

# HABITAT HAPPENINGS



Runge Conservation Nature Center

2012  
January/February



# PARTNERSHIPS

*The first law of ecology is that everything is related to everything else.*  
~ Barry Commoner

You will be hearing a lot about PARTNERSHIPS this month as we continue to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Missouri Department of Conservation. In fact, if you have read recent issues of the *Missouri Conservationist* or newspaper articles about our anniversary year, the word partnership appears often. The Missouri Department of Conservation was formed through citizen involvement, aka partnerships. These partnerships continue to this day in many forms.

At Runge Conservation Nature Center, we are fortunate to have a great partnership with Jefferson City and the surrounding communities. The most noticeable partnership is the Volunteer Naturalist program. Volunteers have been an integral part of Runge since before we opened our doors in 1993. Here are a few things some of the current volunteer naturalists have to say about partnering or teaming up with us:

*Teaming up with the staff at Runge (MDC) gives me the opportunity to recognize that partnerships can only exist within the context of relationships. The very things that connect us together as people (love, compassion, interest, etc.) are the very things that bind us to nature. It is in that place of kinship where the real work of conservation is born.* ~ Holly Grantham

*Because of my partnership with Runge (MDC) I have been able to proudly share my love and enthusiasm of the outdoors with the public and the children of South Callaway School District.*  
~ Gretchen Hannah

*When I was a teacher in the public school system I looked at teaching as a partnership with the students in learning about the biological world. Being a volunteer for Runge Nature Center has enabled me to continue to have a similar partnership with a larger public in learning about our native communities (forestry, fish, and wildlife)---an important part of our biological world.* ~ Anne Hutton

For more thoughts about partnerships, read the Volunteer News column on the next page.

Robin Grumm, Assistant Nature Center Manager



# Volunteer

*Teaming up with the staff at Runge and the other volunteers gives me the opportunity to share with others the beauty of our wonderful state as we go with the Hiking Club to different state parks and conservations areas. ~ Linda Tremain*

*Partnering with RCNC gives me joy when I see a child excited about seeing something in nature they have never seen before. ~ Ken Christgen*

*From puppetry to journaling, teaming with MDC staff as a Runge volunteer allows me to share my love of Missouri's natural world with thousands of folks who are drawn to our center's activities. ~ Kay Kasiske*

*Because of my partnership with Runge, I have been able to hike diverse areas of Missouri and learn their individual differences and importance to our state. ~ Karen Dunkle*

*Through my partnership with Runge I have been able to reap various rewards including an interesting and amazing career but also deep connections with both the natural and my personal community. ~ Aimee Lehmuth*

# NEWS

## January/February Nature Photography Matt Hambly

“As a 9-5 Graphic Designer and Photographer, my daily surroundings are typically the four small walls of my studio, as I’m sure so many other Missourians can relate. In my time away from the daily survival race, my passion is photographing the unbelievable abundance of wildlife that resides right outside our doors in the rolling hills of Missouri. My goal as a photographer is to capture not the exotic and elusive, but the typically overlooked creatures that surround our everyday lives and to showcase their beauty, behavior, and untold story with a click of the shutter.

We are fortunate to live in a beautiful state with such diversity, and I hope you enjoy the images in this exhibit.”



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**Milestones** The following VOLUNTEER Naturalists were recognized recently for their contributions to the programs at Runge. Congratulations!

- 100 hours – Phyllis Patterson
- 200 hours – Anne Hutton
- 300 hours – Hollie Burrows
- 750 hours – Linda Tremain
- 2500 hours – Pam Jones

### NATURE CENTER HOURS BUILDING HOURS

Tuesday-Saturday Open 8:00AM to 5:00PM  
Thursdays until 8:00PM

Sunday and Monday: Building Closed

### TRAIL HOURS

Open Daily 6:00AM to 9:00PM

## Did You Know

**Nature's Partnerships:** Praying mantids provide pest control for other plants and animals which in turn provide shelter and protection for the mantids.

