

Official Louisiana State Symbols

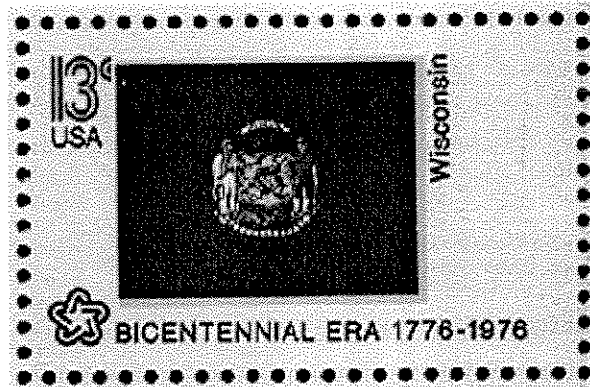
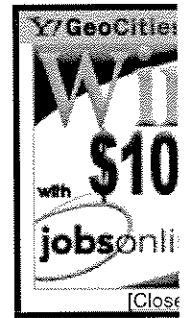
Bird: brown pelican
Colors: blue, white and gold
Crustacean: crawfish
Dog: Catahoula Leopard dog
Drink: milk
Flag: *The Flag Book of the United States* by Whitney Smith, 1970. page 146-7.
Flower: magnolia
Fossil: petrified palmwood
Freshwater fish: white perch
Gemstone: agate
Insect: honeybee (*apis mellifera*)
Mammal: black bear
Musical Instrument: diatonic accordion, commonly known as the "cajun" accordion
Reptile: alligator

Songs:
"Give Me Louisiana" by Doralise Fontane
"You Are My Sunshine" by former governor Jimmie Davis, second state song
"State March Song"
"Gifts of the Earth" by Frances LeBeau, official state environmental song

Tree: baldcypress
Wildflower: Louisiana iris(*Giganticaerulea*)

For more information about the state symbol and its adoption contact the State Library of Louisiana, Louisiana section.

Callen's Wisconsin Page




Wisconsin Symbols

*Note: These are all legitimate, *official* state symbols

- State Flag: Above
- State Motto: Forward
- State Bird: American Robin
- State Animal: Badger
- State Flower: Wood Violet
- State Wildlife Animal: White-tailed Deer
- State Domesticated Animal: Dairy Cow
- State Tree: Sugar Maple
- State Soil: Antigo Silt Loam
- State Insect: Honey Bee
- State Song: *On Wisconsin*
- State Fish: Muskellunge
- State Fossil: Trilobite
- State Grain: Corn
- State Mineral: Galena
- State Rock: Red Granite
- State Dog: American Water Spaniel
- State Beverage: Milk
- State Symbol of Peace: Mourning Dove

Wisconsin Towns and Cities and why they say they're Famous




*Note: If your favorite town and its claim to fame aren't on this list, please e-mail me  and I will try to include it in the next update. Please include both the town name and its claim to fame.

Appleton--Site of the world's first hydroelectric plant
 Baraboo--Home of the Ringling Brothers Circus
 Belleville--U. F. O. Capital of Wisconsin
 Belmont--First Capital of Wisconsin
 Bloomer--Jump Rope Capital of the World
 Bonduel--Spelling Capital of Wisconsin
 Boscobel--Birthplace of the Gideon Bible (also Turkey Capital of Wisconsin)
 Boulder Junction--Musky Capital of the World
 Burlington--Home of the Liars' Club (also Chocolate City, U. S. A.)
 Colby--Birthplace of Colby cheese
 Dickeyville--Home of The Grotto of Christ the King and Mary His Mother
 Eagle River--Home of the Annual World Snowmobile Racing Championships
 Ephraim--The last dry town in Wisconsin
 Franksville--Home of the World Sauerkraut Eating Contest Gays Mills--Apple Capital of Wisconsin
 Green Bay--Toilet Paper Capital of the World (also Titledown, U. S. A.)
 Hayward--Muskie Capital of the World (also Home of the Fishing Hall of Fame)
 Jefferson--The Gemeutlichkeit City
 La Crosse--Home of the World's Largest Six-Pack
 Lake Geneva--Newport of the West
 Lake Mills--City of the Pyramids
 Madison--State Capital
 Medford--Home of the Annual Great Black River Rubber Duck Race
 Mercer--Loon Capital of the World
 Milwaukee--Famous for Beer (also The City of Festivals)
 Mineral Point--Wisconsin's Third Oldest City
 Monroe--Swiss Cheese Capital of the World
 Montfort--Home of the Fort
 Mount Horeb--Troll Capital of the World (also home to the Mustard Museum)
 Muscoda--Morel Mushroom Capital of Wisconsin
 New Glarus--America's Little Switzerland
 Oconomowoc--Premiere site for *The Wizard of Oz*
 Oshkosh--Home of the Experimental Aircraft Association Fly-In
 Pardeeville--Home of the Watermelon Seed-Spitting Championship
 Platteville--Home of the World's Largest man-made "M"
 Potosi--Catfish Capital of Wisconsin
 Pulaski--Polka Town, U. S. A.
 Racine--The Most Danish City in America
 Ripon--Birthplace of the Republican Party
 Sayner--Birthplace of the Snowmobile
 Seymour--Home of the Hamburger
 Sheboygan--Bratwurst Capital of the World
 Shullsburg--Birthplace of the Badger Nickname
 Soldier's Grove--Nation's First Solar Village
 Somerset--Inner Tubing Capital of the World
 Sturgeon Bay--Shipbuilding Capital of the Great Lakes
 Sun Prairie--Home of Jimmy the Groundhog

Two Rivers--Birthplace of the Ice Cream Sundae
 Watertown--Home of the Nation's First Kindergarten
 Waubeka--Birthplace of Flag Day
 Waunakee--The *Only* Waunakee in the World
 Waupun--The City of Sculpture
 Wausau--Ginseng Capital of the World
 Winneconne--The Town that Seceded from the State (1967)
 Woodman--The Dinky's Last Stop

Famous people from or with connections to Wisconsin



*Note: If your favorite son or daughter of Wisconsin isn't on this list, please e-mail me  and I will try to include it in the next update. Please include their name, why they are well-known, and the city with which they were associated.

Hank Aaron, baseball player and all-time home run leader--Milwaukee
 Stephen Ambrose, historian--Whitewater
 Alan Ameche, football player and Heisman Trophy winner--Madison
 Don Ameche, actor--Kenosha
 James Arness, actor--Beloit
 Walter Annenberg, Jr., publisher of T. V. Guide--Milwaukee
 John Bardeen, 1956 and 1972 Nobel Prize physicist--Madison
 Saul Bellow, writer--Madison
 John Belushi, actor/comedian--Whitewater
 Bunny Berrigan, jazz trumpeter--Fox Lake
 Rich Bickle, race car driver--Edgerton
 Bonnie Blair, Olympic gold medal speed skater--Milwaukee
 Richard Bong, World War II flying ace--Poplar
 Ole Bull, violinist--Madison
 Connie Carpenter, 1984 Olympic gold medal bicyclist--Madison
 Carrie Chapman Catt, woman's suffragist--Ripon
 Ellen Corby, actress--Racine
 Seymour Cray, inventor, developer of super computers--Chippewa Falls
 Joan Cusack, actress--Madison
 Kevin Cywinski, NASCAR super trucker--Mosinee
 Willem Dafoe, actor--Appleton
 Jeffrey Dahmer, serial murderer--Milwaukee
 Richard Davis, jazz bassist--Madison
 Tyne Daly, actress--Madison
 August Derleth, writer--Sauk City
 Jeane Dixon, psychic--Medford
 Ole Evinrude, inventor of the modern outboard motor--Cambridge
 Chris Farley, comedian--Maple Bluff
 Edna Ferber, Pulitzer Prize winning author and playwright--Appleton
 Harrison Ford, actor--Ripon
 Zona Gale, Pulitzer Prize winning dramatist--Portage
 Jim Gantner, baseball player & career Milwaukee Brewer--Eden

Hamlin Garland, writer--West Salem
Ed Gein, mass murderer--Plainfield
Heather Graham, actor--Milwaukee
Carie Graves, Olympic gold medal rower--Madison
Peter Graves, actor--Beloit
Owen Gromme, wildlife artist--Milwaukee
Uta Hagen, actress--Madison
Eric Heiden, 1980 5 time Olympic gold medal speed skater--Madison
Woody Herman, clarinetist and big band leader--Milwaukee
Harry Houdini, magician--Appleton
Tom Hulce, actor--Whitewater
Dan Jansen, 1994 Olympic gold medal speed skater--Milwaukee
Al Jarreau, jazz singer--Milwaukee
Kristin Johnson, actress--Milwaukee
Mark Johnson, 1980 Olympic gold medal hockey player--Madison
Skip Kendall, pro golfer--Mequon
George Kennan, Pulitzer Prize winning historian--Milwaukee
Matt Kenseth, race car driver--Cambridge
Frank King, creator of *Gasoline Alley* comic strip--Cashton
Ron Kovic, author of *Born On The Fourth Of July*--Ladysmith
Alan Kulwicki, race car driver--West Allis Increase Lapham, father of the National Weather Service--Milwaukee
Margery Latimer, writer--Portage
Tom Laughlin, actor and star of Billy Jack--Milwaukee
Joshua Lederberg, geneticist and 1958 Nobel Prize winner for medicine--Madison
Aldo Leopold, environmentalist/writer--Baraboo
Liberace, pianist and entertainer--West Allis
Charles Lindbergh, aviator--Madison
Vince Lombardi, legendary football coach--Green Bay
Allen Ludden, T. V. game show host--Mineral Point
Douglas MacArthur, general of the United States Army--Milwaukee
Fred MacMurray, movie and television actor--Beaver Dam
Helene Madison, 3 time 1932 Olympic gold medal swimmer--Madison
Frederick March, Academy Award winning actor--Racine
Dave Marcis, race car driver--Wausau
Jackie Mason, comedian--Sheyboyan
Joseph McCarthy, politician and Communist hunter--Grand Chute
Kathy McKinney, actress--Milwaukee
Golda Meir, prime minister of Israel--Milwaukee
Harry Melges, Jr., Olympic gold medal yachtsman and America's Cup winner--Zenda
Steve Miller, rock singer--Milwaukee
Newton Minow, F.C.C. chairman--Milwaukee
Billy Mitchell, aviator and U. S. general--Milwaukee
Al Molinaro, actor--Kenosha
Agnes Moorehead, actress--Soldiers Grove
John Muir, conservationist and co-founder of the Sierra Club--Portage
William Parry Murphy, physiologist and 1934 Nobel Prize winner in medicine--Stoughton
Andy North, 1978 and 1985 U. S. Open golf champion--Thorp
Bill Nye, humorist and writer--Grantsburg
Pat O'Brien, movie actor--Milwaukee
Sheila Young Ochowicz, 1976 Olympic gold medal speed skater--West Allis

