



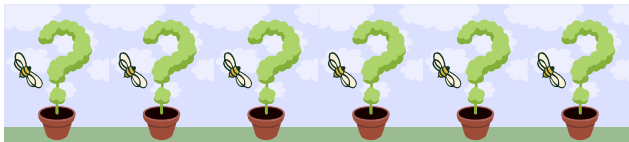
JANUARY MEETING

Thursday, January 10, 2008

6:30-8:30

Breathing Life into Nature Writing  
Conservation Department writer Jim Low.

Jim is the immediate past president of the Outdoor Writers Association of America. He has been writing about the outdoors for 30 years. You may have seen his articles in magazines from Reptile & Amphibian and Better Homes and Gardens to Australian Birding. Topics covered will include writing bright, writing tight and using electronics to improve your prose. Come and learn how to make your nature writing sing.



PRESIDENTIAL PONDERINGS

Suzanne Wright

In keeping with next months program on Nature Writing, this story is a much abbreviated version of a two day duck hunt that occurred last winter. Nature writing takes on many forms but for many of us it is a record of an experience that we can keep as the details that made the day so exceptional begin to fade. Similar to old-time storytelling, it's a chance for many to share in the joy of the moment. And when the tale is written well it can be as much of a pleasure for the reader as it is for the writer. If you think a program on Nature Writing is far removed for the skills we

need as Master Naturalists keep in mind this is a form of journaling which can be a serious record of events and data.

Selection from: **Best Laid Plans**

Written by Brad Wright  
Highly abridged by Suzanne Wright

Being an experienced waterfowler, my motto is similar to that of The Boy Scouts of America, I am always prepared. I had made plans for an overnight duck hunt to "The Fork" with my friends Tom, Andy, Andy's dog Huck and my old hunting dog, Scout. We proceeded northward as the weather began to worsen and soon we could hardly see anything for the *freezingrainsleetsnow*. With my skilled driving, top speed of 40-45mph and lots of references to someone's grandma, we made it to Keytesville without mishap.

Upon arrival we decided to unload the boats that night because the ropes would be so frozen in the morning we would never get them untied. Since we were only unloading the boats, then retreating to the "mansion" for a good night's sleep, we didn't put on additional clothes from those we had been wearing for the drive. After all duck hunters are a tough lot and what's a little *freezingrainsleetsnow*. By the time we had the ice caked ropes untied and the boats on the ground, the wind had picked up and was blowing 20-30mph, with gusts matching my top driving speed on the trip from Columbia. But hey, what's a little wind to duck hunters, especially veterans like me who are always prepared. In the car I had enough clothes to mush the Iditarod and be comfortable. I always carry my survival kit with fire starter, matches, knife, space blanket, plastic rain poncho, fishing hooks, toothbrush,

cordage, signal mirror etc. One of the joys of trips like this is sharing with novices like Tom and Andy my vast knowledge of the outdoors and the undisputed importance of being prepared.

With the boats on the ground and our digits nearly frozen, we rushed to the still warm car, looking forward to cranking up the heater and thawing out on the short ride to the mansion where a good night's sleep awaited. I lifted up on the car door handle and looked longingly through the window into the toasty warm car. I was greeted by a fiendish looking dog face, smushed nose first, against the glass and.....a **locked** door! Huck had deftly put his paw on the lock button, locking the car with the keys inside while my faithful Scout was napping in the back.

My friends were alarmed, repeatedly shouting "What will we do? What will we do"? Keeping calm as veterans do, I put my own safety aside, turned on my head lamp and thrust myself under the car into the mud and ice to retrieve my spare key that I had hidden in one of those little boxes with magnets on the back, prepared for a situation just like this. As I scanned the underneath of the car looking for the hidden spare key, cruel reality hit. "I've never seen the underside of this car before in my life!" I realized the spare key I was looking for was attached to the frame of a Suburban I had sold over two years before. I crawled out from underneath the car to find my partners in the final stages of hyperthermia. I broke the news to them that my spare key was actually attached to another vehicle. Then the years of teaching outdoor skills to those less seasoned than me, paid off. Tom, prepared as I had taught him, had his cellular telephone on his person in case of an emergency just like this. Andy, on the other hand had lapsed into hypothermic delirium. He was by the car window, frantically jumping up and down, trying to teach Huck how to unlock the car! Tom and I rushed to Andy's aid. We huddled around him blocking the wind in hopes of bringing him back from the brink. I firmly said, "Andy! Think of Stacey and the girls"! He immediately snapped back into reality". This has happened

to me before," Andy said, "I just called the Sheriff. He came out and opened the lock with a *Slim Jim*". Tom's agile fingers immediately went to work on the cellular telephone buttons but stopped short of making the call. "I don't know what the sheriff's number is and besides there's only one little bar showing".