# For the little ones



*Connect with nature through exciting and age-appropriate opportunities.*

*"If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder without any such gift from the fairies, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement, and mystery of the world we live in." ~Rachel Carson (1907-1964) naturalist, writer, environmentalist*

**Little Acorns** *Children 3 through 6 years of age are welcome to attend a Little Acorns program with their caregiver. This program is limited to 20 children, plus caregivers.*

## January

Call 573/526-5544 on or after January 3rd to make your reservation.

### **King of Birds**

*By registration.* Missouri is the winter home for hundreds of bald eagles. What do they eat? How much do they weigh? How many feathers do they have? Where do they nest? Find the answers to these questions and more at our program this month.

### **Little Acorns**

Tuesday, January 10 – 1:00PM  
Saturday, January 14 – 10:00AM  
Wednesday, January 18 – 1:00PM  
Thursday, January 19 – 6:00PM

## February

Call 573/526-5544 on or after February 1st to make your reservation.

### **Snowflakes**

*By registration.* Snow, snow, beautiful snow – step on a hunk and away you go! Come with us as we go outside (hopefully) to play in the snow at Runge! We will “make” snow inside, too.

### **Little Acorns**

Saturday, February 11 – 10:00AM  
Thursday, February 16 – 6:00PM  
Friday, February 17 – 10:00AM  
Tuesday, February 28 – 10:00AM



The **Babes In The Woods** (*Children ages 0 through 2 years of age*) and **Little Acorns Plus** (*Families with a child that fits into Babes In The Woods and one that fits into Little Acorns*) programs are taking time off. We will return in the spring with fresh new programs for the youngest among us. Watch for those dates in the March/April issue of *Habitat Happenings* newsletter.

# January Events

Make your registration by calling after **8:00AM** on **January 3rd** to register for these programs (573/526-5544). If you must cancel, please call as soon as possible so someone on the waiting list may attend. Thank you.

## River Bluffs Audubon Presents:

### Green Fire

**JANUARY 12 / THURSDAY / 7:00PM**

*Walk-in* (Adults) Don't miss the Jefferson City debut of the film "Green Fire: Aldo Leopold and a Land Ethic for our Time." This highly acclaimed documentary calls attention to Aldo Leopold's extraordinary career and his influence on modern environmental thinking. **Dr. Susan Flader**, Professor Emerita of American Environmental History at the University of Missouri, will introduce the film and take questions. Dr. Flader is a Leopold expert and she contributed to the film.

## What's Going On?

### TLC (Tender Loving Care) of

### Runge's LIVE Animals

**JANUARY 14 / SATURDAY /**

**10:00AM-2:00PM**

*Walk-in* (All ages) This Saturday you will have an opportunity to see the care and feeding of our animals. Aquarium and large turtle feeding at 11:00AM.

## Midweek Trekkers: Lake Ozark State Park

**JANUARY 18 / WEDNESDAY /**

**8:00AM-5:00PM**

*By registration* (18 years and older) Runge Midweek Trekkers is a volunteer-led program designed to provide opportunities for people to hike Missouri trails and learn about our plants, animals, and natural communities. Each month we'll meet at the nature center, carpool to one of Missouri's choice hiking spots, and hike one or two of the best trails.

With over 17,000 areas, **Lake Ozark State Park** is Missouri's largest state park. We'll hike the north loop of the **Trail of Four Winds** (approximately 8-10 miles, \*\*\*\*), which wanders through oak-hickory forests, an old quarry, and provides a glimpse of the Grand Glaize Marsh. Bring your lunch, water, hiking boots or comfortable shoes, and come dressed for the weather.

## Bundled Up Babes-Winter Stroll

**JANUARY 19 / THURSDAY /**

**10:00-11:00AM**

*By registration* (0-2 years of age with caregiver) Bundle your babes up to take a nature stroll into Missouri's wonderful winter world.

