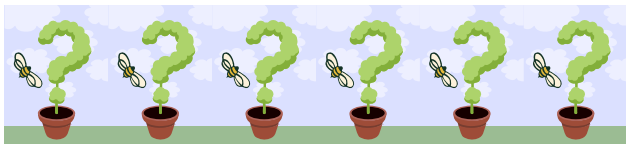




MAY MEETING

The Boone's Lick Chapter of Missouri Master Naturalists will meet at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 10 at the Boone County Extension Center. The program will be given by Dory Draper, who will teach us how to do botanical drawings. After her presentation we will try out our new skills by doing drawings of our own. Ms. Draper will critique our drawings when we are finished, so bring 2-3 different kinds of leaves and a #2 pencil (Ms. Draper will provide the paper). This program will count as 1 hour of advanced training. A business meeting will follow the presentation. This will be a fantastic meeting--we hope to see you there!



PRESIDENTIAL PONDERINGS

Suzanne Wright

One of my first memories as a little girl was of sitting on a stone bench between two large trees in my great-grandmother's overgrown garden. I was certain that elves and fairies similar to the illustrations in one of my story books lived there and if I could sit still enough for long enough I would be unnoticed and they would come out at play. How lucky I was as a child to have been given the opportunity to spend time alone outside to develop a love a nature that would last a lifetime.

The first Earth Day was held in March, 1970. Brad and I were architecture students attending K-State at the time. In June of the same year, we would be married. I don't remember participating in the construction of the geodesic dome the College of Architecture erected on that first Earth Day Celebration and I certainly didn't realize the significance of the day at the time. That people

universally would so warm to the idea of honoring the Earth and that we would be continuing the practice thirty-seven years later.

There are two little girls that live in my neighborhood. After spotting them in my back woods one day, I came out to show them a safer way to get down the steep hill and to tell them it was all right for them to play there and gave them my name and number so their parents could call if they needed assurance that I had given my permission. The younger of the two began to tell me of their secret special place in the woods, only to be hushed by her sibling. Throughout the summer I gave them brochures from the MDC on the different wildflowers and birds they might see while they were visiting their "secret special place". I was happy to provide a wild place in the middle of town for these little girls. A refuge from mowed lawns, TV and computer games for them to build an appreciation of nature.

Spring, although stumbling a time or two, appears to have finally arrived. I noticed I have a cardinal nesting in my rose bush just like the ones that used to nest in my Grandmother's roses when I was a child. Although I am tempted to drag the ladder around so I can look at the eggs, I have been watching them from a distance. By the time the eggs hatch the rosebush will probably have leafed out enough that I won't be able to see the nestlings. When I am banding birds this summer and the cardinals are pinching my fingers with their seed crushing vise grip beaks I'll try to console myself with these happy thoughts.

I wonder at ground hogs. You can see the critters sitting three feet from the highway, deadly cars whipping past, as if they haven't a care in the world. Yet, when we had one living in a brush pile in our side yard a couple of years ago, the fellow would run like crazy every time I stepped out the front door. It didn't matter if I was in and out fifty times in a day, it was always the same mad dash.

At night I listen to the foxes in the woods. Several years ago I was coming over a rise in the horse pasture when I came upon a fox playing a game with the horses. The scene was straight from a Disney movie. The horses were grazing, enjoying the sun on their backs and the new sweet grass. The field was dotted with wildflowers and the hum of insects. The fox was playing his version of tag. He was jumping from one horse to next, as they slowly moved one hoof at a time as they grazed. The horses ignored the fox with the boredom of familiarity. The fox was so intent on his game that I was able to watch and wonder if this was behavior well practiced between all foxes and horses in the springtime or only this small herd and this fox. He must have heard my thoughts as his head swung to me. And looking eye to eye, we held our places for a breath, and then he was gone.

I heard the strangest sound one night. It kept getting closer and then receded only to return again. Finally, I stood at the window tried to see by moonlight what was out there. Soon the noise returned; it was two opossum, one following the other making endless loops through my back woods. I remember the first time I ever saw an opossum. My father pointed it out as it lay in the grass. He explained about their tail which they use like a hand, that they have a pouch they carry their babies in and that they pretend to “play possum”. Later when we returned the opossum was in a near by tree, seemingly reborn. Playing possum became my favorite game. I’m sure my Dad was not fooled as I would lie with my eyes crunched shut trying not to giggle. My older daughter worked at a wild animal sanctuary in Texas and developed a deep affection for possums. It is her belief that there is nothing as cute as a baby opossum’s nose.

