



Confluence Chapter
St. Charles County, MO

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

2011 State Chapter Conference

September 23-25

Joplin, Missouri

Hosted by the Chert Glades Master Naturalist Chapter



Living on the Edge...

Complete your full year AT requirements in one, fun weekend.

If you haven't registered yet (or even if you have), go to the Chert Glades *nifty* website:

www.chertgladesmn.org
Register or check out the latest developments

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Confluence Achieves Another Goal!



The Confluence Chapter has marked 445 drains and we have only 78 assigned drains remaining which will be a total of 523 drains marked. This total number exceeds our 2011 goal of 500 drains. Thank you for your excellent work and congratulations on exceeding our goal, which, by the way, was the 2011 goal established by the City of Wentzville. So we (will) beat not only our Chapter goal, but also Wentzville's annual goal as well!



Green Book Club Keeps on Reading

Going on it's third year, the Green Book Club has read over 20 books regarding all subjects conservation. The next meetings are Sept. 27 and Oct. 25 from 1-3. All members from the three chapters and trainees are welcome.

Contact Holly Currier at hcurrier@sbcglobal.net

Candidates for Secretary, Vice President Elections at the November meeting

Connie Campbell candidate for Secretary

"My family and I returned to the St. Charles area in 2009 after spending 26 years near the beautiful Jersey Shore. While in NJ, we raised our 2 children and I spent 20 years teaching third graders. Through experiences with my own 2 children and my students, I developed a love and appreciation for the "outdoors". When I mentioned a need to meet new people after returning to Missouri, Joe Walker suggested I try the Missouri Master Naturalists.

I enjoy working on Confluence projects that involve children. I like planting and taking care of plants especially flowers. I have greatly enjoyed traipsing over the Springbend property while monitoring the new bluebird boxes on the property. I think the Advanced Training opportunities are highly enriching."

Alberta McGilligan to run for VP

"I have been a Master Naturalist for 3 years. When I retired, I began looking for some volunteer activities that included people who have similar interests as I do.

The Confluence Chapter has been a joy. Even while I was in class, I began to get notices of all the activities the chapter was doing. Pretty impressive! I have enjoyed getting to know new Confluence members and participating in volunteer activities.

I now volunteer at Shaw Nature Reserve every week, worked on the Capstone project that built the Rain Garden at Indian Camp Creek, am working on this year's Capstone project building the Towne Park Nature Explore Classroom as well as some weeding at a couple of our locations and some limited work on the LaBarque Creek cedar removal project."



Update on the Nature Explore Classroom

Just look at what Master Naturalists can do! Many Confluence members have been instrumental in this project that will help children explore nature. Located in Towne Park in St. Charles County, this area will also have wildflowers blooming in adjacent fields.

For more information about the wildflower restoration, please see the link by Joe Walker: <http://www.mmnconfluence.org/documents/townepark.pdf>



Interested in being a Guide?

If you want to be an interpretative Guide for this fabulous new area, contact Confluence member Joe Walker at asti-walker@att.net or Ben Grossman at bgrossman@sccmo.org



Dave Barylski, Larry Berglund, Bob Lee, Bob Coffing on tractor and Rob Merriman (Sam Hodge photographer)

The Lum Miller Calvary Rides To The Rescue!

by Patsy Hodge

LaBarque Creek Watershed is an amazing and unique conservation opportunity for naturalists. Anyone in the Confluence Chapter who has worked in the Lum Miller Restoration Project area of LaBarque will attest to the awesome natural beauty and fascinating geology of this northern edge of the Ozarks, only five miles south of Eureka.

LaBarque is home to many surviving glacial remnant plants, undisturbed by development. It's amazing to me since this watershed is so close to major urban areas.

On one of the exploratory hikes to prioritize restoration work, **Bob Coffing** and **Bob Lee** discovered a dramatically different group of plants growing at the edge of a wooded area. Thanks to the help of MOBOT experts and our partners at **Litzsinger Road Ecology Center**, it was finally identified as *Lycopodium digitatum*. This fan clubmoss is sometimes described as ground pines or creeping cedar because of their small, simple, needle-like or scale-like leaves. It was especially exciting for everyone involved since *L. digitatum* is rare in Missouri and had not been previously sited in this entire region of the state.

Unfortunately with the massive amounts of rain this spring, our little patch of uniqueness became overgrown with cedar and other tall aggressors. The majority of the patch of 5-inch plants was now in total shade, and in danger of being overwhelmed. The crew pictured, this motley calvary, rode to the rescue to enable survival of this rare species. The rescue timing was perfect—just in time for a tour of The National Fern Society's meeting held in St. Louis at the Missouri Botanical Garden. The enthusiastic group came to "our corner" of LaBarque Creek Watershed and left smiling!

