

Nature Connections

News and Events from the Missouri Department of Conservation • July/August 2013



Healthy Waters Are No Accident

Southwest Missouri is truly blessed to have such great water resources. From clear, cold streams to large reservoirs, we have some of the best opportunities for fishing in the Midwest. To ensure that these waters are as clean and diverse as possible, the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) works with you and for you to sustain healthy forests, fish, and wildlife.

One shining example of the way we sustain healthy habitats is at Table Rock Lake and the multi-agency involvement in the National Fish Habitat Initiative (NFHI). The specific NFHI project on Table Rock is a five-year watershed project involving MDC, Bass Pro Shops, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other partners. The primary objective for the Table Rock Lake NFHI project is to improve the fish habitat. Other goals include improving the water quality of Table Rock Lake and its tributaries, monitoring the effectiveness and longevity of the structures and projects employed, and developing a framework for a broader national program focused on habitat protection and restoration in reservoirs and their watersheds. A watershed is the area of land where all of the water that drains off of it goes into the same place.

Water quality is a critical component of fish habitat. In addition to improving physical habitat, MDC is also helping to improve the water quality of Table Rock Lake by working in the watershed. Funding has been contributed to project partners such as the James River Basin Partnership and Table Rock Lake Water Quality, Inc., to help with septic tank pump outs and septic system upgrades within the watershed. This pumping

program is part of the James River Basin Partnership's "Get Pumped" campaign and offers incentives to landowners within the watershed of Table Rock Lake to promote proper maintenance of their septic systems. More than two million gallons of septic tank content have been pumped out under this program. Each participant also receives a packet of educational materials that explains the importance of properly maintaining their septic systems.

MDC is also working to improve watershed health by protecting eroding stream banks and enhancing riparian corridor conditions. Improving these areas will reduce sedimentation and excess nutrients in the stream and will improve in-stream habitat. Five stream bank stabilization projects have been completed to help reduce sediment being deposited into Table Rock Lake. Three other projects within the watershed are currently underway. Cost-share funding may be available to landowners within the Table Rock Lake watershed to help stabilize eroding stream banks. For more information or to see if you live within the Table Rock Lake watershed, contact the Missouri Department of Conservation at 417-334-4859.

Another objective of the NFHI project is to monitor and evaluate the fish structures that are being placed in Table Rock Lake. In order to evaluate the



We work with you and for you to sustain healthy forests, fish, and wildlife.

effectiveness of the structures, MDC has designated four evaluation techniques: fish sampling, SCUBA observations, an angler survey, and a black bass biotelemetry (tracking and data collection) study. By monitoring fish use of the habitat structures, MDC is learning what techniques and designs work best during the remainder of the NFHI project and in other lakes in Missouri. The results of efforts on Table Rock Lake will be shared nationwide and will give other reservoir biologists ideas and ways to improve habitat within their reservoirs and guide their efforts in the future.

So, now that the area has new fish habitat, how will fishing improve? The only way to find out is to get out there and fish those areas. Visit the website <mdc.mo.gov/node/17019> and download the GPS points, print off a map, and go fish some of the habitat structures that have been placed in Table Rock Lake. After all, they were put there with anglers in mind because healthy waters are no accident.

—John Miller, Interpretive Center Manager
Mike Allen, Fisheries Biologist

Joplin Office in the Wildcat Glades Conservation and Audubon Center

201 W. Riviera Drive, Suite B, Joplin, MO 64804 • mdc.mo.gov/node/292



The Joplin Conservation Office, located in the Wildcat Glades Conservation and Audubon Center, is your local connection to Missouri's fish, forests, and wildlife. Stop by and purchase hunting and fishing permits, attend a nature program, go for a hike, enjoy a picnic, or access Shoal Creek. Within the 190 acres of Wildcat Park, you will find a diverse mix of wildlife habitats rich with flora and fauna. From I-44, take exit 6, and turn south on MO-86. Turn right on Riviera Drive to enter Wildcat Park.

HOURS:

Monday–Friday: 8 AM–5 PM
Closed all state holidays.
Audubon Center hours vary.

TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM:

Programs are free. Call 417-629-3423 to sign up for a program requiring registration. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on the waiting list.

