



PRESIDENTIAL PONDERINGS

If heat had a sound, it would be the drone of a cicada. When I moved to Missouri in late August 2001, the first thing that struck me (apart from the fact that I couldn't seem to stop sweating) was that it was never quiet. Cicadas can't take all the blame for Missouri's incessant summertime background music, of course, but our state does provide us with a pleasing variety—Robinson's cicada, with its bold white stripe; the evocatively named scissor grinder and buzz saw cicadas; the plain and simple big cicada; the morning cicada; and the periodical cicada. For those of you sharpening your taxonomic skills, the first five cicada species all reside in the same genus (*Tibicen*); they're also called dog-day cicadas, since they're active when the rest of us are lying inert in the shade, panting and clawing at our chigger bites. The periodical cicadas are in the genus *Magicicada* (though if you've ever waded through a heap of decomposing cicadas on the sidewalk after a major synchronized emergence, "magic" isn't really the word that leaps to mind), and they have the distinction of having the longest life cycle of any insect. Sure, they spend 13 or 17 years squatting underground sucking on tree roots, but for a cicada, that's likely a good-quality life.

Believe it or not, much of their summertime singing is in the service of love—and it isn't really singing at all, it's more like percussion. Males "sing" to attract mates using a sort of abdominal drum. Specialized muscles control the movement of a pair of membranes at the base of the abdomen; the vibrations created as these membranes move are amplified by the insect's hollow abdomen, which acts as a resonating chamber. They also sing to confuse predators—being utterly defenseless in all other respects, a sort of mass screaming is used to reduce the chance of any individual being singled out and eaten.

Cicadas and humans have a long history together. Observers in ancient China and Greece, noting the emergence of the unappealing nymph from the ground and its transformation into an ethereal winged creature (though admittedly clumsy and with a tendency to bounce repeatedly off bystander heads), saw the cicada as being capable of resurrection and thus a symbol of immortality (oddly enough, that didn't stop the ancients from eating them). In Taoism, the cicada was seen as a symbol of the soul leaving the body after death. Their images have appeared on funerary urns, coins, and jewelry; they've been used as diuretics and, with a pleasing touch of irony, as a cure for ear-ache. Homer even mentions cicadas in

the Iliad, comparing the speech of "sage chiefs exempt from war" to the song of the cicada.

Cicadas have, alas, fallen substantially in the estimation of modern humans, but it seems to me that some 2,500 years ago, the Greek poet Hesiod described a 102-degree day in Missouri perfectly: "The tuneful cicada sitting on a tree in the weary summer season pours forth from under his wings his shrill song." Play on. —Celeste Mazzacano

Service Opportunity

The Boone County Pinnacles Youth Foundation is seeking three board members to serve on the Pinnacles Youth Park board of directors. The 12-member board oversees park use and maintenance of the park, which is located about 12 miles north of Columbia on Highway 63. The 70-acre park was given to 'the youth of Boone County' in 1965, and is open to the public during daylight hours and to youth groups for overnight camping.

Board members serve three-year terms. Responsibilities include attending board meetings (six per year, two of which are work days at the park) and serving one month of park duty per year (replacing brochures in the information box, emptying trash cans, replacing toilet paper in the outhouse; generally one trip to the park per week is sufficient).

Anyone interested in learning more about the park may contact Phillip Burk (445-1244), Joanne Cowan (449-7946) or Julie Fleming (874-1968).



Making a Difference

You've probably heard the adage "Think globally, act locally." That's what comes to mind when I think about Master Naturalists. You are acting locally: collecting seed, counting butterflies, working with raptors, educating children, talking with visitors at parks and centers, banding hummingbirds, building rain gardens, combating invasive

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

species, compiling databases, monitoring water quality, and so much more. As volunteers, you may feel like you don't have enough time to do all you'd like to do. Perhaps you're frustrated that you haven't been out collecting seed or working on the boardwalk at Rock Bridge as much as you want to be. Life has a way of intervening and we get busy with work and family. Maybe you think you're not doing enough to make a difference. I'm here to tell you *are* making a difference; a big difference.

Boone's Lick Chapter members have recorded over 2,600 service hours (and I suspect you have contributed many more that haven't been recorded – yet). That's a lot of hours – 325 days worth, which is about one year of full-time employment for a person. And that's just one chapter. Missouri has six chapters and is about to add a seventh, with even more to come. Nearly 200 people have completed their 40-hour course, and we expect to add to that number this fall. Each year we'll have more chapters, and each chapter will conduct training. In five years we hope there will be 1,500 Master Naturalists. The Department of Conservation's new plan sets a goal of 3,000 Master Naturalists by 2016. Just as one drop of water contributes to an ocean, so your efforts add to those of your fellow Master Naturalists around the state. And that's just Missouri.

Recently I have been working with a national Master Naturalist initiative. At least twenty-five states either have or are developing Master Naturalist type programs. Some are older than ours (Texas has trained more than 3,100 Master Naturalists since 1998 and Florida has added more than 2,500 Master Naturalists since beginning a program in 2001); many are newer than our program. Minnesota, Michigan, Virginia, and West Virginia have all launched Master Naturalist programs since 2004. I'm excited about the national initiative because throughout the United States, people like you are making a difference in their communities and their states. The potential is phenomenal. In Texas alone Master Naturalists have completed 315,000 hours of volunteer service valued at \$5.2 million dollars, and have enhanced more than 30,000 acres of natural habitats. Folks, that's a lot of conservation! If that's just Texas, imagine how big a difference there can be throughout the country.