Georgia O'Keefe, painter--Sun Prairie
 Les Paul, musician, inventor of the electric guitar and 8-track tape recorder--Waukesha
 Charlotte Rae, television actress--Milwaukee
 Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, writer--Madison
 Nicholas Ray, movie director--Galesburg
 Bryan Reffner, NASCAR super trucker--Wisconsin Rapids
 William Rehnquist, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court--Milwaukee
 Gene Rowlands, actress--Cambria
 Jay Sauter, NASCAR super trucker--West Salem
 Boz Scaggs, singer/musician--Madison
 Arnold Schwarzenegger, bodybuilder and movie star--Superior
 Christopher Sholes, inventor of the typewriter--Milwaukee
 Ben Sidran, jazz pianist--Madison
 Deke Slayton, astronaut--Sparta
 Tom Snyder, television host--Milwaukee
 Edward Steichen, photographer--Milwaukee
 Steve Stricker, pro golfer--Edgerton
 Darryl Stuermer, musician--Milwaukee
 Dr. Howard Teminin, oncologist and 1975 Nobel Prize winner in medicine and physiology--
 Madison
 Spencer Tracy, actor--Milwaukee
 Daniel J. Travanti, actor--Kenosha
 Dick Trickle, race car driver--Wisconsin Rapids
 Frederick Jackson Turner, historian--Portage
 Bob Uecker, baseball player and announcer, T. V. actor--Milwaukee
 Irving Wallace, writer--Kenosha
 Orson Welles, movie writer/director/actor--Kenosha
 Eudora Welty, writer--Madison
 Ella Wheeler Wilcox, poet--Waukegan
 Gene Wilder, actor/comedian--Milwaukee
 Laura Ingalls Wilder, writer--Pepin
 Thornton Wilder, Pulitzer Prize winning novelist and playwright--Madison
 T. Harry Williams, historian--Hazel Green
 Al Woelbing, inventor (of Carmex)--Hartford
 Tom Wopat, actor and star of The Dukes of Hazzard--Lodi
 Frank Lloyd Wright, architect--Richland Center

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State Symbols of Kentucky - A Quick Guide

State Bird <u>Cardinal</u> Year adopted: 1926	State Flower <u>Goldenrod</u> Year adopted: 1926	State <u>Kentucky S</u> Year ado
State Wild Game Animal <u>Gray squirrel</u> Year adopted: 1968	State Horse <u>Thoroughbred</u> Year adopted: 1996	State <u>Tulip</u> Year ado
State Fossil <u>Brachiopod</u> Year adopted: 1986	State butterfly <u>Viceroy butterfly</u> Year adopted: 1990	State P C Year ado
State Gemstone <u>Freshwater Pearl</u> Year adopted: 1986	State Arboretum <u>Bernheim Arboretum & Research Forest</u> Year adopted: 1994	State Silver Old Kentuck The George Year ado
State Soil <u>Crider Soil Series</u> Year adopted: 1990	State Bluegrass Song <u>"Blue Moon of Kentucky"</u> Year adopted: 1988	State <u>"My Old Ker</u> (modern Year adopte
State Tug-of-War Championship The Fordsville (Ohio County) Tug-of-War Championship Year adopted :1990		State Year ado
State Flag Year adopted: 1962	Covered Bridge Capital of Kentucky <u>Fleming County</u> Year adopted 1998	Offical Cov <u>Switzer Covered Bri</u> Year ado
State Steam Locomotive <u>"Old 152"</u> Year adopted: 2000	State Botanical Garden <u>UK Arboretum</u> Year adopted: 2000	Official I <u>Louisville</u> Year ado
Official Rock <u>Kentucky Agate</u> Year adopted: 2000	State Amphitheater <u>Iroquois Amphitheater</u> Year adopted: 2001	Official Musi <u>Appalachia</u> Year ado

The adoption of official symbols and emblems is governed by chapter 2 of the Kentucky Revised Statutes.

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Last revised April 23, 2001

Kansas State Symbols



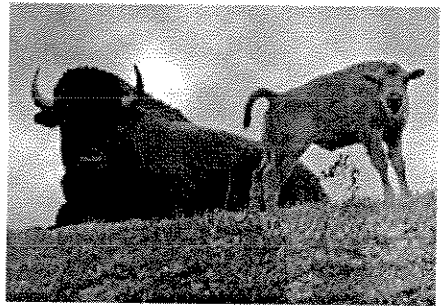
Kansas State Flag



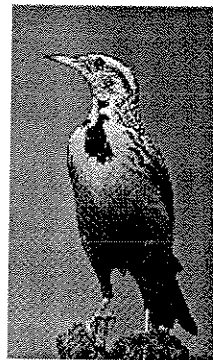
State Seal



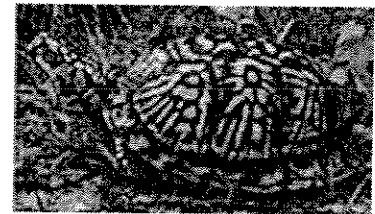
State Capitol Building, Topeka



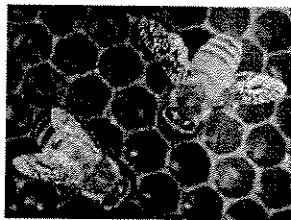
State Animal: American Buffalo



State Bird: Western Meadowlark



State Reptile: Ornate Box Turtle



State Insect: Honeybee



State Flower: Wild Native Sunflower



State Tree: Cottonwood

Capital City:

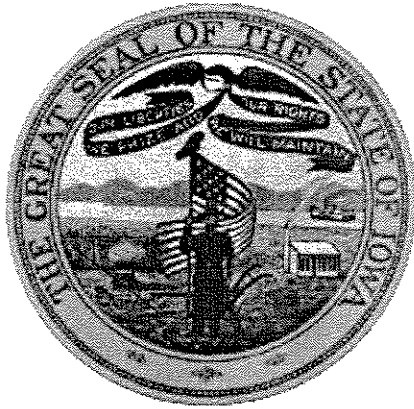
Topeka

State Nickname:	The Sunflower State
State Song:	Home on the Range
State Motto:	Ad Astra per Aspera (To the stars through difficulties)
Statehood Date:	January 29, 1861
State Order:	34th

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State Symbols of Iowa



One of the initial acts of the first Iowa Legislature in 1847 was to create the Great Seal of Iowa.

The two-inch diameter seal pictures a citizen soldier standing in a wheat field, surrounded by farming and industrial tools, with the Mississippi River in the background. An eagle is overhead, holding in its beak a scroll bearing the state motto, "Our liberties we prize, and our rights we will maintain." The motto was the work of a three-man Senate committee and was incorporated into the design of the seal at their suggestion.

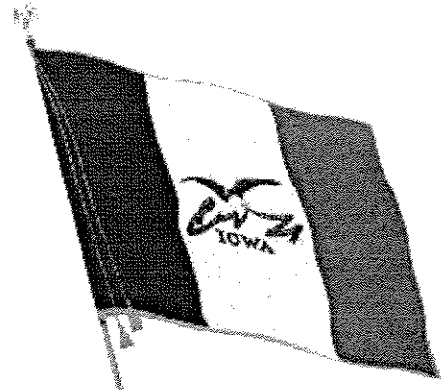
The Great Seal cannot be used without the permission of the Governor. The state seal is retained in the custody of and under the control of the Governor, who uses the seal for official documents and functions.

Iowa was almost 75 years old before the state banner was adopted by the Legislature. Creation of a state banner had been suggested for years by patriotic organizations, but no action was taken until World War I, when Iowa National Guardsmen stationed along the Mexican border suggested a state banner was needed. The Guardsmen said regiments from other states had banners and they felt one was needed to designate their unit. This prompted the state's Daughters of the American Revolution to design a banner in 1917. The Legislature officially adopted the design in 1921.

