From our President

To many people, springtime means new beginnings. I personally love all four seasons for different reasons; but undoubtedly I love springtime because of the rebirth of many plants and because of the birth of many of nature’s babies. Living lakeside in the Ozarks often means savanna-like or glade-like property, and we Billingtons have our fair share! One benefit is that glades produce some beautiful spring natives—one of which is the Hoary Puccoon. There is a spot on our hilltop that takes my breath away each spring. It is awash in buttery yellow blooms. Most are Hoary Puccoon; some are Ground Plum. Two summers ago there was another precious yellow bloom that I was not familiar with; however, before I could take my “Ozark Wildflowers Field Guide” up there, two “precious” little children proceeded to pull up (yes, pull up) my Hoary Puccoon and the unidentified plant making several bouquets. I didn’t spot my “new” plant last spring, but perhaps I will this year.

Three years ago, one of my sons made a wood duck house for me and installed it on the shoreline of the lake a few feet into the water. Almost instantaneously the wood ducks were there checking out a possible new nest. After MUCH juggling and jostling, landing on top of the house and looking over the side into the opening, and botched attempts to enter, a few females were successful. I think in the end only one female laid eggs—one each day for several days—before finally incubating the eggs. I say “I think only one female” because I understand wood ducks are famous for “dumping” their eggs and letting another female incubate them!

Unbelievably that very first spring I happened to be walking through the bedroom and look out the window in time to see what I first thought was someone throwing something out of the duck house! Obviously in the next split second I realized that couldn’t be—so I stopped to watch. There in the water at the base of the duck house was mamma duck looking up and coaxing her new babies to take a leap of faith—all 13 of them! What a heartwarming sight!

Last summer that same son constructed a second wood duck house and installed it near the first one. It took a while for all the females to realize they didn’t have to fight over one house; that they had another one to argue over. Both houses were eventually used though, and each summer I have had the opportunity to watch at least one flock of ducklings emerge!

New Beginnings...............How appropriate then that in the spring of the year the Lake of the Ozarks Chapter of the Missouri Master Naturalist program—has its first Newsletter! Thank you to the Communications & Outreach Committee for this initial foray into virgin territory for our Chapter. I know we will all learn to look forward with anticipation to each issue.

By the way, speaking of babies, do you know whose baby is called a squid or whose is a leveret, or whose is a pinkie?

Joann Billington
Welcome to the first edition of the Lake of the Ozarks Chapter of the Missouri Master Naturalist program newsletter! We are planning for this to be sent quarterly by email, coming out in March, June, September and December.

Having a newsletter has been a long time hope of our chapter, and we are delighted to finally get one started. A big thanks to everyone that volunteered to be on our “staff”, gave advice, and contributed articles.

There is one person in particular that I would like to thank for making this possible, her name is Carmen Santos. Carmen is with the Confluence chapter, and is the editor of their newsletter. I was introduced to her last Fall at our State Conference where she got my email address and contacted me to offer to help us get our newsletter started. She took the time to meet with me and show me some of the basics. The format of this newsletter has been copied directly from her very fine newsletter. Thank you Carmen!

This newsletter is still evolving, and we will always be looking for contributions from our members. We expect the content will change from issue to issue based on these contributions. The more pictures, stories, quotes and ideas that we get from all of you, the better this will be.

Please email any contributions to Brett Billington (brett_billington@yahoo.com).

Jodi Moulder and Ed Thompson for the Identifying Trees in Winter outing at Lake of the Ozarks State Park. The weather was cool but sunny, perfect for a winter hike. The event was well attended, very informative, and fun!

Tim White for the excellent training on astronomy at the January meeting. Unfortunately the cloudy weather did not cooperate to let us go outside and look at the sky through the telescope, but the nimble AT committee quickly adapted, and the indoor program was interesting and informative!

Lillie Smith, Production Manager, Lake Area Industries, Inc. and Kathie Bishop for their presentations on recycling at the February meeting. Thanks also to Bonnie White and Ted Windels for their help in organizing the Advanced Training and for bringing materials to share.

