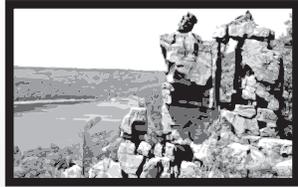

Friends



of Devil's Lake
State Park

Advocate

Volume 20 Number 1

Winter 2016

2015 Recap!

Devil's Lake State Park had a record number of visitors in 2015. Based upon a combination of park decal sales and car counts the park had about 2.4 million visitors as of October of 2015—a 30% increase over October of 2014. The record attendance was likely due, at least in part, to the weather—there were no "rain out" weekends in 2015. If you visited the park much over the past year you can attest to the numbers of visitors that were here recreating at the park. Our former attendance record was set in 2012 when the park saw an estimated 2.2 million visitors. In 2014 when we had 2.1 million.

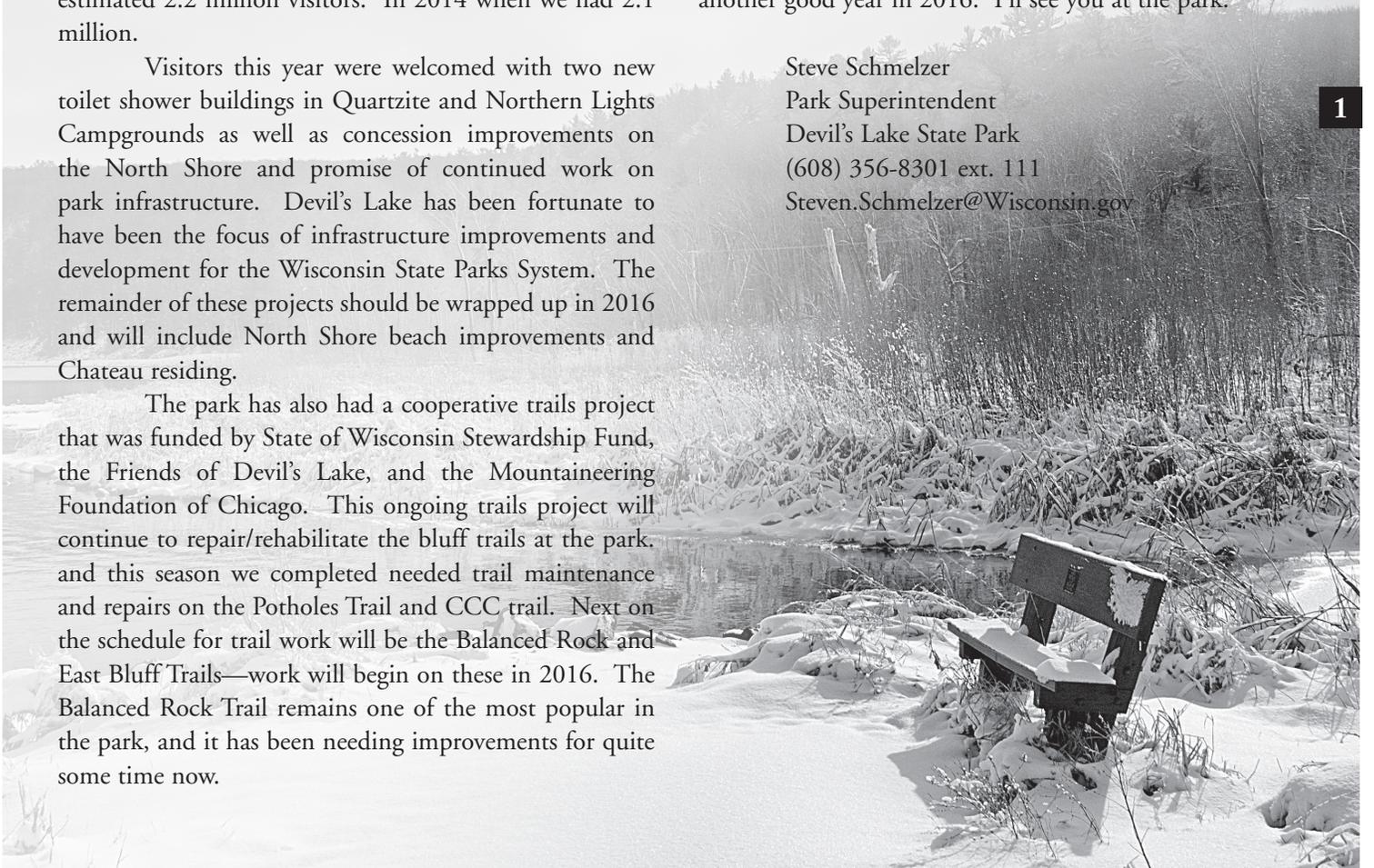
Visitors this year were welcomed with two new toilet shower buildings in Quartzite and Northern Lights Campgrounds as well as concession improvements on the North Shore and promise of continued work on park infrastructure. Devil's Lake has been fortunate to have been the focus of infrastructure improvements and development for the Wisconsin State Parks System. The remainder of these projects should be wrapped up in 2016 and will include North Shore beach improvements and Chateau residing.