Being a mother raccoon must be a trying thing. One morning we spotted a mom with five little ones up a tree by our house. She was trying so hard to get them moving in the direction of her choosing... down... and they just were not embracing the plan. Things did not go well and the fact that we were watching the circus, albeit from a distance, wasn’t helping. We decided to give them some space so I don’t know what caused the mom’s loss of balance that precipitated her fall from the tree. She wasn’t hurt but her mood was not improved. She marched back up the tree, mumbling the raccoon version of, “wait till your father gets home”, grabbed one of the kiddos by the scruff of the neck and proceeded to drag it down the tree, little raccoon claws scabbling on the tree bark with the descent. Then the rest of

the siblings must have realized that they had pushed mom just a little too far and began a quick mass decent. The last we saw of them was the raccoon parade heading off through the woods.

Spring catches me unaware every year. After waiting the long winter I always rake the leaves too soon or too late. This spring seems more harried than the norm and I find myself scrambling to cover all the bases. I have caught myself of late, standing on one leg and pivoting in a circle with the indecision of what to do next. With my son’s wedding on Arbor Day, I should be able to refocus my attentions on my job as MMN president. Thank you for your patience and understanding. For those of you who didn’t notice anything amiss....never mind.



MEETING MINUTES

The April 12th meeting of Boone’s Lick Master Naturalists took place at Rock Bridge Memorial State Park at 5:30 pm. The program provided advanced training from Randal Clark, an accomplished naturalist who has led hikes in the park for over 20 years. Randal spoke about what is involved in giving a presentation such as a wildflower walk. A walking presentation is rather informal, with the wildflowers guiding topics of presentation by their order of appearance. He prefers to use common names, even though there may be more than one for a particular plant. He also includes the history and folklore of the location, as well as past and present uses of the plants. Trees and wildlife can also be mentioned, plus interesting geological and topographical features of the area.

The most important thing about giving a guided presentation is to prepare ahead of time. Gather information such as local history and folklore, common and Latin names of types of plants, wildlife in the area, and topographic and geologic features. It is important to know local names for these features as well as names of creeks in the area. Walk through the area ahead of time to locate wildflowers and

determine the best trail to use, and consider the amount of time and level of difficulty your audience will prefer.

It was a lot of information to absorb at once, but after explaining what was involved, Randal led us on a walk. He seemed to just be nonchalantly walking, talking, pointing out and naming plants, while sprinkling in bits of folklore, topographic and geologic features, and making it very enjoyable. He even mentioned that if someone in the group knew something in addition to what he said, they should feel free to speak out. In other words, he made it look real easy! We can now appreciate more the amount of time spent by a volunteer that prepares for and leads such educational walks. There is more to it than just walking and talking! Thanks Randal!

A post-program business meeting:
Conference Committee : We need CASH donations to cover conference costs--we underestimated how difficult these would be to obtain. Please contact your associates, friends and relatives – and beg! The Welcome Party Friday night includes a pot-luck dinner for our visiting fellow Master Naturalists. We need more people to sign up to bring a vegetarian or non-vegetarian dish. Please contact Troy and let him know that you will be bringing something. There are at least 40 people signed up to attend, but registration does not end until May 1, 2007.

Upcoming Events: *Trail-Side Nature Expo:* Saturday June 2, 9 am – 12 pm. Contact Suzanne Wright. *Rail Barrel Competition:* Contact Vanessa Melton. And please see the Volunteer Opportunities on the website!

Advanced Training: The entire MMN State Conference is Advanced Training! Also, be sure to code training during the April 12 meeting as 1 hour of advanced training!

State Advisory Committee: Troy and Cheryl attended the SAC meeting. Current issues are developing uniform guidelines for various activities and duties for each chapter, guidelines for certification, as well as other

issues. SAC is accepting other topics for submission and will communicate results to chapters after decisions are made.

May 2007 meeting: Advanced Training by Dory Draper (Nature Sketching).

P.S. If I missed something, it was just because I was busy trying drinking my hot chocolate and trying to stay warm!

Submitted by Buffie Balling, chapter secretary



David Silvey watches Master Naturalists watching Randal Clark prior to setting off on a wildflower walk at RBMSP.