Learn To Canoe

July 1 • Monday • 6–7:30 PM
Kellogg Lake (Carthage, MO)
Registration required (ages 8 and up)
Learn the basics of canoeing—from safety to paddling techniques—to discover the beautiful creeks and rivers in southwest Missouri. *Participants 15 years and younger must be accompanied by an adult.* Dress for a water activity (creek shoes and clothes) and bring sunscreen. Upon registering, attendees will be given detailed class information.

July and August Events

Have Dirt, Will Travel

July 17 • Wednesday
Ages 2–3 • 9:30 AM
Ages 4–5 • 10:30 AM
Joplin Public Library
No registration or library card required
Join Joplin Public Library Summer Reading Club and a Missouri Department of Conservation Naturalist to listen to stories and to discover and observe burrowing animals. For more information about the Summer Reading Club, call the Joplin Public Library at 417-624-5465.

Growing Up WILD

July 17 • Wednesday • 9 AM–4 PM
Walter Woods Conservation Area
Register before July 10 (adults)
Fee: \$7.⁵⁰ check to Missouri Project WILD
For anyone working with children ages 3 through 7—day cares, schools, head starts, scouts, church groups, homeschool parents, and Master Naturalists—this delightful activity guide is for you! The guide is filled with useful information, background material, nature activities, art projects, music and movement components, centers and extension ideas, math and health connections, and even suggestions for related snacks. Learn how to engage your young children in outdoor exploration and develop positive impressions about the natural world by using *Growing Up WILD*.

Nature Unfolds—A Discover Nature Schools Workshop

July 19 • Friday • 9 AM–4 PM
Walter Woods Conservation Area
Registration required (educators)
Kindergarten through second grade educators, help your students investigate Missouri's seasons and changes in nature by utilizing *Nature Unfolds* activities. Student books and science journals are available at no cost and teachers may acquire more every school year. The curriculum is DESE-aligned and has field trip opportunities.

Project Learning Tree

July 25 • Thursday • 9 AM–4 PM
Walter Woods Conservation Area
Register before July 18
Fee: \$20 check to Missouri Project Learning Tree
Educators, youth leaders, Master Gardeners, naturalists, and parents, join us in learning how *Project Learning Tree* curriculum uses trees and forests as a window to the world. The activity guide helps young people, preschool through grade 12, with critical and creative thinking and the ability to make informed decisions about our world.

Missouri Community Forestry Council (MCFC)

July 25 • Thursday • 7 AM
August 22 • Thursday • 7 AM
Wildcat Glades Conservation And Audubon Center
No registration required (adults)
MCFC is a group of individuals that promote trees, their benefits, and proper care. The local Joplin group meets the fourth Thursday of each month to discuss issues of concern, to share ideas, and to have a learning opportunity. Anyone interested in trees is welcome. For details, contact Jon Skinner at <jon.skinner@mdc.mo.gov> or 417-629-3423.

Nature Unleashed—A Discover Nature Schools Workshop

July 26 • Friday • 9 AM–4 PM
Walter Woods Conservation Area
Registration required (educators)
Third through fifth grade educators, come join the fun! This instructional unit centers on Missouri habitats and food chains with hands-on and DESE-aligned curriculum to engage students in fun learning activities. Grant opportunities for field experiences to conservations areas and local state parks for student habitat investigation are available.

Shoal Creek Water Festival

August 10 • Saturday • 10 AM–3 PM

Cool off at the Shoal Creek Water Festival. Join us for this partnership event down at the creek in Wildcat Park for a day of water fun. Take a dip in Shoal Creek in your cardboard boat, cheer your duck on to victory during the duck race, splash in Silver Creek during the Creek Hike, and learn about water quality, conservation, and ecology at one of our water activity booths. Youngsters, don't forget the second annual Kids' Shoebox Boat Race. This day of water fun is FREE to the public and all ages are welcome.

Andy Dalton Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center

4897 N. Farm Road 61, Ash Grove, MO 65604 • mdc.mo.gov/node/288

July and August Events

Archery Shooting Basics

July 6 • Saturday • 8:30–11:30 AM

Registration required (all ages)

Join us to discover the basics of archery shooting. We will cover things like bow nomenclature, hand set, bow set, pre-draw, stance, and much more and then go shooting on the static archery range. You may bring your own bow to the program or use ours.