The park has also had a cooperative trails project that was funded by State of Wisconsin Stewardship Fund, the Friends of Devil's Lake, and the Mountaineering Foundation of Chicago. This ongoing trails project will continue to repair/rehabilitate the bluff trails at the park, and this season we completed needed trail maintenance and repairs on the Potholes Trail and CCC trail. Next on the schedule for trail work will be the Balanced Rock and East Bluff Trails—work will begin on these in 2016. The Balanced Rock Trail remains one of the most popular in the park, and it has been needing improvements for quite some time now.

The beach shoreline retaining wall project at the north shore made significant progress this fall. The concrete block retaining wall will be stained to resemble the native quartzite when this project is complete.

I would like to thank our staff, volunteers, the Friends of Devil's Lake, and the Devil's Lake Concession Corporation for all their support this past year. Without the support from all the dedicated individuals and groups Devil's Lake would not be able to provide our visitors with a quality recreational experience. I look forward to another good year in 2016. I'll see you at the park.

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Technology and Nature

By Sue Johansen, Park Naturalist

It's almost the New Year and it's time to start planning my programs for the summer and fall of 2016. As I sit and plan, I am always looking for new ways to engage our visitors in learning about the outdoors. I want new ways to engage our visitors to make them think "nature's cool" so they will continue to explore, engage, and protect the natural areas around them. This isn't always an easy task with kids (and adults) being "plugged in" and finding their devices to be more engaging than a walk in the woods. So what is a naturalist to do when faced with a challenge like this? Bring technology to them!

This past fall, we received 2 grants that will allow us to purchase iPads to use with school groups and visitors to our public programs. The goal is to use something that people are very familiar with, their smart phone, to connect them to something they are not familiar with, nature. Through these grants, we are not only able to purchase the iPads, but digital microscopes, nature-based apps, and wildlife acoustic hardware for studying and monitoring the bats in the park. What's exciting about it is all of the possibilities out there for using different technology to make nature fun, really cool, and give people new ways to explore nature on their own. The whole idea of our programs and school field trips is to help visitors "get hooked" and then take the good experiences they had and turn it into wanting to learn and explore more.

2

Using iPads is just one way I'd like to get our visitors involved and engaged in nature. I'd also like to use trail cameras so students and visitors to learn about the wildlife in the park. I have already started a trail camera project at the Nature Center. I was fortunate (or unfortunate, depending on how you look at it) to find a discarded deer carcass on the road to my house. I found out what I needed to do to bring it to the park and now have a camera watching what happens to remains of the deer. So far, I've had crows, chickadees, woodpeckers, and some very well fed raccoons visit. I am hoping to see foxes or coyotes come by as well. I have been writing to different organizations to receive donations to buy trail cameras to be used in the park. With our newly purchased iPads, we can have visitors and students check the cameras and upload pictures the pictures onto the iPads. Not only will the visitors get to see some fun and cool pictures, but it also will help the park better understand where different animals are living and just what animals are moving through the park.

