



CHAPTER 1

MISSOURI ALMANAC

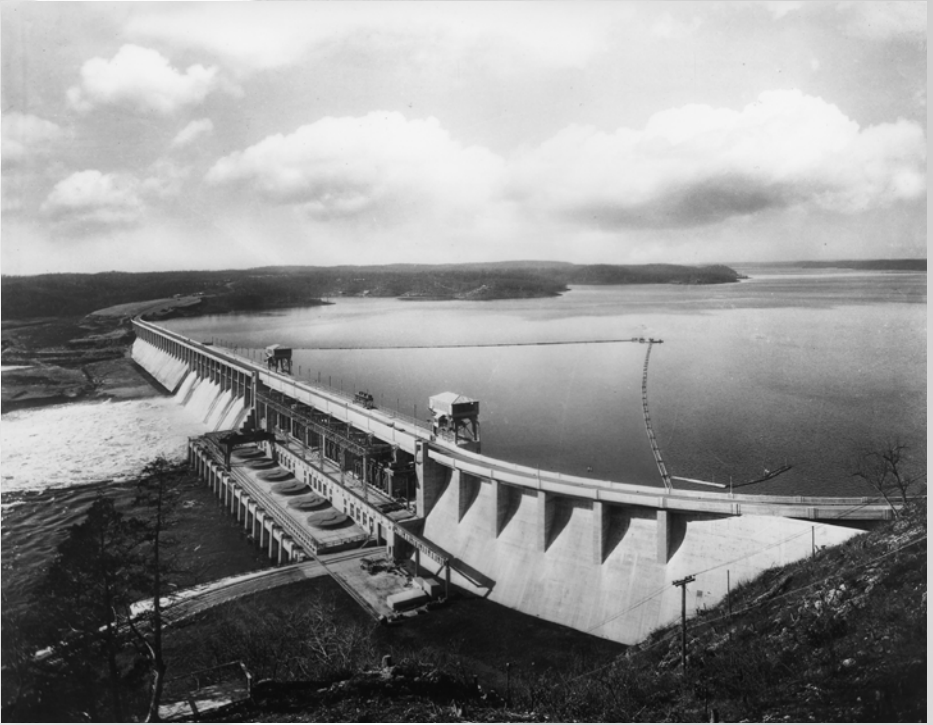
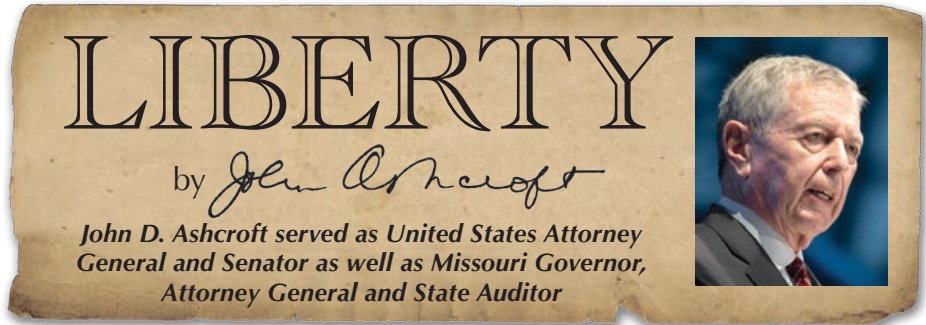


Image showing Bagnell Dam from the west hillside. Water spills through the bays.
Courtesy of the Missouri State Archives.



Marine Corps War Memorial, Washington DC. Front cover illustration based on this image. Adobe stock.

Believing that Americans were better than other people was an easy mistake for me to make as an Ozarks kid at the close of WWII. After all we had led the world in the decisive triumph over Hitler and Americans were at the forefront of virtually all industrial and technological breakthroughs.

But over the years it has become crystal clear to me that Americans cannot be better than others because we are “others!” From the north, south, across oceans from the far reaches of the globe we arrived.

How then can we explain the undeniable predominance of good things that have transpired here: the flourishing community of creativity and productivity that has catapulted America to the apex of human achievement? What is it that has made America the hands down best place in the universe for human existence? It’s LIBERTY! Liberty is the special ingredient that spurs growth, creativity, productivity and development.

The desire for liberty to worship according to one’s own conscience drove the first colonists to our shores. And from this seed a culture of liberty grew. It was this aspiration for liberty which transcended all other considerations that ultimately prompted founders to pledge their “lives, fortunes, and sacred honor” to secure freedom.



House Chamber Stained Glass: Virtues. Five panels of stained glass grace the north side at the height of the House of Representatives Chamber. The panels stand for Liberty, Equality, Law, Justice and Fraternity. Courtesy of Missouri State Archives and State Capitol Commission.