Handgun Shooting Basics

July 11 • Thursday • 6–9 PM

Registration required (ages 18 and up)

Join us for this classroom portion to learn how to handle and shoot handguns safely. Once you have completed this portion of the course, you will be invited to return on a following Thursday evening for your one-hour shooting session to complete the course. This course does not satisfy the CCW (Carrying a Concealed Weapon) requirements under Missouri law.

Wild Game Cooking Sampler

July 20 • Saturday • 8:30–11:30 AM

Registration required (all ages)

Join us to learn about cooking all sorts of wild game from rabbit and squirrel to deer and turkey. Not only will we be looking at how to prepare good meals, we will also be sampling them. Feel free to bring your favorite wild game recipe or make your favorite dish to share.

Archery Shooting Basics

August 3 • Saturday • 8:30–11:30 AM

Registration required (all ages)

Join us to discover the basics of archery shooting. We will cover things like bow nomenclature, hand set, bow set, pre-draw, stance, and much more and then go shooting on the static archery range. You may bring your own bow to the program or use ours.

Holiday Closings

July 4 • Independence Day

Cross Trail Outfitters–Archery

August 15 • Thursday • 6–7:30 PM

Registration required (ages 7–17)

Join the families of Cross Trail Outfitters and learn how to safely handle and shoot archery equipment. Spend some time in the classroom and then adjourn to the static and 3-D archery range to learn how to properly use and shoot archery equipment. This program is designed for youth ages 7–17, but parents will have fun learning too. For more information or to register, email Kirk Bouse at <kbouse@teamcto.org>.

Shooting Sports Sampler For Women

August 17 • Saturday • 8:30 AM–12:30 PM

Registration required (ages 14 and up)

Learn how to handle and shoot rifles, handguns, and archery at this women's only event. You may use our equipment or plan to bring your own.

Tree Stand Safety Program

August 24 • Saturday • 8:30–11:30 AM

Registration required (all ages)

Each year many people fail to use a fall restraint system when hunting from an elevated stand resulting in injury or death. Join us to learn the best practices for preventing these falls so you can enjoy many hours of safe hunting this year. This is not a certification class.

Dove Hunting Clinic

August 31 • Saturday • 8:30 AM–2 PM

Registration required (all ages)

Join us to learn the most effective methods of dove hunting. We will discuss the biology of the bird and then teach you to wingshoot using the *Effective Wingshooting for the Hunter* techniques. We will discuss using decoys and how to use concealment to your benefit.



To get to the Andy Dalton Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center, take US Highway 160 west of Willard, turn south on Farm Road 61, and go 2.5 miles, facility on the west side of road. Facilities include an outdoor education center and archery, rifle, pistol, and shotgun ranges, including skeet and trap.

HOURS:

September 14–April 14

Monday and Thursday: 9 AM–4:30 PM

Friday–Sunday: Noon–4:30 PM

April 15–September 13

Monday: 9 AM–4:30 PM

Thursday: 9 AM–7:30 PM

Friday–Sunday: Noon–4:30 PM

Closed Tuesdays, Wednesdays and all state holidays. Hours are subject to change.

FACILITIES AND FEES:

Available for individual and group use. Call for information and possible restrictions.

- Rifle/pistol range fee: \$3 per booth per hour
- Trap/skeet range fee: \$3 per person per round of 25 clay targets
- Shotgun patterning range: \$3 per person per hour
- Archery range: \$3 per person per hour
- Group use fee: \$20 per hour plus \$3 per round of 25 clay targets

TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM:

Programs are free. Call 417-742-4361 or email <DaltonRange@mdc.mo.gov> to sign up for a program requiring registration. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on the waiting list.

Springfield Conservation Nature Center

4601 S. Nature Center Way, Springfield, MO 65804 • mdc.mo.gov/node/287



The Springfield Conservation Nature Center is located in southeast Springfield just west of US-65 off the James River Freeway (US-60). Indoors, enjoy nature exhibits, attend programs, purchase hunting and fishing permits, browse through a nature-related gift shop, and pick up free conservation brochures. Outdoors, enjoy three miles of hiking trails through a variety of natural communities. Call to schedule a naturalist-led program for your organized group.