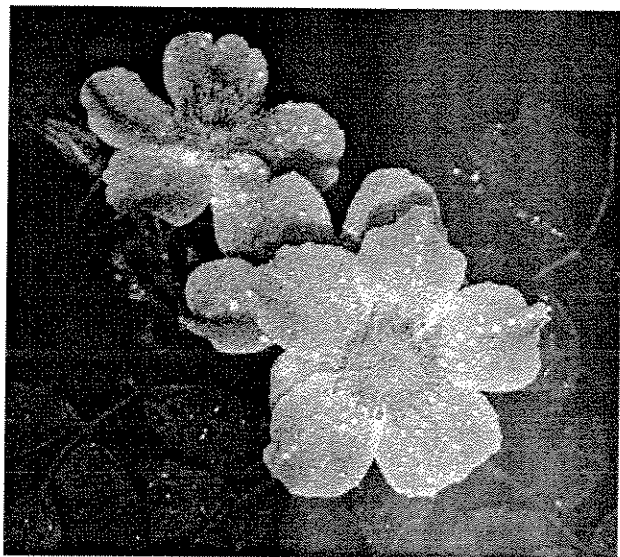
Iowans, with the memory of the Civil War still fresh in their minds, had not adopted a state banner because they felt a national banner was the only one needed. Approval of the banner was aided by patriotic organizations that launched a campaign to explain that a state banner was not meant to take the place of the national emblem.

The banner, designed by Mrs. Dixie Cornell Gebhardt of Knoxville and a member of the D.A.R., consists of three vertical stripes of blue, white and red. Gebhardt explained that the blue stands for loyalty, justice, and truth; the white for purity; and the red for courage. On the white center stripe is an eagle carrying in its beak blue streamers inscribed with the state motto, "Our liberties we prize, and our rights we will maintain." The word Iowa is in red letters just below the streamers.

All schools must fly the state banner on school days. The banner may be flown on the sites of public buildings. When displayed with the United States flag, the state banner must be flown below the national emblem.



The Iowa Legislature designated the Wild Rose as the official state flower in 1897. It was chosen for the honor because it was one of the decorations used on the silver service which the state



presented to the battleship USS Iowa that same year. Although no particular species of the flower was designated by the Legislature, the Wild Prairie Rose (*Rosa Pratincola*) is most often cited as the official flower.

Wild roses are found throughout the state and bloom from June through late summer. The flower, in varying shades of pink, is set off by many yellow stamens in the center.

The Iowa Legislature designated the Eastern Goldfinch, also known as the Wild Canary, as the official state bird in 1933. It was chosen as the state bird because it is commonly found in Iowa and often stays through the winter.

Seeds from dandelions, sunflowers, ragweed, and evening primrose are the main source of food for the Eastern Goldfinch (*Carduelis tristis*). In late July or early August they build their nests from plant materials and line them with thistledown. The pale blue-white eggs of the Eastern Goldfinch incubate for two weeks and the young birds leave the nest when they are two to three weeks old.

The top of the male's head is topped with black. The bright yellow body has black wings and tail. The female has a dull olive-yellow body with a brown tail and wings. The male goldfinch acquires the same dull plumage in the winter months.



The Oak was designated as the official state tree in 1961. The Iowa Legislature chose the Oak because it is abundant in the state and serves as shelter, food, and nesting cover for many animals and birds.

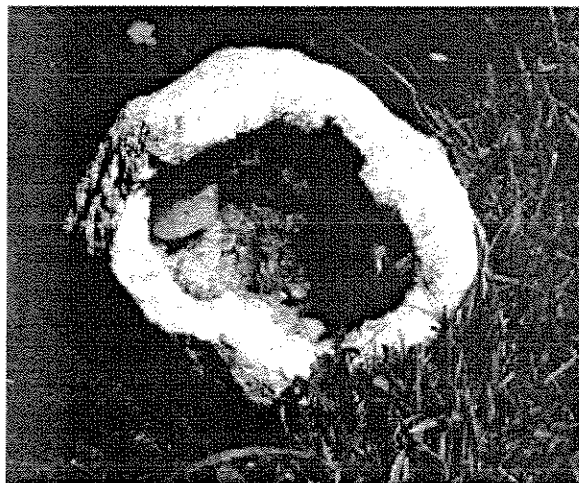
It is difficult to find a tract of natural woodland in Iowa that does not harbor at least one species of Oak. No other group of trees is more important to people and wildlife. Acorns, the nuts of Oak trees, are a dietary staple of many animals and birds. Wild turkeys, pheasants, quail, wood ducks, raccoons, squirrels, chipmunks, bluejays, nuthatches, grackles, and several kinds of woodpeckers are a few of the species that depend on acorns for a significant portion of their diet.



Because Iowa is well known for the presence of the Geode, it was chosen as the official rock in an effort to promote tourism in the state. Legislators who favored making the Geode the state rock pointed out that it is among the rarest and most beautiful of rocks and that Iowa is known worldwide because of the large number found in the state. Other rocks considered for official status were limestone and fossil coral.

In Latin, the word "geodes" means "earthlike." Geodes are shaped like the earth and average about four inches in diameter. Geodes are found in limestone formations and have a hard outer shell. When carefully broken open, a sparkling lining of mineral crystals, most often quartz and calcite, is revealed.

Southeastern Iowa is one of the state's best Geode collecting areas. Geode State Park, in Henry County, is named for the occurrence of the Geode.



Comments about this site or page? lioinfo@staff.legis.state.ia.us

Please remember that the person listed above does not vote on bills. Direct all comments concerning legislation to State Legislators.

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Last update: FRI Oct 16 1998
sw/sam

The Governor of the State of Idaho
DIRK KEMPTHORNE

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Idaho State Symbols

Name: Originally suggested for Colorado, the name "Idaho" was used for a steamship on the Columbia River. With the discovery of gold on the Clearwater River in 1860, the river was to be called the Idaho mines. "Idaho" is a coined or invented word, and is not a derivative of any phrase. "E Dah Hoe (How)" supposedly meaning "gem of the mountains."

Nickname: The "Gem State"

Motto: "Esto Perpetua" (Let it be perpetual)

Discovered by Europeans: 1805, the last of the 50 states to be sighted.

Organized as Territory: March 4, 1863, act signed by President Lincoln.

Entered Union: July 3, 1890, 43rd state to join the Union.

GEOGRAPHY

Land Area: 83,557 square miles, 13th in area size

Water Area: 880 square miles

Highest Point: 12,662 feet above sea level at the summit of Mt. Borah, Custer County in the Lost River Range

Lowest Point: 770 feet above sea level at the Snake River at Lewiston

Length: 479 Miles

Width: 305 miles at widest point

Geographic Center: Settlement of Custer on the Yankee Fork River, Custer County.

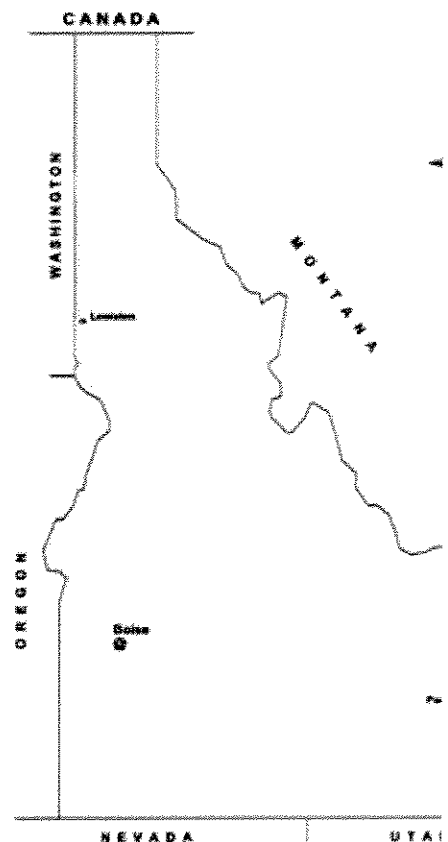
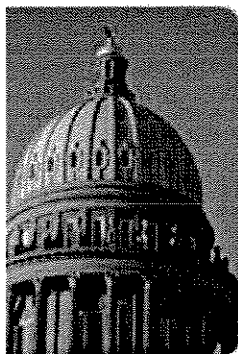
Number of Lakes: More than 2,000

Navigable Rivers: Snake, Coeur d'Alene, St. Joe, St. Maries and Kootenai.

Largest Lake: Lake Pend Oreille, 180 square miles.

Temperature Extremes: Highest, 118 degrees at Orofino July 28, 1934; Lowest, -60 degrees at Island Park Dam, January 18, 1943.

1998 Population: 1,229,000, 40th among states. (U.S. Census Bureau)

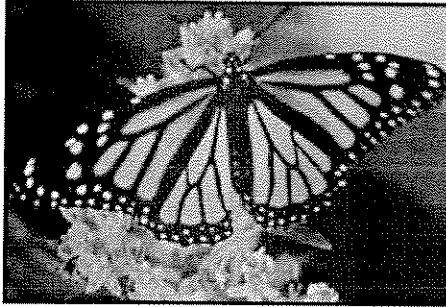


STATE SONG

The music for the Idaho state song, composed by Sallie Hume Douglas, was copyrighted November 4, 1915, under the title "Garden of Paradise." In 1917, McKinley Helm, a University of Idaho student, wrote the verse which became the chorus of the Idaho State song. Bessee set the words to the music by Sallie Hume Douglas. The song was popular then, but Bessee had no idea of its origin. This song won the annual University prize for that year, and eventually became the University alma mater. Albert J. Tompkins, Director of Music

Public Schools, wrote a set of verses for the song. In 1931, the Idaho legislature designated "Have Idaho", previously known at the University of Idaho as "Our Idaho", as the Idaho State Song.

HERE WE HAVE IDAHO

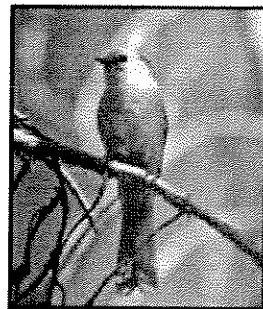
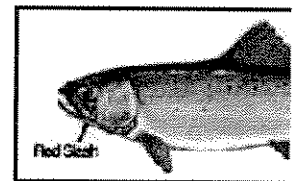


STATE INSECT

The Monarch Butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) was designated the state insect by the state legislature in 1992. The Monarch Butterfly is a unique insect. It is a great migrator, traveling hundreds of miles during its lifetime, which can be from a few years. Monarchs go through a complete metamorphosis in about six weeks.