## Nature's Needlers

**JANUARY 19 / THURSDAY /**

**10:30AM-Noon or 6:00-7:30PM**

*By registration* (18 years and older) In the first of the **Butterflies in Flight** series, the Spring Azure, also known as the Common Blue, is one of the first butterflies of spring. Although small, what they lack in size, they make up for in beauty. This month we'll learn about a partnership between the Spring Azure Butterfly and another Missouri insect. We will make a related patchwork block.

## The Runge Hiking Club: Clifty Creek Natural Area/Painted Rock Conservation Area

**JANUARY 21 / SATURDAY /**

**8:00AM-5:00PM**

*By registration* (18 years and older) Learn about our wondrous state! Each month, we'll meet at the nature center, car pool to one of Missouri's choice hiking spots, and hike one or two of the best trails.

Join us in exploring the winter surroundings of **Clifty Creek Natural Area** and **Painted Rock Conservation Area**. Please plan on participating in our June hike when we return to see what a difference six months make. Bring your lunch, water, and come dressed for the weather. The combined hikes will be approximately 4-5 miles (\*\*\*\*).

## Trail rating system

\*Easiest trail (flat terrain with no obstructions)

\*\*Slight inclines and/or few obstructions (gravel, few rocks)

\*\*\*Moderate inclines and/or occasional rocks or roots

\*\*\*\*Occasional significant inclines and/or rocks or roots

\*\*\*\*\*Most difficult (significant inclines, obstructions, and/or loose rocks)

## Story Tree

**JANUARY 21 / SATURDAY /**

**10:00-10:30AM**

*Walk-in* (All ages)

Cold winds are blowing, snow is falling. Join us inside by the Story Tree and find out what animals do in winter. This is an informal story time for families with young children.

## Owl Prowl

**JANUARY 26 / THURSDAY /**

**6:00-7:30PM**

*By registration* (All ages) Owls are mysterious creatures of the night. Learn about the different types of owls in Missouri, where we can see them, and some of the myths and legends about owls. After a short program, we will hit the trails to see if we can spot an owl. Please dress for the weather.



## Eagle Adventure

**JANUARY 28 / SATURDAY /**

**10:00AM-2:00PM**

*Walk-in* (All ages)

Refer to back page for details.

## Did You Know

**Nature's Partnerships:**  
Aphids partner with ants by providing food in exchange for defense.

# February Events

Call after **8:00AM** on **February 1st** to register for these programs (573/526-5544). If you must cancel, please call as soon as possible so someone on the waiting list may attend. Thank you.

## Cardinals and Coffee—A Walk

**FEBRUARY 7 / TUESDAY /**  
8:00–10:00AM

*By registration* (50 years and older) Join a naturalist for bird watching and shade-grown coffee. We will walk along Runge trails looking for the sights and sounds of our winter birds. A few binoculars and identification books will be provided.

## River Bluffs Audubon Presents:

### Brown-Headed Nuthatches

**FEBRUARY 9 / THURSDAY / 7:00PM**

*Walk-in* (Adults) The Brown-Headed Nuthatch disappeared from Missouri over 100 years ago. Learn about the habitat it requires and more about this fascinating species. Rich Staton from the University of Missouri will speak about his graduate research on the intriguing question of reintroduction of this bird.

## Midweek Trekkers: Bennett Spring State Park

**FEBRUARY 15 / WEDNESDAY /**  
8:00AM–5:00PM

*By registration* (18 years and older) This month, we'll travel to one of our most popular state parks—**Bennett Spring**. We'll hike the **Natural Tunnel Trail** (7.5 miles, \*\*\*) to find a 296-foot-long S-shaped tunnel—one of the largest, most beautiful (and largely unknown) natural tunnels in the state. Bring a small pack, your lunch, water, and hiking boots or comfortable shoes. We will eat lunch on the trail. Bring a flashlight if you want to explore inside the tunnel. Come dressed for the weather.