I suggested that we start the trek up to the mansion where we could get inside and be warm, at least as warm as you can be in a 1976 travel trailer with no heat and a hole in the roof. Also, we usually get a cell signal on top of the hill. We started walking and caught a break as the wind was actually blowing us toward the mansion; the speed had increased and my back side was no longer wet....it was **frozen**. As we walked, I remembered that I had the Chariton County Conservation Agent's business card in my wallet. Maybe he could call the sheriff for us. I pulled out the card and lo and behold, the sheriff's number was at the bottom. I read the numbers; Tom punched them into his phone and hit the send button. The call didn't go through. We walked a little further and he tried again, this time successfully. He reached out his hand with the ringing phone toward me offering **me** the opportunity to explain to the person who answered the phone that a dog....**Andy's dog**... had locked us out of the car. I respectfully declined. Tom put on a brave face and waited for the sheriff to answer. "This is Tom Shryock and"..... "T-O-M, S-H-R-Y-O-C-K....Yes.....Hello....Hello...." This went on for the next five attempts as the message was delivered in bits and pieces including "Oh no Officer, it wasn't my dog." The Sheriff, based out of Keytesville, agreed to meet us about ¼ mile north of Pee Dee Lane on top of the hill. Tom told him we would leave the light on. I had to remind Tom that there was no light. **My** head lamp, attached to **my** head was elected to stand on top of the hill in the blowing, *freezingrainsleetsnow* to serve as a beacon to signal the sheriff that this was in fact the place where three idiots had allowed a dog to lock them out of their car... Not just any dog, **Andy's dog!**

Fifteen minutes later the sheriff's car slid to a stop at our camp, he rolled his window down and ordered "**ONE** of you get into my car and show me where the vehicle is." Tom quickly volunteered....."It's **Brad's** car and **Andy's** dog, one of them should go". Since Andy had disappeared behind the mansion out of sight; I got into the sheriff's car. I couldn't take my eyes off the big gun that was strapped to his side. For a brief moment I wondered if I could open the door and dive into the ditch before he could draw his weapon. On the very long ¼ mile car ride down to the bottom of the hill the Officer espoused this disclaimer: "I'll try but I probably won't be able to open your car". "Thank you Officer, thank you, thank you, **thank you** Officer", I replied. After what seemed an eternity, we finally arrived at the end of our journey. The Sheriff turned the spot light on my suburban. He asked, "Is this the subject car"? "Yes, Officer, thank you, thank you, **thank you** Officer", I replied. The Sheriff went to get his tools out of the trunk of his vehicle. I didn't know what to do, so I walked up to the driver side of the car and pulled up on the door handle. Much to my astonishment the door **opened!** I was rendered speechless. I actually thought for a moment about reaching inside and hitting the lock button so when the Officer came up to the door with his *Slim Jim* the door would at least be locked. But I remembered his lack of confidence in his ability to actually unlock the car. I decided to come clean with the Officer, but first I wanted to make sure I had the keys so I opened the door. I was greeted by the smell of a smoke house and Huck the gourmet dog with a ring of summer sausage hanging from the corner of his mouth, his tail thumped loudly against my leather seats. Scout was laying in the back moaning and groaning from gastric distress, but her tail also drummed a tune on the floor of the car. Strewn about were various chewed up packages of cheeses, meats, crackers and enough dog food for three feedings. I was so caught up in surveying the damage of our grub stake I had forgotten about the Officer with the big gun. Crunch, crunch, crunch. The Officers footsteps! He was approaching! I got out of the car and found myself face to face with the Sheriff. By now, he had thrown down the Slim

Jim and had his hand on his weapon. "Heh, heh", I feebly said. "You'll never guess what....." I had to explain to the Officer that **my dog** Scout, the **good** dog, knew that **Andy's dog** Huck, the **bad** dog, had done a very bad thing by locking the doors and so when she awoke from her nap she must've unlocked the doors so we could get into the car. And she had also tried to clean up all of the bits of sausage, cheese and crackers to keep Huck out of trouble, but had become so exhausted in the process she was napping again. The sheriff gruffly exclaimed "I wish you would have checked the doors before calling me out of my warm house. I guess we're done here." I replied, "Yes sir Officer Sir, Thank you, thank you, **thank you** Officer Sir". He got into his car and sped off into the dark.