EARTH DAY AFTERMATH

submitted by Suzanne Wright

Many thanks to Rebecca Allen, Sharon Reed, Dan Reeves, Mary Jane Wheeling, Buffie Balling, Meredith Donaldson & Sally Swanson for all their help manning the Earth Day Booth. I'm sure we would have won the prize for best educational display if I hadn't lost the ability to speak when the judges came by. No matter, I think we reached a lot of people with our message on urban hydrology and promotion of the MMN program. Special thanks to my son, Sam, for providing "critters" for the aquarium, including the frog which was such a big crowd attention-getter.

LEARN MORE ABOUT ...

...trees. Missouri Forestkeepers Network, a volunteer program co-sponsored by MDC and Forest ReLeaf, is sponsoring a tree ID workshop on Tuesday May 15, 9-11am at the MDC Central Regional Office, 1907 Hillcrest Drive, Columbia. The workshop will be held rain or shine; wear sturdy shoes for moderately difficult walking. Contact Ann Koenig at 573-884-6861 or ann.koenig@mdc.mo.gov to sign up. Approved as advanced training.

...insects and Project WET and orienteering and herptiles and rain gardens and interpretation and... Don't forget that all sessions at the 2nd annual MMN state conference count as advanced training. Final registration deadline is May 1.

...forest health. Missouri ForestKeepers Network is sponsoring a forest health workshop on tree pests and diseases on Saturday June 9, 9 am to noon at the ARC in Columbia. The program is free and open to the public. To register or get more information, contact Justine Gartner at 573- 522-4115 x 3116 or justine.gartner@mdc.mo.gov . Registration deadline is June 1. Approved as advanced training.

UPCOMING EVENTS

ONES, a local alliance of Outdoor, Nature, Environment, and Sustainability groups, will meet Friday May 11 at 7:30 am at Uprise Bakery (816 E. Broadway). Individuals from Master Naturalists, Friends of Rock Bridge, Audubon Society, Sierra Club, 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.

The Missouri DNR is featuring a Trail of the Month: Passport to Health program from May through October, 2007. Participants can

earn a T-shirt, hydration pack, and up to six hiking medallions by hiking up to 36 featured trails through Missouri state parks and historic sites. As part of the program, each participant will receive a passport book which contains space to journal about hiking adventures as well as to record a clue located about mid-point along each trail. Each participant must then record each trail hiked by visiting the state park webpage, www.mostateparks.com (click on the Trail of the month icon), or by calling the Division of State Parks at 1-800-334-6946. Trails vary in length; descriptions of each are available on the website.

One trail will be featured each month in each of the six state park regions. Trails do not have to be hiked in the month in which they are featured. Passport books can be obtained by visiting any Missouri state park/historic site office, or by contacting the Division through the webpage or toll-free number listed above. The more trails you hike, the more hiking medallions you can earn! Plus, you can be eligible for a grand prize. Hiking sticks with the Trail of the Month logo can be purchased at parks with stores or gift shops or by calling 1-800-334-6946.

Featured trails in or near the Boone's Chapter area include the following: Rock Bridge Memorial State Park (Sinkhole Trail); Katy Trail State Park (North Jefferson Trailhead), Clark's Hill / Norton State Historic Site (Osage Trail), and Arrow Rock State Historic Site (Arrow Rock River Landing Trail).

Explore Rock Bridge, Saturday May 19, 1-3 pm, Devil's Icebox Parking Lot. Josh Stevens, MDC Forester, will talk about trees in the park. Call 573-815-9255 for more information or to register.

"Nature's music is never over; her silences are pauses, not conclusions."

Mary Webb

NOTEWORTHY NATURAL HISTORY

submitted by Celeste Mazzacano

In a state where caves are as common as chiggers, **Riverbluff Cave** in Springfield is an unexpected and fascinating little gem. Discovered accidentally on September 11, 2001, while the county was blasting for a new road on the outskirts of town, Riverbluff Cave stretches ~2000 feet. The cave entrance is thought to have been sealed for thousands of years and the moist clay within contains an array of fossils and preserved bones and turtle shells (including a shell from what appears to be a previously unknown species of turtle). One of its 2 side passages is home to the largest congregation of peccary tracks in the world—an interesting historical note, as it was thought previously that peccaries only entered caves after being killed and dragged in. The cave team has found snake skeletons, fossilized turtle shells, rodent tracks and skeletons, peccary tracks, and numerous bear and large cat claw marks; findings have been dated to the Pleistocene (1.8 million to 11,000 years ago). The cave also contains an exciting quantity of dung—believe it or not, preserved dung is pretty rare, and it can tell you a lot about what cave denizens ate. The real showpiece is claw marks of short-faced bears that once inhabited the cave. The bears, which stood up to 15 feet tall, are extinct, but their claw marks are still fresh in the wet clay of the cave walls. Public access to the cave is not allowed, although the young woman I spoke to at the museum said that they have worked with local Master Naturalists. The small field house/museum is open Monday - Friday from 10 am – 4 pm and Saturdays from 10 am – 2 pm. If you pass through Springfield, be sure to stop and see this seriously cool bit of Missouri (pre)history. For more details, visit www.riverbluffcave.com .



