

Nature & You

News and Events from the Missouri Department of Conservation • September/October 2016



You can see autumn color through a car window. But only when you walk among the trees and grasses can you add the sweet, musty smell of fallen leaves, or hear the wind making songs in rhythmic rattling of the leaves. Trails and service roads await the adventurous hiker this autumn at Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) areas and public lands managed by our partners.

Short walk or long hike, paved trail or cross country, forest or prairie, MDC has places in the Kansas City metro area and beyond for people to connect with nature's autumn color. Here's

just a few of the many colorful walks available.

Hikers can walk among old oaks and hickories on a paved trail at **Burr Oak Woods Conservation Area** in Blue Springs. But if they press on a little further on unpaved trails they will pass native prairie grasses and wildflowers in an open meadow. The oaks may turn crimson or purple in autumn, while the prairie grasses shift from green to a reddish gold color, with late-blooming wildflowers adding yellows and blues.

Many people have taken a short walk on the paved trail just outside the nature center. But the area has far

more to see. Six trails ranging in length from a half mile to 1.33 miles are offered. Most are rated as easy walking. Although, the Bethany Falls Trail has moderate difficulty, which means it goes up and down and around trees and rocks. Many of those trails are connected, so a hiker could spend a complete day walking if they visit all trails and pause now and then to admire Burr Oak Creek, the colors or wildlife. More is often seen when a hiker takes time to sit quietly on a trail bench and let awareness reveal the woods and wildlife in

more detail.

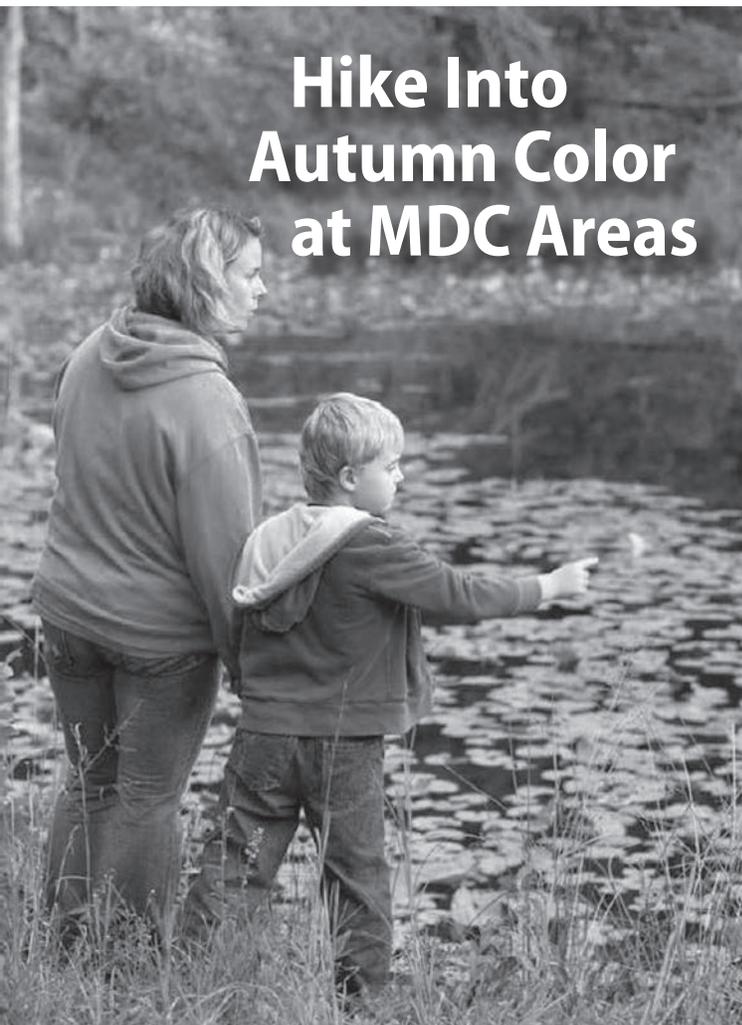
The **Maple Woods Natural Area** in Gladstone is a small acreage but mighty in the memories of autumn hikers because the area has many sugar maple trees that turn bright crimson in autumn, and their colors are mixed with oaks and hickories. This 39-acre area was one of the first urban acreages purchased by MDC after Missouri voters in 1976 approved a one-eighth-percent sales tax for conservation. The city of Gladstone leases and manages the area. About 16 acres are officially designated as a Missouri Natural Area. A parking lot off NE 76th Street, east of North Oak Trafficway, leads to trails that wind uphill through the forest.

