



FNHA Newsletter



Flowering Dogwood (Cornus florida) — at Trails at Mt Sequoyah Woods. Photo by Jennifer Ogle

Message from the FNHA Board

All of us are waking up each day to a strange, different, difficult and, unfortunately, often painful world where everything familiar and ordinary seems to have changed.

We share and empathize with the range of feelings and responses our FNHA members are experiencing in this new age of Covid-19. We dwell in uncertainty and sometimes fear. And we realize, more than ever, how connected we are and must be with the rest of the world. Missing the nearness of friends and family, we value them even more. We long for connection -- with our neighbors, our colleagues, our acquaintances, our fellow volunteers.

Meetings and classes are cancelled, work has been transformed or suspended, even lost. Our favorite coffee bars and restaurants, our places of worship, our indoor recreation facilities, our libraries are now closed or changed to drive-throughs. Masks and gloves are everywhere.

The FNHA board has suspended its monthly face-to-face meetings in favor of electronic exchanges, a disappointing shift as we always look forward to the amazingly delicious potlucks that start our regular board meetings. But we'll adjust, for now. And we are thinking about you, our members, we're concerned about every aspect of your health and your well-being; we care about how you are faring.

Like you, we feel renewed gratitude to our entire range of healthcare providers, to our firefighters, our police officers, our mail carriers, our teachers, our truck drivers, to those who stock our pharmacies and grocery stores and keep them and other essential businesses open, to our scientists and researchers and so many others we depend upon daily. We hope that a vaccine will soon be developed and tested and that everything will seem more normal. Many of us hope that the new normal will be one of greater appreciation and caring interaction, that it will bring joy and healing.

Amidst all the problems we're now experiencing, large and small, spring has arrived! We may feel that it comes with a certain irony, but we're also reassured by its normality, its very ordinariness and its absolute glory. This issue of the FNHA Newsletter brings some suggestions about ways to enjoy this year's springtime and to even contribute to our understanding and appreciation of our local natural heritage as you do so. What a wonderful way to feel our connection with everything, with everybody, with all that makes up our amazing planet, our earth.



New signs in place along trails with reminders of what six feet actually looks like. Photo Credit: City of Fayetteville Parks and Recreation, Fayetteville, AR

COVID-19 GUIDELINES FOR FAYETTEVILLE PARKS AND TRAILS: WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Spending some time outside in parks or on trails is good therapy during these days of sheltering in place, as long as we know and follow guidelines for social distancing. It's also really uplifting to get out for a while every day to see nature's colorful kaleidoscope of unfolding spring flowers and foliage.

"Bike rides on our great city multi-use trails and the Razorback Greenway give me a much needed recreational break, a chance to socialize at a safe distance on cycling outings with friends, and exercise to help keep me from gaining the 'Quarantine 15.' I take care to follow the Fayetteville Parks and Recreation COVID-19 Guidelines and check for updates posted on the City's website. Although wearing a mask and gloves is a bit inconvenient, I find the 'disguise' aspect of everyone doing so, in addition to helmet and sunglasses, somewhat amusing. The mask also blocks a lot of dust and pollen, which is definitely a benefit." - Teresa Turk, Fayetteville City Council Ward 4

Be "In-the-Know" before you go to bike, hike, or play in our public areas. Check the City of

Fayetteville's Parks and Recreation [WEBSITE](#), [FACEBOOK](#) and [TWITTER](#) for posts and updates on current closings of park amenities, such as playgrounds, playing courts and fields, restrooms, and water fountains, as well as recommendations on the safe use of open space (see list, below).

The city recommends remaining flexible with when and where you plan to go, and having a second or third time frame and park destination in mind in case your first choice of venue is overcrowded when you arrive. Here is a link to an [interactive map](#) of all the city's parks and trails so you can plan ahead.

Additionally, you will find entertaining programs for families and individuals to enjoy while maintaining a safe physical distance on the Fayetteville Parks and Recreation webpage, Facebook, and Twitter.

City of Fayetteville Current COVID-19 Recommendations for Public Spaces (from the National Parks and Recreation Association):

- Follow CDC's guidance on personal hygiene prior to heading to parks and trails — wash hands, carry hand sanitizer, do not use parks and trails if you have symptoms, cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, etc.
 - Observe at all times CDC's minimum recommended social distancing of six feet from other people. Practice it and know what it looks like. Keep it as you walk, bike or hike.
 - Warn other trail users of your presence and as you pass to allow proper distance and step off trails to allow others to pass, keeping minimum recommended distances at all times. Signal your presence with your voice, bell or horn.
 - Note that trail and park users may find public restrooms closed — be prepared before you leave and time outings so that you are not dependent on public restrooms.
 - Bring water or drinks — public drinking fountains may be disabled and should not be used, even if operable.
 - Bring a suitable trash bag. Leave no trash, take everything out to protect park workers.
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*Help keep local trails in good shape through trail stewardship.
Photo Credit: Ironside Photography*

