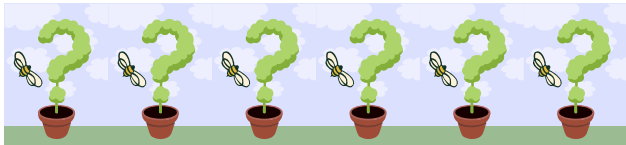




### APRIL MEETING

The April meeting of the Boone's Lick chapter of Missouri Master Naturalists will be at Rock Bridge Memorial State Park **at 5:30 pm**. Randal Clark will lead a wildflower hike, which will count as 1 hour of advanced training. Meet at the Devil's Ice Box parking lot. The hike will conclude at 7 pm, and we will have snacks and the business portion of the meeting at the shelter off the southeast corner of the parking lot. Hope to see you there!



### PRESIDENTIAL PONDERINGS

Marsh Madness – The Illusive Bittern

*Suzanne Wright*

The first sighting of a ruby throated hummingbird in the U.S. this spring occurred February 26, 2007 in Louisiana. If you have an interest in tracking the hummers on their northward migration you can check on the hummingbird tracking website at [www.hummingbirds.net/map.html](http://www.hummingbirds.net/map.html). By the time this issue of the newsletter is published the hummingbirds may have reached Missouri. It will certainly be spring by the calendar if not in fact for the gardeners among us, the last recorded frost in Missouri being May 15<sup>th</sup>.

In my yard I have been listening for new songs among the usual suspects in hopes of catching an early migrant. Even my winter residents are singing unfamiliar tunes as they begin practicing for their trips to more northerly climes. And the birders are heading for the outdoors in hopes of seeing or hearing

something new. Most of them have a “wish” list of sorts, birds they would like to add to their life list this year. It could be something exotic for the area; a flight pattern thrown off course by erratic winds might bring a cinnamon teal into the marsh with a flock of blue wing teal. That's what keeps the birders heading out the door, the mystery and challenge of the hunt.

I will be on a hunt of my own. I want a good look at a Least Bittern this year. I have been with a group when one has been spotted and pointed out, but my response was, “you mean that thing that looks like a fat cattail way over there”. Everyone was so excited to get a scope on something that was still an indistinct play of shades of grass. Not good enough, when I see a bird I want to see the bird.

My quest will not be easy. For one thing the Least Bittern is a bird of concern. Their numbers are diminishing as the result of loss of habitat. But I have heard them so I know I'm covering the right ground. I just need to see it before it sees me as they are masters of blending into the woodwork...or the marsh grasses as the case may be. With the body bulk of a meadow lark but shaped differently, it's easy to see why this is such an elusive bird. Add to that its unique ability to mimic its surroundings its not surprising it's the bird that is heard more than seen.

Researchers have described more than 30 foraging behaviors. They may feed from crouched or upright positions, sometimes extending their necks and pointing their bills down in a behavior called “peering over,” which may reduce glare and give them a binocular view of prey below the water's surface. When humans or potential predators approach they

assure the 'bittern stance", extending their necks and pointing their bills upward, blending in with the surrounding vegetation. I've even read that it will sway in an attempt to further mimic wind blown marsh vegetation. That the bird instinctively knows its upturned bill and vertically streaked breast blend with the grasses behind it is shown by the fact that, as the observer circles to one side or the other, the bittern slowly turns so as to keep its breast in sight. It's a skilled climber and can be found several feet above water that would be too deep for wading, holding onto the swaying reeds with its long toes.

Bitterns and rails are entirely marsh dwellers and extremely secretive in their habits. Although the WRP has helped increase their habitat in recent years, most of that marsh land is held and used by duck hunters. And unfortunately the best habitat for ducks is not always the best habitat for marsh birds. Marshes are important to the survival of many specialized species; of Missouri's 20 rarest breeding bird species, nearly half nest in marshes.

So in March and April, when I should be working in the garden or washing my windows, I will probably make an excuse to head to a marsh. And even if I'm not lucky enough to see one of the great camouflage artists, I might hear one. And that in itself is worth the trip, just to know they are there.



## MEETING MINUTES

Present: Alice Havard, Marie Scruggs, Jody Stotsky, Vanessa Melton, David Silvey, Heather Silvey, Megan Montgomery, Suzanne Wright, Carolyn Doyle, Angela Belden, Dan Reeves, Sharon Reed, Mary Jane Wheeling, Janine Gordon, Troy Gordon, Sally Swanson.