Carolyn Solomon, Dennis Reed, Laura Toombs, Kathie Bishop and Sam Jeffcott for representing the Chapter at the February 23 Leadership Conference in Jefferson City.

Ted Windels for organizing the tour to Laclede Industries in Lebanon! The on-again, off-again “weather” made this a trick!

Jerry Barnabee of Meramec Hills Chapter for sharing the computer program he designed for recording volunteer/AT hours with the Lake of the Ozarks Chapter.

Paul Johnson, MDC Resource Forester for his presentation on selecting the right tree for the location at the March meeting.

Lauri Peterson for her donation of bare root trees for six lucky Master Naturalist members at the March 14 meeting.

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EAGLE DAYS 2012

During Eagle Days on January 5th and 6th we were lucky to have the enthusiastic support of 39 of our members who contributed over 425 volunteer hours to the event. 14 of those volunteers were new to our group.

Through our efforts, along with local Boy Scouts, an additional activity was added this year at the Bagnell Dam Access Site. Using all natural materials, we constructed life-sized replicas of bald eagle nests. Visitors were encouraged to take part in the nest building process over the 2 day period. Many visitors crawled in and out of the nests for photo ops.

Also new this year was the Owls of Missouri presentation. Along with the Eagle presentation at Osage National there were plenty of opportunities for volunteer hours as well as training.

Linda Burns

Heather Durbin of the Citizens Against Domestic Violence (CADV) shelter in Camdenton accepts items delivered by Monique Martinson (right). The donations were collected from our chapter members at the 2012 Christmas party.

CADV is an emergency shelter and outreach center for domestic and sexual violence serving Camden, Miller and Morgan Counties. Find out more about CADV on their website: http://www.cadv-voc.org/about.asp
The 2012 state conference, held at the Windermere Conference Center, had over 230 attendees. The numerous workshops, whether in the classroom or hands on learning in the outdoors, were very informative.

The Silent Auction was a great success.

The dragonfly art contest showcased some incredible talent from across the state.

The Saturday evening Italian banquet was delicious, and Marideth Sisco’s Ozark folklore was spellbinding.

Cave exploration, canoeing, nature photography and entomology were just a few of the choices for advanced training.

The evening events included star gazing, owl prowls, bonfires (with s’mores) and plenty of networking.

All in all, it was a huge success. Thank you to all who helped make it such a wonderful experience.
5 QUALITIES THAT MAKE A GREAT VOLUNTEER

1. **Flexibility** - In the volunteer world we can spend hours planning and organizing something just to have it unravel in a few minutes. It takes someone with the ability to adapt and be flexible in those situations that really makes or breaks the outcome of the situation.

2. **Energy** - Volunteering can take a lot of energy. Know yourself and know your limits, and take time to pick projects that are good match for your physical and emotional energy level.

3. **Creativity & Imagination** - We can probably all agree that people who are creative and have good imaginations are great to be around. The level of passion and excitement they bring doesn’t allow the craziness of the unknown to overwhelm them or the drain of the mundane bring them down. Volunteering doesn’t need to be a solemn or straining thing. When individuals use their talents, passions, and humor they bring life into the tasks at hand. Allow yourself to dream; bring your creativity into whatever you do because it leaves your own personal and sincere mark.

4. **Integrity** - As a volunteer, people trust you with their facility, community, and organization—which is an extreme responsibility.

Relationships between organizations can be hindered by an individual’s thoughtless acts. One of the most helpful things I’ve seen in our volunteers and something we look for in future interns is integrity. When people are sincere in their everyday life it enriches their volunteer work in a way that speaks louder than words. The way you serve really shows how much you care- and those you serve see it.

5. **Selflessness** - Volunteering is just that- sacrificing of one’s time, energy and services without expecting anything in return. Although it is exceedingly rewarding, the reality is the passion behind volunteering can wear thin at times. Sometimes there are days when it seems you’ve given all of yourself, and it’s not fun, it’s not exciting, it’s just sacrifice. It’s at this point when we have to examine what we are doing- is it worth our time and effort? Because when we realize what’s important, living for ourselves is not so appealing anymore.