## Nature's Needlers

**FEBRUARY 16 / THURSDAY /**  
10:30AM–Noon or 6:00–7:30PM

*By registration* (18 years and older) The second block in the series of **Butterflies in Flight**, is the Eastern Black Swallowtail. If you have any member of the carrot family growing in your yard or garden, you have probably seen this butterfly in one or more stages of development. Join us as we look closer at this beautiful butterfly and learn more about how to attract them to our yards. We will make a related patchwork block.

## The Runge Hiking Club: Saline Valley Conservation Area

**FEBRUARY 18 / SATURDAY /**  
8:00AM–5:00PM

*By registration* (18 years and older) This will be a different type of hike. We will experience the art of 'bush whacking' as we explore **Saline Valley Conservation Area** near Eldon. No established trails will be followed. Participants will be broken up into groups and given GPS (global positioning system) units and coordinates. It will be up to each group to find the way points. This will provide an excellent opportunity for you to find out how useful a handheld GPS can be and how they work. A Runge volunteer will be with each group, so don't worry about getting lost. Leave that up to us. Bring your lunch, water, come dressed for the weather, and **wear good hiking boots or heavy duty footwear**. This could be strenuous depending on the weather and terrain. Approximately 5 miles, \*\*\*\*\*.

## What's Going On?

## Great Backyard Bird Count

**FEBRUARY 18 / SATURDAY /**  
10:00AM–2:00PM

*Walk-in* (All ages) Let's celebrate the 15th year of the Great Backyard Bird Count by identifying and counting birds at Runge. Staff will tally and enter the information which will be used by ornithologists (bird biologists) to learn more about birds nationwide. Official counts will take place in the Wildlife Viewing Area at 10:30 and 1:30. Bird identification tables will be set-up in the lobby along with other bird-related activities.

## Story Tree

**FEBRUARY 18 / SATURDAY /**  
1:00–2:30PM

*Walk-in* (All ages) Cold winds are blowing, snow is falling. Join us inside by the Story Tree and find out what animals do in winter. This is an informal story time for families with young children.



## Early Spring Evening Walk

**FEBRUARY 23 /**  
THURSDAY / 6:00PM

*Walk-in* (All ages) It's coming! Venture outside for a walk on our trails to discover harbingers of spring, that is - natural signs announcing that spring is really on the way! Dress for the weather and be ready to look and listen.

## What's Going On? Fly-Tying Fun!

**FEBRUARY 25 / SATURDAY /**  
10:00AM–2:00PM

*Walk-in* (All ages) Prepare for the spring fishing season by having some fly-tying fun! Enjoy demonstrations and visit with the Capital City Fly Fishers as they tie flies right before your eyes. Learn how to make a simple fly and take one home. Participate in fishing games and activities. Pick up information on where YOU can hook a big one. This event is sure to get you in the mood for some fly fishing fun!

## Did You Know

**Nature's Partnerships:** Insects, like bees and moths, pollinate flowers in exchange for food called nectar.

# Scout Packs



Runge Nature Center is happy to offer assistance in meeting requirements for some nature-related scout badges. We have a variety of scout packs available with activities and information to assist you in your efforts. Please contact Becky at 573/526-5544 ext. 3408 for more information or to reserve one of the following scout packs.

## Girl Scouts:

**Brownie:** Animals Try-It  
Plants Try-It

## Boy Scouts:

**Wolf Cub:** Elective #13 - Birds  
**Bear Cub:** Achievement #5 - Sharing Your World with Wildlife  
**Webelos:** Naturalist & Forester Pack(s) Your choice of packs or a combination pack that has both badge requirements.

