

Missouri
Master Naturalist



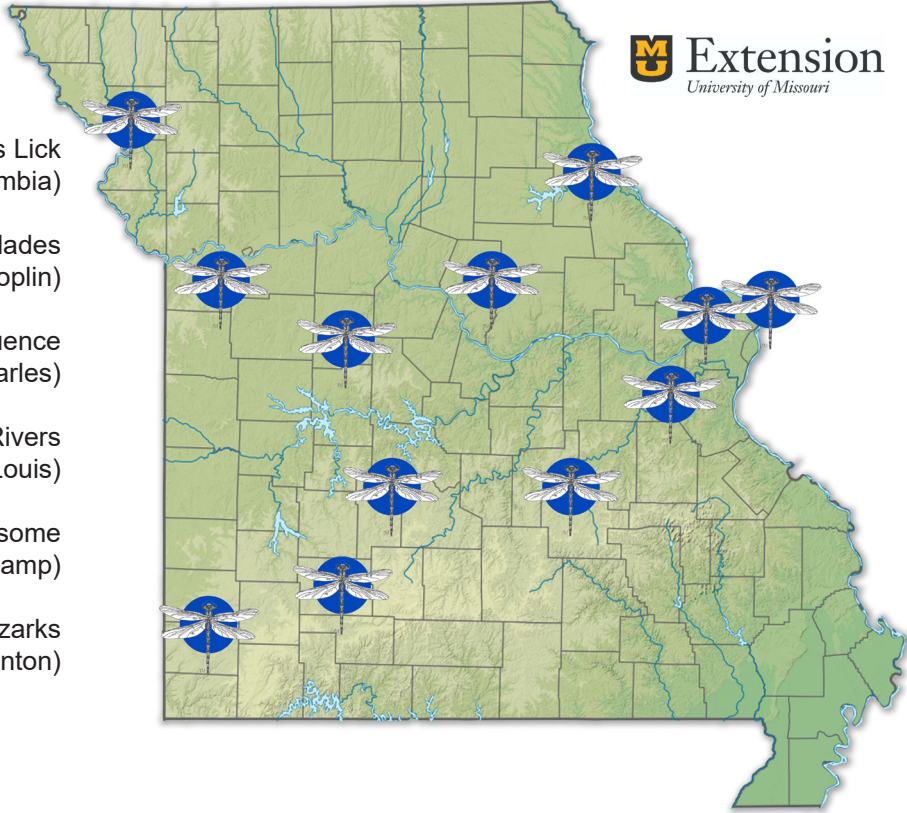
2023

ANNUAL
REPORT




Serving nature and you

MISSOURI MASTER NATURALIST CHAPTERS



The map shows Missouri divided into counties, with 15 blue circular icons containing a white dragonfly. Each icon is placed over a specific geographic region, corresponding to the chapter names listed on either side of the map.

U Extension
University of Missouri



MISSOURI CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

Boone's Lick (Columbia)	Loess Hills (St. Joseph)
Chert Glades (Joplin)	Meramec Hills (Rolla)
Confluence (St. Charles)	Miramigoua (Washington)
Great Rivers (St. Louis)	Mississippi Hills (Hannibal)
Hi Lonesome (Cole Camp)	Osage Trails (Kansas City)
Lake of the Ozarks (Camdenton)	Springfield Plateau (Springfield)



INTRODUCTION

The Missouri Master Naturalist Program results from a partnership created in 2004 between the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) and Missouri University Extension (MUE). These two organizations are the sponsors of the Program at the state level. Within MUE, the Missouri Master Naturalist Program has the distinction of being recognized as a named and branded educational program. The MU School of Natural Resources serves as the academic home for the Program.

The Program is jointly administered by state coordinators that represent MDC and MUE. The state Program coordinators provide leadership in conducting the overall Program. They also facilitate the coordination of training and Chapter development with Chapter Advisors representing both organizations.

Partnerships created at the community level are an integral part of the Master Naturalist Program and organization of a Chapter. These partnerships serve to provide volunteers with learning experiences and opportunities for community service. Local partners may include a variety of entities such as municipal agencies, non-profit organizations, businesses, schools, and others that value the educational and service objectives that are within the scope of the Program.

PROGRAM MISSION & OBJECTIVES

The **mission** of the Missouri Master Naturalist Program is to engage Missourians in the stewardship of the state's natural resources through science-based education and community service.

1. Improve public understanding of natural resource ecology and management by developing a pool of local knowledge that can be used to enhance and expand educational efforts within local communities.
2. Enhance existing natural resources education and outreach activities by providing natural resources training at the local level, thereby developing a team of dedicated and informed volunteers.
3. Develop a self-sufficient Missouri Master Naturalist volunteer network through the Chapter-based program.

STATE COORDINATORS

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SNAPSHOT OF 2023 PROGRAM IMPACTS



During 2023, Master Naturalist Programming activities got back to more normal circumstances from the previous 2 years, as 7 Chapters were able to host the Master Naturalist Core Training, either through in-person or virtual formats. The annual 40-hour volunteer service requirement was implemented once again and volunteer activity increased. The advanced training requirement of eight hours was maintained as volunteers were able to access in-person training and real-time virtual programming that allowed them to stay engaged.