STATE FISH

The Cutthroat trout was designated the state fish by the 1990 legislature. The Cutthroat, along with the Rainbow and Bull Trout, is native to Idaho. The body color varies with the back ranging from steel gray to olive green. The sides may be yellow brown with red or pink along the belly. The Cutthroat's name comes from the distinctive red to orange slash on the underside of its lower jaw.

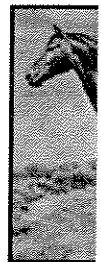


STATE BIRD

The Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia arctica*) was adopted as the state bird by the state legislature in 1931. The Bluebird is about seven inches long, has a bright azure blue coat, and a blue vest with white underfeathers. The male has a quiet blue-gray dress and usually lays six or seven blue-white eggs. The Bluebird's nest is usually built in a hollow tree or in a crevice. The Bluebird is very neat about one's home and carries all refuse some distance.

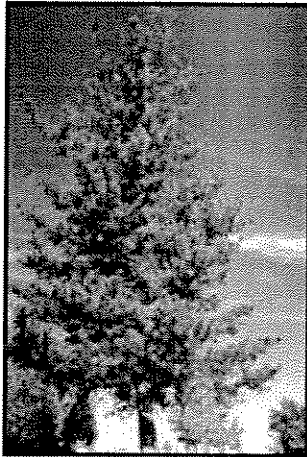
STATE HORSE

The Appaloosa is an intelligent, fast and hard working breed. An easy going disposition and exceptional abilities give this horse a great deal of versatility that no doubt contributes to its rapidly rising popularity. Once the warhorses of the Nez Perce, today the Appaloosa serves as a racehorse, in parades, ranch work and youth programs. The coloring of the Appaloosa's coat is distinct in every individual horse and ranges from white blanketed hips to a full leopard. Adopted by the 1975 legislature.



STATE TREE

The Western White Pine (*Pinus Monticola pinaceae*), our state tree, is probably most notable since the largest remaining volume of the tree in the United States grows in the northern part of Idaho. White Pine has fine qualities such as straight grain and soft even texture. Adopted by the 1935 legislature.



STATE GEM STONE

Adopted by the 1967 Legislature, the Idaho Star Garnet is treasured throughout the world by collectors. This stone is considered more precious than either Star Rubies or Star Sapphires. Normally the star in the Idaho Garnet has four rays, but occasionally one has six rays as in a sapphire. The color is usually dark purple or plum and the star seems to glide or float across the dark surface.

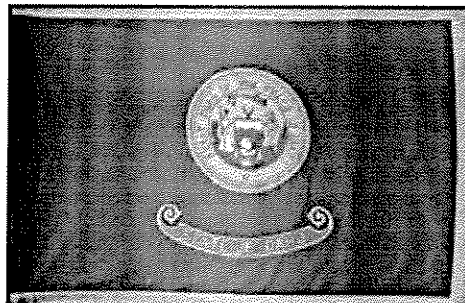
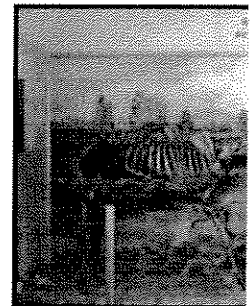


STATE FLOWER

The Syringa (*Philadelphus lewisii*) was designated the state flower of Idaho by the legislature in 1931. The shrub with clusters of white, fragrant flowers are similar to the mock orange, have four petals. The flowers grow at the ends of short, leafy branches.

STATE FOSSIL

The 1988 legislature designated the Hagerman Horse Fossil (species *Equus simplicidens* originally described as *Plesippus shoshonensis*) as the official state fossil. A rich fossil bed 3.5 million years old, which has yielded over 130 complete horse skeletons, was discovered in the 1920s near Hagerman and is said to be the best known Pleistocene-epoch fossil site in the world.



STATE FLAG

A silk flag, with a blue field, 5 feet 6 inches fly on pike is bordered by gilt fringe 2 1/2 inches wide. The Great Seal of Idaho is in the center. The words "State of Idaho" are embroidered in gold block letters two inches high below the Great Seal. Adopted by the 1907 legislature.

STATE FOLK DANCE

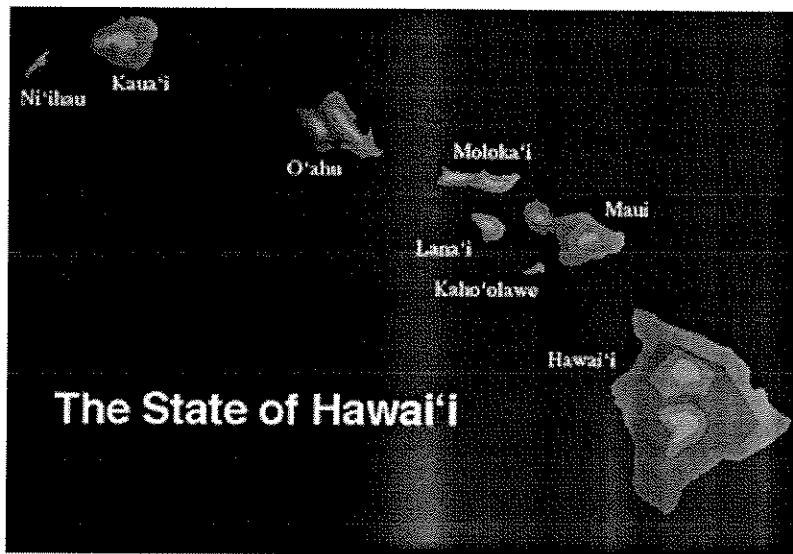
The 1989 legislature designated the square dance as the American Folk Dance of Idaho. The square dance was first associated with the American people and recorded in history since 1651. Square dancing includes squares, rounds, clogging, contra, line and heritage dances.



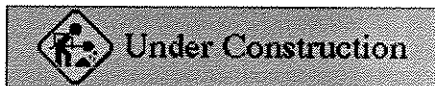
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A Brief Overview of Hawai'i



History



(More to come)

Hawai'i officially became the 50th state in the American Union on August 21, 1959.

Geographic Info

The State of Hawai'i is comprised of eight major islands

Measuring from its submarine base (3,280 fathoms) in the Hawaiian Trough to the top of the mountain (13,796 feet), Mauna Kea is the tallest mountain in the world with a combined height of 33,476 feet.

The July 1, 1991 resident population for the State of Hawai'i was 1,134,800 persons. (Between the 1980 and 1990 Census counts -- 964,691 and 1,108,229 persons -- Hawai'i's population grew 14.9 percent).

Geographic coordinates of Honolulu, the state capital, is 21 18 25 North Latitude, 157 51 30 West Longitude.

State of Hawai'i Emblems and Insignia

The State Seal has a heraldic shield in the center and a figure of King Kamehameha I on its right side and the Goddess of Liberty holding the Hawaiian flag on its left. Below the shield is the Phoenix surrounded by taro leaves, banana foliage, and sprays of maidenhair fern. Statehood was achieved in 1959. With color added, the seal becomes the State Coat of Arms.

The State Flower is the yellow *Hibiscus Brackenridgei*. The official flowers and colors for each island is as follows:

- **Hawai'i**, Red Lehua (Ohia), color Red
- **Maui**, Lokelani (Pink Cottage Rose), color Pink
- **Moloka'i**, White Kukui Blossom, color Green
- **Kaho'olawe**, Hinahina (Beach Heliotrope), color Gray
- **Lana'i**, Kaunaoa (Yellow and Orange Air Plant), color Yellow
- **O'ahu**, Ilima, color Yellow
- **Kaua'i**, Mokihana (Green Berry), color Purple
- **Ni'ihau**, White Pupu Shell, color White

Hawai'i's State Tree is the *kukui*, better known as the candlenut. The nuts of this tree provided the ancient Hawaiians with light, oil, relishes, and medicine.

The State Bird: The Nene (pronounced "nay-nay") is a land bird and a variety of goose. It has adapted itself to life in the harsh lava country by transforming its webbed feet into a claw-like shape and modifying its wing structure for shorter flights. Hunting and wild animals all but destroyed the species until they were protected by law and a restoration project established in 1949.

Marine Mammal: The Humpback Whale, an annual visitor to Hawaiian waters and so designated in 1979.

State Fish: The Humuhumunukunukuapua'a (pronounced "humuhumunukunukuapua'a").

Flag: The State Flag has eight stripes (representing the eight major islands), of white, red and blue; the field closely resembles the Union Jack of Great Britain, from which the original flag apparently was designed.

Motto: The words *Ua mau ke ea o ka aina i ka pono* which mean "The life of the land is perpetuated in righteousness." The saying is attributed to King Kamehameha III as of July 31, 1843, when the Hawaiian flag once more was raised after a brief period of unauthorized usurpation of authority by a British admiral.

Anthem: *Hawai'i Pono'i*, written by King Kalakaua and set to music by Henry Berger, the Royal Bandmaster. It was also the anthem of the Kingdom and the Territory of Hawai'i.



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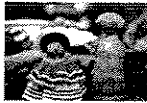
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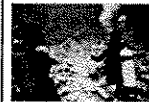
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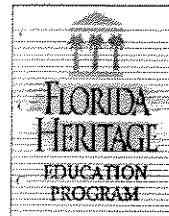
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State Capital:

Dover

State Location:

On the Eastern Seaboard of the United States, Delaware is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean and Delaware Bay, as well as by the states of New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Maryland. Delaware's location affords easy access to the major metropolitan areas of the Northeast. Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, and Baltimore are all within a 2-hour drive.