**Watch for Jr. Girl Scout Packs  
Wildlife and Earth Connection Badges  
Spring 2012!**

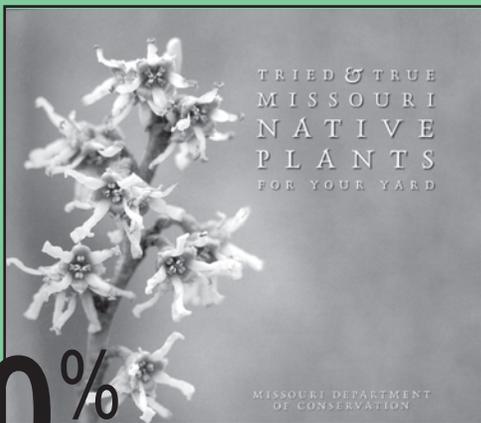
# Adventure Packs



Get outside and explore! Check out our new Adventure Packs from the front desk the next time you visit the nature center. Choose between an ART & NATURE pack, INSECT pack, AQUATIC pack, or a TRACKS & SCAT pack to use while exploring the trails at the nature center. There are fun-filled ideas and tools inside each pack to help you DISCOVER NATURE.

# Nature Shop News

January/February featured items



**20%**  
off

Discounted Price: **\$4.80**

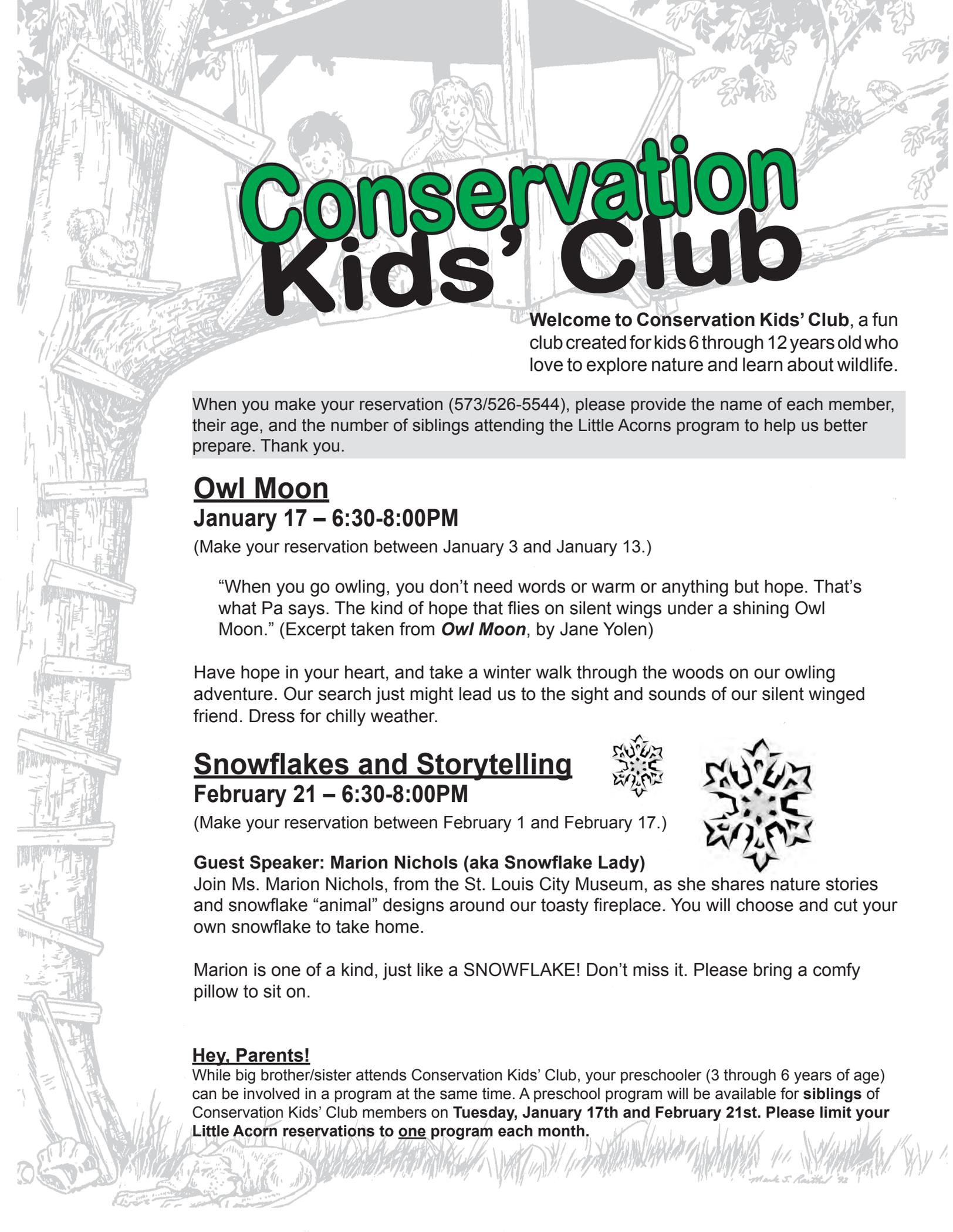
Heritage card discount does not apply.