Another way I'd like to get visitors to connect



with nature is by using a picture post. This project was *An iPad can be a powerful tool for introducing younger generations to nature. It can be loaded with programs or "apps" that allow the user to take photos, look up and identify plants and animals, access trail maps or geographic information and to instantly communicate and share experiences with other users on a global scale.*



A trail camera strapped to a tree. Hunters typically use these hi-tech gadgets to monitor wildlife movements in order to better plan their hunts. These motion-activated cameras can also be used to capture images of wildlife that is normally reclusive or difficult to observe in its natural setting.

started through the University of New Hampshire as part of the Digital Earth Watch (DEW) program. DEW was developed through a partnership of 7 institutions, with support from NASA. They created picture posts as a tool for non-scientists to monitor their environment and share their observations and discoveries with others. Picture posts are wooden posts that guide visitors to photograph a location in nine orientations. The photos are dated, geotagged, and uploads to share. If you want to find out more, check out their website at <picturepost.unh.edu/index.jsp>. To get this project going, I'll need to find a volunteer with some carpentry skills to help build the posts. Again, this is another great way that people can explore and interact with nature using the tools they are already familiar with, the cameras on their phones.

There are so many fun and interesting ways to teach people about nature using technology! I'm excited to start planning for the upcoming season to use all of these new ideas and tools to enhance our programs and especially our field trips. It'll be interesting to see if visitors and students will connect differently to being outdoors using tools that familiar with them. Stay tuned, as we will start using these new tools this spring with our school field trips. If you are interested in any of the projects and want to find out more, feel free to contact Sue at the Nature Center.

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Gratitude

By Sue Miller

Gratitude to Mother Earth, sailing through night and day
and to her soil: rich, rare, and sweet
in our minds so be it

Gratitude to Plants, the sun-facing light-changing leaf
and fine root-hairs; standing still through wind
and rain, their dance is in the flowing spiral grain
in our minds so be it

Gratitude to Air, bearing the soaring Swift and the silent
Owl at dawn. Breath of our song
clear spirit breeze
in our minds so be it

Gratitude to Wild Beings, our brothers, teaching secrets,
freedoms, and ways; who share with us their milk;
self-complete, brave, and aware
in our minds so be it

Gratitude to Water: clouds, lakes, rivers, glaciers;
holding or releasing; streaming through all
our bodies salty seas
in our minds so be it

Gratitude to the Sun: blinding pulsing light through
trunks of trees, through mists, warming caves where
bears and snakes sleep—he who wakes us—
in our minds so be it

Gratitude to the Great Sky
who holds billions of stars—
and goes yet beyond that—
beyond all powers, and thoughts
and yet is within us—
Grandfather Space.
The Mind is his Wife.

So be it.



Devil's Lake State Park Events & Activities

JANUARY

EXPLORATION STATION - OUTDOOR CHALLENGE

Sat, January 9, 2016, 11am – 3pm

Drop in and get outside and try your hand at some outdoor skills by competing at this fun and family-friendly Outdoor Challenge. We'll test your wildlife identification skills. See how well you can start a fire. Try your orienteering skills on our geocaching adventure course, and much more! These activities will happen outside the Nature Center.

“WILD” WINTER AFTERNOON

Sat, January 16, 2016, 11am – 4pm

Its winter, but that doesn't mean you have to stay inside! Cure your winter cabin fever and join us for this wild winter adventure! Go on a self-guided snowshoe (depending on snow) or hike through the park. Warm up by the campfire and make a s'more. There will

be fun nature activities to participate in too. Bring your snowshoes or borrow one of our pairs – we have lots of sizes to fit everyone in your family. Make sure you dress appropriately; the event will happen rain, snow, or shine. Meet at the Rock Elm shelter on the park's north shore. Sponsored by the Friends of Devil's Lake State Park.

LEARN TO ICE FISH

Sat, January 16, 2016, 1pm – 4pm

Bundle up to learn the basics of how to ice fish. Devil's Lake's volunteers and staff will help you go out on the ice and try to catch a fish! All equipment and bait is provided. All children must be accompanied by an adult and adults are welcome! Dress warm as there will be no shanties, but there will be a fire to warm up by on shore. This is a “Free Fishing Weekend” so not fishing license is required. Meet outside the Rock Elm Shelter on the park's north shore.