After the Sheriff was out of sight and I was sure that he wouldn't try to shoot me, I began to pick up the spoils of the K-9 party to salvage lunch tomorrow. I drove the mobile smoke house/dog kennel to camp. It's a good thing that I am always prepared and had the foresight to stock the mansion larder the week before so despite our reduced food supply we wouldn't go hungry. We unloaded what was left of our gear and settled down for a good night's sleep. We listened to the drip, drip, drip hitting the metal bucket that we had set under the leaking, sagging roof of the mansion and dreamed about those mallards cupping their wings and side slipping into our decoys.



**MEETING MINUTES**

**Boone's Lick Chapter  
Missouri Master Naturalist Meeting  
December 13, 2007**

*Submitted by Buffie Balling*

Attendees: Meredith Donaldson, Pam Close, Steffanie Abel with her sister and mother, Kat DiFoxfire, Rachel Pia, Raissa Espejo, Suzanne

Wright, Rebecca Allen & Baby Logan (Jr. MMN), Jeff Koppelman, Mary Jane Wheeling, Syd Hime (MDC State Coordinator), Angela Belden, Buffie Balling, Phil, Melanie & Charlie Knocke, Alice Havard, Donnie Nichols, Lea Langdon, Jane Fore, Carolyn Doyle, Cheryl Hardy, Jody Stotsky, Vanessa Melton, Sharon Reed, Marie Scruggs, Bill T. Crawford, Bobb & Sally Swanson, Janine & Troy Gordon, with Jasmine and Genely (Jr. MMN's), Susan Hazelwood, Don Day, many guests, and whoever forgot to sign in.

The December meeting of the Boone's Lick Chapter of the Missouri Master Naturalists began with a pot luck dinner at 6:30pm with invited friends and family.

Following the dinner, there was a review of the By Laws of the Missouri Master Naturalist Program by Troy Gordon. The annual officers' elections were held with the following results:

	<u>2008</u>
President:	Suzanne Wright
Vice President:	Steffanie Abel
Secretary:	Carolyn Doyle
Treasurer:	Alice Havard

Presentations were made by chapter members showing volunteer activities and capstones projects they had worked on this year. These were followed by Don Day's Annual Year in Review presentation as well as a little known fact about what *really* exists at the end of the rainbow.

Phil Knocke detailed his work as a "Reef Medic" in the Florida Keys last summer. The project is sponsored by NOAA, and involves training people to restore damaged coral reef areas. The corals that have been knocked off by boats due to accidents or carelessness, are able to be 'repositioned' on the reef using concrete and the knowledge of proper depth and environmental requirements of each different type of coral. This project is making a difference in this area of natural beauty.

Vanessa Melton presentation included photos of the MAPS bird banding project,

Treekeepers, CARP, and various Columbia Audubon projects and activities that she participated in during 2006 and 2007.

Troy Gordon had pictures of the MAPS project, humming bird banding and Big Muddy Refuge Area projects that included Stream Team activities, stream cleanups, planting projects and more. There was also a shot of Janine in the canoe she won through Stream Team. Her new canoe was loaded with trash she and Troy had collected.

Then Don and Jeff presented pins and awards to members that have reached certification, recertification and milestones pins.

A brief business meeting was called to order by Suzanne.

Vanessa Melton suggested the Columbia Audubon Society be approved as a Chapter partner. There was a motion from the floor which was seconded and it was passed by majority vote to include the Columbia Audubon Society as a Boone's Lick Chapter partner.

There was the suggestion to lend our support to "Teaming with Wildlife." This is a coalition to obtain regular funding for the benefit of wildlife. This program is being coordinated by the Conservation Federation of Missouri. There was a motion from the floor to support "Teaming with Wildlife", it was seconded and unanimously approved.

Committee Chairs were appointed and members selected.

#### Program Planning Committee

Chair: Steffanie Abel  
Members: Sally Swanson, Buffie Balling, and others

#### Project Approval Committee

Chair: Jack Dillard  
Members: Janine Gordon & Sharon Reed

#### Advanced Training Committee

Chair: Mary Jane Wheeler  
Co-Chair: Steffanie Abel

Members: Meredith Donaldson  
& Sally Swanson

Communications Committee

Chair: Rachel Pia

New Class Training Committee

Members: Don Day, Jeff Koeppelman,  
Suzanne Wright, Steffanie Abel,  
Pam Close, Troy Gordon,  
Janine Gordon

Chapter Historian:

Chair: Pam Close

Refreshments Committee

Chair: Jane Fore

By Law Committee:

Members: Don Day, Jeff Koeppelman,  
Suzanne Wright, Marie Scruggs,  
others to be announced

Don Day announced there is still time to log  
your hours.

Angela Belden caught the Chapter up on what  
she has been doing since last May.