CURRENT HOURS:

March 1–October 31

Building: Tuesday–Saturday: 8 AM–5 PM

Sunday: Noon–5 PM

Closed Monday

Trails: Sunday–Saturday: 8 AM–8 PM

TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM:

Programs are free. Call 417-888-4237 to sign up for a program requiring registration. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to others.

July Events

Venomous Snakes Of Missouri

July 6 • Saturday • 2–3 PM

No registration required (all ages)

You've heard the tales about them, now's your chance to learn the truth. We'll explore the myths and realities of Missouri's misunderstood pit vipers.

Venomous Snakes On Display

July 6 • Saturday • 3–4 PM

No registration required (all ages)

Stop by and see live specimens of Missouri's venomous snakes on display courtesy of Finley Valley Serpentarium.

July Events

Primitive Skills Series Making Cordage

July 7 • Sunday • 1–3 PM

No registration required (all ages)

Volunteer Naturalist and primitive skills specialist Don Brink demonstrates how to weave plant fibers into cordage. Try your hand at this age-old skill and learn about the plants primitive man used to make cordage. Stop by anytime.

Nature Art With A Chinese Brushstroke

July 11 • Thursday • 1–2, 2–3, or 3–4 PM

Registration begins July 2 (ages 5 and up)

Art instructor and nature enthusiast Hing Wah Hatch will increase your powers of observation as she demonstrates, step-by-step, how to capture the essence of local plants and animals through Chinese-style painting. Stop by anytime between 1–4pm to observe. Participation will be limited to 12 students for the classes. Participants will go home with more nature knowledge and their own artistic masterpiece.

Hiking Club

July 12 • Friday • 8–11:30 AM

Registration begins July 2 (ages 18 and up)

Hike at Busiek State Forest and Wildlife Area with Volunteer Naturalist Pat Stritzel. Meet at the nature center and carpool. Bring water and snacks and wear comfortable hiking shoes. **Hike is three miles and rated moderate in difficulty.**

Hummingbird Feeders

July 16 • Tuesday • 1–3 PM

No registration required (ages 5 and up)

Stop by to learn how to make a hummingbird feeder with special guest Liz Valentine. By hanging your feeder, you'll attract hummingbirds and their newly hatched young to your backyard. Please, no organized groups.

Conservation TEEN Club Float Trip

July 17 • Wednesday • 9:30 AM–4 PM

July 18 • Thursday • 9:30 AM–4 PM

Registration begins July 2 (ages 12–17)

Come along as we float and explore one of the many streams in the Ozarks. Drinks, lunch, and transportation will be provided. *This Float Trip is offered twice this month, but you may register for only one trip.*

Conservation Kids' Club Leapin' Lizards

July 25 • Thursday • 6:30–7:45 PM

Registration begins July 2 (ages 7–12)

Summer is the perfect time for lizards, and the nature center is one of the best places to spot them. Learn about Missouri's thirteen species of lizards, and make a lizard craft to take home. Please, no younger siblings and only one adult per group of kids.

Family Fishing Fun

July 26 • Friday • 6:30–9 PM

Registration begins July 2 (families, ages 8 and up with an adult mentor)

Parents, grandparents, and adult mentors, bring your youngster(s) and meet at the Bois D'Arc Conservation Area fishing pond for an evening of fishing. You may bring your own fishing equipment or use ours; we'll supply the bait. Participants 16 years of age or older must have a valid fishing permit.

For Adults Only James River Float

July 27 • Saturday • 8:30 AM–2:30 PM

Registration begins July 2 (ages 18 and up)

If you're a first-time or novice canoeist, this is a great chance to "get your feet wet." Pack a sack lunch, bring plenty of water, and wear clothes you can get wet. We will be renting canoes from an outfitter in Galena. Cost for canoe rental is \$15 per person. Meet at the nature center and carpool.

Beginner Orienteering For Families

July 27 • Saturday • 9–11:30 AM

Registration begins July 2 (families, ages 8 and up with an adult mentor)

Parents, grandparents, and adult mentors, bring your youngster(s) and learn the basics of using a compass and topographic maps during the indoor portion of this program and then test your newfound skills with an outdoor exercise at Living Memorial Park.



Floating an Ozarks stream

Temporary Exhibits

July • Missouri Junior Duck Stamp Contest

August • Caterpillars With Character

Original Artwork by Kelly Hughes

August Events

Little Acorns

Please limit to one per month.