REMINDER TO CONTINUE BEING GOOD TRAIL STEWARDS

As you utilize our local unpaved trails, we'd like to remind you to continue being good trail stewards. Many of the trails in Fayetteville are currently very wet and muddy from spring rains. When runners, bikers, and hikers continually route around mud puddles, trails tend to widen significantly and cause negative environmental impacts on the natural areas we love so much. Please select trails that have good drainage and if you do encounter mud puddles – go through them, not around. We also encourage trail runners to use this time to find alternative running areas – Wedington, Hobbs State Park, and the Back 40 all have trails that typically drain fairly well.



*Join iNaturalist - connect to the outdoors, contribute to research and learn!
Photo by Missouri Dept. of Conservation*

CITIZEN SCIENCE OPPORTUNITY!

Are you finding yourself with a little extra time on your hands these days? Are you looking for productive ways to fill that time? Do you enjoy spending time in nature? If you answered yes to these questions, and if you have access to a smartphone or digital camera and home computer, we have just the thing for you!

FNHA wants to know what species of plants and animals live in our urban natural areas so we can understand how best to manage those areas and help increase their ability to support native wildlife. To aid in that effort, we are conducting biological inventories at Brooks-Hummel Nature Reserve and Mount Sequoyah Woods, two of Fayetteville's urban natural areas that FNHA was instrumental in helping the City of Fayetteville protect. You can help in this effort by heading out there* and recording what you see using the iNaturalist app!

FNHA has created two projects on iNaturalist:

1. [Biodiversity of Brooks-Hummel Nature Reserve](#)
2. [Biodiversity of Mt. Sequoyah Woods](#)

If you're interested in contributing data to these projects, please read the FAQs below!

What is iNaturalist (iNat)? iNat is a place to record data on nature observations, meet other nature lovers, and learn more about the natural world.

How can I use iNat to help FNHA learn more about Brooks-Hummel and Mt. Sequoyah? If

you already use the iNat app and are comfortable taking good-quality photos to record observations of the plants, fungi, and animals you see while in nature, you're good to go! FNHA's projects gather the observations you make within the boundaries of Brooks-Hummel and Mt. Sequoyah, so you don't need to join them to participate. Just visit the natural areas and take photos of the species you see and the observations will be included within the projects.

What if I don't know the name of the plant or animal I'm seeing? One of the coolest things about iNat is that you don't have to know what the species is to upload a photo of it - the app's algorithms will attempt to identify it for you! And if it can't identify it, then other iNat users will, given the photos you upload are of good quality.

What if I have never used the iNat app? If you haven't yet used iNat but you have a smartphone and would like to contribute observations you make, simply download the app from your phone's app store, create an account, and start recording observations!

But I don't have a smartphone! No worries! You can take pictures with a digital camera and then visit www.inaturalist.org/home on your laptop or desktop computer to upload your photos when you get back home.

Where do I go for help using the app? The iNat website has a series of video tutorials that should cover everything you need to know, visit www.inaturalist.org/pages/video+tutorials. The first three tutorials are particularly helpful in learning how to take quality photos and upload them to the iNat app or website.

Even during this difficult time of social distancing and isolation, many of us are still able to safely and responsibly enjoy the outdoors. We hope that if you can get out there, you will visit Brooks-Hummel Nature Reserve and Mt. Sequoyah Woods and contribute data to iNat that will help guide management decisions at these urban natural areas for the benefit of both people and wildlife for generations to come!

*Please follow current guidelines for social distancing and the City of Fayetteville's regulations concerning park closures.



**ORDER YOUR RUN LOCAL TRAILS SHIRT!
AVAILABLE UNTIL APRIL 23, 2020**

FNHA has partnered with local screen-printing company, B-Unlimited to participate in their "Alliance Collection" of shirts. We've designed a simple t-shirt that you can order now to show your love and support of Kessler and local trail running. A portion of the proceeds will go to Fayetteville Natural Heritage Association to cover Kessler Trail Run expenses and you'll be supporting a local business during this time of hardship.

Place your order by April 23rd!



Bird's-foot Violet (*Viola pedata*)
Photo Credit: Jennifer Ogle, FNHA Board President

Are you a member of the Fayetteville Natural Heritage Association?

Help our community balance economic growth and conservation priorities. Help create a land and water legacy for future generations. Conserve wildlife habitat, rural landscapes and neighborhood open space.

Sign up or renew your membership on our website at www.fayettevillenatural.org.

Memberships:

Single \$20

Family \$40

Supporting \$100

Sustaining \$250

Steward \$500

Landmark \$1000 (Lifetime)

Heritage \$5,000 (Lifetime)

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