Suzanne Wright closed the meeting by wishing  
everyone Happy Holidays and a safe and  
Happy New Year.

MILESTONES

**Certified Master Naturalists**

Stefannie Abel  
Pamela Close  
Jane Fore  
Phil Knocke  
Susan Hazelwood  
Bill Lauer  
JaJuan Lauer  
Donnie Nichols  
Rachel Pia  
Sally Swanson  
Laura Sweets

**Recertified**, receiving the dogwood pin

Steffanie Abel, '07  
Rebecca Allen  
Carolyn Doyle  
Jane Fore, '07  
Janine Gordon  
Troy Gordon  
Cheryl Hardy  
Alice Havard  
Susan Hazelwood, '07  
Celeste Mazzacano  
Vanessa Melton  
Donnie Nichols, '07  
Marie Scruggs  
David Silvey  
Jody Stotsky  
Mary Jane Wheeling  
Gail White  
Suzanne Wright

**250+ Hours**

Vanessa Melton  
Donnie Nichols, '07  
Suzanne Wright

**500+ Hours**

Janine Gordon

Congratulations to everyone who reached a  
milestone this year!

Together, Chapter members have logged over  
3,000 service hours in 2007. Thank you!

CAPSTONES 2007  
SUMMARY REPORTS

While on the subject of accolades, here are  
summary reports from the capstone project  
owners on what the class of 2007 (and others)  
accomplished this year.



*Meredith Donaldson  
Friends of Rock Bridge  
Memorial State Park*

**Bats on Parade and UPOP\***

The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Bats on Parade was a series of programs designed to engage children and their families in learning about how bats are important members of our ecosystem. This program is cosponsored by the Friends of Rock Bridge Memorial State Park (FoRB), the Department of Natural Resources-Division of State Parks, Columbia Public Library, and with volunteer support from the Boone’s Lick Chapter of Missouri Master Naturalists. The Missouri Parks Association through their Urban Populations Outreach Program\* funded an extension of Bats on Parade to allow children underserved by the state parks to participate. Children from youth agencies including the Boys and Girls Club, Fun City, Intersection and El Centro Latino participated in nature activities at their clubs and field activities at the park.

Master Naturalists made a significant contribution to the program and some highlights follow:

**June Bat decorating** – Dinah Gastineau and Alice Havard helped 73 children and parents decorate bats at the Columbia Public Library. While decorating cardboard bats, Master Naturalists shared interesting information about bat natural history. They showed great adaptability as they adapted their presentation to the moment and the interests of the child. Over 250 bats (made by children), were seen flying at the library!

**June UPOP activities** -- Alice Havard assisted in presenting programs at the Boys and Girls Club and Fun City. The programs including bat related activities were designed to prepare the children for their field experiences in the park in July. Alice was great with these very energetic kids.

**June Field Day “Kids Go Batty”** – Dinah Gastineau, Mary Jane Wheeling and Alice

Havard assisted with activity stations that highlighted bat natural history and included a tour of Conner’s Cave. This was a public activity and provided a variety of opportunities to capture the imagination and interests of children of all ages.

**July Pre-School Bat Program** --Alice Havard and Dinah Gasteneau assisted at the pre-school program at the library that included songs and games and an opportunity to explore a portable cave. Sixty-two children participated.

**June Bat Viewing** – Dinah Gastineau and Mary Jane Wheeling assisted with the programs providing an opportunity to see bats fly out of the cave in the evening. Mary Jane was the lead naturalist for the event in August. The large group of participants joined in bat activities until dusk, then hiked to a point above the cave to watch the bats leave, and then were divided into groups for a night tour Conner’s Cave. Over 150 participated in bat viewing this summer.

**July UPOP Field Day** – Alice Havard helped



Sybil Amelon, U. S. Forest Service, shows live bats to Fun City kids.

with activities during the all day field day that included hikes and tours of Conner’s Cave, hands- on natural history activities, map reading and camp cooking for children from youth

agencies in Columbia. Children also participated in field trips throughout July led by park staff.

Over 500 children participated in this program that helped over three hundred children and their families learn about the importance of bats in their ecosystem. The children were making connections to natural systems that can lead to a life time of enjoyment and appreciation of our natural world.