The meeting was held at the MU Vet School Raptor Rehabilitation Center. A tour of the facility began at 6:40 PM. The group viewed an educational display and listened to a brief

overview of what the Raptor Rehabilitation Center does. Some injured birds that arrive at the center can be rehabilitated, some have permanent injuries. Birds that can't be rehabilitated are used for public education to make people more aware of the role birds play in the wild. For birds that are rehabilitating, human contact is very limited. We toured parts of the outdoor area, where the raptors are housed individually in 'mews,' wooden structures that allow some flight and a roosting area for each bird. There are also larger 'flight cages' for rehabilitating wing strength and ability to capture live prey. We saw some 'educational' birds up close, including a Saw-Whet owl, hawk, and Great Horned Owl, and also viewed some caged birds. Handlers use gloves and leather straps attached to the birds' legs during educational events to prevent injury to the handlers as well as the birds. The center always needs dedicated volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering, contact Erin West at [eedw76@mizzou.edu](mailto:eedw76@mizzou.edu). A meeting was held after the tour, where we discussed:

### **Capstone Project for 2007 Training Class:**

Megan Montgomery, Graduate Assistant at MU, attended to discuss her Masters Thesis project at Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area, "Fish usage of passage facility and seasonal wetland pools at Eagle Bluffs CA." It involves testing water samples and netting fish in certain pools to determine fish populations. The project would start this spring and go into the summer.

**Advanced Training:** All classes at the Missouri Master Naturalist State Conference are Advanced Training! Be sure to sign up to attend--there is an early registration discount!

**Conference Committee:** There was a discussion of possible ways to obtain CASH donations to cover conference costs. Donations for a silent auction benefiting Education Grants are going well. The welcome party Friday evening will be "bring a dish"; we also have donations of snacks and drinks from local retailers. There will be a photo contest with the following categories: Landscapes, Missouri Animals, Missouri Plants, Master

Naturalists at Work and Play. There may be an auction or sale of the photos.

**Program Planning:** Programs have been planned for the year.

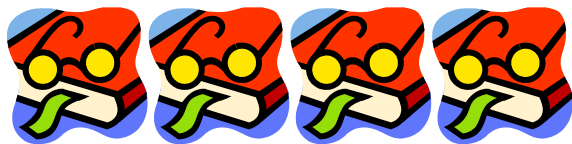
**2007 Master Naturalist Training Class:**

Angela Belden still needs hosts for some of the sessions. Please contact her to find out which classes still need volunteers.

Don't forget to log your hours!

*Submitted by Buffie Balling, chapter secretary*

*A northern saw-whet owl trades stares with David Silvey's camera lens*



**BOOK REVIEW**

***The River of Doubt***, Candice Millard, 2005, ISBN 0-7679-1373-6, paperback

*submitted by Celeste Mazzacano*

This book is subtitled "Theodore Roosevelt's Darkest Journey", but it might better be called "How a group of clueless Yankees charted an unmapped river in the Amazon jungle without everyone dying a gruesome death in the process". This book is a page turner, and addresses a fairly significant portion of Theodore Roosevelt's life that went completely unnoticed in any social studies class I ever took. Most people associate Teddy with San Juan Hill, big game hunting, national parks, and the insane younger brother in the movie *Arsenic & Old Lace* yelling "charge!" each time he runs into the basement to bury another "yellow fever victim", but this book shows that

Roosevelt walked his macho talk. At age 54, he had lost his bid to become President for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time, in a campaign that included an assassination attempt by a Bavarian immigrant (the Bull Moose candidate famously delivered his speech while bleeding profusely, the bullet having been slowed somewhat by Roosevelt's steel eyeglass case and 50-page speech, lodging a paltry 5 inches into his rib cage). Defeated soundly by Woodrow Wilson, Roosevelt retired to his estate at to gloomily ponder his past successes and current insignificance. His prolonged sulk was interrupted by a letter inviting him to deliver a lecture in Argentina. By an inexplicable wandering turn of events, a simple South American lecture tour in 1913 mutated into a trip down an uncharted river in the Amazon jungle by a group that included Roosevelt; his unfortunately-named son Kermit; Kermit's pet dog; Father Zahm, an elderly priest who insisted that the natives carry him on their backs; and Anthony Fiala, former leader of a twice-doomed arctic expedition who outfitted the group handsomely with chutney and paprika but neglected to pack critical provisions such as meat. Abysmally ignorant of even the slightest aspects of the ecology of the jungle they would traverse, blithely assuming they would be able to hunt game along the way, this hasty trip was so ill-conceived that the group arrived at the source of the river without a single boat. And yet, the expedition was not a farce; it was a serious mapping and collecting trip in a completely unknown area of the rain forest. Accompanied by renowned ornithologist George Cherrie and American Museum of Natural History mammalogist Leo Chapman, and guided by Colonel Candido Mariano da Silva Rondon, commander of Brazil's strategic telegraph commission, this apparently suicidal lark was a scientific expedition with H.G. Wells overtones. The river flowed through a dense jungle that had a reputation for devouring those who entered via parasites, famine, deadly animals, spiny fish with a scary fixation on the human urinary tract, and natives who had no particular amity for Europeans who made forays into their home to tap rubber trees and clear land. This book details a wild ride of starvation, murder,