*"snow cone"
formation in cave*



short-faced bear claw marks

MAY VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteer opportunities for May and ongoing projects are included, as well as announcements of other events. Please contact the person indicated for more detailed information on any project. If a project is 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 the project's approval or if there are any questions. Once approval is granted for any person, it is approved for everyone, so it is only necessary to submit one form per project.

Refuge field trip for Eldon High School Friday, April 27th 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 Tim_Haller@fws.gov (573-441-2799) or Troy Gordon at friends@friendsofbigmuddy.org or 573-424-9051. Project is approved.

Butterfly Inventory at Overton Bottoms North (2007 Capstone), Tuesday, May 1st, 1:00 PM

Sponsored by Big Muddy National Fish and Wildlife Refuge and Friends of Big Muddy. Master Naturalists will capture butterfly & moth specimens to continue an inventory begun in 2006. Dress appropriately for field work (sturdy shoes or boots, long pants, and head covering are recommended). Insect repellent and sun block are suggested, as are water bottles. Contact: Troy Gordon, 573-424-9051; friends@friendsofbigmuddy.org or Wedge Watkins, 573-441-2788, Wedge_Watkins@fws.gov. Project is approved.

Invasive Plant Removal at Spring Valley Nature Preserve, Saturday, May 5th, 10:00 AM

Sponsored by Greenbelt Land Trust. A workday to remove invasive plants including euonymus and honeysuckle. Spring Valley Nature Preserve is in the 600 block of Spring Valley, which is south of Broadway between Stadium and Clinkscapes (across from Pershing). Take all the left forks until you come to woods on the left. Gloves, clippers, loppers and saws welcome. Contact: Dee Dokken, 573-442-4224 or ddokken@centurytel.net. Project is not yet approved.

River Clean-up at St. Charles, Saturday, May 12th, 8:30 AM. *Sponsored by Missouri River Relief and Friends of Big Muddy.* Volunteers are provided with trash bags, gloves etc. and transported to the areas via boats. Lunch is provided; bring sun and insect protection and water bottles. Long pants and sturdy shoes that can get muddy are strongly recommended. Contact Troy Gordon at friends@friendsofbigmuddy.org or 573-424-9051. Project is not yet approved.

Invasive Plant Removal at Hinkson Valley Nature Preserve, Saturday, May 19th, 10:00 AM
Sponsored by Greenbelt Land Trust. A workday to remove honeysuckle at Hinkson Valley Nature Preserve. This land can be reached by parking at Capen Park and walking on trail under Rock Quarry Road Bridge. Gloves, clippers, loppers and saws welcome. Contact: Dee Dokken, 573-442-4224 or ddokken@centurytel.net. Project is not yet approved.

Bird Banding, Eagle Bluffs, Friday, May 25, 6:45 am. *Sponsored by Audubon Missouri.* Help ornithologist Andy Forbes conduct bird banding activities at Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area. Dress for the field (hiking boots or sturdy shoes, long pants, sunblock, etc.). Reservations are required. Contact Andy Forbes at 573-447-2249 or Andrew.Forbes@mdc.mo.gov for more information. Project is approved.

Butterfly Inventory at Overton Bottoms North (2007 Capstone), Saturday, May 26th, 1:00 PM
See description under May 1st.

Ongoing Opportunities

Columbia Fishery Resources Office, ongoing, typically weekdays throughout the year.
Sponsored by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Join fishery staff for day long trips to the field to collect,

tag, and measure fish, and assess fish habitat quality. Volunteers can also work in the lab to assist in identification of collected fishes and analysis of field data. Contact: Joanne Grady at 573-234-2132, ext. 101 or Joanne_Grady@fws.gov. Project is not yet approved.