Here are a few highlights:

During 2023, **177 volunteers** participated in the Core Training Course conducted by these Chapters: Miramigoua, Great Rivers, Confluence (St. Louis regional training), Osage Trails, Mississippi Hills, Boone's Lick, and Lake of the Ozarks. The St. Louis region hosted both a spring and fall training for the first time.

Through December 2023, with combined efforts of 12 recognized Chapters, **3,115 volunteers** have been trained as Missouri Master Naturalists since the program was first organized in 2004.

During 2023, volunteers provided **71,249 hours of volunteer service** to local communities, an increase in over 14,000 hours of service from the previous year. This volunteer activity is equivalent to over **34 FTEs* of professional time** and provides an important metric for measuring the impact of the Master Naturalist Program.

Since 2004 Master Naturalist volunteers have been provided over **893,749 hours of service** to local communities.

Master Naturalist volunteers participated in **11,975 hours of advanced training** during 2023.

Over **855 volunteers** became **Certified Missouri Master Naturalists**, maintained certification, or were active members during 2023.

Approximately **135 organizations** have partnered with Master Naturalist chapters at the local level to accomplish natural resource education efforts and service projects within the community.

The economic impact of Missouri Master Naturalist volunteer service during 2023 is valued at **\$2,621,436**.

The cumulative economic impact of Missouri Master Naturalist volunteer service is valued at **\$26,433,297***.

*The number of FTEs was calculated by dividing the total number of volunteer service hours by 2,080 hours (260 workdays) per year. The value of volunteer service calculated using Independent Sector's \$31.80 per hour for 2023. The hourly value is based on the average hourly earnings for private nonagricultural workers as determined by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. This figure is increased by 15.7 percent to estimate fringe benefits. <https://independentsector.org/resource/value-of-volunteer-time/>

STATEWIDE PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



May 2023 marked the end of a three-year global pandemic that made meeting in-person and indoor service activities a challenge. With limited opportunities and ingenuity, Master Naturalists managed to dedicate many hours to conserving our natural resources during those three years. During 2023, Master Naturalists have fully sprung back into action, as reflected in the number of service hours returning to pre-pandemic levels. Chapters received numerous offers to enter into new partnerships, options for service projects were abundant, and Chapters returned to meetings in-person. The wait-list for prospective new Master Naturalists that accumulated over the pandemic is steadily declining as Chapters offer annual and biannual Core Training classes. Although the pandemic was extremely challenging for Chapters, there were some practices that Chapters chose to continue. Multiple Chapters hold virtual sessions for Core Training lectures, and a few have chosen to move to virtual monthly Chapter meetings during the winter weather season and cold and flu season. Chapters continued to offer virtual sessions for many Advanced Training programs.

Most Chapters participated in seed collections and native plantings with partner organizations in their local communities. Of special mention is the Osage Trails Chapter that collected 93 pounds of seeds in partnership with Dunn Ranch during 2023. Education and outreach programs are a staple of the Master Naturalist Program, and all Chapters contributed to this goal during the year. One exceptional highlight for 2023 is the Mississippi Hills Chapter that provided over two-dozen guided educational hikes for their local partners and communities. Chapters were highly active with citizen science projects. Thirty Master Naturalists assisted with the Missouri Department of Conservation's Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) surveillance. Volunteers also assisted with MDC's Eagle Watch Program, bat counts, and herp surveys. Other citizen science service activities included Audubon's Christmas Bird Count, Missouri Stream Team, and the Bumble Bee Atlas.

*Missouri
Master Naturalist*



CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS



BOONE'S LICK CHAPTER (COLUMBIA)

The Boone's Lick Chapter had a very active and successful year of programming. During 2023, Core training was conducted using a combination of virtual and in-person activities with 25 persons graduating. The class capstone project was removing bush honeysuckle and other invasives from the Extension office property. Twelve of the volunteers received their initial certification.

Total volunteer service hours were the second highest since the Chapter was formed, with **87** out of **124** active members reporting **6,679 hours** devoted to community service with local partners. These included an emphasis on stewardship and citizen science projects, education and outreach, as well as program support.

Chapter volunteer activities included:

- Chapter adopt-a-spot
- Information booths at area events and festivals
- Trail building and maintenance
- Habitat restoration and maintenance
- Butterfly and wildlife counts
- Seed collecting
- River and waterway clean-up; park clean-up
- Assisting with household hazardous waste collection
- Compost workshop
- Invasive control
- Public education activities via presentations, children's programs, and social media
- Native plant and pollinator landscaping and maintenance
- Wildlife rehabilitation
- Youth outreach



Monthly meetings were held in a hybrid format – simultaneously online via Zoom and in-person. Average number of participants was 43. These serve as Advanced Training opportunities and a variety of excellent speakers were involved in giving presentations on natural resource management and numerous conservation and habitat management topics.

In June, the chapter held a picnic at Rock Bridge Memorial Park that was attended by about 50 people. The highlight was a scavenger hunt as a great way to explore the park, and for our new graduates to get to know some of the chapter members. In December, the chapter held our holiday party and silent auction at the Boone County Extension office. The silent auction and raffle raised \$750.

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS



CHERT GLADES CHAPTER (JOPLIN)

Chert Glades participated in a variety of activities throughout 2023. We conducted and participated in citizen science projects, community outreach events, hikes, bird watching, habitat restoration, native planting, and seed collecting.

