



Missouri Master Naturalist



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Volume 4 Chapter 2

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

CLAIRE GEMPP DAVIDSON MEMORIAL CONSERVATION AREA **MONARCH WAYSTATION STATUS REPORT**



Sherri Schmidt and Bill Hoss taking a break for a picture during the planting

Update on Monarch Waystation at Claire Gempp Davidson Memorial Conservation Area

We had some great news - Gerald Brown, the Sunset Hills Director of Parks and Recreation was able to obtain all the plants we requested for the initial Monarch Waystation at the Claire Gempp Davidson Memorial Conservation Area.

Saturday morning, March 29 we scheduled a workday at Gempp to prepare the flowerbed for planting.

We had a great turnout - Bill Hoss, Rita Buckley, Carol Carr, Pamela Fournier, Emily & Glen Horton, Cindy Lueder, Vaughn Meister, Susan Orr, Shawn Thomason and Sherri Schmidt all volunteered to help. Sunset Hills provided a load of mulch, that we spread over the planting area. Some volunteers removed invasive plants from the site. Once we were finished preparing the planting site, we freed a Buttonbush near the pond from a tangle of vines. Hopefully the Buttonbush will flower and attract more butterflies to Gempp.

After we finished working, we took a walk through the park. Glen helped us identify plants we saw along the way.

On Saturday, April 26th, Bill Hoss, Pam Fournier, Lori Purk and Sherri Schmidt planted the host and nectar plants in the Monarch Waystation at Gempp.

First the team removed existing plants that had sprouted in the area. After arranging the plants, and making a few adjustments to the plan, the group planted the plants.

We noticed a butterfly visiting the Waystation - not a Monarch, but a beautiful blue Spring Azure.

While we were working, a group of children from a south city school walked by, and their leader asked what we were doing. We had the opportunity to tell the children about Monarch Butterflies, and explain the need to plant milkweeds for the Monarch Caterpillars to eat.

The kids were very interested and asked a number of good questions. One of the parents raised their hand and asked what kind of milkweed they could plant in their garden at home. We told the children to check the Monarchwatch.org website for more information. It was wonderful, the Monarch Waystation is already providing an opportunity to educate people of all ages about Monarchs!



Butterfly Garden at Gempp prior to transformation.



Prepared flowerbed for initial Monarch Waystation, and volunteers who helped in the preparation.



Clearing the vines from the Buttonbush near the pond at Gempp.



Children learning about Monarchs and Waystations at Gempp.



(Sherri Schmidt, Bill Hoss and Pam Fournier discussing plans

(Photos for this presentation were submitted by Lori Purk, Bill Hoss and Sherri Schmidt. Article submitted by Sherri Schmidt)

Well quite a saga and great pictures. Sherri and Bill have worked hard organizing and implementing the renovation of the Butterfly Garden at Claire Gempp. Our admiration and thanks to them and their loyal volunteers.

A FIRST SIGN OF SPRING



Mourning Cloak Butterfly

(Photo submitted by Sherri Schmidt)

PHOTO FROM SHERRI

Sherri Schmidt has passed along this beautiful picture of the Mourning Cloak Butterfly that she saw at the Claire Gempp Davidson Memorial Conservation Area on (3/18/14). As she mentioned at the last Chapter meeting, it is the first butterfly she had seen this year. Fortunately she saw the butterfly flying before it landed in the leaves. Otherwise, she states she wouldn't have noticed it.

EAGLE DAYS 2014 AT OLD CHAIN OF ROCKS BRIDGE

Eagle Days at Chain-of-Rocks Bridge is what I would call the true litmus test of one's Master Naturalists' mettle. The weather on the bridge is always arctic with winds roaring constantly at significant Beaufort numbers. All that said however, this is the perfect once in a lifetime venue for school kids and the general public to view wild Bald Eagles and sense first hand their majesty. And there couldn't be a better volunteering opportunity.