MDC has long partnered with cities and conservation groups to offer public wild lands in urban settings. In Liberty, MDC owns a portion of the property managed by the non-profit **Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary**, 407 N. La Frenz Road. In Parkville, a hillside cloaked in deep oak-hickory forest is owned by MDC but managed as part of the **Parkville Nature Sanctuary**. Trails worthy of an autumn hike lead to both areas.

In south Kansas City, a crushed limestone path winds through a prairie remnant at **Jerry Smith Park**. MDC has partnered with the city's Parks and Recreation Department to preserve the remnant and enhance conditions for native grasses and wildflowers at the park. Autumn prairies have a winsome feel, you can feel the seasons changing when walking in them. In and around, Swope Park, **Rocky Point Glade**

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Hike Into Autumn Color at MDC Areas



Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center

1401 NW Park Road, Blue Springs, MO 64015



Located in Blue Springs, Missouri, one mile north of I-70 and one mile west of MO 7 on Park Road. Six trails, 1,071 wooded acres, two picnic areas, indoor wildlife viewing area, 3,000 gallon native fish and turtle aquarium, hands-on nature exhibits, gift shop, and sales of fishing and hunting permits.

NATURE CENTER HOURS:

Tuesday–Friday: 7 AM–6 PM

Saturday: 8 AM–5 PM

AREA AND TRAILS:

Daily: 7 AM–6 PM

Daylight Saving Time: 7 AM–8 PM

Closed all state holidays.

TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM:

Programs are free. Call 816-228-3766 to sign up for a program requiring registration on or after the first business day of that month. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy.

What's for Dinner?

Wednesdays & Saturdays · 3 PM

Walk-in (all ages)

Discover what's for dinner at Burr Oak Woods as the captive amphibians, fish and turtles enjoy their feast every Wednesday and Saturday. The snakes will be fed every other Friday (Sep 2, 16 & 30 and Oct 14 & 28).

Little Acorns:

The Ants Go Marching

September 3 · Saturday · 10–11 AM

September 7 · Wednesday · 10–11 AM or 1–2 PM

September 8 · Thursday · 10–11 AM

Registration required beginning Aug 2

(ages 3–5 with an adult)

We will be marching alongside our ant friends, two by two, while we learn all about their terrestrial life. Hurrah! Hurrah!

Babes in the Woods: Creek Crawl'

September 6 · Tuesday · 10–11 AM

Registration required beginning Aug 2

(babes under 36 months)

Let's take your little one to a creek! We will take a short hike to Burr Oak Creek to splash and experience this watery world.

Home School: Hidden Nature

September 7 · Wednesday · 10–11:30 AM

for ages 6–8, 9–11, 12–18 or 1–2:30 PM

for ages 6–8, 9–11

Registration required

Slow down; look closely, closer...there! Open your brain to new discoveries by observing nature in new ways and taking more time to discover its secrets.

Discover Nature – Family Fishing

September 10 · Saturday · 9–11:30 AM

Registration required (families)

Fall is a great time to take your family fishing. We will teach some fishing basics; provide equipment and worms and then your family will try their luck fishing. Kids who attend will be entered in a drawing at the end of the summer for a new fishing pole and tackle box. Lessons 1 and 2 of the Discover Nature – Fishing program are included in this class.

Monarch Tagging

September 10 · Saturday · 9:30–10:30 AM

or 11–Noon

Registration required (all ages)

Monarch butterflies are now migrating to their winter home in central Mexico, and



we are ready to tag them! Become a scientist for a day by capturing, tagging and releasing Monarchs and other unique butterflies.

Scouting Wildlife Adventure Series: Bugs and Aquatics

September 17 · Saturday · 1–3 PM

Registration required with one adult for every six Scouts (any Scout group with ages 7–17)

Calling all Scouts! Jump into nature fun with this amazing program series. Meet a Naturalist to learn about careers in conservation, see live animals up-close and learn about endangered and extinct species. This month, we will focus on bugs and aquatic animals.