State Government:

Delaware became a state in 1776, just two months after the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The capital was moved from New Castle to Dover in 1777. Delaware's first constitution was adopted in 1797. The current constitution was adopted in 1897. It has been modernized with many new amendments since that time. Today, Delaware has a cabinet form of government.

The General Assembly, Delaware's lawmaking body, is comprised of a State House of Representatives, whose 41 members are elected for two-year terms, and a State Senate, whose 21 members are elected for four-year terms. Half of the Senate seats are contested in each general election.

The State Supreme Court consists of a chief justice and four associate justices. All members are appointed by the governor, with confirmation by the Senate, for a term of 12 years.

Area:

Delaware ranks 49th in the nation with a total area of 1,982 square miles. New Castle County is 438 square miles. Kent County is 594 square miles. Sussex County is 950 square miles. Delaware is 96 miles long and varies from 9 to 35 miles in width.

Climate:

Delaware's climate is moderate year round. Average monthly temperatures range from 75.8 to 32.0 degrees. Average temperature in the summer months is 74.3 degrees. About 57% of the days are sunny. Annual precipitation is approximately 45 inches. Temperatures along the Atlantic Coast are about 10 degrees warmer in winter and 10 degrees cooler in summer. The average growing season varies from 170 to 200 days.

Elevation:

Highest -- 447.85 ft. above sea level near Ebright Road in New Castle County.
Lowest -- sea level along the coast.

Population:

1994 Population - 700,000; 46th among the states; Distribution: 73 percent urban & 27 percent rural; Density: 345 persons per square mile.

Chief Products:

Agriculture -- broilers, soybeans, corn, milk.

Fishing Industry -- crabs, clams.

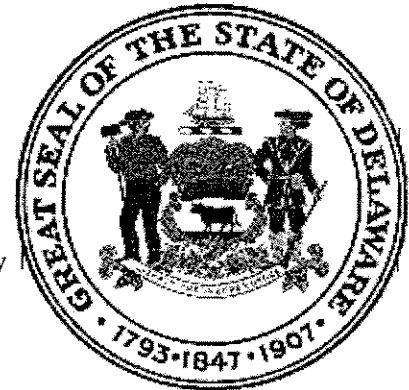
Manufacturing -- chemicals, food products, paper products, rubber and plastics products, primary metals, printed materials.

Mining -- sand and gravel, magnesium compounds.

State Seal:

The state seal was first adopted on January 17, 1777, and contains the coat of arms. It also bears the inscription around it "Great Seal of the State of Delaware" and the dates 1793, 1847, and 1907. A description of the contents of the seal are as follows:

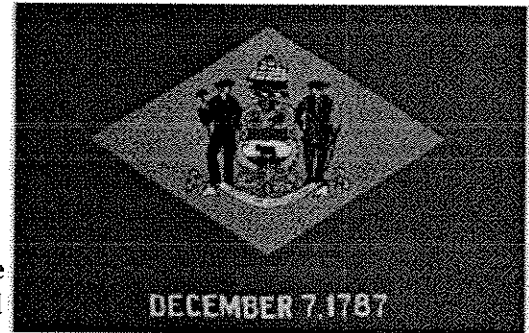
- The Wheat Sheaf -- was adapted from the Sussex County seal and signifies the agricultural vitality of Delaware.
- The Ship -- is a symbol of New Castle County's ship building industry and Delaware's extensive coastal commerce.
- The Corn -- is taken from the Kent County seal and also symbolizes the agricultural basis of Delaware's economy.
- The Farmer -- with the hoe represents the central role of farming to the state.
- The Militiaman -- with his musket recognizes the crucial role of the citizen-soldier to the maintenance of American liberties.
- The Ox -- represents the importance of animal husbandry to the state economy.
- The Water -- (above the Ox) stands for the Delaware River, the main stay of the state's commerce and transportation.
- The Motto -- was derived from the Order of Cincinnati, and approved in 1847.



- **The Dates** -- mark major changes to the state seal. 1793: the farmer and militiaman were omitted. 1847: the two human figures were reinstated, and the motto adopted. 1907: a modernized version of the 1777 seal, with the words "State of Delaware" added.

State Flag:

Adopted on July 24, 1913, the state flag has a background of colonial blue surrounding a diamond of buff color in which the coat of arms of the state of Delaware is placed. Below the diamond are the words "December 7, 1787," indicating the day on which Delaware was the first state to ratify the federal Constitution. Because of this action, Delaware became the first state in the Union, and is, therefore, accorded the first position in such national events as



presidential inaugurations. According to members of the original commission established to design the flag, the shades of buff and colonial blue represent those of the uniform of General George Washington as shown on a specific plate from an official U.S. Army publication.

State Song:

The official state song consist of a poem "*Our Delaware*" containing three verses in honor of each county of the State, written by *George B. Hynson*; a fourth verse in praise of the State and pledging the loyalties of its citizens, written by *Donn Devine*; and a musical score composed specifically for the state song by *Will M. S. Brown*". To view the text of the state song click on the following:

["Words & Music to the Delaware State Song"](#)

Statehood:

December 7, 1787

State Flower:

Passage of the act to adopt the Peach Blossom on May 9, 1895, was prompted by Delaware's reputation as the "Peach State," since her orchards contained more than peach trees yielding a crop worth thousands of dollars at that time.

State Bird:

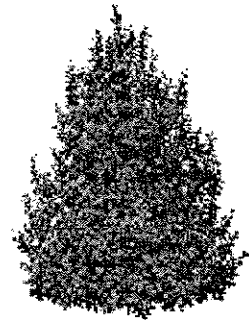
Adopted on April 14, 1939, the Blue Hen chicken had long been used as a motif in numerous political campaigns and in many publications. During the Revolutionary War, the men of Captain Jonathan Caldwell's company, recruited in Kent County, took with them game chickens that were said to be of the brood of a famous Blue Hen and



were noted for their fighting ability. When not fighting the enemy, the officers and men amused themselves by pitting their Blue Hen chickens in cockfights. The fame of these cockfights spread throughout the army and when in battle, the Delaware men fought so valiantly that they were compared to these fighting cocks.

State Tree:

Adopted May 1, 1939, the American Holly (*ilex opaca aiton*) is regarded as one of Delaware's most important forest trees. Often called Christmas holly or evergreen holly, the tree has dark, thorny-leaved foliage and red berries. In Delaware, the tree can reach a maximum of 60 feet in height and a trunk diameter of 20 inches.



State Bug:



Adopted April 25, 1974, the Lady Bug was chosen by the Legislature after an intensive effort on the insect's behalf by Mrs. Mollie Brown-Rust and her 2nd grade students of the Lulu M. Ross Elementary School in Milford, Delaware.

State Fish:

In recognition of sportfishing's overall recreational and economic contributions to the state of Delaware and of the specific values of the weakfish (*Cynoscion* genus) as a game and food fish, the state Legislature adopted the weakfish as Delaware's State fish in 1981. This fish is also known as sea trout, gray trout, yellow mouth, yellow fin trout, squeteague, and tiderunner.

State Beverage:

Milk

State Mineral:

Sillimanite

State Colors:

Colonial blue and buff

State Motto:

Liberty and Independence

State Nicknames:

"The First State":

Delaware is known by this nickname due to the fact that on December 7, 1787, it became the first of the 13 original states to ratify the U.S. Constitution.

"The Diamond State":

This nickname was given to Delaware, according to legend, by Thomas Jefferson because he described Delaware as a "jewel" among states due to its strategic location on the Eastern Seaboard.

"Blue Hen State":

This nickname was given to Delaware after the fighting Blue Hen Cocks that were carried with the Delaware Revolutionary War Soldiers for entertainment during Cock fights.

"Small Wonder": This nickname is basically a new nickname. It was given to Delaware due to its size and the contributions it has made to our country as a whole and the beauty of Delaware.

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















State of Connecticut

State Sites & Symbols

Official Emblems, Symbols and Sites adopted by the State of Connecticut

Tradition, patriotism, and pride in our state have resulted in the official adoption of the emblems and symbols which appear on this page.



	Connecticut Armorial Bearings		State Capitol		State Flag
	Great Seal of the State of Connecticut		Original Seal of the State of Connecticut		Colonial Seal of the State of Connecticut
	Executive Residence		"Old" State House		First State House
	State Tree The Charter Oak		State Flower Mountain Laurel		State Bird American Robin
	State Fossil Eubrontes giganteus		State Insect European Mantis		State Animal Sperm Whale
	State Mineral Garnet		State Shellfish Eastern Oyster		State Ship USS Nautilus
	State Tartan		State Hero Nathan Hale		State Heroine Prudence Crandall
	State Motto Qui Transtulit Sustinet		State Song Yankee Doodle		State Folk Dance Square Dance
	Connecticut State Troubadour		State Composer		Connecticut Poet Laureate

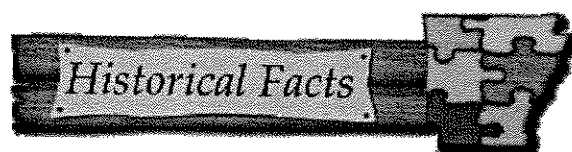
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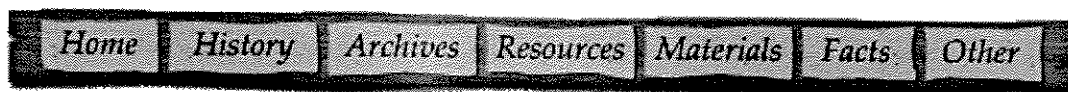
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- **Arkansas history questions and answers**
- **Official state symbols**

Official state symbols

State flower (1901)	apple blossom
State bird (1929)	mockingbird
State tree (1939)	pine
State gem (1967)	diamond
State insect (1973)	honeybee
State instrument (1985)	fiddle
State beverage (1985)	milk
State fruit and blossom (1987)	South Arkansas vine ripe pink tomato
State rock (1967)	quartz crystal
State mineral (1967)	bauxite
Official state historical song (1987)	The Arkansas Traveler (lyrics by the Arkansas State Song Selection Committee, 1949; music by Col. Sanford "Sandy" Faulkner, 1850)
Official state songs (1987)	Arkansas (You Run Deep in Me) by Wayland Holyfield Oh, Arkansas by Terry Rose and Gary Klaff
Official state anthem (1987)	Arkansas by Eva Ware Barnett
State motto (1836)	Regnat Populus (The People Rule)
The Arkansas Creed (1972)	I believe in Arkansas as a land of opportunity and promise. I believe in the rich heritage of Arkansas and I honor the men and women who created this heritage. I believe in the youth of Arkansas who will build our future. I am proud of my state. I will uphold its constitution, obey its laws, and work for the good of all its citizens.