*Jackie Rasmussen - MU Advisor*
This is the time of year when it seems like if you blink you might miss something! After we finally got some snow (yes, I’m one of those people), and it just recently melted away, I realized, “Holy cow, it’s mid-March!” Any day now the white blooms of service berry and wild plum will be dotting the forest understory. Just two days ago I was reminded to go out in search of one of my favorite springtime novelties: salamander and frog eggs!

A couple of guys on our work team came in from their shed with two spotted salamanders – unfortunately, dead. (Trust me - - I made sure, rinsing them off and keeping them in a shallow pan of water all day. I swear one of them moved his little leg a couple of times.) How they got in there is a mystery, but it was after those nice rains we had. These salamanders live in the woods, under rocks or logs, under piles of leaves, even in burrows of other small animals (shrews, mice). On those earliest spring evenings, with temperatures above 50 and a good little rain, spotted salamanders head to woodland ponds in search of a mate. They lay their eggs in clumps that look like big globs of clear jelly with little black dots throughout.

So, out I went, to the little ‘pond’ down the road to see if there were eggs. The shed where these 2 salamanders were found is really close to our lagoon, but I had no desire to check that location. Across the gravel road is a small puddle of a pond and that’s where I headed. Sure enough, I found several clusters of eggs; each was about 3-4 inches across. I also noticed several whitish individual eggs attached to leaves on the bottom of the pond. I’m guessing they could be from the spring peepers I heard calling the other day. These eggs looked different from any I’d ever seen, so that was a new discovery for me!

If you want to hunt for eggs yourself, look in puddles that stay around a while. If you’ve ever driven down the road and hear frogs calling from flooded ditches, go check there. It doesn’t have to be a permanent body of water for the eggs, but it does have to be free of fish that would eat the eggs or larvae. Take your time and look closely, from all sides of the pond. The sun can make them hard to see from certain angles; algae also starts to grow in the mass so they may have a greenish color. Sometimes these puddles dry up before the eggs hatch, or before the tadpoles or larval salamanders are grown and out on dry land. I’ve been known to push egg clumps out to deeper water as I see puddles drying up.

So there’s your excuse to get outside this month. You have to look closely to see the egg clumps. If you don’t know where to go come see me and I’ll show you the place I described. It’s right by the road, easy to get to for that quick ‘nature fix’ you might be looking for. What a great thing to share with your kids or grandkids, or the neighbors, or just treat yourself!

Jodi Moulder — MDC Advisor

Cindy Gum, Linda Burns and Joann Billington traveled to the home of a Meramec Hills Master Naturalist member on March 11. Jerry and Pam Barnabee live several miles south of Rolla in the COUNTRY in a beautiful home they have designed and pretty much "handcrafted" themselves. Jerry has also designed a computer program that the Meramec Hills Chapter members have used for several years. The program, among other things, allows members to record their volunteer and AT hours on line. He volunteered to share the program with the Lake of the Ozarks Chapter!

The day was spent not only sharing how to use the program but exchanging ideas for involving Chapter members in Master Naturalist activities and overcoming challenges encountered in maintaining successful Chapters. Pam was kind enough to prepare a scrumptious lunch for everyone and both Jerry and Pam displayed true “Ozarks hospitality.” A big THANK YOU to both of them!

Watch for more to come for the Lake of the Ozarks Chapter to streamline record keeping!