- Cardinal Valley Restoration Project at Web City
- Redings Mill Bridge Area Restoration
- Stream Team activities at Shoal and Silver Creek
- Native Seed Collection and Distribution

Bird Conservation Initiatives: Participated in the Great Backyard Bird Count, covering three distinct habitats: woods, wetland, and upland prairie. Participated in the EPA's annual Summer Bird Survey. Members discovered and reported multiple new species this year, resulting in Cardinal Valley being officially recognized as a birding "Hotspot." Monitored Wood Duck, Bluebird, and Prothonotary Warbler bird houses, reporting results on nestwatch.org.

Native Flora Initiatives: Installed 275 Milkweed plants. Created and dispersed mixed seed bombs in bare spots, utilizing EPA's donated and locally collected native wildflower seeds.

Water Quality Testing: Conducted spring and fall water quality testing at Ben's Branch, reporting a growing sediment mass that is close to shutting off the stream's water flow. Aiming for permission to plant grasses and forbs within the watershed.

Biodiversity documentation: Six observers reported 307 species on iNaturalist from various plots. Participated in citizen science reporting on Monarch sightings through JourneyNorth.org.

Community Involvement: Invited to participate in naming various ponds based on habitat observations. Maintained three bird blinds for public viewing of wetland species.

Environmental Stewardship: Actively participated in multiple prescribed burns for habitat restoration and invasive species control. Regular litter pickups in the area, especially with the area's growing interest in birding and fishing.



CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS



CONFLUENCE CHAPTER (ST. CHARLES)

- Working with MDC and MU Extension in conducting the Tri-Chapter Core Training twice during 2023, implementing virtual sessions and in-person field trips. Bluebird monitoring at several St. Charles County Parks and provide maintenance and care of the boxes, particularly during the breeding season. Information is provided to the Bluebird Society for database analysis. Other activities at these parks include salamander monitoring, seed collection, stream team, native gardens and Native Explore Classroom.
- Outdoor Education Classes with St. Charles County Parks. Several members directed second graders from a Wentzville School through our Nature Explore Classroom at Towne Park.
- Participated in the Missouri Department of Conservation's Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) sampling.
- Amphibian/Reptile monitoring is conducted at Matson Hill Park in St. Charles County to determine the health of frogs, salamanders, newts, as well as reptiles.
- Provided regular maintenance for several native gardens in the St. Charles County area (Quail Ridge Park, Frontier Middle School, Main Street Garden in Historic St. Charles, O'Fallon Public Works garden) and St. Louis County (Babler State Park Visitor Center garden).
- The Main Street Garden in St. Charles (maintained by a partnership with Confluence Chapter Missouri Master Naturalists and St. Charles County Master Gardeners) has been recognized by the Missouri Prairie Foundation's Native Gardens of Excellence Program.
- Land restoration (i.e. invasive honeysuckle removal, as well as native planting) at Belleview Farms.
- Forest ReLeaf: Members assist with nursery management as well as the nursery's annual "potting days" in early spring.
- Construction and maintenance of two greenhouses at University of Missouri Extension Center in St. Peters, MO. to aid in growing native plants for use in chapter projects.
- Conducted "Monarch Madness, A Pollinator Festival" at the Weldon Spring Interpretive Center.
- Stream Team activities include monitoring two sites of the Femme Osage Creek.
- Chapter members continued to provide leadership for conducting the Tri-Chapter Core Training during the year.



CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS



GREAT RIVERS CHAPTER (ST. LOUIS)

- Welcomed **45 new interns** to the chapter, **18** of whom have already received initial certification and completed two core training classes using a virtual format and field trips.
- Restored and maintained native habitat by volunteering **1,106 hours** on habitat restoration, 471 hours on native plant landscaping, **1,063 hours** on plant propagation and care, and 31 hours on controlled burns throughout the St. Louis area.
- Our members gave **1,478 volunteer hours** to educate adults and children in school gardens, local parks and special events sponsored by MDC, Audubon at Riverlands, Sierra Club.
- Sixty-six members participated in a bioblitz of the Little Creve Coeur Ecological Area as part of a three-day capstone project. Volunteers divided into three teams to collect data in the wetlands, forest, and prairie and conducted a bird count on all three days as part of an ongoing project with St. Louis County Parks.
- Advanced training introduced volunteers to experts in fisheries, insects, The Discover Nature Program, Mosquito Alert STL, prairies, dark skies and streams.
- Participated in Trumpeter Swan Watch which is a partnership project with the Army Corp of Engineers, St. Louis Audubon Society, and Audubon Center at Riverlands.
- Members volunteered **413 hours** as part of the Forest Park Forever Nature Reserve Team.
- Great Rivers members dedicated over **327 hours** to St. Louis Audubon, supporting programs such as BirdSafeSTL and Bring Conservation Home and **569 hours** to the Audubon Center at Riverlands through public outreach at the Nature center and special events, and citizen science collecting and recording data at the Migratory Bird Sanctuary.



CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS



HI LONESOME CHAPTER (COLE CAMP)

- Volunteers monitored **10 eagle nests** with **13 fledglings** and over **20 barn owl boxes** with **56 fledglings**.
- Participated in Eagle Day at the Overlook in Warsaw.
- Stream Team monitoring at Lake Creek and on Big Buffalo Creek.
- Assisted Knob Noster State Park with frog surveys and Owl Prowl programs at their International Dark Skies event and helped with spotlighting surveys to count deer.
- Assisted with the American Burying Beetle re-introduction program at Taberville Prairie.
- Assisted with the Citizens for Environmental Action with a prescribed burn on Turkey Foot Prairie.
- Conducted an Invasive Species event at the Missouri State Fair.
- Hosted the Cole Camp Prairies Christmas Bird Count and participated in the Great Backyard Bird Count.
- Assisted with native seed mixing at Wah-kon-tah Prairie.
- Assisted in conducting events at the at the Birds, Bees, and Blooms Festival in Arrow Rock where they gave away free native seeds, showed pressed flower crafts, and dissected owl pellets.



CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS



LAKE OF THE OZARKS CHAPTER (CAMDENTON)

- This year the Lake of the Ozarks Chapter welcomed **16 new members**. These members completed the initial core training and will be working towards their initial certification.
- Volunteers logged over **400 hours** of advanced training and over **2,500 hours** of community service with local partners. The Chapter has **82 active volunteers**.
- Eagle Day - The Lake of the Ozark Chapter is a major contributor to the event in both financial and volunteer effort. This helps many members get a jumpstart on meeting the 40-hour volunteer requirement and offers a great opportunity to interact with the community.
- Building **180 bird feeder kits** for 4-H youth programs as part of a day camp project.
- Participated with the MDC Furbearer Program by conducting a “Finding Furbearers” project; monitored **50 scent/sign stations** to collect furbearer data that could be used as part of the 2023 MDC Annual Furbearer Report.
- Participated in the 2023 Kayak Roundup and educational activities with the Lake of the Ozarks Watershed Alliance.
- Developed a kiosk for use at the Laurie fairgrounds with educational information on Missouri’s natural resources.
- Provided \$1;000.00 scholarship awards to 3 students entering college to pursue biology or natural resource degree focused degrees.



CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS



LOESS HILLS CHAPTER (ST. JOSEPH)

- Six members helped tag 200 monarchs during the Loess Bluffs National Wildlife Refuge's monarch tagging public event on September 16.
- Since 2018 the Loess Hills Chapter has worked with Friends of Loess Bluffs on the 10,000 Milkweed Plants in 10 years Project at Loess Bluffs National Waterfowl Refuge. To date the volunteers have participated in planting 6,308 milkweed plants, adding 1,400 in 2023.
- 7 members contributed volunteer service hours for physical improvements at Loess Bluffs National Wildlife Refuge including wood staining three info kiosks, bridge railings and part of the main observation platform located on the "Auto-loop" tour to maintain the integrity of these structures.
- Several members volunteered their time at the Weston Bend State Park Wings Over Weston public event in May, with five members part of the birdhouse crew that helped participants build birdhouses.
- 10 members volunteered at the St. Joseph's Robidoux Row Gardens project, which involves transforming the museum's gardens from non-native to native plant species. Volunteers removed invasive plants, relayed the brick garden pathway, and installed natives during phase one of the three-phase project, which will continue in 2024.
- Chapter members continued stewardship of the John Rushin Prairie on the Missouri Western State University (MWSU) campus by helping with a prescribed burn, working to control invasive plant species, and helping the MWSU Wildlife Society plant 1,628 milkweed plants there in June.
- Members participated in several ongoing citizen science/survey projects including the annual Christmas Bird Count, Bumble Bee Atlas, and MDC's Chronic Wasting Disease and Eagle Watch programs.
- Members contributed 60 hours volunteering at the Smithville Lake Eagle Days event in January.
- 18 members helped with the Arbor Day tree event at MDC's Northwest Regional Office in April where 88 visitors received a total of free 250 trees.
- In January, five members helped partner Remington Natural Center with Super Science Saturday at MWSU.
- Two members contributed their time volunteering over a 10-week period to assist with the Junior Naturalist program at Loess Bluffs National Wildlife Refuge, which included lessons on mammalian skull identification, invertebrates, turtles, nature journaling, and how aquatic animals breathe.



CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS



MERAMEC HILLS CHAPTER (ROLLA)

