

Meramec Hills

Native Knowledge...

By Pat Perry

American Bittersweet

(*Celastrus scandens*)

This twining woody vine can climb to twenty feet but more often it is found lying on fences or bushes.

It flowers from May to June after the leaves are out. Flowers are small and greenish yellow and found in terminal dangling clusters. Plants are usually separate sex; male and female flowers differ in size and shape.

Fruit occurs in the Fall in clusters 2 - 4" long with 6 to 20 fruits. The fruit itself is ¼ inch across and is yellow to orange with a leathery appearance. The three parted capsule splits open when ripe and the seeds are covered with a bright red fleshy coating. The fruit often persists through late fall as it is not a favored food. It is eaten by cottontail rabbits, fox squirrel and 15 species of birds.

The stems are twining, green to gray or brown in color with no tendrils.

It occurs in woodlands, rocky slopes and borders of glades. It prefers some shade but will grow



Invasive Look Alike

in full sun.

It is often confused with the invasive Oriental or Asiatic bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*). This is an invasive vine which has a rapid growth rate (kudzu of the north) and which suffocates anything in its path. It can climb to 60 feet but more often runs along the ground where it will root at the nodes. It also will hybridize with the native bittersweet. It can be

recognized this time of year because it has fruiting clusters all up and down the vine rather than terminal clusters of the native.



Native Berries



Sew Native back on for 2019

By Kari Lane

The popular Pulaski county Sew Native program is starting back up for 2019 and a few speakers are still needed to fill in dates later in the year. The theme for this year is: All Creatures Great and Small. Sew Native offers a short class on a nature-related topic to area artists who use that information as an inspiration for creating a themed quilt block. Chapter members need not be quilters to present! Classes are held at the Pulaski County Extension Office in Waynesville.

Dates that still need speakers include: June 11, July 9, August 13, and November 12. Alice & Arthur Sampe will have a sign-up sheet at the January Chapter meeting or can be reached by email at sewngrow@gmail.com.

You can check your email for the flyer or find it on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/MMNMeramecHillsChapter).



<http://www.meramechills.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/MMNMeramecHillsChapter>

January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		

March

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Upcoming Activities

January 19 & 20 (Saturday & Sunday)

Eagle Days, 9:00am – 3:00pm, Old Chain of Rocks Bridge south of I-270 off Riverview Drive in St. Louis. Call 314-301-1500 for more information.

January 19 & 20 (Saturday & Sunday)

Eagle Days, 9:00am – 4:00pm Saturday & 12:30pm – 4:30pm Sunday, MDC Springfield Conservation Nature Center. Call 417-888-4237 for more information.

January 20 (Sunday)

Executive Board Meeting, 5:30pm - 8:00pm, Alex's Pizza Palace (122 W 8th St, Rolla). All Chapter members are welcome to attend. Arrive at 5:30 to order food or drinks with the meeting to start at 6:00pm.

January 21 (Monday)

Bray Workday, 1:15pm - 4:15pm, Bray CA. Join a crew of MS&T students for Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service. Focus will be on trail improvement and clearing the area for the Monarch meadow. For more information, email Pam at pamela.barnabee@gmail.com.

January 21 (Monday)

MDC Prescribed Fire Workshop, 6:00pm – 9:00pm, Salem Community Center (Salem, MO). Landowners can learn to use prescribed fire as a land management tool. To register for the workshop, call 573-226-3241, ext. 106.

January 26 (Saturday)

MDC Prescribed Fire Workshop, 8:00am – 1:00pm, Eminence Forestry Office. Landowners can learn to use prescribed fire as a land management tool. To register for the workshop, call 573-226-3241, ext. 106.

January 28 (Monday)

Eagle Days, 10:00am – 3:00pm, MDC Runge Conservation Nature Center (Jefferson City). Call 573-526-5544 for more information.

January 28 (Monday)

Regular monthly meeting of the Chapter, 6:00pm, Land Survey Building (1251A Gale Dr., Rolla). Topic: Trail First Aid. Social hour & help session for questions regarding activities and entering hours from 5:00-6:00pm.

February 6 (Wednesday)

Core Training Orientation, 6:00pm, Land Survey Building (1251A Gale Dr., Rolla). See the article on page 3 for more information.

February 25 (Monday)

Regular monthly meeting of the Chapter, 6:00pm, Land Survey Building (1251A Gale Dr., Rolla). Topic: Pre-Columbian Occupation of the Fort Leonard Wood Region. Social hour & help session for questions regarding activities and entering hours from 5:00-6:00pm.

March 25 (Monday)

Regular monthly meeting of the Chapter, 6:00pm, Land Survey Building (1251A Gale Dr., Rolla). Topic The Four Largest Spring Systems in the Ozarks presented by Bill Duley (Missouri Geological Survey, retired). Social hour & help session for questions regarding activities and entering hours from 5:00-6:00pm.

April 13 (Saturday)

Gardening with Natives Workshop, 1:00pm - 3:00pm, Wrasmann Home (1950 Carmel Ct., Rolla). Pat Perry will conduct this workshop on ways to include native plants in your garden. More details to come.

Core Training 2019

By Lorely Lather

Our chapter core training committee is launching a new class in 2019. Classes will be held on Wednesday evenings. Orientation will be February 6th, the first class will be March 6th, and graduation will be May 22nd. Enrollment will officially open January 2, 2019.

We have 10 chapter members on the core training committee but many more members are involved in creating a successful training program. Listed below are some of the ways members volunteer.

