

Tennessee

TRIVIA

(pg. 10)

1. What is the official state amphibian?

The Tennessee Cave Salamander, *Gyrinophilu palleucus*, was named official state amphibian in 1995. This large, cave-dwelling salamander has three red external gills, a broad, flat head with small eyes and a tail fin. It is most often found in limestone caves that contain streams in central and southeast Tennessee.

2. What is the official state beverage?

Milk was designated as the official state beverage in 2009. Milk is an essential component to building strong muscle and bones in children, as well as mending injured muscle and bones in adults. Other benefits cited include milk's help in building strong and healthy teeth, hair, skin and nails. Tennessee's dairy industry produced nearly 100 million pounds of milk in 2007, with cash receipts for milk and milk products totaling nearly \$202 million.

(*half credit if you said "Jack Daniels")

3. What is the official state bird?

The Mockingbird, *Mimus polyglottos*, was selected as the official state bird in 1933. The Mockingbird is akin to the Brown Thrasher and the Catbird. It is ashen gray above, with darker, white-edged wings and whitish under parts; its length, inclusive of the long tail, is about 10 inches. One of the finest singers among North American birds, it possesses a melodious song of its own, and is especially noted for its skill in mimicking the songs of other birds.

4. What is the official state game bird?

The Bobwhite Quail, genus *Colinus virginianus*, was designated as the official state game bird in 1987. The Bobwhite, also known as the Partridge, is considered one of the finest game birds in the world. It is a short-tailed chunky brown bird, usually 8 to 10 inches long. The male has a white throat and a white stripe above the eye, while the female has a buffy throat and eye stripe. In spring the male's clearly whistled bob white is answered by the female's four-syllable whistle. This game bird lays from 10 to 20 pure white eggs, more than almost any other bird.

5. What is the official state butterfly?

The Zebra Swallowtail, *Eurytides marcellus*, was designated as Tennessee's official butterfly in 1995. This beautiful, winged insect has black and white stripes that run the length of its body with red and blue spots on its lower back. The swallowtail grows from a tiny egg into a caterpillar that eventually molts into its pupal stage and is transformed into this striking butterfly that can be found throughout most of the United States.

6. What is the official state gaming fish?

The smallmouth bass replaced the largemouth bass as the official sport fish in 2005, due to its popularity and the fact that Tennessee has produced the five largest smallmouth bass in the world. The smallmouth bass, *Micropterus dolomieu*, often referred to as "bronzeback," will fight ounce for ounce harder than any other species of sport fish in Tennessee. The current state record, which is also the world record of 11 pounds, 15 ounces, was caught by D.L. Hayes at Dale Hollow Lake on July 9, 1955. It may be found in most streams and lakes in the state with the exception of West Tennessee.

7. What is the official state commercial fish?

Channel Catfish, *Ictalurus lacustris*, which was also designated in 1987. The Channel Catfish, sometimes known as "Spotted Cat" or "Fiddler," is widely stocked and reared in farm ponds. It may be found in most Tennessee streams and many lakes. The channel catfish is a bottom-feeder and current feeder, generally taken by still fishing.

8. What is the official state flower?

The Iris, genus *Iridaceae*, is the official state cultivated flower. It is an herbaceous perennial of which there are about 170 species, including several North American varieties, the most common of which is the Blue Flag. While there are several different colors among the Iris, and the act naming the iris as the state flower did not name a particular color, by common acceptance the purple iris is considered the state flower.

9. What is the official state fruit?

The Tomato, scientifically known as the *Lycopersicon lycopersicum*, was designated as Tennessee's official state fruit in 2003.

10. What is the official state tree?

The Tulip Poplar was designated as an official state tree of Tennessee in 1947. As no state tree had ever before been designated, the adoption of an official tree seemed appropriate. The tulip poplar was chosen "because it grows from one end of the state to the other."

11. What is the official state wild animal?

In 1971, the Raccoon was adopted as Tennessee's official wild animal. The Raccoon, *Procyon lotor*, is a furry animal that has a bushy, ringed tail and a band of black hair around its eyes which looks like a mask. Raccoons eat fish and frogs that they catch in rivers and streams. Raccoons living in Tennessee weigh from 12 to 25 pounds. Most males are larger than females. Raccoons walk like bears, with all four feet on the ground, and are good swimmers.