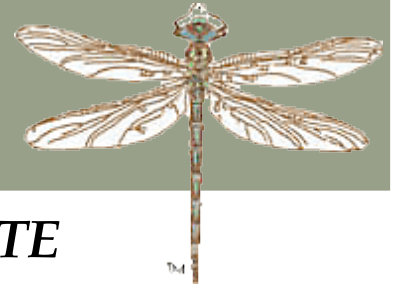




Missouri Master Naturalist



THE GREAT RIVERS GAZETTE

November 2012

Volume 2 Issue 4

Our mission is to engage Missourians in the stewardship of our state's natural resources through science-based education and volunteer community service.



John Powers, a volunteer with Forest Park Forever, helps plant native perennial wildflowers along the banks of Forest Park's river system along Grand Drive on May 9, 2012. A grant from Boeing paid for the plants. Photo by Christian Gooden, cgooden@post-dispatch.com

Our own John Powers made the SLPD recently when he was pictured working in Forest Park. John has been a member of our Great Rivers chapter since 2008 and is Chair of the Hidden Creek Savannah project. (He was the driving force behind the project with his initial proposal.) (See John's photos of the Savanna on page 8)



*New England Aster we observed during the Bird Survey at Hidden Creek Savanna on Friday, 10/10/12.
(Submitted by Sherri Schmidt)*

Summer and Fall at Hidden Creek Savanna

Our intrepid team of surveyors continues to record plants, pollinators and birds observed at Hidden Creek Savanna with the changing seasons. Despite the hot, dry summer, there was water flowing in the creek on all survey occasions.

Plant surveys were conducted by Nancy Burgess, Steve Hoyt, Joanne Johnson and Sherri Schmidt on July 27, and John Powers, Jen Grable, Joanne Johnson and Sherri Schmidt on Sept. 22. Several plants identified by the group had been intentionally planted, including bullrush, blazing star, monarda, river oats and white wild indigo, and were doing well.

On Sept. 8, Steve Hoyt and Sherri Schmidt spotted various bees, butterflies, wasps and moths during the fall pollinator survey. Honeybees were particularly fond of the stands of goldenrod. Steve and Sherri also made note of plants and other insects, such as dragonflies and grasshoppers, on the site.

And on Oct. 12, armed with binoculars and field guides, a group including Nancy Burgess, Jen Grable, Bill Hoss, John Powers, Faith Williams and Sherri Schmidt conducted the fall bird survey. The largest number of birds were observed in the woodland area, and included a Tennessee warbler, a red-bellied woodpecker, and a pee wee as well as robins, song and white-throated sparrows and starlings. Other birds identified included goldfinches, mourning doves, a brown thrasher, a flicker, chickadee, blue jay, cardinal and a red-tailed hawk.

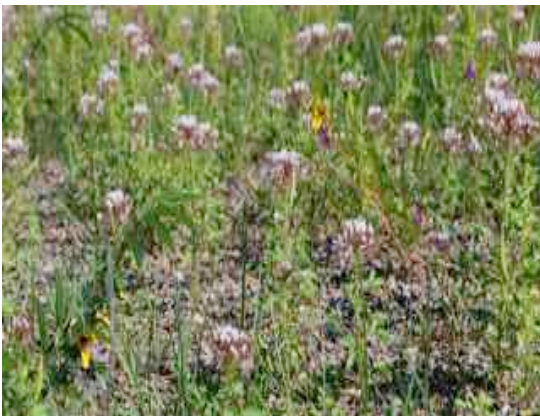
Thanks again to Sherri for her dedication to holding and recording these surveys and to those who have participated.

Green Roof Pictures from Shaw Nature Reserve

Here are a few pictures of the vegetation emerging on the roof of the new restrooms at Shaw Nature Reserve. Some of them may appear soon on the Shaw Nature Reserve Facebook page.