### **Big Muddy NFWR Butterfly and Moth Survey, 2007**

*Wedge Watkins,  
Big Muddy NFWR*

The Overton Bottoms North unit of the Big Muddy National Fish and Wildlife Refuge contains approximately 2,500 acres, within the Missouri River floodplain. A more natural floodplain function is being restored along with a variety of habitats, dominated by native plants. Three distinct habitats (wet prairie, young bottomland forest and upland (fescue pasture/old field)) were sampled for Lepidoptera throughout the summer of 2007. Thirteen volunteers from the Missouri Master Naturalist program and the Friends of Big Muddy worked with the refuge biologist, and in cooperation with the University of Missouri – Columbia, to establish a baseline species list for the Overton Bottoms North unit. Volunteers contributed over 200 hours to the collection, preservation, identification and display of the moths and butterflies. 119 species were observed including *Speyeria idalia* (Regal Fritillary), a state listed and globally vulnerable species. The refuge hopes to use this data, along with information on vegetation and migratory birds, during the development of its comprehensive conservation plan and habitat management plans.

The three distinct habitats were sampled twelve times between April 14 and August 31. Areas dominated by grasses and forbs were visually searched for the butterfly perch profiles and flight patterns. Moths were flushed and collected opportunistically during daylight collections. Special attention was paid to grassland vegetation; puddle edges and recently wet open ground; adult feeding areas

(nectar sources); and microhabitats of short vegetation with patchy open ground, including trails and vehicle tracks. Specimens were collected using standard insect nets. Two sampling sessions for moths occurred after dark with the use of incandescent and ultraviolet lights. Specimens collected in the field were placed in envelopes and stored in a refrigerator until they were pinned (usually < 48 hours). Pinned specimens were identified and labeled or taken the University of Missouri – Columbia, for comparison to vouchered specimens and identification. Special thanks to Dr. Robert Sites and Kris Simpson from MU, for their assistance with this project.



### **Boone County Extension Office Native Garden**

*Don Day  
Extension Office*

Pam Close and Lea Langdon have been working on the capstone project at the Boone County Extension Center. They have planned

a native plant garden on the bank to the south of the Extension Center. This was the area grown up in weeds that was a disgrace to the extension center. They measured the area and developed a plan for what plants to use. The weeds were killed with Roundup and then the area was tilled. Some of the plants have been planted and these were from donations from Pam and Lea. Now they have developed a list of plants that will be purchased from Missouri Wildflowers and will install them over the next few weeks. The area already looks much better.

### **Emerald Ash Borer Survey**

*Rob Lawrence*

*MDC*

The emerald ash borer (EAB), a non-native wood-boring beetle, has killed over 25 million ash trees in several Midwestern states, and it is expanding its range toward Missouri. This beetle has the potential to eliminate nearly all ash trees from U.S. forests, much like the impact of chestnut blight on American chestnut trees. Each year the Missouri Departments of Conservation and Agriculture and the U.S. Forest Service survey sites across Missouri to detect if the EAB has arrived here.

In 2007, members of the Boone's Lick Chapter of Master Naturalists joined this effort and surveyed 20 sites in five counties. Participants were given a 3-hour training, a list of initial survey sites, and guidelines on how to choose additional sites that are at high-risk for EAB introduction. At each site, unhealthy, declining ash trees are examined for signs of the beetle's presence.

The EAB can invade new areas by hitchhiking within firewood and ash nursery stock that are moved long distances. High-risk sites include campgrounds or residential areas receiving firewood from other states, and residential or commercial developments where ash trees have been planted within the last 10 years. So

far, no EAB populations have been found in Missouri.

These surveys will continue annually in summer months. Master Naturalist participation is encouraged. The EAB is spreading westward across Illinois, so additional survey help is especially needed in eastern Missouri. For further information about EAB, see these web sites:

<http://www.emeraldashborer.info/>

<http://www.mdc.mo.gov/forest/features/firewood.htm>



**EAB\_adult\_on  
penny\_Lexa Panessidi\_State of MI\_Forestry  
Images\_edited.jpg**

### **Weekends on the Boardwalk**

*Katherine DiFoxfire,*

*Rockbridge Memorial State Park*

Six Master Naturalists participated in the Rock Bridge Memorial State Park "Weekends on the Boardwalk" project June and July 2007. The goal of this project, now in its fifth year, is to provide interpretation and cave tours to park visitors on summer random weekends, especially those who arrived on site without flashlights and thus would be otherwise unable to explore the cave on their own. Staff and volunteers stationed themselves above the cave entrance from noon to four on 10 different summer days to greet the visitors, answer questions about the cave and the park, and then lead visitors on tours of Connor's Cave. While in the 150-section of cave, visitors learned about cave geology including how various speleothems (cave formations) are formed; cave life including bats, frogs,

salamanders, isopods, amphipods and pink planarians; and the links between the cave ecosystem and the surface watershed. To prepare for the project, volunteers participated in a half-day training session. The six Master Naturalists who helped make this program a success were Gregg Garcia, Dinah Gastineau, Donnie Nichols, Jerry Nichols, Mary Jane Wheeling (from a previous class) and Laura Wright. Along with some park staff and other volunteers, they provided interpretation to a total of 680 people and contributed more than 50 volunteer hours.