Programs are 45 minutes in length.

July Events

Roadrunners . . . Beep, Beep!

July 6 • Saturday • 11 AM
July 11 • Thursday • 11 AM or 1:30 PM
Registration begins July 2 (ages 3–6)

Greater roadrunners are more than just a cartoon so run on in and learn about this really cool bird. Beep, Beep!

Night Chorus

July 17 • Wednesday • 11 AM or 1:30 PM
Registration begins July 2 (ages 3–6)

Come listen to the sounds of a summer night. We'll enjoy night "music" as we discover which animals are the music makers.

Calling All Cicadas

July 31 • Wednesday • 11 AM or 1:30 PM
Registration begins July 2 (ages 3–6)

The droning sound of male cicadas provides background music to summers in the Ozarks. Spend some time learning about these fascinating and loud insects before they quietly disappear.

August Events

Butterfly Magic

August 9 • Friday • 11 AM or 1:30 PM
Registration begins August 1 (ages 3–6)
Butterflies grow up in a magical way. Join us and travel through the butterfly's life cycle—from its humble beginnings to its glorious finish!

Slithery Snakes

August 20 • Tuesday • 11 AM or 1:30 PM
August 24 • Saturday • 11 AM
Registration begins August 1 (ages 3–6)
Kids, slither in and get up close and personal with nature's most misunderstood reptile.

The Praying Mantis

August 30 • Friday • 11 AM or 1:30 PM
August 31 • Saturday • 11 AM
Registration begins August 1 (ages 3–6)
While praying mantids might seem to be serene and peaceful, their "praying" posture is quite misleading. Come and discover what these panthers of the insect world are really like.

Conservation TEEN Club Snorkeling

August 6 • Tuesday • 9 AM–5 PM
August 7 • Wednesday • 9 AM–5 PM
Registration begins August 1 (ages 12–17)
Come beat the heat and experience a fish-eye view of an Ozarks creek. No prior snorkeling experience is necessary. Transportation and lunch will be provided. You may bring your own mask and snorkel or use ours. *Snorkeling is offered twice this month, but you may register for only one trip.*

Family Creek Exploration

August 8 • Thursday • 10 AM–12 NOON
Registration begins August 1 (families, ages 7 and up with an adult mentor)
Parents, grandparents, and adult mentors, bring your youngster(s) and take a naturalist-guided, aquatic journey into Galloway Creek to see what lives beneath the surface. We will look for fish, crawdads, snails, and insect nymphs. Learn how the invertebrates we find help determine whether the stream is clean or polluted. Dress to get wet and meet at the nature center where we will walk to the creek.

Story Time With Ms. Ladybug

August 14 • Wednesday • 11–11:30 AM
No registration required (ages 2–6)
Join Volunteer Naturalist Joyce Tolliver as she reads a nature story and shares activities with your 2–6 year olds. Please, no organized groups.

Conservation TEEN Club Insect Collecting

August 15 • Thursday • 4–9 PM
Registration begins August 1 (ages 12–17)
Bugs, bugs, bugs! Come join the fun as we go insect hunting. Insects will be collected and identified. Meet at the nature center where dinner and drinks will be provided.

Insect-O-Rama

August 16 • Friday • 6:30–9:30 PM
No registration required (all ages)
Our annual celebration of insects and the important role they play in nature returns! Insects—they fascinate us, they bug us, they surround us, and they bite us, but what would a summer evening be like without them? Join insect specialists and enthusiasts for an evening devoted to discovering insects. Grab your entire family and participate in some creepy-crawly fun for all ages. *A free shuttle will be available for overflow parking at nearby Bryan College.*

Hiking Club

August 17 • Saturday • 8 AM–2 PM
Registration begins August 1 (Ages 18 and up)
Cool off this summer by wading through Bull Creek with Volunteer Naturalist Mike Mihalik. Meet at the nature center and carpool. Bring a sack lunch and water and wear clothes you can get wet and sturdy shoes (water shoes recommended for the creek). Ninety percent of the time will be in water. **Hike is approximately two miles and rated moderate in difficulty.**

Insect Buzz Puppet Show

August 23 • Friday • 4:30–5:15 PM or 6:30–7:15 PM
Registration begins August 1 (all ages)
Ever want to talk to a beetle, listen to a butterfly, or interview a bee? Here's your chance to meet a few members from the biggest class of animals on earth—the insects. Buzz on in to learn how these tiny creatures play such a big role in nature.