View of the front of the Thomas Jefferson Statue and pedestal on the main staircase of the south entrance to the Capitol Building. Courtesy of Missouri State Archives and State Capitol Commission.

In times of more rigorous basic education all of us learned about Samuel Adams and his “sons of liberty” making a giant teapot out of the Boston harbor. None of us can forget the indelible words of Patrick Henry at the Second Virginia Convention in 1775: “I know not what course others may take but as for me give me liberty or give me death.”

It is no accident that in this environment the founders elevated liberty to both front and center in the Declaration of Independence. There, liberty is inextricably interlinked with life itself and the pursuit of happiness.

When asked the meaning of liberty as used in our Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson succinctly replied, “unobstructed action according to our own will within the limits drawn around us by

the equal rights of others.” The clarity of this definition is most valuable. Liberty is equally apportioned opportunity.

It is important to note that meaningful liberty implies real consequences. One is not truly free if he is deprived of the outcomes of his exercise of liberty. Those who assert that freedom equals the absence of consequence confuse meaninglessness with freedom.

The Declaration of Independence describes liberty as “unalienable” and states that citizens’ rights are “endowed by their Creator.” Further the Declaration identifies that the purpose of government is to secure these rights. It is not the primary purpose of government to restrain and control citizens. Rather the purpose of government is to protect and liberate citizens by securing their rights.

Liberty endowed by the creator is not subject to confiscation by government.



Replica of Philadelphia’s Liberty Bell is illuminated at night on the Missouri Capitol grounds. Courtesy of Missouri State Archives and State Capitol Commission.



A crowd lines up to view the Freedom Train that traveled the country from 1947–1949. An ALCO PA diesel-electric locomotive pulled the train, which carried the original versions of the United States Constitution, Declaration of Independence, Truman Doctrine, and the Bill of Rights on its tour of more than 300 cities in all 48 states. Courtesy of Missouri State Archives.

Thus the role of government is in safeguarding, securing and defending God-given liberty. Jefferson’s definition signals that government only properly limits liberty in order to protect the equal rights of others.

There are cultures that recite liberty as a value without attributing it to the Creator or to nature. A serious danger lies in this approach. Without a transcendent or superior source, liberty simply stands as a value subject to the ebb and flow of public sentiment or controlling public policy. Consequently, many Americans feel at risk when leaders omit references to the Creator or nature as the source of liberty.

At the founding of our nation, colonists demanded a bill of rights granting durable standing for our most cherished liberties. Patriots understood that unrestrained government would result in restrained citizens. Limited government was a way of assuring liberty to humanity. Among offenses complained of by the colonists against the king were numerous abuses: “He has created a multitude of New Officers, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance.”



John Adams, second President of the United States, 1787-1791. Lithograph, 1828. Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/96522259/>

Consequently it is understandable that the tenth amendment capstone of the Bill of Rights, which made the Constitution far more palatable to the states, is designed to

preserve the liberties of the people. It does so by reserving to the states and to the people all powers not specifically authorized and ceded to the national authority.

Unlike liberty, democracy is not mentioned in the Declaration of Independence or in the U.S. Constitution. Nevertheless, it can be a friend of liberty. However, democracy is not liberty and does not guarantee liberty.



President Harry S. Truman and British Statesman Winston Churchill in the back of the train departing Fulton after Churchill's famous Iron Curtain "Sinews of Peace" speech at Westminster College, March 5, 1956. Courtesy of Missouri State Archives.

There is some wisdom in Winston Churchill's tongue-in-cheek quip that "democracy is the worst form of government except for all the others that have been tried." It has been unfortunate but not infrequent that dictatorial tyrants often claim significant democratic majorities.

Additionally, founding father John Adams observed "it is in vain to say that democracy is less vain, less proud, less selfish, less ambitious, or less avaricious. Even republics need restraints. Tocqueville emphasized, "... the power to do everything that I refuse to any one of my fellows, I will never grant to several."

We are well served to understand that "democracy" is a process for decision making. It does not guarantee any outcome. It carries the significant risk that decisions unduly favor the majority at the expense of minorities. On the other hand, liberty is an outcome or condition in which people live and work. It is not a process but an environment in which humanity can prosper. As a result, our Constitution limits majorities from devaluing our creator-endowed liberties. Together a constitutional framework protecting liberty and the virtue of citizen participation in an elected republic have made America the environment for growth for both individuals and institutions.