### West Boulevard Elementary Habitat Project

*Scott Hamilton*

*Hinkson Creek Watershed Restoration Project*

This project was initiated by the Forest Service, the University Extension then became involved as did the Hinkson Creek Watershed Restoration Project, sponsor of Columbia Master Naturalists. The scope of the work included installation of landscaping rocks and timbers, which formed the infrastructure of the created wetland. A rock swale was also created and planted, and a raingarden was created and planted. Maintenance activities such as building a fence around the wetland, mulching the areas, and weeding the areas, were also accomplished. Tree and shrub whips were planted throughout the school to provide bird habitat. Students (2nd-5th graders) were actively assisting with these activities, and MN volunteers took the role as teachers in the various projects.

Initially, 10 people signed up and showed up at the first meeting and work day. Unfortunately, numbers dwindled after that, but five MN volunteers showed reliably multiple times. Approximately 30 hours were donated to this project. All MN volunteers that showed up to work were very hard workers, and did an excellent job at their tasks.

The project has progressed wonderfully. The wetland plants have thrived and provide habitat for fish, frogs, dragonflies, and other aquatic insects. The raingarden plants have done very well also, and have served as a learning opportunity about pollinators. The shrubs planted have survived amazingly well, and they have been maintained nicely. The installed fence and rocks look good. West Boulevard recently had their dedication ceremony, and the school superintendent spoke highly of the project and honored the MN volunteers in her speech. There is a photo of the MN volunteers on the interpretive sign displayed next to the wetland.

Hopefully more school habitat projects like this one can be accomplished in the future. My grant has talked with Lee School and others about these possibilities.



### UPCOMING EVENTS

**Tuesday, January 8th at 7:30pm: *Carpe Diem* by Duane Chapman, USGS** Sponsored by Friends of Big Muddy and Missouri River Relief

*Carpe Diem* is the first monthly program of a series and features Duane Chapman of the U.S. Geological Survey talking about Asian carp in the Missouri River. You've heard about the "flying fish of the Missouri River," now come and hear the rest of the story.... Details

at <http://www.friendsofbigmuddy.org/program.htm>  
All programs are open to the public.

### **MO Natural Resources Conference, 2008**

“Get Ready for Change: Ensuring Resource Sustainability in an iPod® World”  
January 30-February 1, 2008  
Tan-Tar-A Resort, Osage Beach  
[www.mnrc.org](http://www.mnrc.org)

“The MNRC is an opportunity for conservation professionals and volunteers to share information about ongoing work and discuss local, state, regional and national resource-management issues. The event includes dozens of workshops, exhibits, technical presentations and meetings of professional societies for foresters, fisheries and wildlife biologists and soil conservationists. “

- \* Conference is open to the public.
- \* Hotel deadlines: Make your own hotel reservations, not included in registration fees; special price for hotel rooms is held through January 4. See registration information for details.
- \* Fees: cost is for full program, no fee schedule for individual workshops.

## MEET A MASTER NATURALIST

Donnie Nichols, class of '07

### 1. What is the reason you became a Master Naturalist?

As far back as I can remember, to the time when I was a young boy, I have been fascinated by the simplicity and complexity of nature. As I grew older that interest continued to grow. The interactions within ecosystems and environments are truly amazing. But perhaps the true reason I wanted to become a Missouri Master Naturalist was vanity. I was fortunate enough to pass along an interest in the beauty and wonder of the world to my children. My middle daughter went on to

become an archaeologist and an anthropologist, and now teaches at the college level. I see the impact she has on her students, and realize the possible impact that those students might have in the future. It has been said, “The memory of the dead is entrusted to the living.” With the knowledge and opportunities acquired through the Master Naturalist program I have the opportunity to interact with people of all ages, and various social and economic backgrounds. If I can inspire just one person (hopefully many) with the beauty and awe of our natural world, and its preservation, and they inspire someone else, and they in turn inspire someone else, then hopefully I will have contributed some good to our world for generations to come.

### 2. Most amazing, bizarre, disgusting, odd or awe-inspiring thing you have seen or experienced in the course of Master Naturalist activities?

Perhaps the most awe-inspiring, interesting, bizarre, but not at all disgusting thing that has happened to me as a Master Naturalist was to be engulfed by thousands of insects during the night moth collections at the Overton Bottoms for our Big Muddy Butterfly and Moth Inventory project. Makes you realize that for such a large species we are in many ways very small.