Five days in January are reserved every year by MDC and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources for this carefully choreographed event. The first three days (Wednesday thru Friday) are for Missouri and Illinois public and private grade school kids only. These are mostly inner-city kids who have never been beyond their immediate urban neighborhoods. So this event is structured to amaze, excite and introduce them to the wonders of the natural world. Upon their arrival at Chain-of-Rocks they are given a presentation by the Wild Bird Sanctuary on the Bald Eagle that lets them view up close a live captive eagle. Then they are brought out to the middle of the old bridge where they get to experience the mighty Mississippi and view through spotting scopes wild eagles relaxing in trees along the rivers shore. You can't imagine their excitement. Nor can you fathom the satisfaction of the volunteers.

The two weekend days are open to the general public. This portion of Eagle Days has all the flair of a Medieval Fair. Both ends of the bridge are open to receive visitors. People curiously stroll the bridge. Many seize the opportunity to glimpse eagles through the spotting scopes. Most simply contemplate Old Man River, while some seek out the eagle-oriented attractions on the Missouri shore. But all have an amazingly good time.

This year Eagle Days was host to more than 1200 students from 22 Missouri and 13 Illinois schools. And weekend bridge attendance topped 8,400 visitors. By all metrics this year's event was an outstanding success. This success was facilitated in part due to the efforts of the following Great Rivers volunteers: Michael Meredith, Glen Horton, Kathleen Evans, Pam Wilcox, Vaughn Meister, Carol Carr, Renee Benage, Toni Vafi, Al Koebbe, Cindy Lueder, Richard LeSage, Susan Orr, Kari Pratt and yours truly. *(Submitted by John Vandover)*

HOSPITALITY SPEAKS!

Save the date: Tuesday, June 17th
Great Rivers MMN **Annual Picnic**
Creve Coeur Park

Back by popular demand, at 4:30 we will tour

Forest ReLeaf with Mike Walsh.

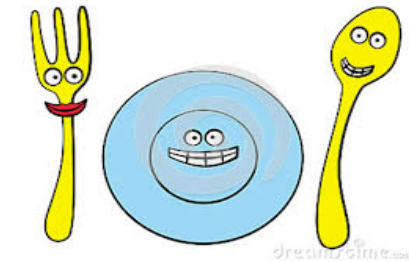
Picnic at 5:30 PM.

Question:

Does anybody have a digital frame they would like to set up with chapter pictures for the State meeting?

To all: Please be thinking of pictures to submit for the digital frames.

(Submitted by Cindy Leuder for the Hospitality Committee)



LORI PURK'S EXPEDITION TO GR MMN (2ND INSTALLMENT)

Every Year the Gazette staff encourages new and recent MMN grads to share with fellow Great Rivers members, their experiences in discovering, joining and finally graduating from the MMN Program.

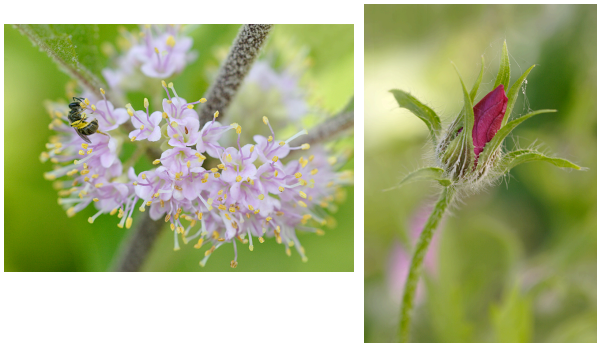
This year we are happy to present an accounting, replete with photos (of course) of Professional Photographer and MMN Newbie, Lori Purk.

Because of the comprehensiveness of Lori's review, as well as the many beautiful accompanying photos, we are presenting her entry in an installment form. So relax and prepare to be entertained by the second installment of Lori's MMN experience.

(If you would like to review the first part of Lori's Newbie presentation, please go the archived Gazette of Feb 1 2014.)

Next Steps for Lori

NaturesScaping in the Southampton Neighborhood – I have never done any gardening so this was a new experience for me. I enjoyed listening to the Latin names of all of the native plants and learning from Michael Wohlstadter. He has developed a beautiful little nature oasis in the middle of suburbia and really knows his plants.



Photography Exhibit at Columbia Bottom CA – Colleen Scott invited me to show my

work at the visitor's center for a month. It was their first nature photography exhibit.