Joann Billington

Our Leadership

• President - Joann Billington
• Vice President - Carolyn Solomon
• Secretary - Lauri Peterson
• Treasurer - Marvin Silliman
• Projects & Volunteer Services - Donna Foster
• Hospitality - Monique Martinson
• Fund Raising - Dennis Reed
• Advanced Training - Sandy Nelson
• Communications and Outreach - Laura Toombs
• Web Site - Cindy Gum
• Certifications - Linda Burns
• MDC Advisor - Jodi Moulder
• MU Advisor - Jackie Rasmussen
Goodwin Sinkhole Update

Saturday, February 16, was the most recent work day for the clean-up of Goodwin Sinkhole and Cave south of Camdenton and marks one year since the first work days. The sinkhole is the collection point of a ninety-acre watershed and has been used as a trash dump for sixty years. Storm water drains through the trash into the cave then exits into Lake of the Ozarks from Ha Ha Tonka spring ten miles away. Because the watershed is composed of cow pastures and hayfields, and because the cave is clogged with trash, natural drainage has been seriously disrupted.

The initial goal of the clean-up is to restore natural drainage by removing the trash. Removing the trash should also result in the water being less contaminated when it enters the Lake. The project is conducted by the Missouri Caves and Karst Conservancy.

Around twenty volunteers participated, including cavers from as far away as St. Louis, ten Army officers in training from Ft. Leonard Wood, and one arthritic but determined Missouri Master Naturalist. While previous work days have been devoted to removing trash and tires from the sinkhole, the focus on Saturday was to remove trash from the cave.

Cavers and soldiers in the cave filled buckets with trash and soil. The buckets were handed out to other workers who carried and emptied them at a great enough distance from the cave that the fill would not wash back in again. When a tire was encountered, a rope was attached and it was tug-of-war until the tire was out of the cave. A truck load of trash was bagged and, along with the stack of tires, was hauled out of the sinkhole at the end of the day.

Totals since last February are:
- 43,760 pounds of trash
- 2,500 pounds of metal which was recycled
- 738 tires which were removed last spring
- around 200 are tires stockpiled on site for eventual removal.

Additional work days were held March 3, 9, 10.

Ted Windels

MISSOURI MASTER NATURALIST LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

On February 23, 2013, Kathie Bishop, Dennis Reed, Carolyn Solomon, Jodi Moulder, Sam Jeffcott, and Laura Toombs traveled to the Conservation Department headquarters in Jefferson City to attend the Missouri Master Naturalist Leadership Academy.

This event was very well attended, despite the iffy weather and all chapters were represented well. Syd Hime (MDC) and Bob Pierce (MUE) hosted the event and were very gracious, as always. After a getting acquainted exercise and a general overview by Syd our day’s lectures began.

Bob Pierce (MUE) spoke about our Master Naturalist chapters acquiring effective partners. Other Master Naturalists around the state have linked up with organizations including Audubon Chapters, Nature Centers, Cultural Centers, “Friends of...” groups etc. There was also group discussion that included partnering with local press, school districts, and 4H Clubs.

Jenny Flatt (4H Youth development specialist) encouraged us to contact our local Extension Service 4H leaders to provide greater opportunities to work with the youth in our communities. This might be a good opportunity for a Kids Club for older kids, help with Eagle Days, to give one day programs on chapter members area of expertise, or assist with Summer Camps.

Joe Jerek (News Services Coordinator, MDC) spoke on the importance of involving local media in our chapters events, building and maintaining good relationships with media professionals, using social media to our fullest advantage, how to compose a well written media release and deliver engaging interviews.

Other selected highlights:
- Finding effective partners eliminated the need to be constantly trying to raise funds.
- Most successful projects were chosen with both a sponsors needs and member interest taken into account at the very beginning. The immediate involvement of a partner sponsor eliminated road blocks such as funding, provision of equipment etc.
- Mentors assigned to graduating class members to help bridge the transition from student to chapter member.
- A special joint meeting at the end of a new class, a "getting to know us" event for graduates.

Laura Toombs and Sam J. Jeffcott
Orangethroat Darter
*Etheostoma spectabile*

**Description**
This small darter is mottled yellow-brown on the back with indistinct brown crossbars and several vertical blue stripes on the sides. The males are quite colorful while breeding with red blotches on their sides and bright orange under gills.

**Size**
The average size of an adult is 1.2 to 2 inches with a maximum of 2.6 inches.

**Habitat**
This darter is found in slow moving riffles in streams with gravel and rock bottoms and clear to moderately clear water.