It is said that democracy only survives until citizens start to vote themselves benefits. When cultures seek to provide benefits by confiscating and redistributing the productivity of freedom

the energy of freedom is impaired. A culture which is characterized by liberty and opportunity attracts immigrants who yearn for freedom. This is in contrast to a socialist, benefits-oriented culture that attracts immigrants who seek "free stuff." Our nation fulfilled its destiny of world leadership because people came here seeking freedom rather than free stuff.

When Emma Lazarus wrote her elegant poem which graces the Statue of Liberty's base she welcomed, "... your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore." She must have seen that responsible, consequential liberty can convert tragedy into triumph, poverty into prosperity, huddled masses and wretched refuse into world leaders.

In the debate following the 9-11 terrorist assault on America's liberty questions were raised as to whether or not security should trump liberty as our central value. The best answer to this important question should inquire: "what are we seeking to secure?" The purpose for security is to preserve liberty! Ben Franklin warned, "Those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety." Our transcendent purpose must be to secure liberty, to enhance it and to sustain it.



View of the Statue of Liberty replica outside of the Missouri Capitol building. Courtesy of Missouri State Archives and State Capitol Commission.



World Trade Center Memorial, New York City, NY. Adobe stock.

Almost thirty years ago the symbol of American greatness, our beloved bald eagle, was making a comeback. Inspired by one flying over the Ashcroft family farm in Greene County, I wished for American greatness to be similarly renewed and wrote the following verses, "Let the Eagle Soar," which represent the concept of unlimited human achievement when liberty is the supreme value.



American Bald Eagle. Adobe stock.

Let the Eagle Soar

This eagle's place is in the sky, she's still got a lot of flyin' to do.
And you can see it in her eye, though she's cried a bit o'er what we've put her through.
She's soared above the lifted lamp that guards sweet freedom's door.
In the dews and damps and watchfires of our nation torn by war.
Oh, she's not about to die, you can see it in her eye.
She's not yet begun to fly, it's time to let the mighty eagle soar once more.

Let the eagle soar, like she's never soared before.
From rocky coast to golden shore, let the mighty eagle soar.
Soar with healing in her wings, as the land beneath her sings,
"Only God, no other kings," let the mighty eagle soar.

This country's far too young to die, we've still got a lot of climbin' to do.
And we can make it if we try, built by toils and struggles God has led us through.
We've fought for freedom dear both here and on the distant shore.
We've paid the price of sacrifice, a price you can't ignore.
Oh, we're far too young to die, we can make it if we try.
We've not yet begun to fly, it's time to let the mighty eagle soar once more.

Let the eagle soar, like she's never soared before.
From rocky coast to golden shore, let the mighty eagle soar.
Soar with healing in her wings, as the land beneath her sings,
"Only God, no other kings," let the mighty eagle soar.

STATE SYMBOLS OF MISSOURI



THE GREAT SEAL OF MISSOURI

The Great Seal was designed by Judge Robert William Wells and adopted by the Missouri General Assembly on Jan. 11, 1822. The center of the state seal is composed of two parts. On the right is the United States coat-of-arms containing the bald eagle. In its claws are arrows and olive branches, signifying that the power of war and peace lies with the U.S. federal government. On the left side of the shield, the state side, are a grizzly bear and a silver crescent moon. The crescent symbolizes Missouri at the time of the state seal's creation, a state of small population and wealth which would increase like the new or crescent moon; it also symbolizes the "second son," meaning Missouri was the second state formed out of the Louisiana Territory.

This shield is encircled by a belt inscribed with the motto, "United we stand, divided we fall," which indicates Missouri's advantage as a member of the United States. The two grizzlies on either side of the shield symbolize the state's strength and its citizens' bravery. The bears stand atop a scroll bearing the state motto, "*Salus Populi Suprema Lex Esto*," which means, "The welfare of the people shall be the supreme law." Below this scroll are the Roman numerals for 1820, the year Missouri began its functions as a state.

The helmet above the shield represents state sovereignty, and the large star atop the helmet surrounded by 23 smaller stars signifies Missouri's status as the 24th state. The cloud around the large star indicates the problems Missouri had in becoming a state. The whole state seal is enclosed by a scroll bearing the words, "The Great Seal of the State of Missouri." (RSMo 10.060)



THE STATE FLAG

Nearly 100 years after achieving statehood, Missouri adopted an official flag on March 22, 1913. The flag was designed by the late Mrs. Marie Elizabeth Watkins Oliver, wife of former State Senator R.B. Oliver. The Oliver flag embraced national pride, and at the same time represented the characteristics of Missouri and its people.