- Members contributed over 1,560 volunteer hours in citizen science efforts and nearly 400 hours toward natural resource stewardship.
- Volunteered continued many ongoing projects at Marguerite Bray Conservation Area including refurbishing the eagle nest in the play area with fresh grapevines, removing a variety of non-natives from multiple habitats, hosting Family Fishing Nights, and conducting the first prescribed burn on the Monarch Meadow, the chapter's 2019 capstone project. Volunteers gave over 200 hours of service at Bray Conservation Area in 2023.
- Several members helped with guided nature hikes and talks with the Rolla Outdoor Collaborative School, area Child Development Centers, and other natural history outlets, including programs on spiders, soil biology, birds, insects, and butterflies; and hosting interactive tables.
- Members hosted an extensive display on pollinators at Missouri Science & Technology's Earth Day celebration. The booth included bee houses, a preserved butterfly collection, a white board where visitors could express thoughts about nature, and literature on native bees and monarchs.
- The Chapter Partnered with the local chapter of the Missouri Native Plant Society to sponsor the second annual post-COVID Spring Native Plant Sale at the Rolla Saturday Farmers Market on May 20.
- Student Missouri Master Naturalists led nature walks at the Fall Nature Festival, co-hosted with Ozark Rivers Chapter of the National Audubon Society and the Rolla Outdoor Collaborative School. Visitors to the festival learn about and see hummingbird banding, and participate in birding walks, plant walks, and nature photography walks. Nineteen booths with educational displays and activities were provided by eleven different organizations.
- Stream Team activities this year included two "Autumn Olive Hack-a-thon" events organized by the Big Piney River Stream Team Watershed Association. Members contributed 145 volunteer hours at these two events alone. Overall, chapter members contributed 267 volunteer hours toward Stream Team monitoring and events.
- Common Grounds Community Garden became a new volunteer outlet, with the goal to create a dynamic, biodiverse ecosystem using permaculture design, food forest, and regenerative practices. This community space provides a place to get your hands in the soil and is a showcase for native plants. Community members can now obtain native plant seeds through the newly established seed library at the Rolla Public Library and learn about natural communities at the garden.
- The Chapter's Fall Family Fun Day was held in October at Maramec Spring Park and highlighted several of the citizen science opportunities available at the park. Members took part in The Great Sunflower Project, which consisted of each member watching a single flower for a period of time and logging all types of pollinators that visited that flower. The day ended with wing-tagging and releasing several monarch butterflies that had been collected as larvae and raised by park staff.



CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS



MIRAMIGUOA CHAPTER (WASHINGTON)

- During 2023, Miramiguo members have completed 5,437 volunteer hours, an increase of 1,360 more volunteer hours than 2022.
- Miramiguo Chapter gained 15 new interns from the 2023 Spring and Fall core training classes!
- We had 7 members engaged in the preparation of the Spring and Fall core classes and several members volunteered as hosts for the virtual classes.
- Several members worked at mammal stations at the Hillsboro Elementary Field Day involving 200 first graders.
- Members participated in citizen science projects, such as the Great Backyard Bird Count, Christmas Bird Count, ebird, and the Global Big Day Bird Count. More than 20 members were engaged in the 5-year Miramiguo Herp Project at Don Robinson State Park. Fifty-one coverboards were placed in four defined sites. The Herp 2023 results showed 85 encounters with herps of 17 species. Members participated in steam team cleanup and monitoring activities at the River Des Peres Watershed, Bourbeuse River in Union, Bayless Bridge at Gravois Creek, Grand Glaze in Manchester, and several designated places along the Meramec River.
- Miramiguo continued to be involved in MDC Programs such as the Chronic Wasting Disease surveillance program, which our members contributed over 164 hours over the two-day event.
- Phenology Surveys were conducted 3 times a month by different volunteers at the Glassberg Family Conservation Area. Results showed 172 observed in bloom and 14 new species were documented.
- Stewardship projects consisted of garden maintenance at Shaw Nature Reserve and Jay Henges Shooting Range and the Outdoor Educational Center. Members participated in the biennial survey of Yellow Lady Slipper Orchids at Meramec State Park. Continued land maintenance (trail clearing, invasive control, and trail maintenance) at various city parks, such as Manchester, St. Charles, Washington, Webster Groves, Wildwood, and Arnold. Several members volunteered at International Dark Sky events educating the public on light pollution, etc. Members volunteered at Hawn State Park, Don Robinson State Park, Rockwood Reservation, Meramec State Park, and Kress Farm Garden Preserve completing over 668 hours of habitat restoration and maintenance.
- Members also participated in the Shutterbee Project, Bee Atlas, Project Feeder Watch, Missouri Monarch monitoring and rearing, Phenology, Black bear research, frog watch, eagle watch, Eagle Days, and Discover Nature School Program.



CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS



MISSISSIPPI HILLS CHAPTER (HANNIBAL)

- Mississippi Hills Master Naturalist (MHMN) contributed 5,895 Volunteer Service Hours, and 893 Advanced Training Hours.
- Volunteers participated in the Ben Sapp 11th Annual Antler Shed Hunt at Mark Twain Lake, a youth activity to encourage youth to experience the outdoors, searching for deer antlers much like an Easter Egg hunt.
- Members planted many native gardens in community areas and on private lands in 2023. Of special note is the native garden project at Hannibal Regional Hospital's walking trail as part of the Chapter's capstone project.
- As part of the 7 New Prairies per Year Initiative, members seeded a total of 24 acres of prairie during 2023.
- Volunteers assisted the Hannibal Tree Planting Board with tree planting on Main Street and planted trees at Mark Twain Lake in the Ray Behrens Recreation Area.
- Members participated in prescribed burns at Hannibal Regional Airport, at Highway 107 & U, and on private land.
- In February, members prepared materials for blue bird house kits for various youth activities.
- Volunteers worked throughout the year to build and deploy fish habitat structures in Mark Twain Lake with Missouri Department of Conservation and the United States Army Corps of Engineers.
- Members participated in multiple citizen science efforts in 2023, including a back yard bird count, a bat count in Sodalis Cave, and the Christmas Bird Count, where 25 volunteers logged 44 hours of service and counted 2,692 birds of 57 species.
- Members participated or led several educational events with themes such as Keeping Safe in Nature, Eagle Days, and Fur Bearers.
- Members were involved with leading and/or partnering on 24 educational hikes in 2023.
- Mississippi Hills Chapter provided 3 fishing and 2 hunting opportunities for youth.
- Members provided 2 hunting opportunities for Missourians with disabilities.
- The Chapter awarded member Allen Miller with the Pike County Soil and Conservation District Wildlife Habitat Award.



CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS



OSAGE TRAILS CHAPTER (KANSAS CITY)

- The Chapter's 2023 service theme/goal was Homegrown National Parks (HGPN). The chapter has over 20 HGPN members with over 1.2 acres of native plantings.
- Members provided support for native plot cleanup, plantings, seed collections, and native plant sales at multiple MDC areas, Bridging the Gap, Kansas City WildLands, Loess Bluffs National Wildlife Refuge, Heartland Conservation Alliance, Heartland Tree Alliance, and Deep Roots KC.
- The chapter made four trips to Dunn Ranch Prairie to support seed collecting efforts. The Chapter helped collect about 93 pounds of seeds of 11 different seed types. Collections help improve plant diversity at Dunn Ranch and are shared and sold to other prairies with needs.
- Members partnered with multiple organizations to assist with invasive plant removal. Partners included Loess Bluffs National Wildlife Refuge, MDC, Bridging the Gap, Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary, Jackson County Parks and Recreation, Kansas City Parks and Recreation, Kansas City WildLands, and Platte County Land Trust.
- Volunteers provided and assisted partners to provide educational programs and booths at over 15 events. A few of these events include MDC HOWLoween Special youth event, Missouri River Bird Observatory's Birds, Bees and Flowers Festival, Powell Gardens Butterfly Festival, and Everygy Festival of Lights.
- Chapter members helped with garden, plot, and trail maintenance at Burr Oak Woods and George Owens Park, Lakeside Nature Center, Kemper Outdoor Education Center, Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary, and Platte County Land Trust. Some members supported a prescribed burn at Charlotte Sawyers Nature Area.
- Members worked with a KC local program to cleanup gardens used to teach Lincoln University students about growing plants.
- Volunteers provided office support and animal care at three wildlife rehab/sanctuary facilities: Lakeside Nature Center, Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary, and Wild Souls Wildlife Rescue.
- The chapter organized several successful hikes in 2023, including a Spring Blue Bell hike, a Winter George Owens Park hike and the Adventure in the Ozarks hike.
- Volunteers participated in several citizen science activities including, conducting bird counts for the Burroughs Audubon Society of Greater Kansas City, helping with a Bioblitz on newly acquired Nature Conservancy land near the Little Blue River, collections for the Bumble Bee Atlas, Stream Team water quality surveys, and gathering bird data for Project Feeder Watch.



CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS



SPRINGFIELD PLATEAU CHAPTER (SPRINGFIELD)

Lake Springfield Boathouse: Our small cadre of workers continued planting and maintaining the area around the Lake Springfield Boathouse Center area. Our plantings thrived this year so well that we only added some coreopsis and a few more echinacea plants. Plans this winter is to create QR codes so observers can identify plants, making the area botanical.

City Utilities of Springfield Solar Farm Native Plant Demonstration Area: Designed as a low-maintenance planting area, a minimum of activities included early spring spurge clearing, trimming the grass, other seed heads, and removing tree sprouts; tidying-up of the edges and stray tree sprouts, and rehomeing some of the grasses was needed throughout the year; and in late October, the rain barrel was decommissioned (turning the gutter so it drains away from the barrel) and emptying the barrel so the hose spigot does not crack from freezing during the winter.

- Chapter members continue to be an integral component in the Wonders of Wildlife School – Springfield Public Schools special fifth grade experience – as they have been since the establishment of the school.
- Several members fulfilled the request for presentations to residents at The Bungalows, an Assisted Living Center, sharing in a presentation about birds, and how their beaks determine the different types of food they eat. Several residents took time to share memories about their own experiences feeding and observing birds. 1 woman said she raised 2 children and 5 wrens. Our member-presenters brought the world of caterpillars and butterflies to life for the residents by showing live specimens to the residents.
- Greater Ozarks Audubon Society and the Chapter partnered at the “Day at the Lake” event sponsored by Empower: Abilities, the disability experts for southwest Missouri. This annual day of accessible outdoor fun took place in September at Miller Park at Fellows Lake in Springfield. Activities included a variety of free outdoor and water activities for people with all levels of accessibility. Our group guided attendees with the assembly of pre-cut bluebird houses.
- Our Chapter members attended several conferences and gave presentations or staffed our informational display that provide information about the Master Naturalist program and the Springfield Plateau Chapter.



The Chapter awarded several grants to teachers in the Southwest Missouri area in 2023. **3 teachers** received grant that were used -

- 1) to expand an outdoor classroom in an elementary school;
- 2) to add a water feature to an intermediate school Sensory Garden; and
- 3) to purchase equipment for an Ecology high school class project.

