



Confluence Chapter
St. Charles County, MO

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

The Confluence Chapter members were a busy bunch this winter!

This issue will be all about the fun we had these last three months (and the fun we will have in October). We collected maple syrup, learned about bryophytes, helped kids learn and enjoy the wetlands, helped our streams stay clean, encouraged high schoolers in their pursuit of learning about their environment and much, much more. We learned.....taught....volunteered!



Spring Stream Team Adventures
by Cliff Parmer

With the arrival of warmer weather we have resumed our monitoring activities on the Femme Osage. Thanks to **Carmen, Kay** and **Jerry** for coming out on a cloudy, chilly March day. The weather forecast indicated rain was imminent and so we limited our activities to chemical monitoring only. As it turned out, we finished just as the rain began. Our results indicated continued good water quality at both sites.

We have been asked to assist Lorri Gruber at Lake St. Louis in monitoring a small creek that flows by Hawk Ridge Park so on Friday, March 26, **Ann Finklang, Bob Lee** and Lorri met me at the park. We had a beautiful day and so were able to perform both macroinvertebrate and water chemistry monitoring.

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Remember to log in your service and training hours!

The macroinvertebrate results indicated a slight decline in quality although the chemistry tested out surprisingly well for a small stream surrounded by development and paralleling a highway. This stream has been rather surprising in that one would assume, given its location, macroinvertebrate families that indicate very good water quality and four that are tolerant of somewhat lower quality water. However, for comparison, all seven of these are prevalent in streams!

Our next monitoring session is scheduled for **Saturday, June 5**. Since weather precluded the macroinvertebrate monitoring we'll do it then. All are welcome to participate, you do not need any special training for most of the activities.



Wetlands for Kids by Cliff Parmer



After a night of storms the sun came out on April 3rd and provided a great day for this event. This event was sponsored jointly by the Missouri Department of Conservation and Ducks Unlimited and supported by a \$25,000 grant from the Monsanto Fund. Over 20 demonstration and activity stations were available to introduce children to various aspects of the natural world. Volunteers and MDC staff were available to instruct participants and answer questions. Activities included working with retrievers, meeting live birds of prey, creating wetland-themed artwork, exploring a beaver lodge, learning to identify waterfowl and other birds, tie fishing flies, seeing and touching snakes, frogs and turtles.

Our Chapter provided a casting activity for the kids, discussions about the purposes that wetlands serve in the natural world and a Twister game using aquatic insects as space markers. Thanks to Kevin for providing the Backyard Bass for the casting event. For many of the children participating in the casting event, it was their first opportunity to actually cast a spinning rod and the excitement of snagging a plastic fishy was heart-warming. Judging from the number of kids and relatives that passed through and the smiles on the faces of the kids that caught Kevin's plastic fish, our event was a big hit. It is estimated that about 1800 people were in attendance at the event. Master Naturalists involved with preparing for and staffing the event were **Leslie Limberg, Cathy Stockglusner, Amy Ludwig, Alberta McGilligan, Claudia**

Kasten, Gary Schneider, Jerry Lindhorst, Steve Thomas, Bob Lee and Cliff Parmer. Special thanks to Leslie for organizing we volunteers, to Amy for providing working and meeting space, to Alberta for her additions to the roots and to Alberta and **John Kasten** for their Twister spinners. We touched a lot of people at this event and had a lot of fun as well.



Learning About Bryophytes while helping Missouri
by Lee Phillion



Upper left: Kay LaBanca, Claire Meyners, Nels Holmburg, Cathy Stockglausner
Upper right: a beautiful Liverwort
Left: Unusual mosses

The informative article by Lee is on the next page, so keep reading!

Mosses, Liverworts and Hornworts, Oh MY!

The first outing of the Weldon Springs Bryophyte Survey yielded 2 county records for mosses. **Kay LaBanca** is responsible for collecting both of the mosses, a *Leucobryum galucum* and a *Platydictya confervoides*.

So, what's a bryophyte? Bryophytes (from the Greek words brýon "moss" and phuton, "plant") are seedless green plants that include the mosses, liverworts, and hornworts. Bryophytes lack the specialized tissues xylem and phloem that circulate water and dissolved nutrients in vascular plants. As a result, Bryophytes are small, soft, and most must be near moisture.

And, what does it mean to find a "county record?" To be a "record" specimen, the collected plant must be identified by a reputable herbarium (like the Missouri Botanical Garden) as the first of the particular species found in a defined area...such as a county. The collected specimen must be "vouchered" and maintained in that herbarium's collection. The "voucher" is the written documentation of the species' occurrence at a specific location, and contains other information about the physical environment in which the species was found.

The specimen and voucher sheet will remain in the herbarium collection (along with the name of the collector -- Yea Kay!) and will be available to anyone for study in the future.

Like other plants in a herbarium, bryophytes are stored as dried specimens. When bryologists wish to study them at a later time, they simply immerse the specimen in warm water to restore it. Very cool what those little mosses can do.

The Confluence Chapter Weldon Springs (Bryo)Phyte Club currently has 12 trained volunteer collectors and have made 4 field trips. Training is provided by **Nels Holmberg**, a noted Missouri collector. Nels has conducted several training hikes through various areas of Weldon Springs. Survey members are collecting from burned and unburned areas in the existing and proposed Natural Areas. The team also visited the Bryophyte Herbarium at the Missouri Botanical Garden to meet Carl Darigo, who identifies all specimens.

The objective is to develop a list of bryophyte species at Weldon Springs Conservation area. **Carmen Santos** is compiling the list of species collected by the team at Weldon Springs. The listing will become part of the Missouri Botanical Garden's website and will be shared with MDC and other state organizations.