The three large stripes are symbolic of the people of the state—the blue stripe represented vigilance, permanency and justice, the red represented valor, and the white stripe symbolized purity. The Missouri coat-of-arms appears in the center of the flag, signifying both Missouri's independence as a state, and its place as a part of the whole United States. Having the coat-of-arms in the center of the national colors represents Missouri, as it is—the geographical center of the nation. By mingling the state coat-of-arms with the national colors of red, white and blue, the flag signified the harmony existing between the two. Twenty-four stars surrounded the coat-of-arms, representative of Missouri's position as the 24th state admitted to the Union. (RSMo 10.020)

MISSOURI DAY

On March 22, 1915, the 48th General Assembly set aside the first Monday in October each year as "Missouri Day," due to the efforts of Mrs. Anna Brosius Korn, a native Missourian. In 1969, the 75th General Assembly changed the date to the third Wednesday in October. Missouri Day is a time for schools to honor the state and for the people of the state to celebrate the achievements of all Missourians. (RSMo 9.040)

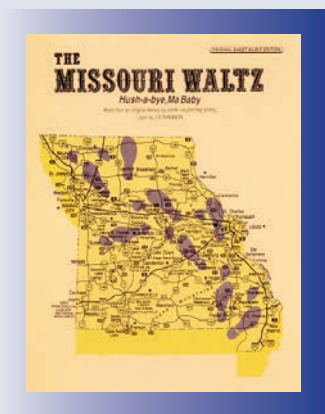


THE STATE FLORAL EMBLEM

On March 16, 1923, a bill was signed naming the **white hawthorn blossom** the official state floral emblem of Missouri. Known as the “red haw” or “white haw,” the hawthorn (*Crataegus*) is a member of the great rose family. The hawthorn blossoms have greenish-yellow centers and form in white clusters. More than 75 species of the hawthorn grow in Missouri, particularly in the Ozarks. (RSMo 10.030)

THE STATE BIRD

On March 30, 1927, the native **bluebird** (*Sialia sialis*) became the official state bird of Missouri. The bluebird, considered a symbol of happiness, is usually 6½ to 7 inches long. While its upper parts are covered with light blue plumage, its breast is cinnamon red, turning rust-colored in the fall. The bluebird is common in Missouri from early spring until late November. (RSMo 10.010)



THE STATE SONG

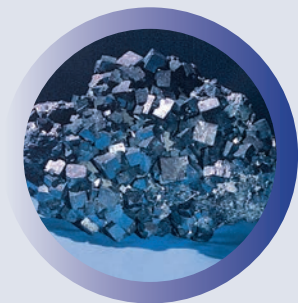
The “**Missouri Waltz**” became the state song under an act adopted by the General Assembly on June 30, 1949. The song came from a melody by John V. Eppel and was arranged by Frederic Knight Logan, using lyrics written by J.R. Shannon. First published in 1914, the song did not sell well and was considered a failure. By 1939, the song had gained popularity and six million copies had been sold. Sales increased substantially after Missourian Harry S Truman became president. (RSMo 10.050)

THE STATE TREE

On June 20, 1955, the **flowering dogwood** (*Cornus florida* L.) became Missouri’s official tree. The tree is small in size, rarely growing over 40 feet in height or 18 inches in diameter. The dogwood sprouts tiny greenish-yellow flowers in clusters, with each flower surrounded by four white petals. The paired, oval leaves are olive green above and covered with silvery hairs underneath. In the fall, the upper part of the leaves turn scarlet or orange and bright red fruits grow on the tree. (RSMo 10.040)



THE STATE MINERAL



On July 21, 1967, the mineral **galena** was adopted as the official mineral of Missouri. Galena is the most important ore of lead and is also a major source of silver. The recognition of this mineral by the state legislature was to emphasize Missouri's status as the nation's top producer of lead. Galena is dark gray in color and breaks into small cubes. Mining of galena has flourished in the Joplin-Granby area of southwest Missouri, and rich deposits have been located in such places as Crawford, Washington, Iron and Reynolds counties. (RSMo 10.047)

THE STATE ROCK

Mozarkite was adopted as the official state rock on July 21, 1967, by the 74th General Assembly. An attractive rock, mozarkite appears in a variety of colors, most predominantly green, red or purple. The rock's beauty is enhanced by cutting and polishing into ornamental shapes for jewelry. Mozarkite is most commonly found in Benton County. (RSMo 10.045)



THE STATE INSECT

On July 3, 1985, the **honeybee** was designated as Missouri's state insect. The honeybee, (*Apis mellifera*) yellow or orange and black in color, is a social insect which collects nectar and pollen from flower blossoms in order to produce honey. The honeybee is common to Missouri and is cultivated by beekeepers for honey production. (RSMo 10.070)