Conservation Kids Club: Fishing Plus

September 22 · Thursday · 6:30–8 PM

Registration required (ages 7–13)

Who lives in a pond? Fish, frogs and even insects all call ponds home. Join us as we discover the wild communities in the Burr Oak Woods pond. We will be fishing, frogging and using nets to catch aquatic insects and other invertebrates.

Rockin' & Readin' Nature Tales

September 24 · Saturday · 11 AM–Noon

October 29 · Saturday · 11 AM–Noon

Walk-in (ages 2+)

Join us for story hour as we venture on fantastic nature adventures! We will meet birds, mammals and all sorts of magnificent creatures! We will cross rivers, discover mysteries within the forest and across the prairies. Our imaginations are the only limits.

Turtle Trek

September 24 · Saturday · 1–2 PM

No registration required (all ages)

Box turtles, red-eared sliders and snapping turtles, OH MY! We will see them all and learn some fascinating facts about each of them.

Bountiful Autumn

September 27 · Tuesday · 1–3 PM

Registration required (adults)

Discover pawpaws, persimmons and other native fruits. We will take an identification hike and then learn to prepare delicious dishes from nature's bounty.

PUBLIC NOTICE: Burr Oak Woods Conservation Area will be closed for a **Youth Managed Deer Hunt** Oct. 29 and 30. The Nature Center will remain open on Oct. 29, but the trails, roads, parking lots and all off trail areas will be closed. There will be **Managed Archery Deer Hunts** on Burr Oak Woods Conservation Area. The Nature Center, area and trails will remain open during the hunts. All hunts are Mon. through Fri. Dates include: Oct. 31–Nov. 4, Nov. 7–11, and Nov. 14–18.



SPECIAL EVENT:

October 1 · Saturday
 MATINEE · Noon–3:30 PM
 (final matinee tour departs at 3 PM)
 MEET & GREET · 4:30–5 PM
 EVENING · 6–7:30 PM
 (final evening tour departs at 7:30 PM)
No registration required (all ages)
 Strange things are happening in the forest. We've heard unusual sounds coming from the Missouri Tree Trail and something that looks like a space ship just landed! Let's check it out. You never know what or who we might find! Join us in celebrating the forest with many of your favorite *Star Wars* characters along the trail such as Hans Solo, Princess Leia and Darth Vader as we discover all the important jobs that trees do on this planet!

Discover Nature – Women: Backpacking

October 8 · Saturday · 12:30–3:30 PM
Registration required beginning Sept 1 (women and girls ages 14–17 when accompanied by an adult woman participant)
Required Orientation is a prerequisite to attend the Intermediate Backpacking Trip Oct. 15–16. Participants must attend and complete a test hike which includes a one-hour backpack hike up and down small hills on a natural trail. You may check out equipment if needed. First come, first served. Learn what to bring and what to expect.

Intermediate Backpacking Trip

October 15–16 · Saturday–Sunday · 7 AM–6 PM
 Embark on an amazing journey to a land of dolomite glades, rock bridges, karst and sinkholes... also known as the Missouri Ozarks. We will hike a seven mile backpack loop that is rated as moderate in difficulty. This trip involves carrying a 30 lb. backpack up and down hills across rocky terrain.

Babes in the Woods: Backdoor to Bethany Falls Trail

October 11 · Tuesday · 10–11 AM
Registration required (babes under 36 months)
 Don't miss the fun! Hike out with your little one to the Bethany Falls Trail, voted #1 in Kansas City! "Falls" refer to the unique limestone boulders that we will explore. We'll stop to play and take pictures.

Little Acorns: Slithering Snakes

October 12 · Wednesday · 10–11 AM or 1–2 PM
 October 13 · Thursday · 10–11 AM
 October 22 · Saturday · 10–11 AM
Registration required (ages 3–5 with an adult)
 Big snakes, little snakes, fast and slow snakes. How are they different? What do they have in common? Join us to learn more!

Conservation Kids Club: Fun in the Forest

October 12 · Wednesday · 6:30–8 PM
Registration required (ages 7–13)
 Have you ever wandered through the woods? Come out for an evening of forest exploring! We will explore the plants and animals that thrive in the forest, observe the forest layers and learn about how foresters measure trees to study them.

