

# Outdoors and Wildlife

## Sumner Community Park



Sit outside and enjoy the view as Maxie stands guard over the park. Visitors can take advantage of the picnic tables and playground equipment. Electrical hookups for campers and shelter house reservations are available.

Contact 660-856-3364 for reservations

## Swan Lake Drive



Swan Lake Drive serves as the main entrance for visitors to Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge. Visitors are greeted by rows of flowering redbuds and pines planted as part of a community betterment project. Hours for the refuge vary based on season and weather conditions. Check online or call for hours.

Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge  
16194 Swan Lake Avenue  
Sumner, MO 65681  
660-856-3323  
[www.fws.gov/midwest/swanlake](http://www.fws.gov/midwest/swanlake)

## A BRIEF HISTORY

Teeming with wildlife, the area along the Grand River in the northwest corner of Chariton County once attracted both Native American tribes and settlers exploring Missouri. In 1820, Thomas Stanley, along with two of Daniel Boone's sons explored the area that would become present day Sumner. Stanley established a trading post in the vicinity of present day Stanley Lake, but for several years little else was built due to the Grand River flooding and the marshlands. Jack's Ridge, located just north of Sumner, was named for a free black, Jack, who settled in the area in the mid 1830s.

With the buildup of the railroad and the relocation of the Wabash depot from Cunningham to Sumner, the community experienced tremendous growth. In 1882 Joel H. Wilkerson laid out the town and a hotel, newspaper office, general stores, opera house, and factories soon followed.

With the community's boom came a drastic reduction in the local wildlife as marshes were drained and hunters reduced the animal population. In 1937 the US Congress established the Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge to the south of Sumner, in the hopes of preserving wetlands. Men of the Civilian Conservation Corps constructed roads, buildings, and man-made wetlands.

Originally designed to preserve habitat for ducks, Canada Geese came in droves during their migrations, with some 800 stopping in 1941, with highs up to 100,000 in 1990. This also led to a yearly influx of hunters, benefiting the Sumner businesses and Chariton County as a whole. With these great numbers of geese Sumner became the "Wild Goose Capital of the World" and the first Wild Goose Festival was held in 1955 to coincide with the opening of wild goose season. The three-day festival has been held annually since.

Sumner's Community Betterment Organization has won state recognition over the years for its active involvement in Sumner. Among its projects have been the Senator William Fulbright Museum, the Sumner Community Park, the restoration of Purvis Cemetery, and the beautiful plantings along Swan Lake Drive.



**Wild Goose Festival**  
Weekend in fall, varies based on when the geese arrive! Check our website for details:  
[www.goosefestival.com](http://www.goosefestival.com)

## SUMNER

### Wild Goose Capital of the World



Built in 1976, Maxie the goose stands guard over the town of Sumner. Designed by artist David Jackson, Maxie rotates according to the wind direction. Standing 40 feet above ground, with a wingspan of 61 feet tip to tip and weighing over 3 tons, Maxie, a *Branta Canadensis Maxima* (Giant Canada Goose) is an impressive sight for all of Sumner's visitors. Sumner's sister city to the north, Wawa, Canada, also hosts a goose statue.

### Chariton County Heritage Tours, Inc.

Janet Weaver, President  
P.O. Box 40, Keytesville, MO 65261  
Call: 660-288-3425  
Email: [janet\\_weaver531@hotmail.com](mailto:janet_weaver531@hotmail.com)  
Online: [www.keytesvillemo.com/chariton-county-heritage-tours.html](http://www.keytesvillemo.com/chariton-county-heritage-tours.html)

## Pioneer Kitchen



In the fall, with approaching goose season, each Sunday in October sees the award-winning Pioneer Kitchen open for business. Completely manned by volunteer labor from the surrounding Sumner community, approximately 200 delicious meals are served each Sunday. People from miles around come for the great food and fellowship.

106 W. Centre Street

## Fulbright Museum



The Fulbright museum features a comprehensive display of antiques and artifacts collected in and around Sumner. The museum was named in honor of former US Senator William Fulbright who was born in Sumner and while a senator sponsored educational scholarships for foreign students studying in the US. Today the Fulbright US Student Program is the largest US exchange program for students and young professionals to learn and teach worldwide. The museum contains some artifacts pertinent to the career of Senator Fulbright as well as antique medical and dental equipment, old barber shop equipment, tools, furniture, and kitchen implements.

104 W. Centre Street • 660-856-3579 or 660-856-3513

## Swan Lake Sportsman's Club



In 1947 the Swan Lake Sportsman's Club was organized in affiliation with the Conservation Federation of Missouri. The club is still active and the redecorated building is used regularly. Community members can rent the facility for hosting events; call Randy Richardson to rent.

W. Centre Street • 660-856-3059

## Sportsman's Inn



The scene of lively gatherings, particularly during wild goose season. Open year round, plenty of food and drink!

116 W. Centre Street • 660-856-3332

## Purvis Cemetery



Genealogists and historians alike will enjoy exploring the Purvis Cemetery, with tombstones dating from the early 1800's. Due to nearby wetlands, the entrance to the cemetery is occasionally inaccessible except for 4-wheel drive vehicles.

## Inn at Clover Hill (Bed & Breakfast)



Fred Carpenter, proprietor  
10639 Hwy YY  
Sumner, MO 64681  
660-856-3648  
[www.innatcloverhill.com](http://www.innatcloverhill.com)

## Cooney's General Store



Sumner's local convenience store provides not only the usual staples of the grocery business but also custom-made Cooney deli sandwiches for people on-the-go. Don't forget to order yours!

Highway 139 & Main Street • 660-856-3616

## Sumner's United Methodist Church

3rd & Main Street  
Church Services 9:30 am Sunday  
Sunday School 10:30 am Sunday

**American Legion Post #586**  
The organization meets the 3rd Friday  
of each month at 7:00 pm