disease, attacks by natives, whitewater disaster, suicidal depression, and extreme bodily discomfort, but they accomplished what they set out to do—successfully mapping and exploring the natural history of a river nearly 1000 miles long. If you're looking for an enthralling mix of North American and South American history, rain forest ecology, and sheer potboiler drama, look no further than The River of Doubt.

#### LEARN MORE ABOUT ...

...**karst and caves** with a Devil's Icebox Wild Cave Tour, Rock Bridge Memorial State Park, April 15-May 16 (weekends only). Day-long adventure-style wild cave tours to learn about karst and cave geology, biology, and hydrology. Special equipment and fee required. For schedule and details, call 573-449-7402 or send an e-mail to [rock.bridge.memorial.state.park@dnr.mo.gov](mailto:rock.bridge.memorial.state.park@dnr.mo.gov)  
Not yet approved as advanced training.

If you have ideas or suggestions about advanced training, or know of any upcoming opportunities, please contact Mary Jane Wheeling at [wheelmj@centurytel.net](mailto:wheelmj@centurytel.net).

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

**Outdoor, Nature, Environmental, and Sustainability Groups of Columbia (ONES)** will meet Friday April 13, 7:30 am at Uprise Bakery (816 E. Broadway). Representatives from Master Naturalists, Friends of Rock Bridge, Audubon, Sierra Club, Wild Ones, Missouri River Communities Network, Hawthorn Native Plant Society, Hinkson Restoration Project, Greenbelt Land Trust, Friends of Big Muddy, and related organizations are invited to attend. For more information, contact Celeste Mazzacano at 573-239-4267, or visit ONES web site at [web.missouri.edu/~umcsnresiwww/ones.html](http://web.missouri.edu/~umcsnresiwww/ones.html).

**Wildflower Walks with Randal Clark**  
Wednesdays, March 21 - mid-May, 5:30-7 p.m.  
All walks begin at the Devil's Icebox parking lot at Rock Bridge Memorial State Park. Call 573-

449-7402 for directions or more information.

#### **Wonder and Wander with Wildflowers**

Saturday, April 28, 2007. Two-mile wildflower hike in Gans Creek Wild Area at Rock Bridge Memorial State Park, led by park naturalist Roxie Campbell. Call 573-449-7402 for reservations.

#### **Trail of the Month: Passport to Health**

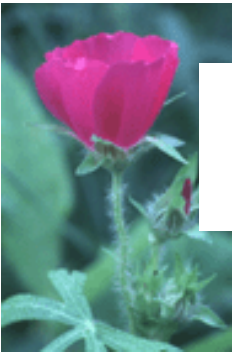
Missouri State Parks will host a *Trail of the Month: Passport to Health* program starting May 1, 2007 with a kick-off event at Rock Bridge Memorial State Park. Each month, Missouri State Parks will feature six trails, one in each of the six passport regions for visitors to hike. Visitors will use a *Trail of the Month* passport to journal about trails they hike and adventures they find. Hikers can also earn hiking medallions and other incentives. This program will run May 1 – Oct. 31, 2007. Full details will be available to the public on April 20. Hikers can follow links from the Division of State Park main page at [www.mostateparks.com](http://www.mostateparks.com).

#### **Bradford Farm Research & Extension**

**Center** will host a native plant sale on Saturday April 14 from 9 am – 12 pm. The event features local native plant and seed producers, and includes activities such as rain garden installation, cost-share information, poor-site gardening, spring wildflower program, and a special bird watching tour from 7-9 am (RSVP for tour to Nadia Navarrete-Tindall, 573-289-2018). For directions visit <http://aes.missouri.edu/bradford/index.stm> or call Thresa Chism or Tim Reinbott at 573-884-7945.

