



# Mississippi Earthtones Festival

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**Celebrating our river through art, music & conservation at Riverfront Amphitheater**

**5<sup>th</sup> Annual Festival to be held on Saturday, Sept. 17<sup>th</sup> - "It's Our River Day"**

(9 Sept 2011 –Alton,IL) Festival-goers at this free, family-friendly event will find countless ways to celebrate life on theMississippi Riveron Saturday, Sept 17th from Noon-10pm as part of Governor Quinn's "It's Our River Day" initiative.

Highlights of the festival include an eco-village where you'll find Earth-friendly products and services, conservation exhibits and nature craft vendors. Plus, ideas and experts to help us all achieve more sustainable lives.

During the afternoon, families will enjoy an abundance of kids' hands-on activities, such as: fun solar experiments, eco-crafts, Japanese fish printing, EarthBall Games, launching biodegradable water balloons, interacting with wildlife from the Riverside Reptile Ranch, and take-home gardening activities. Don't miss the 3-sided climbing wall that looks like real rock and can accommodate up to three climbers at once! At 23 feet tall, each of the rope stations has several different routes that range in difficulty from beginner to expert. Trained staff from the YMCA will be on hand to assist all climbers. Be sure to wear closed-toe shoes (i.e. no sandals, flip-flops, etc) if you plan to scale the wall.

Over 40 exhibitors will be set up atAlton's beautiful Riverfront Amphitheater, including informational displays on electric & hybrid vehicles, composting methods, the newAudubonCenterinWest Alton, energy-efficient home improvement products, and how you can get involved with monitoring the water quality of your local streams. TheSt. LouisScienceCenterwill be on hand with segways available to rent for guests 12

and older. D&R Energy Services will have a solar panel grid set up on site to power a number of the exhibits, and wind-power credits will be purchased to offset other energy use to make the event completely sustainable.

Guests will find an abundance of ways to help the environment at the festival, such as picking up a recycle bin for your home or bringing various items to be recycled. Black plant pots, old cell phones, home and garden tools, old shoes, eyeglasses and keys can all be dropped off at the festival grounds. Rain barrels to harvest rain water for gardening will be available at the festival for \$65 – supplies are limited, it is suggested to reserve yours in advance by calling 618-334-3630. Kick the day off right by participating in the Great River Clean-Up from 9am-12pm, which includes a free lunch and a boat ride. (Pre-registration is required, please call 462-6802)

Artistic elements of the event include a river photography exhibit and a plein air painting competition, as well as an 8-foot mural of a river scene for kids of all ages to color. There will be a raffle fundraiser at the festival for a chance to win a donated painting by local artist Micah Streubel, on gallery quality wrapped canvas compliments of Abbey Graphics in Godfrey.

Before or after you enjoy the festival, take a bike ride on the levee trail, guided by the Wild Trak Cycling Club. A water stop will be offered at theNationalGreatRiversMuseum.

Visitors will find a great selection of food booths all day, and the beer tent will open at 4:00 featuring Blue Moon and Schlafly products.

The festival will also present live music on the main stage all day:

Jakes's Leg (7:00-10:00) –St. Louis's based jamband that has been interpreting the music of the Grateful Dead for over 30 years

Drum Circle (6:30-7:00) - Bring percussion instruments & hula hoops

River Ramblers (4:30-6:30) - Traditional & Contemporary Bluegrass

Confluence Conservation Leadership Awards (4:00-4:30)

Brian "Fox" Ellis (3:15-4:00) - renowned river-themed storyteller presents "Song of the Mountain Lion: John Muir, The Ohlone Indians and a Wilderness Encounter"

Casey Reeves (1:00-3:00) – Solo folk rock artist

Brian “Fox” Ellis (12:00-12:45) – “River Tales: Stories and Songs to Celebrate the Big Rivers!” Enjoy the story of The Mississippi, its geology, natural history and the diversity of life that inhabits this valley through traditional music and original poetry.

The Mississippi Earthtones Festival is presented by Alton Marketplace and the Sierra Club with support from The Nature Institute, theNationalGreatRiversResearch & EducationCenter, the Army Corps of Engineers, the City ofAlton, The Audubon Center at Riverlands, American Water, Dave Mungenast Alton Toyota Scion, Simmons Firm, Meyer Law Firm, Liberty Bank, and Day and Night Solar. Fun volunteer opportunities are available, please contact 463-1016 to sign up for a shift. Please note that no coolers or pets are allowed inRiverfrontParkduring events. Visit: [www.RiverfrontAmphitheater.com/Earthtones](http://www.RiverfrontAmphitheater.com/Earthtones) for more details and registration info or find the event on facebook.