SEASONAL SCAVENGER HUNT

**Sat, January 30, 2016, Drop-in
Between 11am – 3pm**

Families will receive a set of clues to help solve nature riddles. Each family will need to work as a team as they hike along the trails to complete the hunt and receive a small prize. Meet at the Nature Center.

FEBRUARY

TEACHING TRAILS: WEEKEND WALK FOR ALL AGES

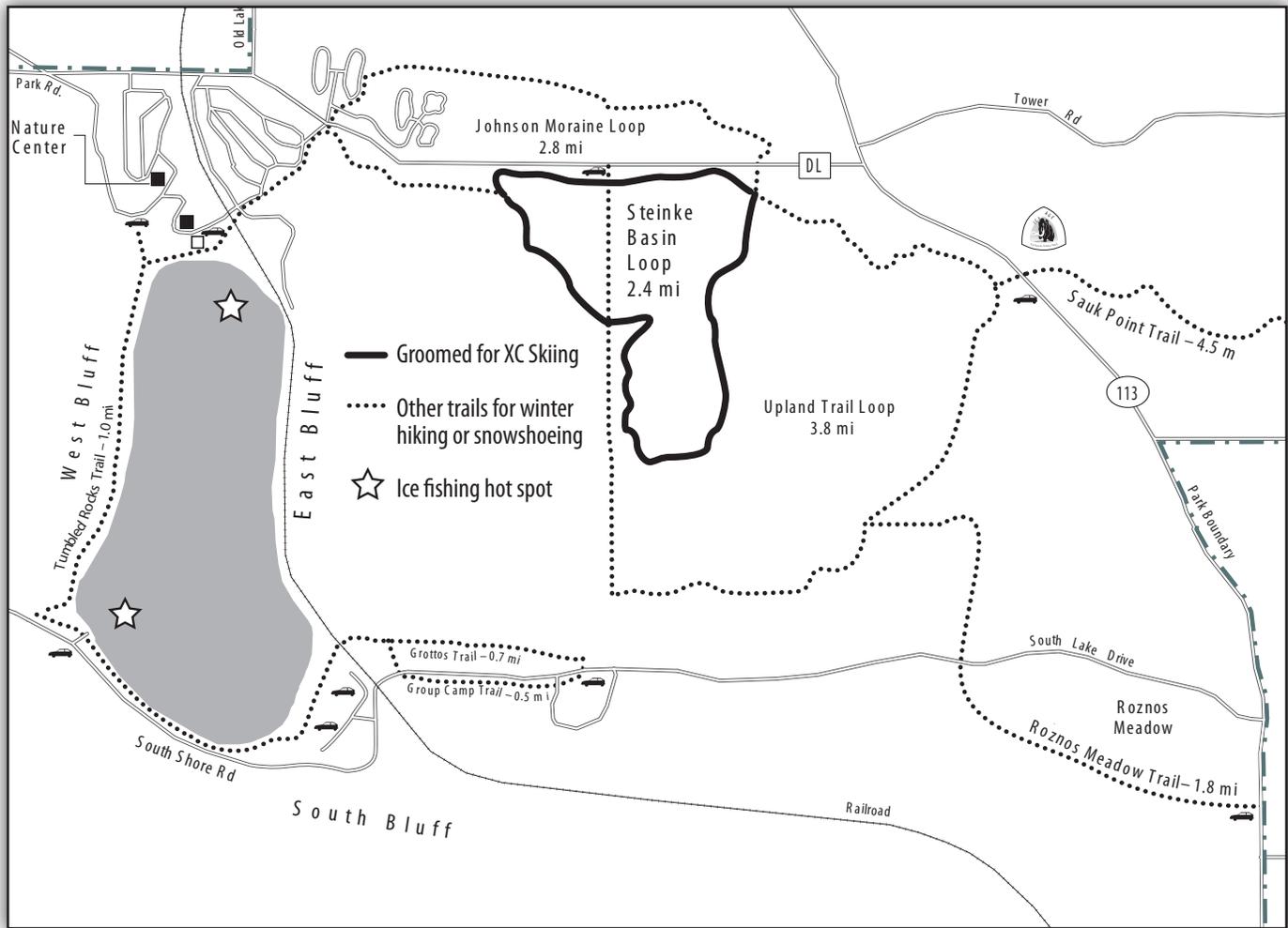
**Sat, February 6, 2016, 10:00am –
11:30am**

Join us for a guided trail experience through the woods. Learn which of the animals left specific tracks and discover what wildlife makes their homes in the forest. Meet at the Nature Center.