**Food**
They feed on midge larvae, other aquatic insects and small crustaceans.

**Interesting Facts**
- The swim bladder in darters is lacking or much-reduced. This allows them to sink and hold closely to the bottom of the stream without much effort.
- Shortly after hatching, orangethroat darter fry sometimes inhabit the nests of smallmouth bass. It is believed that they benefit from the protection of the male bass guarding the nest.
- Recently scientists have separated the orangethroat darter group in Missouri into three distinct species: brook, Current River and orangethroat darters.

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**STREAM TEAM WATER QUALITY MONITORING**

Our chapter has an impressive 25% to 30% of our members interested in monitoring water quality as Stream Team Members. The stream team effort is a joint Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) and MDC program. Monitoring water quality involves collecting and recording chemical, biological and physical stream data and providing that data to a statewide data base maintained by MDNR in Jefferson City.

The chemical data collected is stream water PH, conductivity, dissolved oxygen content and nitrates. Other chemicals checked include ammonia and phosphate. The physical data collected is made-up of the stream bed and riparian area composition, stream flow in cubic feet per second, water temperature and water clarity.

The most challenging and interesting data collected is the variety and number of marco-invertibrates (bugs) present in the water and stream bed. We look for and count about 15 variety of bugs. We make three sets with our net and identify and count the marco-invertibrates from each set. The challenge and fun is the bug identification.

We monitor the Niangua and Little Niangua Rivers that flow into the Niangua Arm, Mill Creek that flows into the Grand Glaze Arm and one small stream that flows into the Main Channel of the LOZ. We need to expand our efforts to cover more streams that flow into the Main Channel, at least one stream site on the Gravios Mills Arm and one additional site on the Big Niangua and Grand Glaze Arms. We check each site at least twice per year.

Formal training for a Stream Team Volunteers includes:
- One day Introductory Course (stream side)
- One day Level I Course (stream side)
- Level II classroom course.
- Level III designation where individuals successfully demonstrate all of the procedures and techniques learned up to that point.

Please note you don't have to have any formal training to participate in a stream team exercise; just accompany a trained Stream Team volunteer(s).

Being a Stream Team Water Quality Monitor is a very interesting endeavor and one that serves a valuable purpose.

**Come join us!**

**Billy Backues**

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**Upcoming Events**

- April 11 chapter meeting 6:30 PM Advanced Training topic will be bats.
- May 4 “27 acre yard sale” at the Laurie Fairgrounds. Clean out your houses and donate excess items to this fund raiser. Contact Dennis Reed if you have items that need to be picked up.
- May 9 chapter meeting 6:30 PM
- June 7-9 Offshore Super Series races at Bagnell Dam. The chapter may be calling for volunteers to help with parking as a fund raiser.
- June 13th chapter social at Ha Ha Tonka lake side shelter. Social hour starts at 5:30, potluck at 6:30.
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Our second year of Kids Club is going along GREAT! We learned a lot in our first year of existence and we are constantly retooling our efforts to better serve our kids.

This 2012-13 year of Lake OZ-some Conservation Kids Club started with the introduction of a theme that will run throughout the entire year. Each Club member was given a Nature Journal from the Missouri Department of Conservation. Members were encouraged to write, draw and take pictures to fill their journals with their outdoor experiences. This has been very popular with the kiddos! We dedicate the beginning of each meeting to a Show & Tell type format with members sharing pictures, stories, and found objects with the group. We have had some really interesting contributions!

Every month our meeting has an individual theme and we use that theme as the focus for Talk time, Game time and Activity time during the length of the meeting. In October we talked about Bats and flew blind through the halls of the school. In November Gerry Williams talked about Turkeys, constructed our own bird, and gobbled around the room. During the December meeting we created different devices to feed our feathered friends during the winter months, and got way out there! And this January GROSS NIGHT was a huge hit! We learned about dung and burying beetles- GROSS! We made edible poop cakes GROSS! and played a really PUKEY Turkey Vulture game!