The Art Of Woodcarving

August 24 • Saturday • 10–11 AM
Registration begins August 1 (ages 12 and up)
Try your hand at woodcarving with members of the Southern Missouri Woodcarving Artists as they teach carving techniques and show how to transform wood into works of art.

Woodcarving Demonstration

August 24 • Saturday • 10 AM–4 PM
No registration required (all ages)
Visit with members of the Southern Missouri Woodcarving Artists as they share information with the "wood-be" carver, demonstrate carving techniques, show works in progress, and sell some of their art pieces. Stop by anytime.

Monarchs Rule!

August 31 • Saturday • 1–4 PM
Registration begins August 1 (ages 5 and up)
Every fall millions of monarch butterflies wing over the Ozarks to their winter home in Mexico. Join Volunteer Naturalists Bob and Ruby Ball and Dana Tideman for an indoor/outdoor adventure to explore the fascinating behavior and life cycle of these beautiful travelers.

Insect-O-Rama



Eastern Hercules Beetle

Shepherd of the Hills Fish Hatchery and Conservation Center

483 Hatchery Road, Branson, MO 65616 • mdc.mo.gov/node/290



The Fish Hatchery and Conservation Center is located on 221 acres in Branson off Highway 165 next to Table Rock Dam. Outdoors, visitors will experience an active fish hatchery with 700,000 rainbow and brown trout in 30 pools with opportunities to feed the fish. Indoors, enjoy a 3,500 gallon aquarium and hands-on nature exhibits and purchase hunting and fishing permits. The area also features four hiking trails, a picnic area, a boat ramp, and access to Lake Taneycomo.

FACILITY HOURS:

Memorial Day–Labor Day

Sunday–Saturday: 9 AM–6 PM

Remainder of Year

Sunday–Saturday: 9 AM–5 PM

AREA AND TRAIL HOURS:

4 AM–10 PM

The area is open to fishing 24 hours daily, but special permits and regulations do apply. Check the current fishing regulations or call for details.

TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM:

Programs are free. Call 417-334-4865, Ext. 0, to sign up for a program requiring registration. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on the waiting list.

FISHING LAKE TANEYCOMO:

Before fishing on Lake Taneycomo, become familiar with the regulations and restrictions. Come by for a free brochure of the entire lake including fishing accesses. For specific details about trout fishing here and across the state, visit mdc.mo.gov/node/5603.

July and August Events

Hunger Games II

July 20 • Saturday • 10 AM–NOON

Registration required (ages 11–18)

Come join us for our second *Hunger Games*-style event. This program will be another safe, teen-friendly hike for both boys and girls where individuals and small groups get to encounter three or more activity stations. By completing the activities, you will earn the chance to prepare your own wild snack. No previous skills are required. Bring a bottle of water and dress for the weather.

Reptiles Alive!

July 27 • Saturday • 2–3:30 PM

Registration required (families)

Here is your chance to not only learn about snakes, turtles, and lizards, but also to touch some live ones. This interactive program will shed light on the importance of these interesting critters to our natural world. Bring a camera and lots of questions about reptiles.



Old Fishing Lures

August 9 • Friday • 7–8:30 PM

Registration required (families)

Fishing lures have been made in all shapes and sizes from the 1800s to present day. This will be a discussion about the history, identification, and preservation of lures. Vintage lures will also be on display. If you have an old or unusual lure that you would like to know more about, feel free to bring it.

How Plants Were Used In The Civil War

August 24 • Saturday • 9–11 AM

Registration required (families)

Plants have been important over the years for a variety of reasons. This is especially true during the American Civil War. Surprisingly, plants were used for food, tools, and transportation. This program and hike will show you some of the ways plants were used by soldiers and civilians over 150 years ago. Bring a bottle of water and dress for the weather.