#### **Spring Bird Watch/Wildflower Walk**

on Saturday April 28 at 7 am at Henry Domke's Wildflower trust near Fulton. For more information contact Suzanne Wright at [suzwright@centurytel.net](mailto:suzwright@centurytel.net).



CONSERVATION  
CORNER

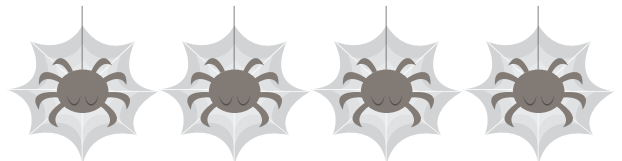
*submitted by Celeste Mazzacano*

Bush's poppy mallow (*Callirhoe bushii*), as the name implies, is a member of the Malvaceae (mallow) family, producing vivid wine-colored flowers from June through August. A species of conservation concern, this plant is hanging on by its taproot in only ~50 locations in Missouri, Arkansas, Kansas, and Oklahoma. On a historical note, the species epithet "*bushii*" is a nod to Benjamin Franklin Bush (1858-1937), an internationally renowned botanist who worked to catalog Missouri's flora (and incidentally may have been on the 1<sup>st</sup> train to travel the Missouri Pacific Railway when he moved with his mother from Indiana to Independence MO in 1865).

Bush's poppy mallow likes to grow in open rocky woodlands, edges of glades, prairies, ravine bottoms, and railroad or highway right-of-ways, mostly in calcareous soils (i.e. containing a high proportion of calcium carbonate and tending to alkalinity). In Missouri, it is found in rocky open woods, wooded valleys, ravine bottoms and glade borders in five counties in the southeast corner of the state (Steyermark). Butler Hollow Glade Natural Area, which contains a dolomite glade, has been cited as one place to view Bush's poppy mallow "in the wild". With a notably thick taproot that helps it survive drought, fire, and insect damage, loss of habitat is the main threat to this species' continued existence. This comes from a variety of sources, including land development, increased urbanization, and loss of natural fire cycles. Some populations in Missouri and Arkansas may have been destroyed by flooding in the White River drainage basin when reservoirs at Bull Shoals, Taneycomo, and Table Rock were constructed.

In Arkansas, one population was destroyed by a highway widening project.

What can be done to preserve Bush's poppy mallow? Current management practices involve population monitoring, prescribed burning, controlled mowing and selective thinning of trees and shrubs to maintain open habitat. Plants can be propagated from seed or stem cuttings, and may be used to augment wild populations. If you feel the urge to add Bush's poppy mallow to your own native plant garden, it is available from some nurseries, but remember to ask nursery dealers about their sources and NEVER buy wild-collected plants!



WEB RESOURCES FOR MASTER NATURALISTS

The American Hiking Society ([www.americanhiking.org/](http://www.americanhiking.org/)) is "the only national organization dedicated to promoting and protecting America's hiking trails, the natural areas that surround them, and the hiking experience itself." The web site provides a variety of information, including a locator for nearby hiking clubs, updates on current legislative and policy issues that affect trails, upcoming events and volunteer activities, journal entries from fellow hikers, and fact sheets on everything from avoiding skin cancer to protecting trail ecology. Go to the Hiker's Info center and click on the map to find foot trails (fee-based service with a 14-day free trial), National Trails Day events, and locations of federal and state public lands. Browse links in the Alliance of Hiking Clubs, a network of hiking clubs, trail conferences, land trusts, and conservation groups working to maintain footpaths and conserve trail lands. And because Alliance groups often include volunteer trail building and conservation component, the site provides a manual on how to organize and implement a volunteer program, as well as ways to make your next hiking trip carbon neutral. Before your strap on your hiking boots, you might want to take a virtual walk around this site.

## STATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETS

The 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Missouri Master Naturalist Statewide Advisory Committee was held February 24, 2007 at the Runge Nature Center in Jefferson City. The purpose of SAC is to advise and make recommendations to the state coordinators in the operation of the Missouri Master Naturalist program to ensure consistency of participant experience across chapters; ensure that public perception of the program is accurate and positive; help coordinators articulate and communicate to participants appropriate standards of conduct; represent the program needs of the regions or agencies they represent; and serve as liaison between participants and coordinators regarding programmatic issues and ideas.