Introduction to Deer Hunting

October 15 · Saturday · 10 AM–3 PM
Registration required (ages 11+; ages 11–15 must be accompanied by an adult)
 Have you thought about hunting, but just don't know where to start? Deer hunting is a challenging, yet exciting tradition. Come out to Burr Oak Woods and learn the basics of pursuing white-tailed deer. We will cover everything from scouting to hunting methods and processing your own deer and more.

Missouri River Masterpiece Series: Fall Fun Float

October 19 · Tuesday · 1–4 PM
Registration required beginning Oct 1 by calling Lisa LaCombe at 816-655-6263 ext. 1332 or email lisa.lacombe@mdc.mo.gov (adults)
 Fall colors along the Mighty Missouri River should be at their peak! Join me in



exploring this natural resource masterpiece from LaBenite Park to Cooley Lake Access. We will begin with an orientation on Oct. 13 at the Burr Oak Woods Education Pond

to learn or brush up on your canoe strokes and learn the specifics for the upcoming fall color float. This workshop is led by an enthusiastic MR 340 finisher and American Canoe Association certified instructor.

Soup & Fables

October 27 · Thursday · 6–8 PM
Registration required (adults)
 The autumn leaves and the boundless stars will be our only canopy. Don't miss this unforgettable experience as we savor the bounty of a wild autumn harvest, sip warm and wild native teas, and then sit back to listen to wild tales around the campfire.

Cooking Wild: Venison

October 29 · Saturday · 1–3 PM
Registration required (adults)
 It is deer season, and for many Missourians, that means fun, outdoor adventure and a freezer full of venison! Join us as we dig into some great recipes including sausage, jerky and other tasty treats.

HOLIDAY CLOSURES

All facilities will be closed for these state holidays:
Labor Day, September 5
Columbus Day, October 10

Lake City Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center

28505 E. Truman Road, Landahl Park, Buckner, MO 64016



Located on 60 acres of forests and fields near Blue Springs, Missouri, six miles north of I-70 on MO 7 and two miles east of MO 7 on Truman Road in Landahl Park. Facilities include an outdoor education center, archery, pistol, rifle and shotgun ranges, including skeet and trap.

HOURS:

May 1–September 15

Wednesday–Sunday: Noon–6 PM

September 16–April 30

Wednesday–Sunday: Noon–4:30 PM

Closed Monday and Tuesday

and all state holidays.

FACILITIES AND FEES: Available for individual or group use. Call for information and possible restrictions.

- Rifle/Pistol range: \$3 booth per hour
- Trap/Skeet: \$3 per round
- Archery range: \$3 per person per hour
- Shotgun pattern: \$3 per person per hour

TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM:

Programs are free. Call 816-249-3194 to sign up for a program requiring registration.

If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy.

Teens & Firearms – Fun Shoot

September 8 · Thursday · 6–8 PM

Registration required (ages 13–17)

This will be the last Teens & Firearms event for the summer. Bring the kids out to show off the skills they have learned throughout the summer. Events will include rifle, pistol, shotguns and archery! Come enjoy a friendly challenge with others and the Lake City staff to show off what you have learned!

Cable Restraint Certification

September 9 · Friday · 6–9 PM

Registration required (all ages)

If you are a trapper looking for another tool to help you on the trapping line; then you might want to explore cable restraint. The course of instructions includes general history of cable restraint, rules and regulations, length of season and more. This class is a requirement to trap with the cable restraint technique and certification will appear on your Resident Trapping Permit. This class will fill quickly.

SPECIAL EVENT: Women on the Range

September 10 · Saturday · 8 AM–4 PM

Registration required (women ages 18+)

This program is a safe and fun way for like-minded women to enjoy a day of shooting in a friendly, safe environment. This all-day event will cover everything from rifles and pistols to shotguns and archery. It is a great way to introduce you and others to the sport of shooting and to the different shooting disciplines offered. The one-on-one coaching offered by Lake City staff will give you the support needed to obtain the skills of a basic shooter and give you a better understanding of what the shooting sports can offer you.

Basic Pistol...PLUS

September 24 · Saturday · 8–11:30 AM

Registration required (ages 18+)

This course continues where the Basic Handgun course ends. The topics of discussion include purchasing and owning a firearm, ammunition facts, cleaning and storage of your firearm. We also will work on your marksmanship skills on the range.