Firehouse #2 Habitat Restoration with River Des Peres Watershed Coalition – Eric Karch and Great Rivers Chapter members clearing out some less desirable plants.



Listening to speaker and **Missouri Conservationist photographer Noppadol Pathong** during his program about photographing wildlife while visiting the Miramigua Chapter.



NEXT UP...

Native Plant Edibles Class at Lincoln University in Jefferson City – tasting what they grew and then cooked up in the demonstration kitchen. After our delicious lunch we took a tour of the native gardens. They allowed me to harvest some seeds for Michael’s Southampton garden.



At a Program about the stars at the **Rock Bridge High School Planetarium** during “Nature’s Path a Day of Discovery” Missouri Master Naturalist Conference in Columbia. I had fun with fellow chapter member Marcia Wilderman and got to meet other chapter members and Missouri Master Naturalists from all over the state.



Trumpeter Swan Watch – I counted and photographed one swan as it flew over us to land in Teal Pond. I was only able to

participate this one day of training and do two surveys. As a result I now get the emails from the Audubon Society team. I enjoy reading the increasing count each week. There have been a record number of swans this season and there have been several sightings of banded birds from other states, some of which were banded many years ago.



Mist Net Mending – this is hardest thing I have done so far!!! I find it to be particularly satisfying though since Cori Westcott pointed out that the bird banders from the World Bird Sanctuary do not have the patience or time to do these repairs. It also helps them avoid replacing costly nets. I was fortunate to see mist nets being used and birds being banded on my trip to the Gulf Shores area of Alabama in April 2013.

By sharing some of my experiences from last year I hope to help a newbie or two from the class of 2013. As you can see, there are a wide variety of volunteer and advanced training activities to participate in and this may give an idea about what you might enjoy. Those listed here are only the tip of the iceberg. I have not thought of any of my own project ideas yet but I am sure that will come with time. Thanks for reading.

(Photos and article submitted by Lori Purk)

RACKING YOUR BRAIN For Volunteer Activities?

Here are some ideas from GR MMN Kari Pratt.

"Birds in Winter" at The Riverlands is the perfect place to volunteer in the winter and observe nature up close. What a great opportunity to share birds with others, learn about birds in the Mississippi Flyway and volunteer in a warm and dry place. Watch for the next opportunity...you'll be glad you did.

Make it a great day~



Volunteering from Home

If you want to volunteer in the winter from the warmth of your own home, repairing mist nets for the World Bird Sanctuary could be the opportunity for you. Once you've gotten your spot setup, you can 'drop in' while you are watching TV and volunteer for a while. The nets came to us in November and were returned in February. I logged right at 40 hours repairing 1 net this season. I think I'll try it again next year, perhaps you will, too.



Are you a Stream Teamer? If not and you like water, this might be the opportunity for you. Our family regularly camps on the Black River in Reynolds County. On each visit we collect and count bugs, measure water flow and report on changes in surrounding land area. We've found that kids and adults like to help pick bugs. Level one training comes about once a year. If you have a special spot in/on/near the water that you would like to protect and preserve, this volunteer opportunity might be for you~



What could be more fun than tapping trees, collecting sap, boiling that sap to syrup and eating that syrup on lots of stuff? That's what you get to do when you volunteer for ***Maple Sugar Days at Rockwood Reservation***. There are opportunities for hiking in the sugar bush, collecting sap at the trees, boiling sap over an open fire, making maple candy in snow and maple popcorn (much better than caramel corn), and eating real maple syrup on pancakes! Watch for your opportunity next winter...you won't be disappointed.



(Photos and article submitted by Kari Pratt)

FOREST PARK OWLS AND MARK GLENSHAW, MMN MEMBER AND OWLPROWLER

Recently certified Missouri Master Naturalist Mark Glenshaw, has closely observed and followed the activities of a mated pair of Great Horned Owls in Forest Park since late December 2005. On any given day you can find Mark in the park watching the pair he has named Charles and Sarah. He regularly gives talks and "Owl Prowls" in the park for schools, conservation groups, churches, and anyone that wants to learn more.