Visit the Friends of Devil's Lake website, at www.devilslakefriends.org for more upcoming winter programs.



Steinke Basin Trailhead



Winter Activities

Now that we (finally) have some snow on the ground it is a great time to get out and enjoy your favorite state park this winter! Following is a quick overview of a few of the more popular winter activities at the park.

CROSS COUNTRY SKIING

The only trail that is kept groomed and tracked for cross country skiing is the Steinke Basin Loop. You can also ski on the other trails but you will either have to break your own trail or hope that someone else has done it ahead of you!

SNOWSHOEING

Snowshoeing is becoming an increasingly a popular sport. All hiking trails at Devil's Lake State Park are open for use for snowshoeing and hiking but most are not maintained for winter use. Please **DO NOT** snow shoe on the Steinke loop and keep to the sides of other trails that may have been previously tracked by skiers. **We do not recommend snowshoeing on the bluff trails. They are NOT maintained in winter and can be very dangerous.**

The campground areas are great for snowshoeing and you can also snowshoe upon the lake itself—but it just froze over a few days after New Years Eve so you may want to wait for a few more weeks of sub-zero temps before venturing out.

If you would like to try snowshoeing but do not own snowshoes they will be available for use at no charge through the nature center again this year. The hours for the nature center are 12:00 noon - 4:00 pm Thursdays and Fridays and 9:30 am - 4:00 pm on Saturdays. You may want to call ahead before coming out as staffing is limited and hours may change. Call the Nature Center at (608) 356-8301 ext. 140

ICE FISHING

Ice fishing is always popular on the lake. It has been a warm winter so please be very careful when out on the ice. Some of the more popular fishing spots are the weed beds off of the north shore boat landing parking lot and off of the south Shore boat landing near the mouth of Messenger Creek. Dress warm and good luck!

Forgotten Formations: The Other Balanced Rock

By Mark Tully

Anyone who visits Devil's Lake State Park is familiar with the iconic rock formations known as Devil's Doorway, Elephant Rock and Balanced Rock. The images of these amazing natural structures can be found on various souvenir items around the area and are featured in logos for the Baraboo Area Chamber of Commerce and the City of Baraboo and are even featured on local city park and street signage.

Ever since Devil's Lake was first "discovered" the unusual outcrops that dot the rocky bluffs have been a source of fascination. As early as the late 19th century—decades before Devil's Lake was made a state park—several prominent rock outcrops and formations had been named and were popular destinations for adventurous hikers. In his 1875 book *Sauk County Sketches*, William H. Canfield lists several of the more common landmarks as well as a few less familiar ones:

- LOOK-OUT ROCK is a high point on the east bluff, 80 rods east of the Minni-Wauken.
- ELEPHANT ROCK, at foot of bluff, 20 rods east of hotel.
- WILDCAT CAVE, near top of bluff, in sandstone and conglomerate rock, 50 rods east of hotel.
- TURK'S HEAD, south part of West Bluff.
- MONUMENT ROCK is near by. l
- HIGHEST POINT, OR EAGLE ROCK, center of West Bluff. Here are the "Beacon Pines" that form so conspicuous a land mark. It is a pleasant pretty place when reached.
- OLD SHADY, on East Bluff, 80 rods eastwardly from the lake.

In addition to the ones mentioned by Canfield, there are quite a few additional named formations that were popular sightseeing destinations of years past. Some of these "forgotten formations" are now partially or wholly



blocked from view by trees or they are a little tricky to get to, requiring nimble footing and a bit of effort to see.

Over the next few issues I hope to feature a few of these “forgotten formations” and offer you advice on how to find and best view them.