Officers of the SAC are:

- Chair: Pat Perry, Meramec Hills Chapter
- Vice Chair: Cheryl Hardy, Boone's Lick Chapter
- Secretary: Connie McCormack, Confluence Chapter

SAC will hold its next meeting on March 31, 2007 at the Runge Nature Center in Jefferson City. Contact Cheryl Hardy at [chardy@ccis.edu](mailto:chardy@ccis.edu) for more information about the SAC or to request that an item be placed on the meeting agenda.



**Got carrion?**

## APRIL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

April volunteer opportunities and ongoing projects are listed. Contact the person indicated for more detailed information. For a listed as "not yet approved," you will need to fill out a Service Project Form (available at <http://extension.missouri.edu/masternaturalist/columbia/Projectapproval.htm>). You will be

notified via e-mail of project approval or if there are any questions. Also included are capstone projects for the 2007 class. Previous year's graduates are encouraged to participate in these projects to help mentor the new class into the Master Naturalist program!

### **2007 Capstone Projects**

#### **Butterfly Inventory at Overton Bottoms North; Sponsors: Big Muddy National Fish & Wildlife Refuge, Friends of Big Muddy**

Contact: Troy Gordon, 573-424-9051; [friends@friendsofbigmuddy.org](mailto:friends@friendsofbigmuddy.org) or Wedge Watkins, 573-441-2788, [Wedge\\_Watkins@fws.gov](mailto:Wedge_Watkins@fws.gov).

*Description:* Participants will conduct an inventory of butterfly species at the Overton Bottoms North Unit of the Big Muddy National Fish and Wildlife Refuge (across the Missouri River from Rocheport). Butterflies will be captured and identified; some specimens will be preserved and mounted to create a voucher reference collection for the refuge. Some may also be mounted for display in a future visitor's center for the refuge. Data from the inventory will be used to expand the butterfly list for the refuge unit. Dragonflies and damselflies will be captured when possible to begin a list for these species as well.

#### **Weekends on the Boardwalk, Sponsor: Missouri DNR: Rock Bridge Memorial State Park, Contact: Kathryn Devany DiFoxfire, 573-449-7402,**

[rock.bridge.memorial.state.park@dnr.mo.gov](mailto:rock.bridge.memorial.state.park@dnr.mo.gov) or Roxie Campbell, 573-449-7402, [roxie.campbell@dnr.mo.gov](mailto:roxie.campbell@dnr.mo.gov).

*Description:* Volunteers stationed in pairs on the Devil's Icebox Boardwalk above the entrance to Devil's Icebox Cave on nice weekends in June and July between 1 and 4 p.m. provide information to park visitors, answer questions about the cave system and park, and take turns guiding visitors on free 15-to-20-minute tours of Connor's Cave. Prior to conducting the program, volunteers will meet with park staff for an orientation session which will include information about the park, cave system, and interpretive techniques. Written materials and lesson plans will be provided.

## ***April Volunteer Opportunities***

### **Bats on Parade; Sponsor: Friends of Rock Bridge Memorial State Park, Contact:**

Meredith Donaldson, 573-815-4255 or [Mjdonlson@aol.com](mailto:Mjdonlson@aol.com). *Description:* The 5<sup>th</sup> annual Bats on Parade is a series of programs to engage children and their families in learning about bats as important members of our ecosystem. Master Naturalists may contribute to program development in April and May and/or assist with program presentation in June, July or August. Programs are held at the Columbia Public Library, area youth clubs, and Rock Bridge Memorial State Park. Opportunities will be provided for developing a variety of interpretive materials including printed matter, electronic links and hands-on presentation tools; and for practicing teaching, interpretation and presentation techniques indoors and in the field.

### **Hinkson Creek Capstone; Sponsor: Hinkson Creek Watershed Restoration Project, Contact:**

Scott Hamilton at [Scott.Hamilton@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:Scott.Hamilton@mdc.mo.gov) or 573-882-9909 ext 3257. *Description:* Tasks to accomplish include digging out live wetland plants from various areas and transplanting; gathering creek rocks for stabilizing a gully that will bring water to the wetland; helping design signage explaining components of the landscape; planting small trees and shrubs; insect collecting to "seed" dragonflies, damselflies, etc into new wetland; maintaining planted areas by initial weeding, mulching, watering as needed; and maneuvering logs and rocks around the wetland for final design.