Wonders of Wildlife will be bringing live animals in March and leading an activity that will create a plaster animal foot print to take home. OZ-some! During the March meeting club members who have attended five meetings will be getting their Club T-shirt as well!

In April we will bring the Nature Journaling message home when guest speakers Cindy Gum and Mark Armstrong will talk to our group about writing what you see and feel and taking a photo of what's around you.

And hopefully in May, we will get to do the Owl Pellet dissection we have been hoping to do for a long while now!

The School has been doing a fine job this year getting the word out about meetings, sending out parent reach reminders and unfortunately-weather cancellations, and adding new kids to our roster.

Another key factor that we think lends to the success of our club is parental involvement. Parents are required to attend the meeting with the children. We have a great group of “Big People” that are actively involved with their junior person in games and crafts and learning, and judging by the results of show and tell, continue the discussion and interaction throughout the rest of the month!

We are very lucky to have a dedicated, creative, and FUN crew of kids club leaders that are always there with a good idea and to lend a hand helping make our meetings a success! We greatly appreciate the support and encouragement the chapter and its members have given us.

Kids Club meets on the third Thursday of each month on the lower floor of the Hawthorne Building in the Camdenton Schools campus. Big kids are there from 5-8 and club members are present for the meeting 6-7:30 pm.

Come see for yourself how much fun we can have learning.

Laura Toombs

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Lebanon Recycling Center Tour

Seventeen members of our chapter traveled to Lebanon, Missouri to tour the Laclede Industries recycling center on Monday, February 25. The tour was conducted by Jim Butcher, a retired manager of the facility.

The tour took an hour and our group asked a lot of questions about recycling and about the operation of the facility. The center is a workshop for the disabled and handles numerous materials for recycling, including plastics, metals, glass, and handles numerous materials for recycling, including plastics, metals, glass.

The employees are screened by the Missouri department of education, are held to industry standards of safety, and they are paid in proportion to their productivity. The workshop has the most employees of any business in Lebanon.

Our group learned about the economics of recycling. While the workshop receives some subsidies, to stay in business it must still make a profit on the materials it processes and sells. For example, Laclede Industries also manages the Waste Watchers collection center on Valley Road below the Bagnell Dam strip in Lake Ozark. The low return on recyclable glass has meant that it is no longer feasible to transport glass from the Lake Ozark site to Lebanon for processing. Consequently, glass is no longer accepted by that site. However, the Lebanon facility still takes glass.

Article and photos by: Ted Windels
From Joann Billington--
This poem was read on Animal Adventures one Sunday morning by Jack Hanna. He said it touched their hearts... and it certainly touched mine...
Written by "Michael" from New Hampshire:

When animals become extinct,
Some people just shrug and say "so?"
But if anything has to leave,
We should be the ones to go.

That's because they were here first
Before you and me.
And they would probably live longer
If we would just let them be.

So that's why we need everyone
On our planet Earth;
And we should celebrate when a
Tree grows and when animals birth.

2012 PHOTO RECAP
Photos from Eric Davis
The communications committee always welcomes information from chapter members on what they have been doing under the Missouri Master Naturalist Flag. It is very important that we keep submitting articles to the paper, and promote our organization’s good works! The Lake area needs to know that we are out there doing good stuff! Please submit your who, what, where, when, and why to Laura Toombs - zachman_mom@yahoo.com in order to get out the good word! A photo always helps!

Please send submissions for this newsletter of stories, pictures, quotes, or any other ideas or feedback to: brett_billington@yahoo.com

Organized in the spring of 2009, the Lake of the Ozarks Chapter of the Missouri Master Naturalist program serves the residents of Camden, Miller & Morgan counties. The Missouri Master Naturalist Program is an adult, community-based, natural resource education and volunteer service program.

Visit us at: http://www.lakeozarkmasternaturalist.com for calendars and volunteer opportunities.

Like us on Facebook for up to the minute postings on the chapter and what its members are doing: https://www.facebook.com/pages/Lake-of-the-Ozarks-Master-Naturalist/153968454647217?ref-ts&ref-ts