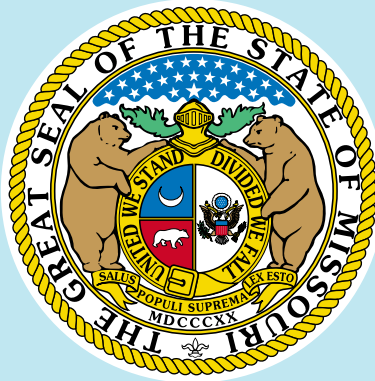


State Symbols of Missouri



The Great Seal of the State of Missouri

The Great Seal was designed by Judge Robert William Wells and adopted by the Missouri General Assembly on January 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, "Let the welfare of the people 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 flag consists of three horizontal stripes of red, white and blue. These represent valor, purity, vigilance and justice.



In the center white stripe is the Missouri coat-of-arms, circled by a blue band containing 24 stars, denoting that Missouri was the 24th state. (RSMo 10.020)



The State Floral Emblem

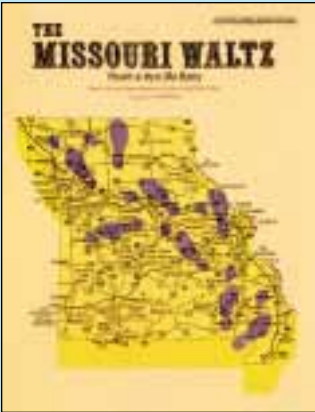
On March 16, 1923, Governor Arthur M. Hyde signed a bill naming the white hawthorn blossom the official state floral emblem of Missouri. Known as the “red haw” or “white haw,” the hawthorn (*Crataegus*) is a member of the great rose family, which resembles the apple group. The hawthorn blossoms have 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, and it was reported that the "Missouri Waltz" was his favorite song. (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 turns scarlet or orange and bright red fruits grow on the tree. (RSMo 10.040)



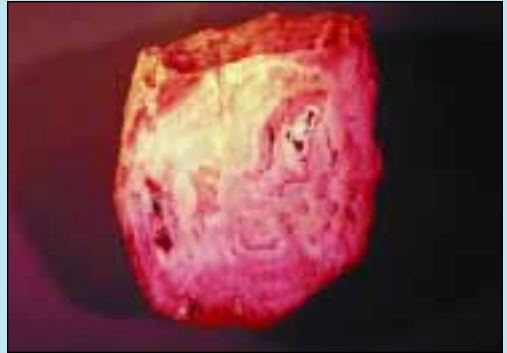
The State Mineral

On July 21, 1967, the mineral galena was adopted as the official mineral of Missouri. Galena is the major source of lead ore, and 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 flour-

ished 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, Governor John Ashcroft signed a bill designating the honeybee 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 13, 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 which covered Missouri lived in the ocean 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, and is also used in paint products and as a filler in dynamite. (RSMo 10.100)



The State Animal

On May 31, 1995, Governor Mel Carnahan signed a bill designating the Missouri mule 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, the Show Me State 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, Governor Mel Carnahan signed a bill designating the channel catfish as 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)



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)



Guy Griffin and “Missy” who holds the record for a 72 inch jump—4-time first place winner at the Missouri State Fair.

(Ival Lawhon Jr.)