Wow! Is it possible to be the hero and save a little patch of our natural world? Maybe so.

Awards from Forest ReLeaf

Valerie Giele: For planning and installing over 100 trees and shrubs at the World Bird Sanctuary

Ben Grossman: For planting over 2500 trees in St. Charles Co

Congratulations and Thank You!





Fun and knowledge..... Thank you, **Kevin McCarthy**, for guiding us on July 8 on a float trip on the Meramec River. We started out at the Pacific Palisades Conservation Area and ended at the Allenton Boat Access. It was 7 miles of learning about aquatic diversity and having great fun.

**Help me.....I'm lost!
Where am I supposed to go?**

No worries anymore about how to get to that Capstone project, or this volunteer location. **Ric Gray**, our webmaster, has created a link on our webpage, <http://www.mmnconfluence.org/documents/MMN-PROJECT-DIRECTIONS.pdf> So no more frustration, no more excuses! It's a 2 page document you can print out and put in your glove box. Thanks, Ric!

Hiking at Graham Cave

Several Confluence Chapter members enjoyed a field trip to Graham Cave State Park in Montgomery County on Saturday, June 11. Park supervisor Debra Ray started things off with a nice introduction and provided background information. Member Jim Phillips, who volunteers at the park, then led a hiking tour that included the Glades Natural Area. We viewed the mouth of Graham Cave where artifacts uncovered in the cave revealed that people were living there more than 10,000 years ago. We ended the tour with a picnic lunch in the park.



l to r: **Jeff Hornung, Renden Hornung, Cliff Parmer, Barbara Thomas, Holly Currier, and Jim Phillips**



Blue Bird monitoring at Shaw Nature Reserve is coming to a close for the season, but they had a very good year. Confluence members monitored 83 cavity boxes and counted well over 300 bluebirds that have fledged. **Lynn Buchanan**, center, trained by **Claire Meyners**, heads up the project. Also shown here are **Leslie Limberg**, left, and a friend, Jill Cimmings.

Goofing off....

Ahhh...those Master Naturalists: Always goofing off! **Carmen Santos** recently spotted these two shirkers, "The Weed Busters," **Kay LaBanca and Ann Finlang** at Quail Ridge Park. (They keep telling us how hard they work)



Conservation Day for 3rd Graders in Wentzville by Connie Campbell

About 175 third graders at Wentzville Heritage Intermediate School enjoyed varied activities provided for them by the Confluence Chapter of the Missouri Master Naturalists on Monday, May 9th, 2011. **Judy Huck** led an activity of finding camouflage critters in a patch of grass, and when thunderstorms moved us inside, she adapted well and provided different camouflage critters in her indoor classroom.

Mindy Batsch designed a lesson with several activities that kept the children excited with “tracks, scat, and habitats”. **Leslie Limberg** came dressed as a naturalist that made her look like she had just stepped out of the forest as she led a busy lesson about tree identification. The students learned how to identify trees from their leaves, bark, nuts, fruit, and other characteristics.

Joan Twillman outdid herself when she crafted an activity where the students were given an egg. They were instructed to use natural materials to make a boat that would carry the egg safely across a “river” that Joan had improvised with several Rubbermaid tubs of water.

Connie Campbell recruited all of the volunteers and coordinated with a lead from the school. Connie also handed out big nametags of local plants and animals and helped the students to think about who relied on who to stay alive. They could pass the web string to a prey or a predator, and the end web demonstrated how connected we all are. As the students rotated through the activities, they had a fun end-of-the-year day; yet they learned about the wonderful world of nature around us.

June Water Quality Monitoring Activity by Cliff Parmer

On the morning of June 5th **Leslie Limberg, Bob Coffing, Larry Berglund** and I met to carry out the second monitoring session of the year on Femme Osage Creek. We usually try to perform the macroinvertebrate survey early in the year when the aquatic stage of the bug’s life cycle is close to ending and they are ready to hatch and so are close to their maximum size. But, due to rain, by the time this session occurred the bugs had hatched, laid their eggs and the next generation young were developing – but they were incredibly tiny.

Femme Osage Creek water quality usually scores “Good” on the macroinvertebrate score sheet, and had the same score this time. Nitrate levels were on the high side of average, however. Nitrate is a form of nitrogen which supports plant growth, hence its presence in fertilizer. High nitrate levels can encourage aquatic plant growth which can lead to a reduction in dissolved oxygen affecting the diversity of aquatic life-forms. We did see an increase in algae on the stream bottom over previous years and suspect that the high nitrate levels are related to a pasture about a mile upstream where cattle have access to the creek.

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