*The most abundant species is clammy weed *Polanisia dodecandra* (caper family)*



*The yellow flowered one is partridge pea *Chamaecrista fasciculata* (legume group).*



*The magenta-flowered one is fame flower (or as John calls it, happy hour flower, since it flowers in late afternoon) *Phemeranthus calycinus* (purslane family).*



*Some of the sowed grasses (probably side-oats *Bouteloua curtipendula*), as well as volunteer horse weed *Conyza canadensis* (daisy family), also can be seen.*

James C. Trager, Ph. D.
Biologist - Naturalist
Shaw Nature Reserve
P.O. Box 38
Gray Summit MO 63039
636-451-3512 ext. 6002
(submitted by Cori Wescott)

Update on Seibert Park Project.

There is ongoing removal of invasives: Recently, we alerted Eileen (Manchester Parks Director) of a colony of Poison Hemlock growing on the stream bank. We've also removed Crown Vetch, White and Yellow Sweet Clover, seed heads of some Johnson Grass, Japanese Hops. Side note: If you ever know you're going to be involved with this plant, wear a long-sleeved shirt you don't care about. It's itchy and oils from it splatter unremovable stains all over your shirt. The site was recently visited by MDC Forester, Mark Grueber, who made numerous planting suggestions. It reminded me that a slope in a riparian corridor is more protected by planting in front of the base of the slope to slow fast-flowing water that will cut into the lower section of ground. On the hilltop, where there's very little soil and a woodland amount of sun, there's not a lot of plant suggestions; Buckbrush or Coralberry, Blackberry and White Oak trees were all that was suggested for the hilltop. Eileen Collins also visited the site and is in process of having injured trees removed from the site. Eileen is also requesting a grant from MDC for trees for the site through ForestReleaf. Cori is going to ask the property owners abutting the park permission to remove their honeysuckle as a buffer to make future maintenance that much easier. We'll see.

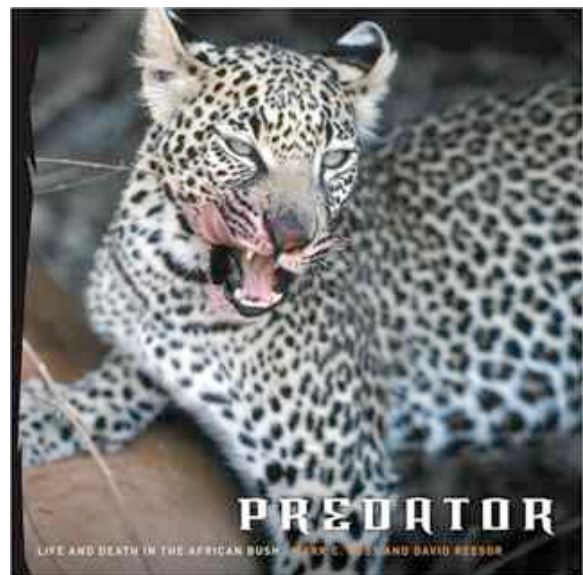
(Submitted by Cori Westcott)

The New Review, Book Review that is.

Predator: Life and Death in the African Bush* by **Mark C. Ross and David Reesor.*

Mark Ross has spent decades in as a safari guide. We went to college together. This is his second book (that I'm aware of). He's collaborated with photographer colleague David Reesor on this project. He presents the hunting, breeding, territory-keeping, social behaviors of cheetahs, leopards, lions, hyenas and alligators. It's a fascinating read. The photography is stunning! All those of you who like to settle down with a gory tale at bedtime? This book is for you. Did you know that hyenas can't suffocate their prey in a throat hold like most of the African predators do? No, they rip the stomach open and eat their prey's internal organs while it's still living. This, and more awaits you. Enjoy.

(Submitted by Cori Westcott)



ooh!

Happy Holidays Everyone!

Believe it or not, the holiday season is fast approaching and we're planning a party you won't want to miss. Here's the info you need in order to participate:

The date is November 30th - 6:00 p.m.
The party will be at Houlihan's, 1085 N. Mason Rd, Creve Coeur.

Please RSVP to Pam Fournier at ppfournier@sbcglobal.net by Nov. 16.

\$12.00 Members/Future Members
\$20.00 Spouses/Significant Other

Make your check payable to "University Extension Council" by November 16 and mail to: Barbra Stephenson
1315 St. Anthony Lane
Florissant, MO 63033

This is an upscale dinner, costing twice what you will be paying. Please don't procrastinate, as we need to know numbers. Come on..let's party!