### **Emerald Ash Borer Capstone; Sponsor: Missouri Department of Conservation**

Contact: Rob Lawrence at [Rob.Lawrence@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:Rob.Lawrence@mdc.mo.gov). *Description:* Volunteers will be trained to ID ash, detect weak trees, and assess if they are infested with Emerald Ash Borers, a non-native invasive insect. They will then search for signs of these insects in designated areas.

### **River Clean-up at Jameson Island Saturday, April 7<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 AM**

*Sponsored by Friends of Big Muddy and Friends of Arrow Rock.* We will pick up trash and other debris for ~ 1 mile of Missouri River frontage between the end of the Lewis and Clark Trail of Discovery and the new chute being constructed on this unit. Meet at 9:00 at the trailhead of Arrow Rock Historic River Landing Trail, on First Street south of Van Buren. Contact Troy Gordon at [friends@friendsofbigmuddy.org](mailto:friends@friendsofbigmuddy.org) or 573-424-9051. Project is approved.

### **Junior Duck Stamp Entries Processing Monday, April 9<sup>th</sup> through Friday April 14<sup>th</sup>**

*Sponsored by the Big Muddy National Fish and Wildlife Refuge and Friends of Big Muddy* Assistance is needed to process entries after judging of the Missouri Junior Duck Stamp Contest, to send entries back to students and notify winners. Duties will primarily be preparing and mailing out packages of entries. Work must be done during the workday, but can be done any day M-F. Contact Tim Haller at [Tim.Haller@fws.gov](mailto:Tim.Haller@fws.gov) (573-441-2799) or Troy Gordon at [friends@friendsofbigmuddy.org](mailto:friends@friendsofbigmuddy.org) (573-424-9051). Project is approved.

### **Demonstration Native Planting Workday Saturday April 14 from 10:00 AM to noon**

*Sponsored by Wild Ones* We will be planting native grass plugs at Epple Field site on MU campus, and weeding and planting plugs at the Monk Hill site. Wear gloves, and bring hand trowels and clippers if you have them. The group will meet at the MU Epple Field site. Contact: Celeste Mazzacano at [cmazzacano@gmail.com](mailto:cmazzacano@gmail.com). Project is approved.

### **Tree Planting at Columbia Landfill Sunday, April 15<sup>th</sup>**

*Sponsored by Hinkson Creek Watershed Restoration Project* We need help planting trees on at the Columbia landfill area. Volunteers need only sit in a seat at the back

of the equipment and pluck the stakes into the ground as they are driven along. This will only take~ 4 hours; volunteers don't have to do the full time. Contact Scott Hamilton at [Scott.Hamilton@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:Scott.Hamilton@mdc.mo.gov) or 573-882-9909 ext 3257. Project is approved.

**Orienteering markers at Rock Bridge Memorial State Park, before April 21**

*Sponsored by Rock Bridge Memorial State Park* Volunteers needed to verify location and condition of each marker in the park's 30-marker orienteering course prior to April 21, 2007. Let us know which markers you would like to search for and replot the condition of markers you find. Contact: Kathryn DiFoxfire ([rock.bridge.memorial.state.park@dnr.mo.gov](mailto:rock.bridge.memorial.state.park@dnr.mo.gov)) or Roxie Campbell at 573-449-7402 or [roxie.campbell@dnr.mo.gov](mailto:roxie.campbell@dnr.mo.gov). Project is approved.

**GPS locations, Hidden Treasures at Rock Bridge Memorial State Park, before April 21**

*Sponsored by Rock Bridge Memorial State Park* Volunteers with GPS units are needed to locate areas designated as "hidden treasures" and points of interest in the park, and provide the park with those GPS coordinates. While the project can be completed at whatever time is convenient between sunrise and sunset, we recommend the work be done before the woods start greening up and the underbrush gets too thick. Contact: Kathryn DiFoxfire at [rock.bridge.memorial.state.park@dnr.mo.gov](mailto:rock.bridge.memorial.state.park@dnr.mo.gov) or Roxie Campbell at 573-449-7402 or [roxie.campbell@dnr.mo.gov](mailto:roxie.campbell@dnr.mo.gov). Project is approved.