Design by Aristotle.



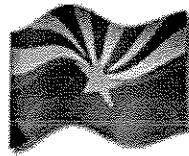
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**ARIZONA STATE
CAPITOL
MUSEUM**

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State Symbols

USS Arizona

The Arizona State Symbols

Arizona's state symbols were passed into law by the state legislature over a number of years. The plants, animals, industries and historical events selected as state symbols hold special importance to Arizona and reflect its unique character.

Symbols Exhibit at the Capitol Museum

"Symbols" is an adapted exhibit intended for visitors who are visually impaired. Visitors are encouraged to touch the objects and to read the braille.

State Fossil Petrified Wood

adopted 1988

Petrified wood is Arizona's state fossil. Millions of years ago, when much of the area was covered by swamps, fallen trees became buried under layers of sediment. Slowly, over sixty million years, each cell of the plant was replaced by quartz, making a brightly colored replica of the original living plant.

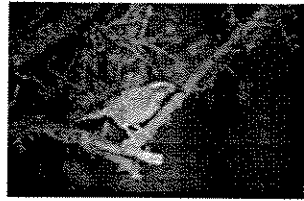
Most petrified wood comes from the Petrified Forest in northeastern Arizona.

State Gemstone Turquoise

adopted 1974

Arizona's beautiful state gemstone has been used for centuries by southwest Native Americans for making jewelry.

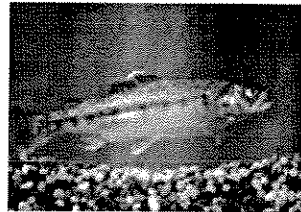
This blue-green stone has a somewhat waxy surface and can be found throughout the state.



State Bird
The Cactus Wren
adopted 1931

Arizona's state bird is seven to eight inches long and likes to build nests in the protection of thorny desert plants like the arms of the giant saguaro cactus. It builds many nests but lives in only one. The rest are decoys.

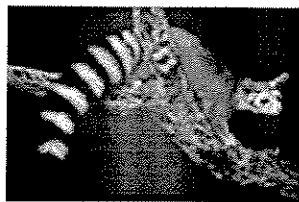
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State Fish
The Arizona Trout
adopted 1986

Arizona's state fish lives in five streams in the White Mountain area. It measures 8 inches in the wild and up to 22 inches in hatcheries. Once near the brink of extinction, this Arizona native fish is now listed as a threatened species under the federal Endangered Species Act.

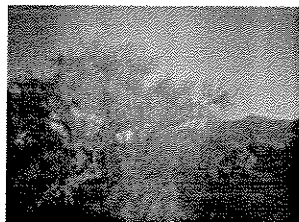
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State Mammal
The Ringtail
adopted 1986

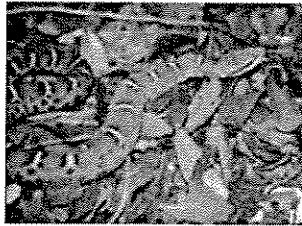
Arizona's state mammal is a small animal about two and one half feet long. Half of this length is a bush tail, ringed with black and white fur. The ringtails have gray fur, huge round eyes and large round ears. Ringtails are shy, nocturnal creatures and are seen by relatively few people.

[More Info](#)



State Tree
The Palo Verde
adopted 1954

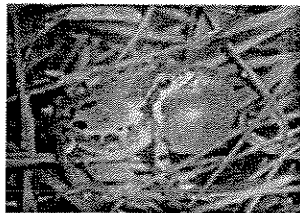
Native to Arizona, the tree's name is in reference to its green bark. "Palo Verde" in Spanish means *green stick* or *green pole*. The Palo Verde has yellow blossoms and usually blooms in April or May.



State Reptile
The Arizona Ridgenose Rattlesnake
adopted 1986

Arizona's state reptile is a relatively rare snake in the United States and perhaps the most beautiful of all eleven species of rattlesnakes found in Arizona. The scales on its upturned nose are what gives this reptile its name. It is rarely over 24 inches long or weighs more than three or four ounces.

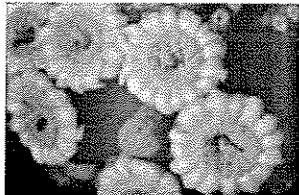
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State Amphibian
The Arizona Treefrog
adopted 1986

Arizona's state amphibian is one of two native species of treefrog found in Arizona. Well known for its climbing abilities, this little creature is actually much smaller than the one depicted on the panel. It is actually only three-quarter inches to two inches long.

[More Info](#)



State Flower
The Saguaro Blossom
adopted 1931

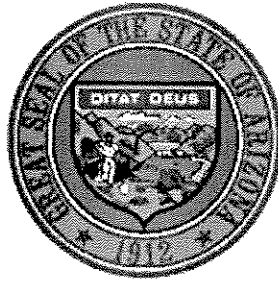
Arizona's state flower is the pure white waxy blossom of the giant saguaro cactus. This cactus is indigenous to Arizona and grows to a height of forty to fifty feet and lives to an age of 150 to 200 years.

State Colors
Blue and Old Gold
adopted 1915

The official state colors are blue and gold.

State Seal
Arizona Constitution
adopted 1911

A shield with the motto *Ditat Deus*, which means God Enriches, lies in the center of the seal and contains symbols of Arizona's



key enterprises.

A quartz mill sits on the side of a hill on the left of the seal, behind a miner with a pick and shovel. They symbolize Arizona's mining industry. The sun rising behind mountain peaks in the background symbolizes Arizona's climate. The reservoir and dam which sit in front of the mountains remind us of water reclamation farming. Irrigated fields with rows of cotton and citrus trees lie below the dam. These elements symbolize Arizona's rich agriculture. Cattle, which graze in front of the fields, on the lower right side, is another symbol of historic importance to Arizona.

Written in a band around the edge of the seal are the words Great Seal of the State of Arizona with the year of Arizona's admission to the Union, 1912.



State Flag

adopted 1917

Arizona's state flag is divided into two halves. The top half consists of thirteen alternating red and yellow rays which represent America's thirteen original colonies.

Because Arizona is a western state, the rays shows a setting sun. The colors of the rays refer to red and yellow in the Spanish flags carried by Coronado when he came to Arizona in the sixteenth century.

The bottom half of the flag is a solid blue field, the same color as the blue in the United States flag.

A large copper colored star is superimposed in the center of the flag. This identifies Arizona as the largest producer of copper in the United States.

In 1910, Col Charles W. Harris designed a flag for the Arizona Rifle Team when they attended the National Matches at Camp Perry. Arizona was the only team in past matches without a flag.

The Harris flag was adopted in 1917 by Arizona's Third Legislature and was passed into law without Governor Thomas Campbell's signature. "Governor Campbell did not officially state his reasons for taking

no action on the bill, but it is generally supposed that the flag did not measure up to his ideals of what a state emblem should be."

Arizona Republican, February 27, 1917

State Neckwear

The Bola Tie

adopted 1973

Arizona's official state neckwear was invented in Wickenburg, Arizona. It is worn around the neck in the same fashion as a necktie. It consists of a cord, usually made of braided leather, which is held together by a decorative clasp and often has some form of ornament on the ends of the cord.

State Song

The Arizona March Song

adopted 1919

Arizona's state anthem was written in 1915 and passed into law in 1919. Later a song titled "Arizona," written and performed by native son Rex Allen, Jr., was adopted as an alternate state song.

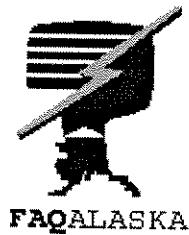
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FAQALASKA - Frequently Asked Questions About Alaska



State Symbols

Alaska Flag and Song

The design for the Alaska flag was selected in a contest for Alaska students in grades seven through twelve in 1926. The winning design, submitted by 13-year-old Benny Benson, consisted of eight gold stars on a field of blue, representing the Big Dipper and the North Star.

The Alaska Legislature adopted the design as the official flag for the Territory of Alaska on May 2, 1927. Later the drafters of the Alaska constitution stipulated that the territorial flag would become the official flag of the State of Alaska.

The words to the song *Alaska's Flag* were written by Marie Drake, a long-time employee of the Alaska Department of Education, and first appeared as a poem in 1935. The poem was set to music composed by Elinor Dusenbury, whose husband was commander of Chilkoot Barracks at Haines from 1933-1936. The Territorial Legislature adopted *Alaska's Flag* as Alaska's official song in 1955.

Permission is not needed to reproduce the image of the state flag. However, The University of Alaska holds the copyright to the song. For further information, contact the University Archivist the Rasmuson Library, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-6808.