THE STATE MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

The **fiddle** became the state's official musical instrument on July 17, 1987. Brought to Missouri in the late 1700s by fur traders and settlers, the fiddle quickly became popular. The instrument was adaptable to many forms of music, could be played without extensive formal training and was light and easy to carry. For generations, the local fiddle player was the sole source of entertainment in many communities and held a position of great respect in the region. (RSMo 10.080)





THE STATE FOSSIL

The **crinoid** became the state's official fossil on June 16, 1989, after a group of Lee's Summit school students worked through the legislative process to promote it as a state symbol. The crinoid (*Delocrinus missouriensis*) is a mineralization of an animal which, because of its plant-like appearance, was called the "sea lily." Related to the starfish, the crinoid lived in the ocean which covered Missouri more than 250 million years ago. (RSMo 10.090)

THE STATE TREE NUT

The nut produced by the black walnut tree (*Juglans nigra*), known as the **eastern black walnut**, became the state tree nut on July 9, 1990. The nut has a variety of uses. The meat is used in ice cream, baked goods and candies. The shell provides the soft grit abrasive used in metal cleaning and polishing, and oil well drilling. It is also used in paint products and as a filler in dynamite. (RSMo 10.100)



THE STATE ANIMAL

On May 31, 1995, the **Missouri mule** was designated as the official state animal. The mule is a hybrid, the offspring of a mare (female horse) and a jack (male donkey). After its introduction to the state in the 1820s, the mule quickly became popular with farmers and settlers because of its hardy nature. Missouri mules pulled pioneer wagons to the Wild West during the 19th century and played a crucial role in moving troops and supplies in World Wars I and II. For decades, Missouri was the nation's premier mule producer. (RSMo 10.110)

THE STATE AMERICAN FOLK DANCE

The **square dance** was adopted as Missouri's official American folk dance on May 31, 1995. Square dances are derived from folk and courtship dances brought to the United States by European immigrants. Lively music and callers are hallmarks of square dancing. The caller directs the dancers by singing the names of figures and steps to be performed. (RSMo 10.120)





THE STATE AQUATIC ANIMAL

The **paddlefish** (*Polyodon spathula*) became Missouri's official aquatic animal on May 23, 1997. Only three rivers in Missouri support substantial populations of the paddlefish: the Mississippi, Missouri and the Osage. They are also present in some of the state's larger lakes. The paddlefish is primitive, with a cartilage skeleton, rather than bone. They commonly exceed five feet in length and weights of 60 pounds; 20-year-olds are common, and some live 30 years or more. (RSMo 10.130)

THE STATE FISH

On May 23, 1997, the **channel catfish** became the official fish of Missouri. The channel catfish (*Ictalurus punctatus*) is slender, with a deeply forked tail. Young have spots that disappear with age. The catfish does not rely on sight to find its food; instead, it uses cat-like whiskers to assist in the hunt. The channel cat is the most abundant large catfish in Missouri streams. Its diet includes animal and plant material. Adults are normally 12 to 32 inches long and weigh from a half-pound to 15 pounds. (RSMo 10.135)



THE STATE HORSE

On June 4, 2002, the **Missouri Fox Trotter** became Missouri's official state horse. Missouri fox trotters were developed in the rugged Ozark hills of Missouri during the early 19th century. Bloodlines can be traced from early settlers to Missouri from the neighboring states of Kentucky, Illinois, Tennessee and Arkansas. The distinguishing characteristic of the fox trotter is its rhythmic gait, in which the horse walks with the front feet and trots with the hind feet. This gait gives the rider a smooth, gentle ride. (RSMo 10.140)

THE STATE GRAPE

On July 11, 2003, the **Norton/Cynthiana grape** (*Vitis aestivalis* 'Norton') was adopted as the official state grape. This adaptable, self-pollinating variety has been cultivated since the 1830s and is likely North America's oldest grape variety still commercially grown. Norton/Cynthiana has long been prized by Missouri vintners for its hardy growth habit and intense flavor characteristics, which produce lush, dry premium red wines of world-class quality and distinction. (RSMo 10.160)





THE PURPLE MARTIN CAPITAL

The **City of Adrian**, located in Bates County, was declared the purple martin capital of the state of Missouri on Aug. 28, 2003. Purple martins are largely dependent on humans to build and maintain their housing and are happy in large bird houses or in gourds. These creatures are partial to living near water, in open parts of a yard, or along rural roadsides. Purple martins are popular among bird lovers because of their melodic singing and aerial feats. (RSMo 10.141)

THE STATE DINOSAUR

Parrosaurus missouriense is a type of dinosaur called a Hadrosaur or “duck billed” dinosaur. It was a herbivore with jaws that contained over 1,000 teeth. *Parrosaurus* had evolved specialized teeth to handle the tough, fibrous vegetation of the time. *Parrosaurus* lived in Missouri during the Late Cretaceous Period. *Parrosaurus* was first discovered in 1942 by Dan Stewart, near the town of Glen Allen, Missouri, and became the official state dinosaur on July 9, 2004. The name was changed from *Hypsibema missouriense* in 2022, due to legislation (House Bill 1738) in the 101st General Assembly, Second Regular Session.