**Guided Tours of the Lewis and Clark Trail of Discovery, Arrow Rock, Saturday, April 21st, Tours at 10:00, 1:30, and 3:30**

*Sponsored by Friends of Big Muddy and Friends of Arrow Rock* Tour leaders will lead free guided tours at 10:00, 1:30, and 3:30. Guides will interpret natural and cultural history of the area including Jameson Island Unit of Big Muddy National Fish and Wildlife Refuge and how the Missouri River has impacted the town of Arrow Rock. Volunteer hours are available to Master Naturalists who lead the tours or trail to be future tour leaders. Contact

Troy Gordon at 573-424-9051 or [friends@friendsofbigmuddy.org](mailto:friends@friendsofbigmuddy.org). Project is approved.

**Refuge Field trip for Eldon High School Friday, April 27<sup>th</sup> 9:15 Am to 12:30 PM**

*Sponsored by Big Muddy National Fish and Wildlife Refuge and Friends of Big Muddy* Volunteers help operate field stations to discuss various types of wildlife on the Missouri River. Contact: Tim Haller at 573-441-2799 or [Tim.Haller@fws.gov](mailto:Tim.Haller@fws.gov) or Troy Gordon at (573-424-9051 or [friends@friendsofbigmuddy.org](mailto:friends@friendsofbigmuddy.org). Project is approved.

**Ongoing Opportunities**

**Spring Green-up Study, March through May**

*Sponsored by Missouri Department of Conservation* Jeff Beringer, MDC resource scientist, needs help recording dates when certain tree and herbaceous species bloom or leaf out across the state. Plants to look at, and what to look for, are on a spreadsheet where you will also record the date and location it occurs. Contact Jeff Beringer at [Jeff.Beringer@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:Jeff.Beringer@mdc.mo.gov). Project is approved.

**Fish Study at Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area, Ongoing spring and summer**

*Sponsored by University of Missouri* Involves studying fish use of two passage structures and wetland pools at Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area with UMC graduate student. Volunteers help sample and identify fish. Contact: Meagan Montgomery at [mdm01a@mizzou.edu](mailto:mdm01a@mizzou.edu) or 417-619-6460. Project is approved.

**Wood Duck Box Monitoring at Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area, late April - mid-May**

*Sponsored by Missouri Department of Conservation* There are ~150 wood duck nesting boxes on Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area and it would be nice to know how many are being used. Mostly data gathering: Is the box being used? By what kind of critter? How many eggs are in the box? How many hatched? Contact: Tim James at [Tim.James@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:Tim.James@mdc.mo.gov). Project is approved.

**Prairie Seed Collection for Prairie Restoration at Charles Green Conservation Area, ongoing May to November for 6-10 years**

*Sponsored by Missouri Department of Conservation* Volunteers maintain and collect seed from established forb plots at Charles A. Green Conservation Area (little guesswork here, as plants are in rows). They can also collect on other areas of choice, if species and/or area have been approved. Contact: John George at [John.George@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:John.George@mdc.mo.gov) or 573-882-8388 ext 224. You may also contact Jody Stotsky at 573-874-0642 to learn about her work on the forb plots at the Green Area in summer and fall of 2006. Project is approved.

**Hummingbird Banding in Central Missouri Flexible hours throughout the summer**

Assistance is needed with a hummingbird banding project in the Columbia area. Trainees will begin by assisting in catching birds and removing them from traps and will gradually be trained to do actual banding over time. Contact Troy Gordon at 573-424-9051 or [tgordon@friendsofbigmuddy.org](mailto:tgordon@friendsofbigmuddy.org). Project is approved.

**Garden Bed Maintenance, through summer**

*Sponsored by Rock Bridge Memorial State Park* Remove weeds from small garden bed at park office. Garden tools and gloves can be provided. Work must be done between 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. any day of the week, or anytime between sunrise and sunset if you bring your own tools. Contact: Kathryn DiFoxfire at [Kathryn.DiFoxfire@dnr.mo.gov](mailto:Kathryn.DiFoxfire@dnr.mo.gov) or call 573-449-7402. Project is approved.

**North American Amphibian Monitoring Program: Calling Surveys**

*Sponsored by U.S. Geological Survey* Volunteers are needed to participate in calling amphibian surveys to determine population levels. Additional information available at <http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/NAAMP/>. Project is not yet approved.