State Motto

The official motto of the State of Alaska, *North to the Future*, was adopted by the legislature during Alaska's Purchase Centennial in 1967. Created by veteran newsman Richard Peter, the motto is meant to represent Alaska as a country of promise. According to Peter, the motto "...is a reminder that beyond the horizon of urban clutter there is a Great Land beneath our flag that can provide a new tomorrow for this century's 'huddled masses yearning to be free.'"

The Seal of the State of Alaska

When Congress provided for civil government for Alaska in 1884, the first governor designed, and had made, a seal for the District of Alaska. The seal was used until 1910 when Governor Walter E. Clark decided the design placed too much emphasis on icebergs, northern lights and Native people. The governor had a draftsman in Juneau sketch a new seal that incorporated the original features, plus symbols for mining, agriculture, fisheries, fur seal rookeries, and a railroad.

The design was approved by the acting attorney general of the United States. A more refined drawing was made by an unknown person in the Department of the Interior, and the new seal was ready for use early in 1911. When Alaska changed from district to territorial status in 1912, the

new designation was substituted on the seal.

The Constitution of the State of Alaska provides that the territorial seal shall be the seal for the State of Alaska, with the word "territory" changed to that of "state." The seal is 2 1/8 inches in diameter.

The seal of the State of Alaska may be used only with the permission of the Lt. Governor.

Other State Symbols

The State Bird, the Willow Ptarmigan, was adopted by the Territorial Legislature in 1955. It is a small (15-17 inches), arctic grouse that lives among willows and on open tundra and muskeg. Plumage is brown in summer, changing to white in winter. The Willow Ptarmigan is common in much of Alaska.

The State Fish - King Salmon (adopted by the Alaska Legislature in 1962)

The State Flower, the wild Forget-Me-Not, was adopted by the Territorial Legislature in 1917. It is a perennial that is found throughout Alaska, from Hyder to the Arctic Coast, and west to the Aleutians.

The State Fossil - Woolly Mammoth (adopted by the Alaska Legislature in 1986)

The State Gem - Jade (adopted by the Alaska Legislature in 1968)

The State Marine Mammal - Bowhead Whale (adopted by the Alaska Legislature in 1983)

The State Mineral - Gold (adopted by the Alaska Legislature on 1968)

The State Sport - Dog mushing (adopted by the Alaska Legislature in 1972)

The State Tree - Sitka spruce (adopted by the Alaska Legislature in 1962)

• *Source : Alaska Blue Book 1993-94, 11th ed., Juneau, Department of Education, Division of State Libraries, Archives & Museums.*

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For further information about Alaska, contact your nearest library. For comments or corrections about this site, contact:

Sue Sherif: e-mail - sue.sherif@fnsb.lib.ak.us

ALABAMA EMBLEMS, SYMBOLS AND HONORS

Emblem/Symbol	Name of Emblem/Symbol	Date Adopted
☉ Bible	State Bible	1853
☉ Great Seal	State map showing major rivers	1876
☉ Flag	Crimson Cross of St. Andrew/white field	1895
☉ Bird	Yellowhammer	1927
☉ Poets Laureate	Alabama State Poets Laureate	1930-1999
☉ Song	Alabama	1933
☉ Coat-of-Arms of Alabama		1939
☉ Motto	We Dare Defend Our Rights	1939
☉ Creed	Alabama's Creed	1953
☉ Salt Water Fish	(Fighting) Tarpon	1955
☉ Flower	Camellia	1959
☉ Mineral	Hematite (Red Iron Ore)	1967
☉ Rock	Marble	1969
☉ Horse	Racking Horse	1975
☉ Fresh Water Fish	Largemouth Bass	1975
☉ Game Bird	Wild Turkey	1980
☉ American Folk Dance of AL	Square Dance	1981
☉ Nut	Pecan	1982
☉ Fossil	<i>Basilosaurus cetoides</i>	1984
☉ Renaissance Faire	Florence Renaissance Faire	1988
☉ Alabama State Championship	Horse Show	1988
☉ Official Mascot & Butterfly	Eastern Tiger Swallowtail	1989
☉ Insect	Monarch Butterfly	1989
☉ Reptile	Alabama Red-bellied Turtle	1990
☉ Gemstone	Star Blue Quartz	1990
☉ Shell	<i>Scaphella junonia johnstoneae</i>	1990
☉ Outdoor Drama	William Gibson's <i>The Miracle Worker</i>	1991

● Barbecue Championship	Demopolis Christmas on the River Cook-off	1991
● Agricultural Museum	Dothan Landmarks Park	1992
● Horseshoe Tournament	Stockton Fall Horseshoe Tournament	1992
● Historic Theatre	AL Theatre for the Performing Arts	1993
● Outdoor Musical Drama	<i>The Incident at Looney's Tavern</i>	1993
● Tree	Southern Longleaf Pine	1997
● Soil	Bama Soil Series	1997
● Quilt	<i>Pine Burr Quilt</i>	1997
● Wildflower	Oak-leaf Hydrangea	1999
● Amphibian	Red Hills salamander	2000

Related links

Authorities:

Code of Alabama, 1975, (1998 Cumulative Supplement)

Information Section of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, *State of Alabama Official Symbols*, April 10, 1990.

Alabama Department of Archives and History, *Alabama State Emblems*, n.d.

Updated: April 16, 2001

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History**
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The State Folk Dance Conspiracy: Fabricating a National Folk Dance

by Julie Mangin

Originally published in the Old-Time Herald, v.4(7) p.9-12, Spring 1995

Update Feb 14, 2001! -- Here we go again...
H.J.RES.15.IH, introduced in February 2001.
Referred to the House Committee on Government Reform.

Some people just don't get it.

Additional thoughts on square dancing -- July 16, 1998

Introduction

Modern Western square dance clubs are coordinating across the U.S. to have square dancing declared the state folk dance of all fifty states. At the time of this writing, there are twenty-two states that have passed legislation designating square dance as the "state folk dance." Many of these bills were passed after 1988, which was the last time that a bill was in the U.S. Congress to designate square dancing as the national folk dance. It appears that having failed on a national level, modern Western square dancers are trying to accomplish the same thing on a state by state basis.

The sponsors of these bills are members of organizations that promote modern Western square dance, also known as club square dancing. Club square dancing is distinguished from traditional square dancing in many ways. Their clubs are structured into levels of dance. The "mainstream" level of club square dance requires dancers to be competent at 66 different square dance figures, requiring at least 60 hours of lessons. The "plus" level of club square dance involves the knowledge of approximately 100 calls; a level of complexity unequaled in any traditional folk dance. Club square dance uses recorded music rather than live music, often choosing popular music over any form of music that might have been originally associated with traditional square dancing. There is a minor industry associated with club square dancing including businesses that sell a variety of products and services: recordings, costumes, amplification equipment, certification of callers, and dance paraphernalia. The national square dance convention has been known to attract more than 20,000 participants.

By contrast, traditional square dances are usually open to any member of the community, with no membership or certification required. Since most traditional communities get by with no more than a few dozen calls in their repertoire, lessons are not required, although some dances may feature a short workshop before the dance or "walk throughs" during the dance itself. The dancers wear street clothes, not square dance costumes. Finally, true folk dances are always linked to a folk music tradition. Recorded music is a rarity at traditional dances.

Club square dancers have, in one sense, narrowly defined the term "square dance." They seem to believe that only square dancing done in their clubs is the "real" square dance. But they also talk about square dance as any dance activity that happens in their clubs, and in doing so, use the term "square dance" in a broader sense. It's no wonder that legislators who vote in favor of state dance legislation don't know what it is they are supporting.

The most curious statement that club square dancers make to justify square dance as the state folk dance is that the term "square dancing" encompasses contra dancing, clogging, ballroom dancing, Texas two-step, country-western dancing, and various other American folk dances. This was a designation made unilaterally by national club square dance organizations, without consulting traditional square dancers or their organizations. While this appears to make modern Western square dance more inclusive (and perhaps helps their legislative goals), it also gives an inaccurate and confusing picture of what square dancing (traditional or modern) really is. Using the term "square dancing" in this way defines the kind of dancing that goes on in the square dance clubs. However, it defies logic to declare that because it happens in square dance clubs, contra dancing can be called square dancing. To have an organization sit around a table and redefine dance terminology to suit its own ends contradicts their claim to be a folk dance. Dance scholar LeeEllen Friedland wrote in a letter to the Washington Post on this issue, "Only the hobbyists who perform modern western square dancing use the term 'square dancing' in this manner. Every one else uses the term to refer only to dances performed in square formation." It seems that the legislatures that have passed such laws declaring "square dancing" as the state folk dance are endorsing a lifestyle more than a clearly defined form of dance.

Club square dancing may be an entertaining and wholesome form of recreation, but its highly organized nature is the very antithesis of the concept of "folk." It not my intention to say that traditional square dancing, as opposed to club square dancing, should be the state folk dance in any state in this country. In fact, I believe it is inappropriate for any cultural activity to be declared the "state" or "national folk dance." This is not the place of government, and doing so may offend those who don't practice square dancing, and do not feel that it represents them. It may also have a chilling effect on those cultural forms that were not chosen.

What happened in Maryland

Early in 1994, a bill, sponsored by State Senator Leo Green, was introduced in to the Maryland Assembly declaring square dance the state folk dance of Maryland. The bill described square dancing as representing the American melting pot by blending the Morris and Maypole dances of England, the ballroom dances of France, the Church dances of Spain, and the folk dances of countless other countries. The bill also invoked the symbols of family values, wholesomeness, and benefits to the handicapped and elderly, and used these to justify square dancing as representative of the state of Maryland.