CHAPTER PARTNERS



Boone's Lick

Big Muddy National Fish & Wildlife Refuge
City of Columbia
Clark's Hill/Norton State Historic Site
Columbia Audubon Society
Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture / Columbia Ag Park
Downtown Urban Butterfly Garden
Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area
Greenbelt Land Trust of Missouri
Lick Creek Conservation Area
Lincoln University Native Demonstration Garden
Missouri Bumblebee Atlas
Missouri Department of Transportation
Missouri Eagle Watch Program
Missouri Native Plant Society
Missouri Prairie Foundation
Missouri River Bird Observatory
Missouri River Relief
Missouri Stream Team
Missourians for Monarchs
Ozark Trail Association
Prairie Fork Conservation Area
Prairie Garden Trust
Rock Bridge Memorial State Park
School Outdoor Classrooms
Shepard to Rollins Trail Restoration
The Nature Conservancy: Missouri River Center
University of Missouri Community Collaborative Rain Hail and Snow Network
University of Missouri Jefferson Farms & Gardens
University of Missouri Lakes of Missouri
University of Missouri Raptor Rehabilitation Project
University of Missouri Sorenson Estate Natural Area
Wild Ones

Chert Glades

Association of Missouri Interpreters
Cities of Joplin, Neosho, Webb City, Cartersville, Carl Junction, Carthage
George Washington Carver Monument
Grow Native Nursery
Joplin Historical Museum
Joplin Parks & Recreation
Joplin Recycle Center
Joplin Public Library
Liberty Utilities
MAKO Fly Fishers
Missouri Department of Transportation
Missourians for Monarchs
Missouri Prairie Foundation
Neosho National Fish Hatchery
Ozark Regional Land Trust
Ozark Gateway Audubon Society Chapter
Ozark Soul Native Plants
Prairie State Park
Shoal Creek Conservation Education Center
Wildcat Glades Nature Group

Confluence

Forest ReLeaf of Missouri - St. Louis Section
Frontier Middle School
Missouri Bluebird Society
Missouri Botanical Garden
Missouri State Parks (i.e. Don Robinson, Babler)
Missouri Stream Team
Shaw Nature Reserve
St. Charles Parks and Recreation
St. Louis Audubon Society
Weldon Spring Interpretive Center
Wentzville City Parks

Wildlife Rescue/Rehabilitation

Great Rivers

Audubon Center at Riverlands
Biodiverse City STL
Brightside STL
City of Ellisville Parks and Recreation
City of Chesterfield Parks and Recreation
City of Kirkwood Parks and Recreation
City of Webster Groves-Parks and Recreation
Deer Creek Alliance
Endangered Wolf Center
Forest Park Forever
Forest Releaf of Missouri
Greenway Network
Great Rivers Greenway
Little Creek Nature Area
Litzinger Road Ecology Center
Mississippi River Water Trail Association
Missouri Botanical Garden
Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Missouri Prairie Foundation
Missouri Stream Team
National Museum of Transportation
River des Peres Watershed Coalition
Shaw Nature Reserve
Sophia M. Sachs Butterfly House
Stewards of Grand Glaize
St. Louis Audubon Society
St. Louis City Parks, Recreation, and Forestry
St. Louis County-Parks and Recreation
The Green Center Open Space Council
World Bird Sanctuary

Hi Lonesome

Audubon Society of Missouri
City of Cole Camp
Harry S. Truman and Knob Noster State Parks
Missouri Prairie Foundation
Missouri River Bird Observatory
Missouri Stream Team

Lake Ozark

Ameren Missouri
Bennett Springs
Camdenton R-III Schools
Camden County Farmers Market
City of Laurie
Ha Ha Tonka State Park
Lake Area Chamber of Commerce
Lake Ozark Watershed Alliance
Lake of the Ozarks Convention and Visitors Bureau
Lake of the Ozarks State Park
Missouri Cave and Karst Society
Missouri Department of Transportation, Adopt-A-Highway
Osage Beach City Park
School of the Osage
West Side Chamber of Commerce

Loess Hills

Burroughs, Midland and Grand River Audubon Society
Clay and Platte County Parks
Smithville Lake
Platte Land Trust
Missouri River Relief
Missouri Stream Team
Missouri Western State University
Missouri Western State University Student Chapter Wildlife Society

CHAPTER PARTNERS



Missouri Native Plant Society
Missouri Department of Transportation, Northwest Region
Missouri Department of Waste Disposal
Remington Nature Center
The Nature Conservancy Grand River Grasslands and Dunn Ranch Prairie
Loess Bluffs National Wildlife Refuge
Big Lake State Park
Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge
Weston Bend State Park

Meramec Hills

Audubon Trails Nature Center
Bonebrake Center for Nature & History
Bray Conservation Area
Cave Research Foundation
City of Rolla, City of Salem
City of Steeleville
Common Grounds Community Garden
Katy Trail
Missouri Department of Transportation, Adopt-A-Highway
Missouri Stream Team Program
Newburg Children's Museum
Missouri State Parks
Rolla Outdoor Collaborative School

Miramiquoa

Caldwell Memorial Wildlife Area
Don Robinson State Park
Eastern Missouri Sierra Club
Jay Henges Shooting Range
Meramec State Park
Missouri Prairie Foundation
Missourians for Monarchs
Onondaga Cave State Park
Open Space Council
Ozark Trail Association
Shaw Nature Reserve
The College School
World Bird Sanctuary

Mississippi Hills

Audubon Society of Missouri
Clarksville Eagle Days
Forest Council
Hannibal Parks & Recreation & Tree Board
Missouri Bat Census
Missouri State Parks
Missouri Department of Transportation
Missouri Stream Team
Pike County Schools
Shelby County Education
University of Wisconsin-Madison
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Mark Twain Lake
USA National Phenology Network
Wild Turkey Federation, Hannibal Chapter
Xerces Society – Bumble Bee Atlas