Fish Study at Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area, ongoing in spring and summer. *Sponsored by University of Missouri-Columbia.* Involves studying fish use of two passage structures and wetland pools at Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area with UMC graduate student. Volunteers will help sample and identify fish. Contact: Meagan Montgomery at 417-619-6460 or mdm01a@mizzou.edu. Project is approved.

Wood Duck Box Monitoring at Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area, Late April through 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. Project is approved.

Prairie Seed Collection for Prairie Restoration at the Charles Green Conservation Area, ongoing May until November, each year 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 are approved. Contact: John George at John.George@mdc.mo.gov or 573-882-8388 ext 224. You can 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 with assisting in catching birds and removing them from the traps and will gradually be trained to do the actual banding over time. Contact Troy Gordon at tgordon@friendsofbigmuddy.org or call 573-424-9051. Project is approved

Garden Bed Maintenance, ongoing 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 weekday, or any time between sunrise and sunset if you bring your own tools. Contact Kathryn.DiFoxfire@dnr.mo.gov or call 573-449-7402. Project is approved.

Bulletin Board Update at Rock Bridge Memorial State Park, flexible hours. Drive to the park's four bulletin boards, open/close them with power drill and add/remove flyers and posters. Work can be done on your own time if you have your own drill and vehicle or between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. if you use park equipment/vehicle. Updates needed 2-3 times/month from April-October, and once a month from November-March. Contact Kathryn DiFoxfire at rock.bridge.memorial.state.park@dnr.mo.gov or Roxie Campbell at roxie.campbell@dnr.mo.gov 573-449-7402. Project is approved.

Bats on Parade, Summer 2007 Program
Sponsored by Friends of Rock Bridge Memorial State Park. Help needed for award-winning Bats on Parade program starting in March to help prepare materials for this series of summer programs that help families and children learn about bats and their importance in ecosystems. Volunteers also needed to help with variety of summer interpretive programs for June-August. Estimated 4-8 hours/month. Contact: Meredith Donaldson at Mjdonlsn@aol.com or 815-9255. Project is approved.

Raptor Rehabilitation Project, ongoing
Sponsored by MU Raptor Rehabilitation Project. Care for sick/injured raptors; feed & provide activities to captive, wild animals; create & deliver presentations. Contact Erin West at eewd76@mizzou.edu for information or to set up training. Project is approved.

Prescribed Burns at Rock Bridge Memorial State Park, weekdays between 8 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. (call for specific dates). Assist in prescribed burns in restored native grassland or woodland units in the park. Exact dates determined by weather, wind direction, staff and volunteer availability. Contact Kathryn DiFoxfire at rock.bridge.memorial.state.park@dnr.mo.gov or Roxie Campbell at roxie.campbell@dnr.mo.gov 573-449-7402. Project is approved.

Prairie Fork Conservation Area Field Trip Naturalists. *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 Monday - Friday from ~ 9 am-2 pm. Most programs involve 3 small group activities from 9am-noon with children rotating through the stations, and one large group activity after lunch. Help is most needed for morning activities. Contact Benedict Nagy at (573)254-3262 or benedict62@yahoo.com. Project is approved.

Explore Rock Bridge, 3rd Saturday of each month. *Sponsored by Friends of Rock Bridge 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 (May: Josh Stevens, Trees), and to plan future programs. Contact: Meredith Donaldson at Mjdonlsn@aol.com or 815-9255. 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 the 1940s and recording assistance provided on specific properties in the past will provide an account of historical management that will allow MDC to better assess needs for the property. Location: Fulton. Contact Josh Stevens at Josh.Stevens@mdc.mo.gov or 573-592-1412. Project is approved.

Friends of Big Muddy Activities, ongoing throughout the year. *Sponsored by Friends of Big Muddy.* Most are on units of Big Muddy National Fish & Wildlife Refuge. Current opportunities are at www.friendsofbigmuddy.org, or sign up for list serve announcements by e-mailing FriendsofBigMuddy-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. Contact Troy Gordon at 573-424-9051 or friends@friendsofbigmuddy.org. Projects approved.



*Mayapple
(Podophyllum
peltatum)*

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NEXT MEETING

Thursday, May 10, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Boone County Extension Center

Program: Dory Draper, Botanical drawing

NOTE: This program counts as 1 hour of advanced training

Refreshments: Non- Dessert, Cheryl Hardy; Dessert, Celeste Mazzacano; Beverage, Suzanne Wright
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*