Training and collecting hikes will continue throughout 2010. Everyone is welcome. Contact Lee Phillion 314-780-5326 (HYPERLINK "<mailto:leephillion@sbcglobal.net>" leephillion@sbcglobal.net) for information.



Master Naturalists from the Confluence Chapter Help the Next Generation of Ecologists

North America's largest high school environmental competition took place in April with two of our own, **Russell Barton and Dianne Johnson** leading their schools. Teams of five students compete in outdoor stations testing their knowledge of aquatic ecology, soils/land use, forestry, wildlife, and current environmental issues. The state champion goes on to participate on the national level, where the grand prize is \$100,000 in scholarships.

Russell's team took 2nd place in the state and Diane's took 3rd place. Way to go!

Congratulations and **thank you** for going the extra mile in helping the future of Missouri ecology through our youth.

Did you know.....? A quiz on the proper use of our name

1. Can we write on our posters: "Confluence Master Naturalists"?
2. Can we write : "In St. Charles, The Missouri Master Naturalist Volunteers will maintain a garden.."
3. Can we write to prospective volunteers: "It's great fun to be a MMN!"

Answers are on next page

Answers:

1. No, we can't. It must read "Missouri Master Naturalist, Confluence Chapter"
2. No. It should read, "In St. Charles, the Missouri Master Naturalists volunteers will....." (no caps in 'the' or 'volunteers')
3. No, initials or acronyms must never be used to identify the program to outside audiences.

Who says so and why? Because it's important to protect our identity and to maintain clarity and consistency within Missouri and the nation's other chapters. The Master Naturalist program is growing and we all need to keep a consistent look so the public recognizes the program. So, MDC and the head of the Missouri Master Naturalist program has created guidelines for us to use in publicity, newspaper articles, marketing, logo use, posters, presentations and anywhere else where our name/logo will appear.

***The President will keep these guidelines in his/her box for your use.
Please read and understand them before using our name/logo***

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation!



Prior to opening the program to the public on Feb. 6 at Rockwoods Reservation, Kevin taught us how to tap trees, collect sap and boil it down to make sugar and syrup. You're the best, Kevin: We had great fun and learned a lot, so thank you. But, we think we'll stay with what we know how to do, and requires a lot less time when we want maple syrup: We'll open a bottle.

State Conference is coming!
October 15-17
Cuivre River State Park
 by Ann Finklang

Are you ready for a fun weekend? Do you want additional advance training? Would you like to meet other Missouri Master Naturalists from across the state? If you answer 'yes' to any of these questions – be sure to attend the 2010 Conference at Cuivre River State Park.

Why Cuivre River State Park? The park offers a location that has a non-commercial natural rustic character that will be more befitting our Master Naturalist mission.

Cuivre River is a location that possesses within walking distances a wide variety of differing ecosystems. This is the focus of a unique range of field training opportunities. The Park has ample classroom space that will easily accommodate all anticipated indoor advanced training classes. Some of the classes scheduled for advance training are: native plants, geology, birds, bats, archery, and a whole lot more. In addition a day trip is being planned for a visit to the Confluence of the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers.

What about sleeping arrangements? If you choose you may stay on site at Cuivre River State Park in Camp Sherwood Village. Camp Sherwood Village can accommodate the bulk of our attendees in rustic bunk house style cabins. The Park Cuivre River also has tent camping areas for the more adventuresome members

If you prefer urban style lodging there are several modern motels a short four miles away in Troy. The Super 8 agreed to reserve a block of rooms for the Missouri Master Naturalists at a reduced rate.

What about meals? This particular area has indoor and outdoor dining areas scaled to handle all our anticipated attendees and their guests. In addition to lunch a catered hot breakfast is planned for Saturday.

The evening will be a Chuck Wagon meal followed by music under the stars.

If you are like me, and a little shy about meeting new people – I will give you an opening: Simply approach a fellow Missouri Master Naturalist from another chapter and ask “Do you have much honeysuckle in your area?”

If you have attended in the past I need not say any more. Watch your mail box in **August** for the registration packet. The packet will include: a schedule, training sessions and field trips with session descriptions and confirmed presenters, registrations fees, accommodations, all extra conference activities, and driving directions among other pertained information. registrations fees, accommodations, all extra conference activities, and driving directions.

Welcome new members!

Since January, we have welcomed the following new members: **Rich Burkemper, Bob Coffing, Debra Galloway, Sam Hodge, Dianne Johnson, Claudia Kasten, Bob Lee, Barbara Lamker, Renden Marshall, John Schwendenman, Cathy Stockglausner, Stan Spence, Barbara Thomas, Steven Thomas, and Joe Veras** . Many of you have already become active in our volunteering activities. With new members like you, the Confluence Chapter will continue to make Missouri a better place to live.

Congratulations on a job well done!

Since January, the following service awards have been earned:

Pewter Pin for more than 500 hours: **Larry Berglund, Holly Currier, Valerie Geile, Jerry Lindhorst**

Bronze Pin for more than 250 hours: **Joan Twillman**

Crayfish: **Linda Kalicak, Amy Ludwig, Alberta McGilligan, Joan Twillman**

2008 MN class certificate and Dragonfly recognition: **Mindy Batsch, Carmen Santos, Tom Schultz, Joe Walker**

2009 MN class certificate and Dragonfly recognition: **Bob Coffing, Sam Hodge, Bob Lee, Rendan Marshall**

Learn

Teach

Volunteer

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editor