Osage Trails

Anita B Gorman Discovery Center
Blue River Watershed Association
Bridging the Gap
Burr Oak Woods
Burroughs Audubon Society of Greater Kansas City
Deep Roots KC
Dunn Ranch Prairie
George Owens Nature Park
Heartland Conservation Alliance
Heartland Tree Alliance
Jackson County Parks and Recreation

Kemper Outdoor Education Center
Kansas City Parks and Recreation/Lakeside Nature Center
Kansas City WildLands
Lincoln University Extension
Little Blue River Property
Loess Bluffs NWR
Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary
Missouri Prairie Foundation/Snowball Hill Prairie
Missouri River Bird Observatory
Missouri River Relief
Osage Trails Chapter Stream Team
Platte County Land Trust
Powell Gardens
Wild Souls

Springfield Plateau

Bass Pro Shops Outdoor World
Bat Conservation International
Bennett Spring State Park
Branson for Monarchs
Bull Shoals Field Station
City of Republic – Parks Dept.
City of Springfield
Dept. of Environmental Services
Dept. of Public Works
Friends of the Garden
Greater Ozarks Audubon Society
Interpreters Coalition of Springfield and SW MO
James River Basin Partnership
LAD Fair
Lakes of MO Volunteer Program
Leave No Trace National Organization
Missouri Prairie Foundation
Missouri State University, Biology Department – Bat Studies
National Speleological Society
Safe Kids Coalition Springfield and SW MO
Springfield-Greene County Park Board
Springfield Plateau Grotto
Springfield R-12 School District
Watershed Committee of the Ozarks/Watershed Ctr
White Nose Syndrome Working Group/MO

CHAPTER ADVISORS



Missouri Master Naturalist Chapter Advisors, representing MU Extension and the Missouri Department of Conservation, provide leadership and facilitate educational programs and activities to ensure the success of the Missouri Master Naturalist Program and Chapters.

Boone's Lick Chapter

Tish Johnson - MU Extension
Cara Coates - Missouri Department of Conservation

Chert Glades Chapter

Sarah Havens - MU Extension
Jeff Cantrell - Missouri Department of Conservation

Confluence Chapter

Elihu Isele - MU Extension
Brian Waldrop - Missouri Department of Conservation

Great Rivers Chapter

Elihu Isele - MU Extension
Brian Waldrop - Missouri Department of Conservation

Hi Lonesome Chapter

Gene Schmitz - MU Extension
Ginger Miller - Missouri Department of Conservation

Lake of the Ozarks Chapter

Joni Ross Harper - MU Extension
Cara Coates - Missouri Department of Conservation

Loess Hills Chapter

Jim Humphrey - MU Extension
TJ Peacher - Missouri Department of Conservation

Meramec Hills Chapter

Sarah Higgins - MU Extension
Jeff Cantrell - Missouri Department of Conservation

Miramiguoia Chapter

Matt Herring - MU Extension
Brian Waldrop - Missouri Department of Conservation

Mississippi Hills Chapter

Daniel Mallory - MU Extension
Kathi Moore - Missouri Department of Conservation

Osage Trails Chapter

Tamra Reall - MU Extension
Courtney Green - Missouri Department of Conservation

Springfield Plateau Chapter

Kelly McGowan - MU Extension
Lyle Whittaker - Missouri Department of Conservation

2023 CHAPTER STATISTICS



Chapter & Year Established	Completed Core Training	Volunteer Service Hours	Advanced Training Hours	Active Members
Boone's Lick (2004)	25	6,679	1,596	124
Chert Glades (2005)	N/A	4,786	646	44
Confluence* (2005)	9	5,044	808	56
Great Rivers* (2007)	45	11,626	2,137	123
Hi Lonesome (2008)	N/A	1,342	171	14
Lake of the Ozarks (2009)	16	2,588	405	33
Loess Hills (2011)	N/A	3,696	591	40
Meramec Hills (2005)	N/A	5,301	977	70
Miramiguo* (2009)	15	5,437	802	64
Mississippi Hills (2018)	29	5,895	893	84
Osage Trails (2006)	38	11,994	1,925	147
Springfield Plateau (2006)	N/A	6,861	1,024	56
Total	177	71,249	11,975	855

Cumulative statewide volunteer service hours since 2004: **893,791**

Cumulative statewide advanced training hours since 2004: **234,892**

**Chapters within the St. Louis Region conduct a joint regional core training. Participants in the course affiliate with one of the three area Chapters: Confluence, Great Rivers, or Miramiguo.*

Chapter Advisors and Chapter leadership have the discretion to decide when the core training course is conducted. Chapters are not required to host a core training course on an annual basis.

The **Alliance of Natural Resource Outreach and Service Programs** was formed in 2006 to facilitate networking and resource development for Master Naturalist and similar programs. The Missouri Master Naturalist Program was one of the founding members. Currently, about 25 states have adopted the Master Naturalist volunteer and education program model. The Missouri State Program Coordinators provide ongoing support to the Alliance through program membership.

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Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs of the Missouri Department of Conservation is available to all individuals without regard to their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, ancestry, age, sexual orientation, veteran status, or disability.

Questions should be directed to the Department of Conservation, PO Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102, 573-751-4115 (voice) or 800-735-2966 (TTY), or to Chief, Public Civil Rights, Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20240