- Chapter members bring some of the most enthused students into the class by word-of-mouth publicity, so tell your friends a new class is starting!
- Many chapter members assist at Orientation by representing our volunteer outlets.
- One or sometime two chapter members host each classroom session to greet the students, help organize the room, and assist with snacks.
- Chapter members host at the Saturday field trips and the one evening trip to help with logistics, greet students,

and make sure all students are involved and comfortable.

- At some of the class sessions, chapter members assist in displaying a volunteer outlet during the ½ hour social time before class.

- And, chapter members mentor students. Mentors are a great contribution to training, giving each student a specific member to answer their questions and encourage their involvement.

Several students from the 2017 class are still needing part or all of their 40 hours/8 hours to complete full certification. If you are a mentor to someone in that class, please continue to offer your assistance to your student yet before this new class moves forward. Hours spent in hosting or mentoring are recorded under Program Support/Core Training.

Finally, please urge interested people to enroll in the class through our website, rather than only submitting a paper form to University Extension, although the \$100 fee must be received at University Extension to secure their enrollment in advance of Orientation.



Top & Middle: Students from the class of 2017 work on their Capstone Project at Audubon Trails Nature Center.

Above & left: Students explore the Barnabee property and learn about woodlands and stream health.

Focus on Nature

By Helen Johnston

It is time to take a look at the dogwood tree again, and how it is progressing as we move through the cold winter months.

Our dogwood was given to one of our children in fourth grade, a gift from our Missouri Department of Conservation nearly thirty years ago. As much as I have cherished the tree all these years, and especially as it burst into bloom each and every spring, I never noticed the structure at the end of the twig in the first picture. I did not know what it was, so it was time for me to do some research. That structure is the remnant "raisin" seed left after the berries fall, or are eaten by

wildlife. You will remember the bright red berries, called "drupes", from an earlier post. Each drupe holds one seed.

The bud has changed a bit as shown in the second picture. For one thing, it has darkened in color, from pink to a deep magenta. You can now clearly see the distinct "bracts", or protective scales, that surround the future flowers of the dogwood and are beginning to separate. A little lower are the developing leaves.

As always, there will be more surprises as we continue to take a look at the dogwood in winter!



Follow Helen's ['Focus on Nature and Other Things that Matter'](#) on Facebook to keep up with her observations, curiosities and other things that matter!



Make sure you have logged your volunteer and advanced training hours for all your events and activities so we can have accurate numbers in the annual report!

Do you need more training hours? If you're a bit short on your AT, you can watch some great archived online webinars from [MDC](#) or [CoCoRaHS](#). If you need help accessing a webinar, contact [Kari Lane](#).



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We're on the Web!

See us at:

<http://www.meramechills.org/>
and

<https://www.facebook.com/MMNMeramecHillsChapter>

Volunteer Outlets Profile: MDC Private Land Services

In Missouri, 93% of the land is under private ownership. Given this reality, MDC established Private Land Services, in 2000 to better serve and be more focused on helping landowners enhance fish, forest and wildlife resources. The Private Land Services Division helps landowners achieve their land use objectives in ways that enhance the conservation of Missouri's natural resources. Private Land Services staff promote sound management of forest, fish, wildlife, and natural community resources through voluntary participation, information, financial assistance, and partnerships. This includes assistance to landowners to evaluate natural resource and wildlife damage conditions & recommendations of management & improvement techniques.

A Private Land Conservationist provides onsite technical assistance to landowners and also has access to financial assistance to help implement habitat improvements. Some of the more common cost-share programs include:

- Wildlife Watering Impoundments
- Native Warm Season Grass and Forb

- Establishment
- Forest and Woodland Improvement (TSI)
- Woody Cover Control (Old Field, Glade, and Woodland Restoration)
- Invasive Species Control
- Tree and Shrub Establishment
- Prescribed Burning
- Forest Stewardship Plans

Annually the Department provides service to approximately 65,000 landowners including 6,500 onsite visits. The Private Land Conservationist supporting Phelps and Pulaski counties is Luke Anderson. He can be contacted at the NRCS office (1050 Hwy. 72 East, Suite 2, Rolla) or by phone at 573-364-6202 ext. 109. The Private Land Conservationist supporting Dent County is Cody Roberts. Cody works out of the USDA office in Eminence (573-226-3241 ext. 106). For Maries County contact Seth Barrios at 573-897-3797 ext. 3037. Seth works out of the USDA office in Linn.

A Private Land project can be counted for volunteer

service hours if the project has been preapproved by the Chapter and the Master Naturalist submitting the volunteer hours is not the landowner. This means that time you spend helping a neighbor or friend to plan and execute conservation practices can be counted for volunteer service hours. The project might consist of invasive species control, planting trees in a riparian area, or conducting a prescribed burn. Enter your hours under: Natural Resource Stewardship>>Landowner Assistance.

Please note that in order to be covered by MU Extension liability insurance, the project must be preapproved. This becomes particularly important when you are working with a private landowner, in order for you and the Chapter to be protected for claims of bodily injury and/or property damage. If you have projects you'd like to open up to others in the chapter, use the website to complete the "Submit New Project Approval Form". Once approved, submit the project to the newsletter to get the word out!

About the Master Naturalists...

The Missouri Master Naturalist™ program is a community-based natural resource education and volunteer service program for adults sponsored by Missouri Department of

Conservation and the University of Missouri Extension. Our mission is to engage Missourians in the stewardship of our state's natural resources through science-based

education and volunteer community service. Our chapter is comprised of residents primarily from Phelps, Pulaski and Dent County. Meetings are held once a month in Rolla.

A High Five to our Members!

2018 Re-Certification: Norman Cox, Thomas Sawyer
Bronze Milestone (250 hours): Bob Neff

