



OCTOBER MEETING

The next meeting of the Boone's Lick Chapter of the Master Naturalist will be on Oct. 12 at 6:30 PM. Dave Graber will be giving a program on water fowl migration.

PRESIDENTIAL PONDERINGS

Another summer has passed us by and, as always, I greet fall with mixed feelings. The poet Juvenal wrote "Autumn is the harvest of greedy death", while Robert Frost, no less melancholy though in a more restrained New England way (and really, if you don't like fall, why are you living in New England anyway?), moodily informs us that "My sorrow, when she's here with me, thinks these dark days of autumn rain are beautiful as days can be; she loves the bare, the withered tree; she walks the sodden pasture lane". Not everyone views the turn of the season with dismay; Percy Shelley declaimed lyrically "There is a harmony in autumn, and a luster in its sky, which through the summer is not heard or seen, as if it could not be, as if it had not been!" Of course, he was also doing a lot of drugs at the time.

Regardless of your personal take on the matter, we have passed the date when night and day are roughly equal, and in the Northern Hemisphere we see the Sun's path as crossing the celestial equator, heading south. From here till winter solstice, we're losing daylight. The autumnal equinox is one of two days each year when the center of the Sun spends an equal amount of time above and below the horizon at every location on Earth. Timing of the equinoxes is actually not fixed, but falls about six hours later every year; this differential of

one full day in four years is reset by using a leap year.

Autumnal equinox goes by many names, such as Alban Elfed, Cornucopia, Feast of Avilon, Festival of Dionysus, Harvest Home, Harvest Tide, Mabon, Night of the Hunter, Second Harvest Festival, Wine Harvest, and Witch's Thanksgiving. Common themes include balance (the sun enters the sign of Libra, the righteous constellation of the scales), harvesting, hunting, and remembering the dead. Many ancient civilizations observed solstices and equinoxes, and found ways to mark them in their calendars. The ancient Britons specialized in constructing stone structures aligned so that solstices and equinoxes could be determined. The ancient Mayans built the pyramid at Cihickén Itzá to display different patterns of triangles of light at the solstices and equinoxes; on the fall equinox, seven triangles become visible on the pyramid's staircase. The most recent attempt to introduce a new equinoctial calendar was during the French Revolution, where New Year's Day, the first of Vendemiaire (grape-harvest month; this was France, after all), was the date of the fall equinox in the Northern Hemisphere. The French Republican Calendar lasted from 1793 to 1805, faring a little less well than the metric system.

Harvest and death have been popular autumnal themes for centuries. The full moon closest to the fall equinox is called the Harvest Moon, as farmers eager to gather their final crops would continue working by its light. The ancient Druids conducted a mock-sacrifice by burning a huge wicker figure that represented the corn god (Julius Caesar gave them a bad

PONDERINGS Cont.

rap by claiming they shoved people into the figure and burned them too, but he was widely believed to have been lying, as he admitted he never actually observed this, and was trying to conquer Britain at the time). The Druidical spirit lives on in England, where fall celebrations may include burning cornhusk dolls. In Japan, the equinoxes signal time for visiting the graves of loved ones and honoring one's ancestors.

So gather your harvest, pay your debts, drink wine, and enjoy the waning of the daylight!—
Celeste Mazzacano

SEPTEMBER MEETING MINUTES

Present: Janine Gordon, Troy Gordon, Celeste Mozzacano, Meredith Donaldson, Larry Barringhaus, Phil Sachs, Sharon Reed, Suzanne Wright, Don Day, Ginny Wallace, Sally Swanson, Angela Belden, Cheryl Hardy, Jack Dillard, Eleanor Mitter, Alice Havard, David Silvey, Vanessa Melton, Jody Stotsky, Charles Pugsley, Buffie Balling, Carolyn Doyle, and Bev Boyd..

The meeting was opened at 6:30 p.m. by Celeste. Snacks were provided by Suzanne Wright. Ann Koenig spoke on trees in the city. She went into much detail about pruning does and don'ts. We learned that you should not remove more than 20% of the branches of a tree at a time, that you should remove broken or crossing branches if you can, and leave the tree alone for the first 2 years. Also you should remove suckers. Timing for pruning is best in the late fall or winter, but it is so important to do proper pruning that if summer is the only time available it is ok to do it then.

Ann rewarded those who asked good questions during the talk with Smokey the Bear prizes.

Pins for certification were handed out to Vanessa Melton, David Silvey, Bev Boyd, Phil Sachs, and to Meredith Donaldson for re-certification.