The only individual to testify against the bill at the hearings in Annapolis was Stan Fowler. Stan manages the dance program at the Glen Echo Park in Glen Echo, Maryland, which includes contras & squares, Cajun, zydeco, big band, and swing. Stan testified as a concerned citizen and dancer of the state of Maryland, and not as a representative of the National Park Service, which runs the park.

Stan's testimony pointed out the importance of state symbols. Choosing the same state folk dance as nearly two dozen other states defeats the purpose of a state symbol to distinguish that

state from others. There is nothing about club square dancing that represents Maryland. You can go to a mainstream modern Western square dance club in Maryland and then to one in Minnesota or Arizona and find little or no difference in their dancing. Stan also offered the exclusionary nature of club square dancing as another reason that the bill was inappropriate for the state of Maryland. He quoted an article in the Washington Post from February 6, 1987, in which a historian for a local modern Western square dance association said, "We kind of look down our nose at square dancing over at Glen Echo. It's totally open to the public, and they don't meet our criteria for being a member of the Washington Area Square Dance Cooperative Association."

Most important, Stan Fowler's testimony brought up the issue of cultural diversity. "Frankly, I do not see the need for Maryland to select a state dance. It would be hard to select a truly representative one because of the rich variety of dances done in Maryland and because of the diversity of Maryland's population."

A vote was taken immediately after the hearing at which Stan Fowler testified. The measure was defeated unanimously. The club square dancers, however, would not give up so easily. Within days, a letter was sent to Mr. Howard Rawlings, the chairman of the committee which held the March 29 hearing. Richard Peterson, of the Washington Area Square Dance Cooperative Association, implored the committee to reconsider its vote, and included a reference to the national square dance convention: "We had intended to bid for the national square dance convention again...this June. In 1984, we had the national in Baltimore and attracted over 25,000 square dancers. With the negative vote we received from the House Appropriations Committee, this makes our bid rather useless. The conventions have been going to other states that have passed the legislation." On April 9, the committee voted again on the bill and it passed.

On May 27, Governor William Donald Schaeffer signed a bill designating square dance (as defined by modern Western square dancers) the state folk dance of Maryland. This was despite petitions, phone calls, and letters of opposition from dancers who participate in the dances sponsored by the Folklore Society of Greater Washington, the Baltimore Folk Music Society, the Mid-Maryland Folk Arts Council, and the Annapolis Traditional Dance Society.

It appears that the politicians sold out to the economic benefit of a national square dance convention being held in Maryland. One can only wonder what is the value of a state symbol. For Maryland, it seems to be a convention that has yet to be actually scheduled in Maryland. Even if one is scheduled for Maryland, it will be a convention that is not likely to be scheduled more than once every twenty years. Club square dancers in every state are likely to use the same ploy on their legislatures.

WHAT HAPPENED NATIONALLY?

Maryland's experience with state folk dance legislation echoes the unsuccessful attempts to have club square dancing declared the national folk dance. In 1984 and 1988, the U.S. Congress considered such bills, both of which were defeated. Similar bills have been introduced before, and all have failed, except one that made square dance the national folk dance for a specific period of time, 1982-1983.

During the Congressional committee hearings in both 1984 and 1988, some very interesting issues were addressed concerning the designation of a national dance. Here are some of the best

remarks I found in the printed record.

In 1984, Ralph Rinzler, then the Assistant Secretary for Public Service at the Smithsonian Institution, said, "I as a folklorist find it difficult to comprehend, especially in a multicultural society like ours, how one could have a 'national folk dance.'"

Joe Wilson, Executive Director, National Council for the Traditional Arts, testified in 1984 that "My organization sees no good reason for the Congress to make what in essence is a value judgment about the folk dances of the United States by selecting one as the national folk dance." "There is this huge mythology that has grown up about it [modern Western square dance]. And some historians of the form have relied on fragmentary information and their imagination to create scenarios about it. But it goes back to the 1920's at the earliest."

LeeEllen Friedland, folklorist and dance historian, said in the 1988 hearings, "There are three major regional folk forms of the square dance: the Northeastern square dance, which is closest in form to the French quadrille; the Southeastern square dance, the oldest form of which appears to have been performed in a circle with small squares of four individuals dancing around the circumference; and, thirdly, the Western square dance, which evolved from an intermixture of the previous two forms." She went on to say that "The modern Western square dance has been developed and standardized through recreational organizations...and not through the folk process to which all cultural traditions are subject." "To modern Western square dancers, square dancing is any dancing sanctioned and enjoyed by their clubs. This is fine if you choose to join such a club for recreation, but it has nothing to do with the nature of folk dance in the United States."

Bob Dalsemer, then Vice President, Country Dance & Song Society made the following remarks at the hearing in 1984: "...the legislation of it [modern Western square dance] as our national folk dancing, I think will lead to a lot of misunderstanding about the variety that exists both in square dancing and in all forms of traditional American dance." "Frequently, when we are calling what we call a square dance, a traditional square dance, members of the modern Western square dance community will approach us, and tell us that what we are doing is not square dancing. That it is barn dancing, or it is country dancing, or it is something else. That they would prefer us to use another name." "I think that it is not in the best interest to legislate a square dance, one that a majority of people do, that that is the right way...this legislation would have a chilling effect on traditional square dancing in this country and I think that it is unfortunate."

Carol Robertson, then President, Society for Ethnomusicology said in 1984, "To single out a dance that represents even a very small fraction of British-origin immigrants would be insulting to every other cultural group in this country. The greatest repudiation would be to the only people that are not imports to this land, the Native Americans."

No one objected to honoring square dancing; it was the designation of square dance (or any dance) as a national symbol in perpetuity that raised objections. The United States has designated only five national symbols in its entire existence: the flag, the Great Seal, the national anthem, the bald eagle, and the American rose. It was remarked during one of the Congressional hearings that passing the square dance bill might open the flood gates for more "national symbol" legislation, including a national sport, a national food, and a national who knows what else. The U.S. Congress takes its symbols more seriously than many state legislatures.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?

Club square dancers, having failed in their attempt to have square dance declared the national folk dance, are now attempting a state by state campaign to make square dance the national folk dance by default. They may try again to introduce a bill in Congress to have square dancing designated the national folk dance. If the majority of states have designated it as their state folk dance already, such a bill could be more successful in Congress than it has in the past.

I believe that to have square dancing designated the state or national folk dance is a mistake. It may seem to be frivolous and inconsequential legislation, but I think there are hidden consequences that need to be brought to light.

First, I think it is wrong to use legislation to elevate one cultural form above all others. It is more important for our country's social evolution that cultural diversity be honored and embraced. It is the nature of the modern Western square dance movement that diversity is something to be eliminated. Standardization of dancing and of dance instruction is an important goal of these organizations. Legislation of club square dancing as the state folk dance is a serious threat to traditional and regional variations of square dance.

Second, I am concerned about the educational aspect of this legislation. Most elementary and secondary school students must study their state's history and government. One of the ways that the heritage of the state is taught is through the state symbols. By last count, in at least twenty-two states, one of the symbols misinforms students as to the nature of folk dance. Modern Western square dance is not a folk dance, and it is not the same thing as clogging, contra dancing, and ballroom dancing, despite the insistence of club square dancers. Given the limited time that the arts are given in schools these days, how much time will be left over to teach children genuine traditional and ethnic folk dances?

I don't understand the motivation of club square dancers to impose their enthusiasm for square dancing so forcefully on their fellow citizens. Perhaps they see these laws as a way to promote their activities. However, this strategy overlooks the negative public relations generated from a tactic that says to the rest of the dance world "we are better than you." While there were strong objections to the bill in Maryland, no other dance organization tried to have their folk dance receive the dubious honor of "state folk dance." Real folk dancers do not need the approval of a legislative body. To prevent state folk dance laws from succeeding elsewhere, we need to communicate to our representatives the inappropriateness of such legislation.

Sidebar #1

The following are states that have passed laws designating square dance "the state dance," "the state folk dance," or "the state American folk dance." The dates of the passage of the laws are given, if known.

(note: this list has not been updated since the article was written in 1995.)

Alabama (1993)

Arkansas (1991)

California (1993)
Colorado (1993)
Delaware (1994) temporary
Florida
Idaho (1989)
Illinois (1990)
Maryland (1994)
Massachusetts (1993)
Montana (1991)
New Jersey (1982)
North Carolina (1994)
Oklahoma (1988)
Oregon (1977)
South Carolina (1994)
Tennessee (1993)
Texas (1991)
Utah (1994)
Virginia (1993)
Washington (1979)
West Virginia

If your state isn't listed, you should check with your state legislative representative's office to see if a bill has been introduced. You can also contact the state folklorist or folklife council. Public libraries usually carry directories and other information related to state and local government, as well as information on cultural activities on a state and local level.

Sidebar #2

References

National Folk Dance. Hearing before the Subcommittee on Census and Population of the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service. House of Representatives, 98th Congress, Second Session on H.R. 1706, A Bill to Designate the Square Dance as the National Folk Dance of the United States. June 28, 1984.

Designate Square Dance as American Folk Dance. Hearing before the Subcommittee on Census and Population of the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service. House of Representatives, 100th Congress, Second Session on H.R. 2067, A Bill to Designate the Square Dance as the American Folk Dance of the United States. June 28, 1988.

Nevell, Richard. *A Time to Dance: American Country Dancing from Hornpipes to Hot Hash*. New York, St. Martin's Press, 1977.

Sidebar #3

About the author

Julie Mangin has been dancing since 1980, and playing banjo since 1989. She used to publish

The Daily Clog, a newsletter about old-time music and dance, and organize old-time music events at the Clog Palace, in the Washington DC suburbs. Ms. Mangin is a librarian by profession. She can be contacted by email at jmangin@radix.net.

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