THE STATE AMPHIBIAN

On June 5, 2005, the **American Bullfrog** (*Rana catesbeiana*) became the official state amphibian. The bullfrog is the largest frog native to Missouri and is found in every county. Most Missourians are familiar with the deep, resonant “jug-of-rum” call, which is typically heard on warm, rainy nights between mid-May and early July. The idea for the bullfrog designation came from a fourth grade class at Chinn Elementary School in Kansas City. (RSMo 10.170)

THE STATE GAME BIRD

The **bobwhite quail** (*Colinus virginianus*), also known as the northern bobwhite, became the official state game bird on July 13, 2007. The northern bobwhite is found throughout Missouri in a variety of habitats. In the fall and winter, northern bobwhites form loose social groups better known as a covey. A covey will generally contain 10 to 12 quail, but can have as many as 20 or 30 birds. The familiar two- or three-note “bobwhite” whistle is made by males in the spring and summer to attract females. (RSMo 10.012).



THE STATE INVERTEBRATE



On June 21, 2007, the **crayfish** (also known as crawfish and crawdad) became the official state invertebrate. Crayfish are an important food source for Missouri fishes. Missouri supports more than 30 species of crayfish (including seven species that occur nowhere else in the world). Crayfish are found in every county of the state and contribute to our unique biodiversity and conservation heritage. The nomination of crayfish for state invertebrate came from Mrs. Janna Elfrink's elementary school class in Reeds Spring, Missouri. (RSMo 10.125)

THE STATE REPTILE

On June 21, 2007, the **three-toed box turtle** (*Terrapene carolina triunguis*) became the official state reptile. Most Missourians are familiar with this land-dwelling turtle. Three-toed box turtles, as their name implies, typically have three hind toes. The hinged bottom shell allows the turtle to retreat inside as if enclosed in a box. Males have red eyes and females have brown eyes. (RSMo 10.175).



THE STATE GRASS

Big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*) was designated as Missouri's stategrass on June 11, 2007, as a result of efforts by the fourth-grade class at Truman Elementary School in Rolla. Big bluestem is native to Missouri and occurs throughout the state, with the exception of a few southeastern-most counties. It is a major component of Missouri's tallgrass prairies where it impressed the first explorers by sometimes growing tall enough to hide a person on horseback. The name bluestem comes from the bluish-green color of the leaves and stems that turn an attractive reddish-copper color in autumn. (RSMo 10.150).



THE STATE DESSERT

The **ice cream cone** became the state of Missouri's official dessert on Aug. 28, 2008. The 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis was the birthplace of the treat and has become a staple at many community events across the state, such as the State Fair. The University of Missouri–Columbia has played a large role in the development of ice cream products for over a century. Missouri ranks among the top five states in ice cream production. (RSMo 10.180).

Louise and Omar Putman Collection, photograph by Louise Putman
Missouri State Archives





THE STATE SYMBOL FOR CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

The **blue ribbon** became the state of Missouri's official symbol for child abuse prevention on Aug. 28, 2012. It is a symbol of efforts to increase awareness of the prevalence and warning signs of child abuse and the prevention methods and measures available to reduce the incidence of child abuse in Missouri. (RSMo 10.185).

THE STATE EXERCISE

The **jumping jack** exercise was invented by Missouri-born Army General John J. "Black Jack" Pershing as a training drill for cadets when he taught at West Point in the late 1800s. The idea for the jumping jack designation came from students at Pershing Elementary School in St. Joseph. (RSMo 10.115)



THE WONDER DOG

On Aug. 28, 2017, "**Jim the Wonder Dog**" was designated as Missouri's wonder dog. A Llewellyn Setter, born in 1925, Jim first gained notoriety for his prowess as a hunting dog. He tracked over 5,000 birds, a total no other dog had ever achieved, earning him the *Outdoor Life Magazine* designation of "The Hunting Dog of the Country." Eventually Jim began to exhibit a wide range of other talents not typically associated with dogs. He could pick a car on the street by license number, recognize unknown people in a crowd and carry out instructions, oral or written, given to him in any foreign language, Morse Code or shorthand. Jim predicted seven Kentucky Derby winners and was known for accurately

determining the gender of unborn babies. He performed before the Missouri Legislature and was featured in *Field and Stream*, *The Kansas City Star*, *Missouri Ruralist* and Ripley's Believe It or Not. Jim is buried in Marshall, Missouri's Ridge Park Cemetery. His grave is the most visited spot in the cemetery. (RSMo 10.113)