Save the date...

*8th  
Annual  
Native  
Plant  
Sale*

**March 24**

**10:00AM - 3:00PM**

A detailed black and white line drawing of a treehouse built in a large tree. Two children, a boy and a girl, are looking out from the windows. A squirrel is on a branch to the left, and a bird is on a branch to the right. The title 'Conservation Kids' Club' is overlaid on the drawing in large, bold letters.

# Conservation Kids' Club

Welcome to Conservation Kids' Club, a fun club created for kids 6 through 12 years old who love to explore nature and learn about wildlife.

When you make your reservation (573/526-5544), please provide the name of each member, their age, and the number of siblings attending the Little Acorns program to help us better prepare. Thank you.

## Owl Moon

**January 17 – 6:30-8:00PM**

(Make your reservation between January 3 and January 13.)

“When you go owling, you don’t need words or warm or anything but hope. That’s what Pa says. The kind of hope that flies on silent wings under a shining Owl Moon.” (Excerpt taken from *Owl Moon*, by Jane Yolen)

Have hope in your heart, and take a winter walk through the woods on our owling adventure. Our search just might lead us to the sight and sounds of our silent winged friend. Dress for chilly weather.

## Snowflakes and Storytelling

**February 21 – 6:30-8:00PM**

(Make your reservation between February 1 and February 17.)



### **Guest Speaker: Marion Nichols (aka Snowflake Lady)**

Join Ms. Marion Nichols, from the St. Louis City Museum, as she shares nature stories and snowflake “animal” designs around our toasty fireplace. You will choose and cut your own snowflake to take home.

Marion is one of a kind, just like a SNOWFLAKE! Don’t miss it. Please bring a comfy pillow to sit on.

### **Hey, Parents!**

While big brother/sister attends Conservation Kids' Club, your preschooler (3 through 6 years of age) can be involved in a program at the same time. A preschool program will be available for **siblings** of Conservation Kids' Club members on **Tuesday, January 17th and February 21st. Please limit your Little Acorn reservations to one program each month.**

# Holiday Happenings

## The Gifts of Conservation



Tuesday, December 27 • 10:00AM – 3:00PM

Wednesday, December 28 • 10:00AM – 3:00PM

Thursday, December 29 • 10:00AM – 7:00PM



In celebration of the 75th anniversary, we will explore and highlight the many **Gifts** from Missouri's fish, forest, and wildlife resources. Bring your family and friends and enjoy a variety of activities, crafts, refreshments, and walks along the trails. No reservations required.

**20% off everything in the gift shop.** These 3-days only.

# Eagle Adventure



**January 28**

**10AM~2PM**

No reservations required.

### At the Nature Center

- Live Eagle presentations at 10AM, 11AM, and 1PM
- Eagle activities and crafts

### Eagle Viewing Sites

Pick up a map to three eagle viewing sites at the nature center.

- Binder Lake Park (parking lot near old bait shop)
- Marion Access on Hwy 179
- Noren Access (near the Missouri River bridge)

These locations will be staffed and you will be able to use high-powered scopes and binoculars to view eagles (weather permitting).