But this isn't really about numbers (though being in government, numbers are important to my work and to the future of these kinds of programs). It's about you. About your commitment to making sure the resources we enjoy today will be here for future generations. It's about the joy of learning and of teaching others, and about the satisfaction that comes from making a meaningful contribution. It's about having fun and enjoying the people you meet along the way. No matter how much or how little, it's making a difference. As Margaret Mead said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." –Ginny Wallace

Here are volunteer opportunities for August and ongoing projects. Additional information for each project is at <http://extension.missouri.edu/masternaturalist/columbia/VolunteerOpportunities/Volunteer%20Opportunities.pdf>. If a project is listed as "not yet approved," you need to fill out a Service Project Form (available at <http://extension.missouri.edu/masternaturalist/columbia/Projectapproval.htm>).

Stream Monitoring

Friday, August 18, 3 p.m.

Sponsored by Hinkson Creek Watershed Restoration Project

Volunteers will do stream monitoring activities in several tributaries to Hinkson Creek. They will monitor for chemical pollutants within the creeks. There will be several experienced Master Naturalists on hand to help newcomers. Monitoring should last two and a half to three hours. Water may be two-feet deep in places, so dress/plan accordingly.

Contact: Scott Hamilton at Scott.Hamilton@mdc.mo.gov or call 882-9909 ext 3257.

Project is approved.

Butterfly Collecting at Overton Bottoms

Monday, August 14, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Sponsored by the Big Muddy National Fish and Wildlife Refuge and Friends of Big Muddy

We will be adding to the butterfly checklist with an August collection day. You do not need to have helped with the capstone to participate, and we will provide training. After collecting, volunteers are invited to the refuge office to help pin specimens. Another day at the MU Entomology lab identifying specimens is planned, possibly Aug. 15 or 16. Contact Wedge for date.

Contact Wedge Watkins at

Wedge.Watkins@fws.gov or 573-441-2788; or Troy Gordon at friends@friendsofbigmuddy.org or call 573-424-9051.

Project is approved.

Ongoing Opportunities

Staff Audubon's Trailside Nature Center Museum

Saturdays and Sundays

Sponsored by Columbia Audubon Society
Volunteers are needed to help staff Audubon's Trailside Nature Center Museum at the MLK parking lot of the Katy trail. Shifts are 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 12:30 to 4 p.m. each Saturday and 1 to 4 p.m. each Sunday.

Contact Suzanne Wright: Suzwright@centurytel.net or Denny Donnell: hddonnell@hotmail.com to schedule a time.

Project approved.

Flower Bed Weeding at Rock Bridge Memorial State Park Office

Date: Anytime this summer

Sponsored by Rock Bridge Memorial State Park
Work may be done on weekdays or weekends during 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. or at other times if you provide your own tools.

Contact Kathryn DiFoxfire at rock.bridge.memorial.state.park@dnr.mo.gov or call 573-449-7400.

Project is approved.

Friends of Rock Bridge Memorial State Park Explore Rock Bridge third Saturday of each month

Sponsored by Friends of Rock Bride Memorial State Park

Volunteers needed to assist with hike each month; volunteer to assist selecting topic and speakers for future programs.

Contact: Meredith Donaldson at Mjdonlsn@aol.com or 815-9255.

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 assist in catching birds and removing them from the traps and will be trained to do banding over time. Contact Troy Gordon at tgordon@friendsofbigmuddy.org or call 573-424-9051.

Project is approved

Landowner Contacts Database

Flexible hours until completed.

Sponsored by the Missouri Department of Conservation

The volunteer will create an Access database or use a database already completed (depending on the interest/abilities of the volunteer) to record pertinent information about landowner contact information and log each file into the database. Contact Josh Stevens at Josh.Stevens@mdc.mo.gov or 573-592-1412.

Project is approved.

Friends of Big Muddy Activities

Ongoing dates throughout the year.

Most opportunities are on the units of the Big Muddy National Fish and Wildlife Refuge, projects are sponsored by Friends of Big Muddy.

Check <http://www.friendsofbigmuddy.org> for current opportunities or sign up for list serve announcements of activities by e-mailing FriendsOfBigMuddy-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

Contact Troy Gordon at friends@friendsofbigmuddy.org or call 573-424-9051.

Projects are approved.

Raptor Rehabilitation Project

Ongoing

Sponsored by Raptor Rehabilitation Project

There are a variety of things we need help with: maintenance and upkeep of building, compound, mews and flight cages; care and feeding of the birds, educational presentations, etc. Contact: Diane Kuschel at dgkb6b@mizzou.edu or 875-1395.

Project is approved.

Rock Bridge Memorial State Park

Needs include invasive species removal, interpreters for Connor's Cave tours, updating bulletin boards, patrolling trails, assistance in office, historical research. Contact: Roxie Campbell at Roxie.Campbell@dnr.mo.gov, Kathryn DiFoxfire at rock.bridge.memorial.state.park@dnr.mo.gov or call 573-449-7402.

Projects are approved.

Remember to report your hours! Keeping track of all the time donated by Chapter members allows us to see and celebrate the impact we're having in our community. And the hours you contribute can be used as a match on many of the grants our partners rely on to support their operations. Instructions of how to log hours and what counts have been posted to the website.

President	Celeste Mazzacano (573) 499-1913
Vice-President	Suzanne Wright (573) 446-2217
Secretary/Treas.	Sally Swanson (573) 874-2043

COMMITTEES

Program	Suzanne Wright
Communication	Barb Fairchild
Project Approval	Carolyn Broun
New Class	Vacant

2006 OFFICERS

NEXT MEETING - Thursday, September 14 6:30 p.m
Program to be announced



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