7 Million and Counting

While the Shepherd of the Hills Fish Hatchery has been a part of the Branson community since 1958, the Conservation Center (or Hatchery Visitor Center) only dates back to 1980. Since the early 1980s, daily attendance records have been kept to allow us to track how many visitors came to enjoy the fish and the fishing opportunities of the hatchery. Not surprisingly, the hatchery has enriched the lives of millions of visitors over the years. Sometime in early- to mid-August, the Conservation Center is on track to welcome its **7 MILLIONTH VISITOR**. This means that if you visit the hatchery this August, you may be the person who puts us over the 7 millionth visitor mark. We know that you will enjoy the hatchery and see all the “cold, hard, wet work” that it takes to raise all the trout. But more than anything else, we are glad to have so many visitors see that *Conservation pays by enriching our economy and quality of life*.

– John Miller, Interpretive Center Manager

We help people discover nature

Southwest Regional Office

2630 N. Mayfair Avenue, Springfield, MO 65803 • mdc.mo.gov/node/257

Tips for how to get the most enjoyment while floating your favorite stream

Very few things are as relaxing and enjoyable as floating down one of the many rivers in the Ozarks. A fun outing, however, can end abruptly upon encountering a group of unruly floaters. Everybody seeks to have a good time while floating, but a good time may not mean the same thing for all groups of people. If you regularly float Missouri streams, chances are you have encountered one of these unruly groups at one time or another. If you find yourself in this type of situation and are there with your family, remember you are there to enjoy a day in the outdoors and to create good memories. Make the decision to leave some space between your group and theirs in order to avoid possible conflicts.

If you come across a group of people already enjoying a gravel bar it is good etiquette to simply float to the next one. Chances are it will be just as nice as the one you passed. Sound travels very well on the water so be mindful of the language you use and remember there may be children around so behave accordingly. A little common courtesy can make a day on the river a good experience for everyone.

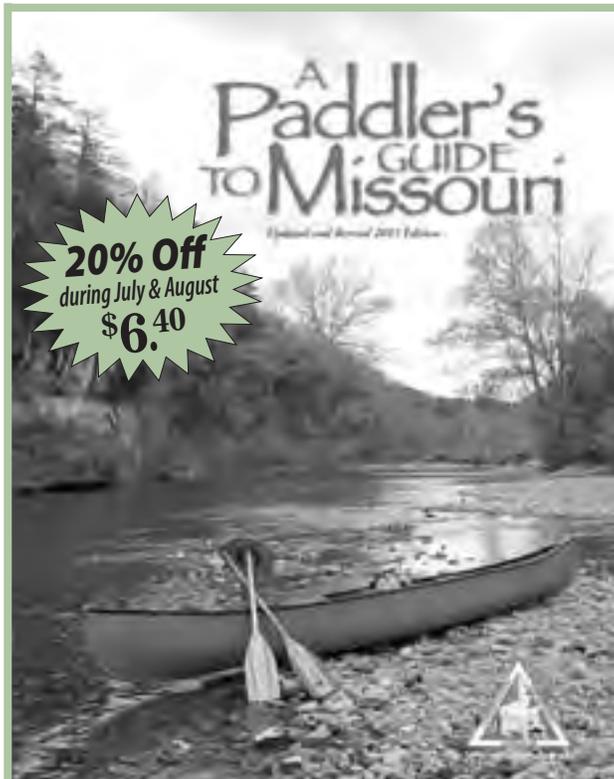
— Dan Akin, Stone County Conservation Agent



The Southwest Regional Office is conveniently located just west of the intersection of US-65 and Kearney in Springfield. The public may obtain information on land management, nuisance wildlife, educational opportunities, river and pond management, and more, as well as purchase hunting and fishing permits and obtain area brochures for Conservation Department areas.

HOURS: Monday–Friday: 8 AM–5 PM
Closed all state holidays

PHONE: 417-895-6880



Featuring 58 rivers and streams to canoe and kayak

Discover Missouri's rivers and streams with the updated and revised 2013 edition of *A Paddler's Guide to Missouri*.

One of the Department's all-time bestselling books since its initial release in 1965, this publication has been Missouri's go-to paddling resource ever since. Originally researched and written by Oz Hawksley, today, this greatly expanded reference includes not only updated maps and details of Missouri's more popular Ozarks streams, but also lesser-known streams and tributaries throughout the state that are ready to be explored.

Detailed sections include northern streams, the Missouri River, and more floats from all corners of the state. Each waterway includes easy-to-read maps, descriptions of access points, camping, state parks, and conservation areas along the way.