(Invitation by Maxine)

And EVery BiT as ImPorTANT!

Our next meeting, November 20, is going to be lots of fun. Come with your best smiles and social skills as we have invited the graduating Master Naturalist class to join us. There will be a potluck dinner, so come at 6:00 and bring something good to share with the group. After a good social hour, we'll talk about who we are and what we do in hopes of getting some of the graduates to join our Great Rivers Chapter.

You might want to check it out with Michael or Pam, as they actually know what is going to transpire.
(Invitation by Maxine)

Pictures Below by Jen Grable



White-Lined Sphinx Moth. 3" long. Early September in Forest Park



Common Green Darner. About 4" long. Early October in Forest Park

Thanks Jen!

Meeting Highlights

Chapter meetings held in August, September and October at Kirkwood Community Center have been well attended and informative. Kudos to the Advanced Training Committee for arranging such diverse and interesting presentations.

First, to remedy an unintentional omission from our August issue, thanks to Pam Wilcox for her program on bird identification. Sorry that your excellent presentation in July wasn't mentioned in the last issue of the Gazette, Pam!

At our August meeting, we learned what it takes to make flour from acorns. Marc Bowers described the many steps required to prepare the acorns to be ground and used in cooking. (Emily Horton later supplied a PDF of the program, in case you want to try it at home!) Marc also provided information about Earth Dance Farms in Ferguson. Other August business included drawings for a scholarship to attend the state conference in September, won by Maxine Stone, and for a pollinator poster, won by John Vandover.

In September, Cori Westcott announced that Cindy Leuder had received initial certification. Mark Katich and Toni Vafi received recertification, and Gina Staehle achieved 1000 hours of service. Much of the meeting was devoted to future volunteer and social opportunities coming up in the fall. It was also announced that the hospitality committee and the advanced training committee are looking for new members. Cindy Leuder volunteered to chair the hospitality committee. We were reminded that it's time to fill the offices of president and treasurer for next year.

Barb Stevenson has agreed to continue as Treasurer, but nominations for president are sought.

Garrecht Metzger, a Ph.D. candidate at Washington University, made an excellent presentation entitled "The Ocean Beneath Us - Geology of Eastern Missouri."

The presentation for October was made by Bob Merz from the St. Louis Zoo, who described the life cycle of the American Burying Beetle and efforts to re-introduce Zoo-bred beetles in Southwest Missouri.

The brief business meeting included presentation of certification and recertification pins to Cindy Lueder, Jeanne Koebbe, Maxine Stone, Nancy Burgess, Yvonne Von Der Ahe, and Mark Katich.

Coming Events

In addition to ongoing volunteer activities shown on our website calendar, we want to highlight several future events:

Nov. 3 Green ***Center Fire Festival***; 5:30-8:30pm; 8025 Blackberry in U. City; \$15 adults, \$5 children.

Nov. 8 ***Conservation Forum "Environmental Issues of St. Louis Past, Present and Future"***. 5:30-9pm; Living World at the St. Louis Zoo; free.

Nov. 9 Hayride ***and Social Time*** at Columbia Bottoms Nature Center; 6:30-10:30pm. Contact Colleen Scott for more info or to sign up.

Nov. 20* Great ***Rivers potluck and new member welcome***; nominations for chapter president

Nov. 30* Great ***Rivers holiday party at Houlihan's***.

Seibert Park:

We've gotten rained out on our designated Fridays. Our next attempt will be this coming Friday (Nov. 2nd). We'll be clearing honeysuckle along both stream banks directly behind Denke Cabinetry on Manchester. He is leasing the lot from the grand child of Antoinette and Josef Seibert. By the way, it is pronounced seye-ber't not see-ber't. They're of German ancestry. His 87-year-old grandmother is asking him to take her to the park. She is anxious to see it now that it's been cleared of the honeysuckle.

Manchester Parks staff is gearing up for a day of foliating the winter creeper. I haven't talked to Eileen lately, but I hope she's made her Forest Re-Leaf order and is considering the native plant list I sent her.