Volunteer ops were discussed. They can be found in this month's Dragonflyer. Spring classes will begin in February. The committee to work on details will begin soon. Committee members are Troy Gordon, Janine Gordon, Suzanne Wright, Meredith Donaldson, Sally Swanson, Don Day and Ginny Wallace.

Election of new officers will take place at the December meeting.

We will staff a booth at the walk - run in Jefferson City on October 7.

October's meeting will be the 12th with Dave Graber giving a program on water fowl migration.

Respectfully submitted,
Sally Swanson

KNOW MORE

The 10th annual Conference on Environmental Education (EE) is Friday, Nov. 3, through Sunday, Nov. 5 on the University of Missouri campus in Columbia. For registration information, go to <http://www.meea.org/EECampus06.pdf> or call the MU Conference office at 882-4087 or 1-866-6663. The EE Campus offers sessions of interest to Master Naturalists including Project WET, Project Learning Tree, Science of Climate Change, Karst Geology, Map Reading and more. Some of these sessions should qualify for advanced training. Check with Phil Sachs.

CONGRATULATIONS

Kudos are in order for these Master Naturalists: Celeste Mazzacano, 250-hour service award; Troy Gordon, 500-hour service award; Celeste Mazzacano, Meredith Donaldson and Janine Gordon, recertification; Beverly Boyd, Phil Sachs, David Silvey and Vanessa Melton, initial certification. Each of these members received the appropriate pins and awards at recent chapter meetings. Marie Scruggs has achieved certification and will receive her pin, certificate and name badge at an upcoming meeting. Members are reminded

to report volunteer hours, so they, too, can be recognized.

THINK ADOPTION

Trail That Is: The interval between the torpor of summer and the rigors of winter is a great time to hike, bike or ride a horse through woods, glades, wetlands and prairies. It also is a great time to help maintain trails in these areas. The Conservation Department has more than 700 miles of trail on 136 areas and not enough hands to maintain them all. The agency's Adopt-A-Trail Program lets volunteers maintain their favorite trails and gives them an excuse to trek the trail several times a year.

Autumn is an especially good time to adopt a trail as summer can be tough on trails, especially a hot, dry summer like this past one. Not did it take its toll on plants, it left soil along trails vulnerable to erosion. Just one heavy rain can start the process.

Adopt-A-Trail participants monitor, maintain and enhance trails and trailhead facilities. Common projects include clearing loose rocks, sticks and branches that accumulate on trail surfaces, cutting back limbs and brush, cleaning and repairing water bars (which helps halt erosion) and drainage ditches, clearing debris from bridges, stairs and viewing decks and picking up trash.

Many trails are available. To start adoption proceedings, call Teresa Kight at 573/522-4115, ext. 3636, or e-mail her at teresa.kight@mdc.mo.gov. This project is not approved. To have it approved, go to <http://extension.missouri.edu/masternaturalist/columbia/Projectapproval.htm>

ARE YOU A LEAF PEEPER

Because drought plagued much of Missouri throughout the summer, autumn may be relatively drab in some areas, especially central and southwest Missouri. To Missouri's finest fall color, you'll need to travel to the northwestern part of the state. However, some trees show spectacular fall color even in areas hit hard by drought. Trees growing along creek and river bottoms are less affected by dry weather, so driving through valleys is one way to find fall color in drought-stricken areas. But be quick. Fall color almost always peaks around Oct. 15 in Missouri. Trees in the northern and southern parts of the state may change colors a week earlier or later.

Here's what is putting on a show in central Missouri right now: Virginia creeper and poison ivy are turning red. Smooth sumac, a common roadside shrub, is turning red. Small trees changing color include sassafras (red) and dogwood (purple or faint red.) Large trees changing color include white ash (purple), sugar maple (red) and hackberry and elm (yellow). Most black walnuts and cottonwoods have dropped or are in the process of dropping their leaves

Good routes for fall color in this region include I-70 from Montgomery County to Saline County, Highway 54 from New Bloomfield to Camdenton, Highway 63 from Ashland to Rolla, Highway 50 from Rosebud to Centertown, Highway 87 north of Boonville, Highway 179 south of Wooldridge, Highway C west of Jefferson City, Highway 94 east of Jefferson City, Highway 19 south of New Florence and almost any road in Camden, Miller, Maries, Osage and Gasconade counties. For fall color updates as the season progresses, visit www.missouriconservation.org/nathis/seasons/fall/.

OCTOBER VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Here's the latest in volunteer opportunities.