THE HISTORICAL DOG

On Aug. 28, 2017, **Old Drum** was designated the historical dog of Missouri. Old Drum was a black and tan hunting hound whose shooting death became the subject of an 1870 Missouri Supreme Court case. The closing arguments for the plaintiff, delivered by attorney George Graham Vest, brought tears to the eyes of jurors and became famously-known as the *Eulogy of the Dog*. Although the words of the speech were not written down until sometime after the trial, it became renowned for its appeal to dog lovers in its praise of the dog as a man's "best friend." Both Old

Drum and the *Eulogy of the Dog* are memorialized with a statue and plaque at the Johnson County courthouse in Warrensburg, Missouri. (RSMo 10.112)

THE STATE FRUIT TREE

The **Pawpaw tree** (*Asimina triloba*) was designated as Missouri's official state fruit tree on Aug. 28, 2019. The pawpaw tree is a small, deciduous tree, typically growing in forest understorey. Pawpaws can grow to a height of 11 feet, although taller ones have been measured. They have the distinction of producing the largest edible fruit that is also native to the U.S. The richly-colored maroon flowers ripen into a green, then yellow or brown fruit, 2-6 inches in length and 1-3 inches wide. The flesh of the pawpaw fruit is pale yellow, with a custard-like texture and large black seeds. The flavor is often compared to that of banana, mango or kiwi. Pawpaw fruit is also known regionally, by colloquial names such as "Missouri banana," "Ozark banana" and "hillbilly mango." (RSMo 10.105)



THE OFFICIAL ENDANGERED SPECIES

On Aug. 28, 2019, the **Hellbender Salamander** (*Cryptobranchus alleganiensis*) was designated as Missouri's official endangered species. It is also known as the "snot otter" or "lasagna lizard," and is an aquatic salamander. There are two subspecies, the Ozark and the Eastern. The Hellbender can live up to 30 years and grow up to two feet long. They breathe through their skin and are nocturnal

foragers. Missouri is the only place to have both subspecies of the Hellbender and both are listed as endangered. The salamander is important due to its role as an indicator of overall stream health. The Ron Goellner Center for Hellbender Conservation's successful breeding program at the St. Louis Zoo currently has released over 5,000 back into the wild. Westminster College student Cameron Gehlert submitted the suggestion. (RSMo 10.200)



THE STATE TARTAN

The “**Show-Me Tartan**” was designated as Missouri’s official tartan on Aug. 28, 2019. Missouri is one of 29 states to adopt an official tartan, and the design is registered with the Scottish Tartan Authority. The design, a criss-crossing line pattern of blue, brown and silver on a field of dark blue and green, was inspired by four of Missouri’s state symbols; the Eastern Bluebird, the Missouri mule, and the crescent moon and bear present on the Great Seal. The dark green and blue are symbolic of Missouri’s lands, waters and the Ozark Mountains. The Eastern Bluebird is symbolized by

stripes of light blue, white and red. A band of brown represents the Missouri mule. A narrow band of light blue reflects the crescent moon symbol of the Seal, and another brown band represents the grizzly bear of the Seal. The pattern is intended to reflect the concepts of “vigilance and justice, valor, purity, steadfastness, hope and strength.”(RSMo 10.190)

THE OFFICIAL STATE HOCKEY TEAM

On Aug. 28, 2019, the **St. Louis Blues** was selected and shall be known as the official state hockey team of Missouri. In 2019, the Blues won the first Stanley Cup championship in the team’s history. (RSMo 10.225)



THE OFFICIAL STATE MONUMENT

The **Gateway Arch** is perhaps Missouri’s most iconic and recognizable structure. Architect Eero Saarinen designed the winning monument in 1947 in the shape of a weighted catenary arch. Construction began in 1963 and was completed in 1965. Today, approximately 4,000,000 tourists visit the site every year. Visitors to the Gateway Arch may explore an underground museum and ride a tram up the inside of the Arch to the top where an observation deck provides a stunning view of St. Louis, the Mississippi River and surrounding areas. In February 2018,

the Gateway Arch and nearby Old Courthouse were designated as Gateway Arch National Park, the first national park in Missouri. Gov. Mike Parson signed a bill in 2021 designating the Gateway Arch as Missouri’s official state monument.