National Hunting and Fishing Day

September 24 · Saturday · Noon–6 PM

FREE SHOOTING! The Lake City Range is happy to open our doors to the public with a FREE day of shooting in celebration of National Hunting and Fishing Day! Everyone is welcome! Hone your skills on the trap or skeet fields, archery fields, or on the rifle or pistol ranges. We'll see you on the range!

Effective Wing Shooting

October 6 · Thursday · 6–9 PM

October 7 · Friday · 6–9 PM

Registration required (ages 12+)

Like to improve your wing shooting skills using non-toxic shot? Join us in learning the proper way to select the best ammunition and choke combination for different migratory and upland game bird hunting. We will discuss the latest technology on non-toxic shotgun ammunition, how to judge distances and properly patterning your shotgun.

Basic Pistol

October 15 · Saturday · 8–11:30 AM

Registration required (ages 18+)

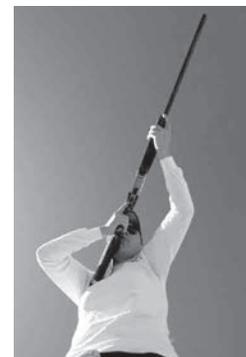
This is a novice class for people who have little or no experience in handling and shooting a handgun. Topics that will be covered include safety in the home, types of handguns, different parts of the handgun, the variety of calibers, ammunition and marksmanship. Class includes range time.

Family Trap Shooting

October 16 · Sunday · 9–11:30 AM

Registration required (ages 12+)

Trap shooting is a fun shooting sport to experience. Course will cover basic firearm



safety, different actions on shotguns, proper shot size, proper firearm fit and shot follow through. Trap is a good way for an upland game hunter to improve their shotgun skills.

Introduction to Skeet Shooting

October 22 · Saturday · 9–11:30 AM

Registration required (ages 12+)

Are you a trap shooter who wants an exciting and quicker target game? Why not try skeet shooting? Skeet shooting is a great way to improve your basic shotgun skills and improve your hit ratio on all types of winged game. You may even pick up a new sport at the same time!

Parma Woods Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center

15900 NW River Road, PO Box 14024, Parkville, MO 64152

Youth Air Rifle

September 3 · Saturday · 8–9:30 AM

Registration required (ages 8–15; youth must be accompanied by an adult)

Many shooters learn to master the skills of marksmanship using an air rifle. The virtual lack of recoil and relatively quiet discharge of an air rifle creates a good environment where a new shooter can learn to focus on the fundamentals of shooting. In this program we'll discuss safety, different types of air rifles, fundamentals of shooting and then we'll practice those fundamentals with some live fire exercises.



Antler Academy: Pre-Rut Whitetail Strategies

September 9 · Friday · 6–9 PM

Registration required (ages 8+; youth must be accompanied by an adult)

The early bow season is one of the best times of the year to notch your deer tag on a mature whitetail deer. Join our team of seasoned hunters for this seminar covering some of the tactics commonly used to hunt September whitetails. Seminar topics will include deer biology, habits and hunting strategies.

Selection, Mounting & Zeroing Scopes

September 28 · Wednesday · 6–9 PM

Registration required (ages 11+)

With literally thousands of options, it can sometimes be difficult to choose the right scope for you. In this seminar we will talk about how to go about selecting the right optic for you, options for mounting it and how to mount it. Then we'll discuss how to bore sight and zero your new scope.

Fall Turkey Hunting Workshop

September 25 · Sunday · 9 AM–4 PM

Registration required (ages 11+; ages 11–17 must be accompanied by an adult)

October offers hunters a crack at harvesting their own Thanksgiving turkey, but few turkey hunters take advantage of the opportunity. Turkey habits change throughout the year making fall turkey hunting much different than spring turkey hunting. Learn the differences and what it takes to get your turkey dinner.

Introduction to Firearms

October 7 · Friday · 6–9 PM and

October 8 · Saturday · 8:30–11:30 AM

Registration required (ages 11+; ages 11–17 must be accompanied by an adult)

Staying safe around firearms requires the appropriate level of knowledge and skill combined with a positive attitude. Join our certified firearms instructors as we explore the fun of shooting in a safe and controlled environment. This course will cover all major types of firearms and will include live fire.