Hinkson Clean Sweep

Saturday, October 7, 10 a.m. to noon

Hinkson Creek Watershed Restoration Project is coordinating a large-scale litter pick-up at four sites within the Hinkson watershed.

Site 1: Walnut Street Bridge over Hinkson Creek. Take Walnut Street immediately north of Stephens Lake. Go to the bridge at the end of the street.

Site 2: Flat Branch Tributary at Flat Branch Park, Fourth and Broadway. (One block east of Providence Road in downtown Columbia.) This site is best if you have young children.

Site 3: Hinkson Creek Valley Neighborhood. Old 63 at Bluffdale Drive (north of Shepard Boulevard at Old 63). Turn west on Bluffdale.

Site 4: Flat Branch Tributary at Hinkson Creek. Along the MKT Trail at Martin Luther King Memorial on Stadium. Meet at the trailhead parking lot.

Contact Mona Menezes

mona.menezes@GoColumbia.com or call 874-7616 and leave your name, phone number, and the site you will clean. You may also register on-line at www.GoColumbiaMo.com.

Project is approved.

Trail Building and Trail Tours at Boone's Crossing, Chesterfield, Mo.

Saturday, Oct. 14, 9 a.m., Tours at 3:30 p.m.

Friends of Big Muddy are building a trail at the Boone's Crossing Unit of the Big Muddy National Fish and Wildlife Refuge in

Chesterfield. Volunteers are needed to help spread mulch on the trail. There will be free tours of the new trail at 3:30 p.m. Tours will highlight the cultural and natural history of the area. Volunteers are needed to help lead the tour.

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

Project is approved.

Guided Tours of the Lewis and Clark Trail of Discovery, Arrow Rock

Saturday, October 21, Tours at 10 a.m., 1:30 and 3:30 p.m.

Friends of Big Muddy and Friends of Arrow Rock are offering free tours and need guides to interpret the natural and cultural history of the area including the Jameson Island Unit of the Big Muddy National Fish and Wildlife Refuge and how the Missouri River has impacted the town of Arrow Rock. Volunteers must attend one tour to be trained before leading one on their own.

Contact Troy Gordon at

friends@friendsofbigmuddy.org or call 573-424-9051.

Project is approved.

Explore Rock Bridge

Saturday, October 21

Friends of Rock Bride Memorial State Park need volunteers needed to assist with hikes the third Saturday of each month. They also need volunteers to do park clean up along the highway, remove old fencing and invasive plants.

Contact Meredith Donaldson at

Mjdonlsn@aol.com or 815-9255.

Project is approved.

Water Quality Monitoring at the Overton Bottoms

Sunday, October 22, noon

Friends of Big Muddy and the Big Muddy National Fish and Wildlife Refuge will be sampling macroinvertebrates at several locations on the refuge unit to assess water quality of stream on the refuge and of the

Missouri River. Meet at noon at the main parking lot
Contact Troy Gordon at friends@friendsofbigmuddy.org or call 573-424-9051.
Project is approved.

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| ONGOING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES |
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Prairie Fork Conservation Area Field Trip Naturalists
Prairie Fork CA needs naturalists to staff environmental education stations during field trips for school students. Most programs take place Monday through Friday from about 9 a.m. till 2 p.m., with a concerted effort to schedule programs Tuesday or Friday. Most programs involve three small-group activities from 9 a.m. to noon, with children rotating through the 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.
Project is approved

Prairie Fork Conservation Area Program Development
Prairie Fork CA needs naturalists to help develop new, exciting and innovative outdoor environmental education programs. These programs must be designed to help teachers meet goals described in Missouri state and National educational standards to help teachers meet curriculum standards in as many subjects as possible, not just math and science. Emphasis is being placed on elementary-aged students, particularly fourth graders.
Contact Benedict Nagy at (573)254-3262, or benedict62@yahoo.com.
Project is approved.

Staff Audubon's Trailside Nature Center Museum
Weekends

Columbia Audubon Society needs volunteers to 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 and from 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

Rock Bridge Memorial State Park needs volunteers to weed flower beds. Work can be done from 8 a.m. to 4 p. m. any day of the week and 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.

Landowner Contacts Database

Flexible hours

The Missouri Department of Conservation needs a volunteer to 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

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

There are a variety of volunteer opportunities: 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.

NOTE: 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 questions. Once approval is granted for one, it is approved for everyone, so it is only necessary to submit one form per project.

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| 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 |

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|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2006 OFFICERS | |
| President | Celeste Mazzacano (573) 499-1913 |

NEXT MEETING - Thursday, October 12, 6:30 p.m



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