### 3. Favorite service project thus far?

The fortunate thing for me is I can be intrigued by almost anything. I can easily be entertained by watching a leaf as it is pulled along a stream by the currents and eddies, or by following tracks in the snow, from nowhere to nowhere. I thoroughly enjoy all the projects I am involved in as a Master Naturalist. The Butterfly and Moth Inventory, the Ash Borer Survey, Stream Team projects, helping Troy with hummingbird banding, and the prairie restoration are equally fascinating to me. If I were forced to pick one project as the most satisfying it would be giving the Connor Cave Tours. I enjoy sharing knowledge and interacting with the public. What a bonus when you spark an interest and open doors for someone to new ways of seeing and thinking about our environment

#### 4. Favorite Missouri native?

I am way too much of a generalist to be able to narrow down my favorite Missouri Native anything. Perhaps I could lump together my answer by saying The Biodiversity of Missouri is my favorite thing. With over 4000 native plant species (not including algae) and 18,000+ native animal species I would never be able to decide on one favorite thing. For example, just in flowering plants, the Jack-in-the-pulpit might be my favorite for beauty, a Missouri orchid for its rarity, the Prairie violet for role it plays in the life cycle of the Regal Fritillary and the compass plant for the uniqueness of how its basal leaves align themselves north and south. (Plus the sap makes good chewing gum.) See the problem for me? And that's just one category.

#### 5. Something folks would never guess about you?

I like to catch rattlesnakes. I've been doing it since I was 16.

<b>ADVANCED TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES</b>
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#### **TreeKeepers**

Class starts January 17, 2008.

TreeKeepers participants begin with a six-week class on tree care and maintenance.

Volunteers are asked to give 36 hours of service to City tree projects.

Classes will be held on six consecutive Thursdays from 6-8:30 p.m. at the ARC, 1701 West Ash St. Beginning Jan. 17. Classes are taught by City of Columbia and Missouri Department of Conservation staff and faculty from the University of Missouri.

To learn more about TreeKeepers, contact the City's Office of Volunteer Services at 874-7499 or [volunteer@GoColumbiaMo.com](mailto:volunteer@GoColumbiaMo.com).

*Note that the Treekeepers classroom hours count as advanced training for us, and the service hours may be counted as well.*

#### **The Birds of Winter**

With Bill Clark and Edge Wade

January 24 and 31, Feb 7 and 14, 1:30-4:00pm  
Osher Lifelong Learning Center. The emphases will be on waterfowl, raptors, the occasional wintering sparrow and how to identify the feathered UFOs invading from the North this winter. Field trips, weather permitting, will be Jan 31, Feb 7 and 14. To register, or for more information, call 573 882-2585.

#### **Columbia Aquatic Restoration Project**

CARP (Columbia Aquatic Restoration Project) is a new volunteer program designed to support the Columbia Parks & Recreation Department in implementing an aquatic plant and shoreline management plan.

Participants will learn about lake and pond ecology during three training classes and hands on training labs. After the course, you will assist the city horticulturist with organized projects.

Please note: CARP projects are scheduled on Saturday mornings. We ask that you consider this before you register for this volunteer program.

The 2008 CARP class will be held on March Mondays 3, 10, and 17, 2008 at the Parks Management Center located at 1507 BL70 W.

View the [2008 CARP brochure and application](#).

*Note that the CARP classroom hours count as advanced training for us, and the service hours may be counted as well.*

#### **Pond Management Workshop**

Tuesday March 4th 6:30 - 9 pm

At Boone Electric Coop, 1413 Rangeline Road in Columbia.

Workshop is put on by the MDC and Boone Co. NRCS and SWCD. Topics include site selection, construction, stocking, fisheries

management, and nuisance wildlife. To register, call 573-884-6861.

## JANUARY VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

### Volunteer Opportunities

Below are the volunteer opportunities for January and ongoing projects, as well as announcements of other events. Additional information on each project is at:

<http://extension.missouri.edu/masternaturalist/columbia/VolunteerOpportunities/JanuaryVolunteerOpportunities.pdf>

Please contact the person indicated for more detailed information on any of the projects. Note that 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.

#### **Christmas Bird Count: Saturday, January 5<sup>th</sup>**

*Sponsored by Friends of Big Muddy.*

The Weldon Springs Christmas Bird Count includes the Boone’s Crossing Unit of the Big Muddy National Fish and Wildlife Refuge in Chesterfield. We will identify and count all birds in our assigned area. Dress warmly and bring binoculars, id books, etc. We will carpool from Columbia. Contact Troy Gordon at 573-424-9051 or [friends@friendsofbigmuddy.org](mailto:friends@friendsofbigmuddy.org). Project is approved.