Discover Nature — Family Squirrel Hunting Clinic

October 9 · Sunday · 1–7 PM

Registration required (all ages)

Hunting squirrels is a time honored tradition and rite of passage for many youths. It is also a great way to spend time as a family and provide meat for the table. Join our team of experienced hunters as we teach you everything you need to know to find success hunting squirrels. We'll talk about regulations, equipment, how to find squirrels and what to do if you take a few. This class does involve an actual hunting experience, so all participants must meet any legal requirements for hunting.

Deer Hunting 101

October 18 · Tuesday · 6–9 PM

Registration required (all ages)

Deer season is around the corner. Whether you consider yourself a novice or a seasoned veteran now is a good time to brush up on your knowledge. Join us for an evening to learn about deer and deer hunting. Course topics will include deer biology and habitat, hunting regulations, selecting the right gear, hunting strategies and more.



Located in Platte County, Missouri. Go west of downtown Parkville on Route FF to River Road, then west 3 miles to the entrance located just west of I-435. Facilities are available for individual or group use and include a rifle/pistol/shotgun range, and archery range.

HOURS:

May 1–September 30

Monday and Tuesday: 2 PM–8 PM

Friday–Sunday: 10 AM–4 PM

October 1–April 30

Friday–Tuesday: Noon–4:30 PM

Closed Wednesday and Thursday and all state holidays.

FACILITIES AND FEES:

- Rifle/Pistol/Shotgun/Range: \$3 booth per hour
- Archery range: \$3 per person per hour

TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM:

Programs are free. Call 816-891-9941 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.

Creating Cartridges: Metallic Reloading Basics

October 19 · Wednesday · 6–10 PM

Registration required (ages 11+; ages 11–17 must be accompanied by an adult)

Reloading cartridges is a great way to enjoy your firearms even after the season is over. Whether your goals include squeezing out additional accuracy or shooting more for less money, this class will give you the foundation needed to start making safe cartridges right away.

Anita B. Gorman **Discovery Center**

4750 Troost Avenue, Kansas City, MO 64110



Located in Kansas City, Missouri, just east of the Plaza near 47th and Troost. Six hands-on workshops explore Missouri's fish, forest and wildlife with a Lewis and Clark theme. Discovery Center is a showcase for environmental architecture with four acres of native landscaping. Buy books and hunting/fishing permits at the gift shop.

HOURS:

Monday–Friday: 8 AM–5 PM
1st and 3rd Tuesdays: 8 AM–7 PM
1st and 3rd Saturdays: 9 AM–4 PM
Closed all state holidays.

TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM:

Programs are free. Call 816-759-7300 to sign up for a program requiring registration.

Nature Nuts Storytime

September 3 · Saturday · 10–11 AM,
11 AM–Noon or 1–2 PM

September 17 · Saturday · 10–11 AM,
11 AM–Noon or 1–2 PM

Walk-in (ages 3–8; all welcome)

Join volunteer naturalists for a fantastic journey through forests, streams and other magical places as they read select books. Children will participate in a hands-on nature activity.

Missouri Bats

September 3 · Saturday · 10 AM–2:30 PM
Walk-in (all ages)

The only mammals that can fly, bats use this unique adaptation to survive. Bats here in Missouri eat insects and their ability to fly and use echolocation to “see” their prey with their ears, allows them to catch flying insects in midair. Come learn more about these amazing creatures as we discover where they live, why they are nocturnal and how echolocation really works.

Scout Program

September 6 · Tuesday · Evening

September 20 · Tuesday · Evening

Registration required (Scouts)

Scout leaders, are you lacking expertise or equipment to complete conservation badges? Bring your troop to the Discovery Center and education staff will provide a program to help Scouts with rank achievement. All Missouri Scout groups of 10-24 participants are welcome to schedule a free program. Please contact Steve Jacobsen at 816-759-7305 ext. 1146 or steve.jacobsen@mdc.mo.gov to learn more about how we can help and to schedule a program.

Monarch Mania

September 17 · Saturday · 9:30 AM–2:30 PM

Walk-in (all ages)

The monarch is without a doubt one of the most remarkable insects we have the opportunity to enjoy in Missouri. Discover the majesty of this butterfly through various hands on activities that will leave you in a state of “Monarch Mania.” There will be monarchs to tag and release, milkweed giveaways and much more for all ages. Join the mania and learn how you can help the population of the monarch butterfly.