Sharing what he has observed and learned about the owls keeps him very busy! Between September 2013 and April 2014 he:

- led 50 Owl Prowls in Forest Park for families, friends, schools, universities, and organizations such as: Confluence MMN chapter, Missouri Coalition for the Environment, StLNerdyGirls, and the Piasa Palisades Group (Sierra Club).
- gave 23 talks to conservation organizations, libraries and schools, including Great Rivers and Mirimigoua MMN chapters, Gateway Greening, St. Louis County Library, Forest Park Forever, Great Rivers Audubon Society, University City Public Library, Maplewood Public Library, Songbird Station in Columbia, MO, Wild Bird Rehabilitation, and Fontbonne University and for an animal behavior class at Webster University.
- was featured on the KWMU's "St. Louis on the Air" on December 30, 2014
- <http://news.stlpublicradio.org/post/insider-s-look-forest-parks-great-horned-owls>

- was featured as a cover story for the Sunday magazine of the Belleville News-Democrat" on March 30, 2014
- <http://www.bnd.com/2014/03/30/3131508/whos-whooo-forest-park-owl-expert.html>
- began co-leading the Beginner Birder Walk in Forest Park, a joint venture of Forest Park Forever and St. Louis Audubon Society.

Mark's calendar fills quickly! He already has talks scheduled and Owl Prowls on the calendar for the summer and fall. To find out more about Mark Glenshaw, Charles and Sarah, visit his blog "Forest Park Owls" at <http://forestparkowls.blogspot.com/>



(Info submitted by Mark Glenshaw)

COLLEEN SCOTT SENDS THANKS

Colleen sends thanks for our assist with the MDC Earth Day booth on April 27 in Forest Park. She tells us that over 1200 seedlings of Flowering Dogwood, Redbud and Black Chokeberry were distributed. Participating MMN members included Kari Pratt, Carol Carr, Bill Hoss, Patrice Wilson, Pat Behle, Andra Stanley, Jen Grable, Tom Bayer, Kit Townsend, David Foeller, Cindy Taylor, Toni Vafi and Phyllis Moehsner.

You are more than welcome Colleen. We appreciate all of your hard work.

HIDDEN CREEK SAVANNA 2014 BIRD SURVEY

Site 1: Wetland area - triangle shaped piece of ground near the intersection of Union & Theater streets.

Site 2: Bridge area by the stream in the middle of the prairie restoration area.

Site 3: Edge of the site opposite the intersection of Summit & Union streets.

Method of Observation:

At each site observations are made for at least 15 minutes. Only birds seen and/or heard within the Project site were recorded. As with the initial survey, birds flying over the site were included. Multiple team members made observations. At the end of the observing period, the results were consolidated. If one team member observed a bird, it was recorded along with the number. If more than one team member observed a bird, the highest count was recorded.

Jen Grable, Bill Hoss, Lori Purk and Sherri Schmidt participated in the survey.



Two Tree Swallows

Weather conditions:

On Friday, 04/11/2014, it was a mostly sunny morning, with temperature in the 60's and a slight breeze.

Birds observed in Wetlands (8:50 - 10:30 am)

2 male Flicker, 2 Goldfinch, 2 Grackles, 1 House Sparrow, 6 Red-Winged Blackbirds (flyover), 5 Robins, 1 Song Sparrow

Birds observed in Sunny Prairie (09:00 - 09:30 am)

1 Blue Jay (flyover) 1, 4 Canada Geese (flyover), 1 Flicker (heard), 1 Grackle (flyover), 1 Red-Winged, 4 Robin, 2 Sparrows (type unidentified), 3 Tree Swallow, 1 Woodpecker

Birds observed in Woodland (09:30 - 10:00 am):

3 Blue Jay, 2 Brown Thrasher, 2 Flicker, 1 Goldfinch, 7 Grackle, 1 Mourning Dove, 3 Red-Winged Blackbird (2 males, 1 female)



Two male Flickers fighting

In addition, the team made the following observations:

Plants in bloom Sunny Prairie - Spring Beauties; Woodland – Dandelion Spring Beauties, Violets



Bluebells getting ready to bloom