THE OFFICIAL STATE SPORT

Archery is a method of shooting a projectile point secured to the tip of a shaft propelled by a bow: the age-old “bow and arrow.” In Missouri, archery took on special significance when in 1966 Kansas City resident Holless W. Allen submitted a patent for the compound bow, which was approved in 1969. Other Missouri archery connections include the Archery Hall of Fame & Museum in Springfield; the Missouri National Archery in the Schools Program run by the Department of Conservation; and, the Grayson Archery Collection and Library at the University of

Missouri Museum of Anthropology, one of the largest and most comprehensive collections in the world containing over 5,500 pieces representing six continents.

THE STATE RIFLE

The **Hawken rifle** was originally manufactured by brothers Jacob and Samuel Hawken in St. Louis. Their double-trigger muzzleloader was also called the prairie rifle and the Rocky Mountain rifle because its intended purpose was to arm fur traders in the West. They never patented the gun. The brothers produced their first rifle in 1823 or 1825 and continued working together until Jacob’s death in the cholera epidemic of 1849. Samuel retired around 1855 and left the business to his son William.

William carried on until he sold the company around 1862. The name Hawken remained attached to the gun shop until it closed in 1915. The Hawken family made an estimated 1,000 rifles over nearly 40 years. Famous “mountain men” known to have owned Hawken Rifles were Kit Carson, Hugh Glass, Theodore Roosevelt and Missouri’s own Daniel Boone and William Henry Ashley. Missouri is the tenth state to have an official firearm.



STATE UFO CAPITALS OF MISSOURI

To mark the 50th anniversary of alleged unidentified flying object (UFO) sightings in Piedmont, the Missouri General Assembly passed SB139 designating **Piedmont** and **Wayne County** as the UFO Capitals of Missouri. The purpose of codifying the designation in state statute was, according to the original bill sponsor Rep. Chris Dinkins, to increase tourism. (Committee) Between February and April 1973, residents of Piedmont and the surrounding area witnessed unexplained activity in the sky. Several hundred

calls were made to local police, sheriffs and newspapers. The incidents made local headlines and eventually national news outlets began reporting the sightings. There was no official government investigation of the sightings (Project Blue Book was discontinued in 1969); however, Southeast Missouri State University physics professor Dr. Harley Rutledge investigated with his own team. He issued a public paper in 1973, which he later turned into a book called *Project Identification: The First Scientific Field Study of UFO Phenomena* (1981). Today, Unexplained Aerial Phenomena reports, as they are now called, are handled by the All-domain Anomaly Resolution Office under the U.S. Secretary of Defense.

STATE GOLD STAR MEMORIAL MONUMENTS



In 2020, the governor signed a bill designating three separate **Gold Star Memorials** as official state symbols. The federal Gold Star Families program is for individuals whose immediate family member died during U.S. military service. The Gold Star tradition dates back to the World War I Service Flag families would fly at their homes. A blue star on the flag represented a serving member of the family; a gold star meant that family member had died during his or her service. The Service Flag was formalized by Congress

in 1942. The nation observed its first Gold Star Mother's Day in September 1936; Gold Star Mother's and Father's Day is now marked annually on the last Sunday in September and Gold Star Spouse's Day is April 5. The Gold Star lapel button (pin) was established by Congress in 1947. A U.S. Gold Star is issued by the Department of Defense or the deceased's specific branch of the military. Each Gold Star honoree receives an official Gold Star lapel pin and survivor support services.

STATE KOREAN WAR VETERANS MEMORIAL

In January 2020, Sen. Mike Cierpiot submitted SB656, which would designate the **Missouri Korean War Veterans Memorial** in Kansas City as the official Korean War Veterans Memorial for the state. Cierpiot was following an earlier attempt made in 2013 by Sen. Jason Holsman's SB399, which died in committee. Gov. Mike Parson signed the 2020 bill into law, effective Aug. 28, 2020. United States involvement in the Korean War officially began with hostilities on June 27, 1950 and lasted through July 27, 1953, with veteran benefit eligibility extending up to Jan. 31, 1955. With the 1955 extension, 6.8 million Americans qualified as Korean War veterans. As of 2018, the official number of casualties from Missouri was 944 (NARA). Unofficially, the number has risen to 1,056 as of 2023 (Korean War Project). The Memorial was dedicated Sept. 28, 2011, in Washington Square Park, Kansas City. According to the Memorial's official website, the purpose of the Memorial is, "To perpetuate the legacy of Korean War Veterans present and past and the over 900 from the State of Missouri who paid the supreme sacrifice and gave their lives in defense of South Korea." (MKWVM). Other statewide Missouri Korean War monuments are in St. Louis (Forest Park), Jefferson City (Capitol grounds) and College of the Ozarks (Patriots Park).