I have no idea if this first formation has an official name, but I call it “The Balanced Rock of the West.” It is located atop the West Bluff across the lake from its more famous sibling. It is relatively easy to find off of the southern end of the West Bluff Trail—look for an obvious dirt path worn by rock climbers leading to the east near trail marker S20. (These white markings were placed on the asphalt along the West Bluff and Tumbled Rocks trails by Eagle Scouts to aid emergency teams in locating people needing rescue.)

As you follow this trail towards the edge of the bluff the path will fork. Follow the north (left) fork and keep your eyes peeled off to your right and you should glimpse the formation through the trees. The Balanced Rock of the West is a bit smaller than its east-bluff counterpart—about the size of a refrigerator. It is almost identical in shape to the more familiar balanced rock, only it is upsidedown—tapering towards the top instead of widening out from the bottom. It is hard to imagine how this particular rock landed here and managed to cling to its sharply angled perch over the millennia!

DISCLAIMER: *the dirt paths mentioned above are not official Devils Lake State Park trails so you will be proceeding at your own risk—please be careful, especially near the edges of the bluff.*

Annual Membership Card!

Clip out this card and keep it handy! When you visit Devil’s Lake State Park, show this card at either the North Shore, South Shore, or Ice Age Campground Concessions and receive a 10% discount on food and boat rentals. You may also be asked to present this card at special, members-only events and activities.



Why Are There No Fossils at Devil’s Lake?

There is evidence for life on Earth almost 3.5 billion years ago. The oldest rocks in Devil’s Lake State Park are only 1.65 billion years old. So if life was around during the deposition of the rocks at Devil’s Lake, how come we can’t see any fossils in the rocks? The answer is simple...metamorphism! The dominant rock at Devil’s Lake State Park is the 1.65 billion year old Baraboo Quartzite. Before this rock was quartzite, it was originally sandstone deposited along the edge of our ancient continent 1.7 billion years ago. 1.65 billion years ago, a small micro-continent collided with our continent, increasing the temperature and pressure of the rocks and metamorphosing the sandstone into quartzite. The metamorphism is considered “low grade”, with temperatures only reaching between 305 °C and 345 °C. During the metamorphism, the quartz grains found in the sandstone recrystallize and become interlocking, which increases the strength of the rock and makes it more resistant to weathering. Many of the sedimentary structures and textures originally formed in the sandstone (i.e. cross-bedding, ripple marks, etc.) have been preserved in the metamorphic quartzite. However, if any fossils were present in the sandstone, they would not have survived the increased pressures and temperatures. This is true for all metamorphic rocks. Fossils can only be found in sedimentary rocks.

Even if the rocks in Devil’s Lake State Park were not metamorphosed, the odds of finding a fossil in the rocks would be very low. While life on Earth appeared about 3.5 billion years ago, hard-shelled organisms did not appear in great abundance until the Cambrian Explosion, 544 million years ago. While soft-tissue fossilization is possible, it is much more likely for an organism to be preserved in the rock record if it has hard parts.

Melissa Hage,
Assistant Professor of Geology
UW Baraboo-Sauk County

Friends



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Return Service Requested

Contact Us

If you would like to contribute a story, photograph, poem or artwork relating to Devil's Lake State Park, please contact the editor, Mark Tully at 608.356.1836 or info@ballindalloch-press.com

Membership paid through year shown on label

Two large empty rectangular boxes with rounded corners, intended for a membership label.

Friends of Devil's Lake State Park Membership Categories & Benefits

Student Membership - \$10

- Subscription to *Friends of Devil's Lake State Park Advocate* newsletter

One Year Membership - \$20

- Subscription to *Friends of Devil's Lake State Park Advocate* newsletter

Three Year Membership - \$55

- Subscription to *Friends of Devil's Lake State Park Advocate* newsletter
- *Friends of Devil's Lake State Park* decal

NEW: All memberships also receive a 10% discount on food and boat rentals at Devil's Lake State Park concessions (some exclusions apply).

I am renewing my current membership.

This is a new membership with Friends of Devil's Lake State Park.

____ Student membership (\$10)

____ Three Year Membership (\$55)

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____ Additional gift to support DLSP projects \$ _____

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