**Bulletin Board Update at Rock Bridge Memorial State Park, Flexible scheduling**

*Sponsored by Rock Bridge Memorial State Park* Volunteers needed to drive to the park's four bulletin boards, open and close them with a power drill and add/remove flyers and posters. Work can be done on your own time if you have your own power drill and vehicle or between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. if you need to use park equipment/vehicle. Updates are usually needed 2-3 times/month during busy seasons (April-October), and once a month during slower seasons (November-March). Contact: Kathryn DiFoxfire at [rock.bridge.memorial.state.park@dnr.mo.gov](mailto:rock.bridge.memorial.state.park@dnr.mo.gov) or Roxie Campbell at 573-449-7402 or [roxie.campbell@dnr.mo.gov](mailto:roxie.campbell@dnr.mo.gov). Project is approved.

**Raptor Rehabilitation Project, Ongoing**

*Sponsored by Raptor Rehabilitation Project* Care for a sick or injured raptor; feed and provide activities to captive, wild animals; create, improve and deliver presentations. Contact: Erin West at [eewd76@mizzou.edu](mailto:eewd76@mizzou.edu) to hear more about the project and how to get training. Project is approved.

**Prescribed Burns at Rock Bridge Memorial State Park, select weekdays between 8 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. (call for specific dates)**

Volunteers assist in prescribed burns in restored native grassland or woodland units in the park. Exact dates determined by weather, wind direction, and staff and volunteer availability. Contact: Kathryn DiFoxfire at [rock.bridge.memorial.state.park@dnr.mo.gov](mailto:rock.bridge.memorial.state.park@dnr.mo.gov) or Roxie Campbell at 573-449-7402 or [roxie.campbell@dnr.mo.gov](mailto:roxie.campbell@dnr.mo.gov). Project is approved.

**Prairie Fork Conservation Area Field Trip Naturalists: 2 large field trips (80 students) on April 20<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>. Group training session for volunteers on Friday, April 13<sup>th</sup> (alternate training session(s) can also be arranged.**

*Sponsored by Missouri Dept. of Conservation, University of Missouri and Prairie Fork Trust.* Prairie Fork CA needs naturalists to staff environmental education stations during field

trips for school students. Most programs take place M - F from ~ 9 am to 2 pm. Programs involve 3 small group activities from 9am to noon with children rotating through the stations and one large group activity after lunch. Help is most needed during the morning activities. Contact: Benedict Nagy at (573)254-3262, or [benedict62@yahoo.com](mailto:benedict62@yahoo.com). Project is approved.

**Friends of Rock Bridge Memorial State Park Explore Rock Bridge, 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month**

*Sponsored by Friends of Rock Bride Memorial State Park* Explore Rock Bridge provides opportunities for the public to explore different park resources and participate in service projects. Volunteers needed to assist trip leader with hike each month (April: wildflowers; May: trees) and plan future programs. Contact: Meredith Donaldson at 815-9255 or [Mjdonlson@aol.com](mailto:Mjdonlson@aol.com) . Project is approved.

**Landowner Contacts Database, Flexible hours until completed.**

*Sponsored by Missouri Department of Conservation* Log landowner contact folders by location. Files date back to 1940s and recording assistance provided on specific properties in the past will provide an account of historical management to allow MDC to better assess needs for the property. Location: Fulton. Contact Josh Stevens at [Josh.Stevens@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:Josh.Stevens@mdc.mo.gov) or 573-592-1412. Project is approved.

**Friends of Big Muddy, Ongoing throughout the year.** *Sponsored by Friends of Big Muddy*

Most opportunities are on units of the Big Muddy National Fish and Wildlife Refuge,. Check <http://www.friendsofbigmuddy.org> for current opportunities or sign up for list serve announcements of activities by e-mailing [FriendsofBigMuddy-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:FriendsofBigMuddy-subscribe@yahoogroups.com). Contact Troy Gordon at [friends@friendsofbigmuddy.org](mailto:friends@friendsofbigmuddy.org) or call 573-424-9051. Projects are approved.

*"If men had wings and bore black feathers, few of them would be clever enough to be crows."*

*Henry Ward Beecher*

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**NEXT MEETING**

**Thursday, April 12, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.**  
**Rock Bridge Memorial State Park**  
**(meet at Devil’s Icebox parking lot)**

**Program: Randal Clark will lead a wildflower walk**  
**This program will count as 1 hour of advanced training.**  
**Please note the earlier start time!**

**Refreshments: Non- Dessert: Carolyn Doyle; Dessert: Sally Swanson; Beverage: Dan Reeves**  
**Please bring anything needed to serve and consume your dish or drink.**



*To promote awareness and citizen  
 stewardship of natural resources  
 through science-based education and  
 community service*