I'm hoping for a pretty good turn out this Friday. We need enough folks to make a kind of "bucket line" across the creek to pass along honeysuckle and make a brush pile for Manchester guys to shred.
(Submitted by Cori Westcott)



Manchester Homecoming:

We ran two tables under one roof. One table devoted to our partner, DNR's Stream Team. The other table was devoted to Missouri Master Naturalists, Great Rivers Chapter. We ran a slideshow illustrating our many projects and accomplishments and another slideshow on Seibert Park. Many Manchester residents have not heard of Seibert Park. It was fun to introduce Manchester folks to a valuable natural resource in their own city. I do feel our weekend of work there may have generated a future MM Naturalist or two! Darlene Haun, DNR's local Stream Team coordinator captured macro invertebrates early Saturday morning. The table had a natural stream set up in a basin, complete with natural stream debris for hiding and an unnatural but highly effective pump for oxygen supply. We even hosted a live crayfish! On Saturday afternoon and Sunday, we ran one of MSD's interactive watershed displays. It allowed the kids to make a mess (a real crowd-pleaser) and learn with their parents the consequences of our suburban bad habits. And, I believe one or two parents went home with the intention of considering Stream Team work on their local creek or river.

The turnout for the homecoming was about 1,000 people. That count didn't include a gazillion family dogs who visited the Manchester pool next to our tent. All in all, a fun time was had by all!
(Submitted by Cori Westcott)



Hibiscus blooms downstream of the stone bridge near Union Rd. This plant existed near the stone bridge a year ago and now appears to be establishing itself in some other areas of Hidden Creek - down stream as well as upstream of the bridge.



The stream near its head. The streambed lies hidden in the lush vegetation due to a constant water flow.

John Powers' photos of the Hidden Creek Savanna at Forest Park

River Des Peres Trash Bash

I volunteered for the River Des Peres Trash Bash. Both Michael Wohlstadter and I were in the same group, led by Cindy Duhigg from the stream team! This attached picture was taken after many from our group left. We picked up A LOT of trash and found a giant puffball mushroom (which I unfortunately forgot to take a picture of).

(Article and photo submitted by Claire Beaudoin)



AND..... Coming soon:

Jan. 16-20, 2013 Eagle Days; contact jamila.reid@mdc.mo.gov for more info or to sign up.

Words on the Conference from Michael Meredith

Once again, this September Master Naturalists from around the state gathered to share stories and increase their conservation knowledge. The Lake of the Ozarks Chapter continued the trend of improving on the previous conferences, hosting the gathering at the Windermere Conference Center.

The Great Rivers delegation (more than 20 members in number) was treated to some spectacular natural areas as well as the usual array of advanced training sessions. Ha Ha Tonka State Park, with its unique karst topography was the focal point for both a pre-conference session and another session. With several caves, sinkholes, and bluffs overlooking the lake, the park could have provided a week's worth of training.

But there is also the Lake of the Ozarks, which despite its manmade origins, still offered a large laboratory for watershed management, amphibian and aquatic life, not to mention flat water canoeing.

Besides the advanced training, there were other activities such as a dragonfly-themed art contest, silent auction and a post-dinner appearance by Maradith Sisco. Her music and stories related to the Ozark hills and the making of the movie *Winter's Bone* made Saturday evening extra special.

The only question mark to come out of the weekend is the location for the next conference. At the moment, no chapter has volunteered to host, though conversations are surely underway.

(Submitted by Michael Meredith)

Great Rivers chapter was well represented at the State Conference at the Lake in September. The following members registered (and presumably attended): Nancy Burgess, Jim and Brenda Christ, Lisa Dennis, Ann Earley, Kathleen Evans, Dennis Honkomp, Beth Lewandowski, Vaughn Meister, Michael Meredith, Mary Mierkowski, Julie Nicolai, Ssan Orr, Lorraine Schraut, Ed Shafer, Beth Skelton, Michael Smith, Barbra Stephenson, Maxine Stone, Pam Wilcox and Michael Wohlstadter. Hope you all enjoyed and learned a lot!
(Faith, Editor)

Deadline for articles for the Feb. 1 issue of the Gazette is January 30, 2013.