Gorgeous color photographs in this new, revised edition will make you want to float Missouri's rivers soon. The 9- by 11-inch book has lay-flat spiral binding so you can put the book in a sealable clear bag and still see the river map in its entirety without having to flip pages while on the river.

Available at the Springfield Conservation Nature Center, Southwest Regional Office, and online at mdcnatureshop.com.

Conservation makes Missouri a great place to hunt and fish.

Nature Connections Newsletter

To begin receiving the newsletter by mail, call any of the offices listed in the newsletter and leave your name and address.

To begin receiving the newsletter electronically by e-mail, go to <mdc.mo.gov/node/257>, click the "Subscribe by Email" box on the right-hand side of the page, and scroll down to "Nature Connections."

Missouri Department of Conservation



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and Watch

youtube.com/user/moconservation

See You At The Ozark Empire Fair

Stop by the Missouri Department of Conservation's Fair Building during this year's Ozark Empire Fair, from Thursday, July 25, through Saturday, August 3

25

years

The nature center will be celebrating its 25th Anniversary in October, and we want

to hear from you. Do you have a special story and/or photo you'd like to share? Please send stories, remembrances, and photos by e-mail to <SprfdNatureCenter@mdc.mo.gov> or drop copies by the front desk. Stories and photos may be used in special anniversary programming and exhibits and will not be returned. Thank you.

Conservation Area Showcase:

Stream Accesses

LOCATION/PURPOSE: In summer, many outdoor enthusiasts turn their recreational attention to the more than 280 stream access sites throughout the state managed by the Missouri Department of Conservation. These areas have come under Department of Conservation management as acquisition opportunities have arisen and, as a result, their locations vary. Some, like the Joe Crighton Access on the James River at the edge of Springfield, are located in urban settings. Others, like the Lower Flat Creek Access (Flat Creek, Barry County) or Rader Access (Osage Fork of the Gasconade, Webster County), are more remote. The Missouri Department of Conservation also has Community Assistance Program (CAP) agreements with communities on some stream access sites the Department doesn't own. Regardless of where they're situated and how they're administrated, the purpose of access sites is the same—to provide angler and boating access to this area's scenic streams.

ABOUT THESE AREAS: Though all these sites are called "accesses," they vary widely in size and appearance. Some are large enough to offer a range of hunting, hiking, and nature-viewing activities. Other accesses feature concrete boat ramps where both canoes and motorized boats can be launched. Some have tables, picnic areas, and disability-accessible parking lots. Others are small and offer little beyond a canoe launch area and bank-fishing opportunities. Floating and stream-fishing enthusiasts can learn more about stream access locations in *A Paddler's Guide to Missouri*. Beginning in July, this updated and revised Department of Conservation publication can be purchased at the Department of Conservation's Southwest Regional Office, Springfield Conservation Nature Center, or online at <mdcnatureshop.com>. Information about stream accesses can also be found at <mdc.mo.gov>.

FISHING: Anglers who use access sites as entry points to float-fish or wade-fish area streams can catch a variety of species. Rock bass (goggle-eye), black bass, channel catfish, and longear sunfish are among the most common catches. In addition to statewide species regulations, stream anglers need to be mindful of special regulations that apply to smallmouth bass management zones in some areas. Locally, smallmouth management zones can be found on the James River from the Hooten Town bridge to Missouri 13, on the Osage Fork of the Gasconade River from Skyline Drive Bridge to the Gasconade, and on the Elk River from the confluence of Big and Little Sugar Creeks to the Oklahoma line. Canoe anglers also need to remember that some streams have trout management zones. Regionally popular float streams that feature trout management areas include the Niangua River, the Eleven Point River, and the Current River. Check at your nearest Department of Conservation office, with a conservation agent, or online at <mdc.mo.gov> for fishing regulations at specific areas.

HUNTING: Although people think of fishing and floating when they hear the term "stream access," hunting opportunities are also available at some stream access sites around the state. Two local examples are 155-acre Phenix Access on Clear Creek (Greene County) and the 208-acre Paris Springs Access on Turnback Creek (Lawrence County). Both offer hunting opportunities in addition to fishing and canoeing access. Check at your nearest Department of Conservation office, with a conservation agent, or online at <mdc.mo.gov> for regulations at specific areas.

— Francis Skalicky, Media Specialist