#### **CACHE Birding Trips: Every Wednesday, 7:30am**

*Sponsored by The Columbia Audubon Society, Missouri Department of Conservation, and The Audubon Society of Missouri.*

These are birding trips with Bill Clark. Meet at 7:30am (don’t be late) at the southwest corner of the Parkade Center parking lot. The destination will be decided the day of the trip. Contact Vanessa Melton at 573-864-3905 or [vanndawn@hotmail.com](mailto:vanndawn@hotmail.com). Project is approved.

#### **Arrow Rock Historic Landing Trail Interpretive Signs: Any day before January 31st**

*Sponsored by the Big Muddy National Fish and Wildlife Refuge, Friends of Big Muddy and Friends of Arrow Rock*

Work on your interpretive skills, incorporating the natural and cultural history of the Missouri River and the town of Arrow Rock. Write the text for two interpretive panels that will be located along the trail. This can be done from your home. Some notes and books will be provided to use as sources, and you are welcome to delve deeper into the history at the State Historical Society Museum in Columbia. Contact Tim Haller at [Tim\\_Haller@fws.gov](mailto:Tim_Haller@fws.gov) or 573-441-2799. Project is approved.

### Ongoing Opportunities

#### **City of Columbia Natural Resources Inventory: Data collection can be done until April 1.**

*Sponsored by Columbia, MO*

Select an area to collect information on the location and type of trees. This may be your private property, in a city park or on other public property. Second, collect data by walking the area and completing a checklist of the type of vegetation and trees present, and sketching on a map. Contact John Fleck at 874-7659 or [jef@GoColumbiaMo.com](mailto:jef@GoColumbiaMo.com). Project is not yet approved.

#### **Project Seeds- Students, the Environment, and Endangered Species**

*Sponsored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ecological Services Columbia Office*  
Volunteers will lead presentations on Boone County endangered species in Columbia schools (5<sup>th</sup> grades). They will also follow up presentations with installing and maintaining an aquarium in the school and hosting a book fair

to purchase wildlife books for the school libraries

Contact [Becky Clearwater@fws.gov](mailto:Becky_Clearwater@fws.gov) or Charlie Scott at [Charlie\\_scott@fws.gov](mailto:Charlie_scott@fws.gov) Phone: 573-234-2132. Project is approved.

**Columbia Fishery Resources Office, Ongoing, typically weekdays throughout the year**

*Sponsored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.*

Volunteers join fishery staff for day long trips to the field where they will collect, tag, and measure fish, and assess fish habitat quality. Volunteers may also work in the lab to aid in fish identification analysis of field data.

Contact: Joanne Grady at [Joanne\\_Grady@fws.gov](mailto:Joanne_Grady@fws.gov) or 573-234-2132, ext. 101. Project is not yet approved.

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

Volunteers are 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 8am and 4:30pm if you need to use Park equipment/vehicle. Updates usually needed 2-3 times per 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 [roxie.campbell@dnr.mo.gov](mailto:roxie.campbell@dnr.mo.gov) 573-449-7402. Project is approved.

**Raptor Rehabilitation Project**

*Sponsored by Raptor Rehabilitation Project.*

Care for sick or injured raptors; feed and provide activities to captive, wild animals; create, improve and deliver presentations. Contact: Erin West, President at [eedw76@mizzou.edu](mailto:eedw76@mizzou.edu) for details and training. Project is approved.

**Prairie Fork Conservation Area Field Trip Naturalists**

*Sponsored by Missouri Dept. of Conservation, University of Missouri, 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 ~ 9am to 2pm. Most programs involve 3 small group activities from 9am till noon with children rotating through stations and one large group activity after lunch. Help is most needed during 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 and to plan future programs. Contact: Meredith Donaldson at [Mjdonlsn@aol.com](mailto:Mjdonlsn@aol.com) or 815-9255. Project is approved.

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

*Sponsored by the Missouri Department of Conservation.* Volunteer will 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 allowing MDC to better assess property needs. 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 Activities, Ongoing dates throughout the year.**

*Sponsored by Friends of Big Muddy.* Most opportunities are on units of the Big Muddy National Fish & 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.

**CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS!**

Sometimes a good story needs the right audience. Do you have a story to share with others who will understand it? Were you a first-timer on the Christmas Bird Count, and want to tell others what it was like? Send submissions to [Rachel.Pia@gmail.com](mailto:Rachel.Pia@gmail.com) for inclusion in the newsletter.

What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.

Jane Goodall

2008 OFFICERS



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