pics from the park



Photos courtesy of Bennett Spring Park Store
Top left photo, Mickey Liberman from St Charles, Mo shows off her trout caught with a Green Lure in Zone 1. The fish weighed in at 3.25 lbs. Bottom left photo, George Wielms from Warrenton, Mo holds his Zone 3 catch, which weighed in at 3 lbs.
Top right photo, Ryan Sallisbury from Liberty, Mo caught this 4 lbs 2 oz trout off a minnow in Zone 3. Bottom right photo, Alex McCallum from Belton, Mo caught this 3 lb Black Rooster Tail in Zone 1 earlier in July.



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