Native Plant Sale

September 17 · Saturday · 9:30 AM–2:30 PM
Walk-in (all ages)

Missouri Prairie Foundation will be on site for Monarch Mania to offer a native plant sale. Missouri Wildflowers Nursery will be providing a variety of native flowers, grasses, shrubs and trees to purchase. If you wish to preorder your choices, contact Missouri Wildflowers Nursery at 573-496-3492 or mowldflrs@socket.net. A percentage of proceeds from plant sales will benefit prairie conservation in Missouri.

Field to Fork: Squirrel and Panfish

September 20 · Tuesday · 6:30 PM–8:30 PM
Registration required beginning August 16

(adults) Bushytails, bass and bluegill will be on the menu with dishes being prepared by Chef Martin Heuser of Affäre Restaurant and Chef Calvin Davis of Soil Collective. Learn how to skin a squirrel and fillet a fish to take advantage of some of the most common game in Missouri. A \$20.00 per person refundable deposit is required to hold a spot.

Home School Day on the River

September 21 · Wednesday · 10 AM–1 PM

Registration required

(home school students ages 8+)

It's been a long, hot summer; let's spend a cool day on the river! Join us as we explore the wonders of a local stream. We will try our luck at bank fishing, dip netting for aquatic invertebrates and hiking the floodplain forest. We'll wrap it all up with lunch on the gravel bar; we'll provide hotdogs and s'mores, and you provide your own sides. Bring your old shoes, bug spray/sunscreen and a water bottle... the rest will be provided.

Nature Nuts Storytime

October 1 · Saturday · 10–11 AM,

11 AM–Noon or 1–2 PM

Walk-in (ages 3–8; all welcome)

Join volunteer naturalists for a fantastic journey through forests, streams and other magical places as they read select books. Children will participate in a hands-on nature activity.

Waterfowl and Wetlands

October 1 · Saturday · 10 AM–2:30 PM

Walk-in (all ages)

Quack! Quack! Honk! Honk! Join us for a day of learning about the upcoming waterfowl migrations and hunting seasons. Bring your duck and goose calls to practice and get advice from experienced hunters. Learn how



to set a spread of decoys to get those birds in close. Watch trained dogs from the Kansas City Hunting Retriever Club demonstrate their skills and learn how to train

your dog to be a more effective retriever.

You can also learn some of the waterfowl hunting opportunities available in Missouri and how to manage a wetland to attract and benefit waterfowl.

Harvest Moon Festival

October 1 · Saturday · Noon–4 PM

Join the Discovery Center staff at the Harvest Moon Festival located on Troost Avenue between 31st and Linwood. This family friendly street fair will feature live

entertainment, arts, crafts and storytelling. The Discovery Center staff will be at the festival from noon until 4 p.m. so stop by, and try out the fun activity we will have.

Scout Program

October 4 · Tuesday · Evening
October 18 · Tuesday · Evening
Registration required (Scouts)
Scout leaders, are you lacking expertise or equipment to complete conservation badges? Bring your troop to the Discovery Center and education staff will provide a program to help Scouts with rank achievement. All Missouri Scout groups of 10-24 participants are welcome to schedule a free program. Please contact Steve Jacobsen at 816-759-7305 ext. 1146 or steve.jacobsen@mdc.mo.gov to learn more about how we can help and to schedule a program.

HOWLoween III

SPECIAL EVENT

October 14 · Friday · 6-9 PM
Walk-in (all ages)
HOWLoween is back and we want you to join the fun! Discovering nature's creepy creatures is just part of the nighttime fun.



Take a hike on the Wild Side Walk to get up close with some of Missouri's nocturnal wildlife. Kids will have a howling good

time exploring nature stations like Track or Treat, The Bone Yard, The Bat Cave and more. It will be a howling fun, free and unforgettable event for the entire family.

SPECIAL NOTICE: No Programming October 15

October 15 · Saturday
The Kansas City Marathon route will make getting to us a little challenging, but the building will be open 9 a.m.-4 p.m. as usual. Swing by, cheer on your favorite runner then come take a relaxing stroll through the gardens or check out the live animals on display.

Field to Fork:

Canada Goose and Wild Turkey

October 18 · Tuesday · 6:30 PM-8:30 PM
Registration required beginning September 20 (adults) October is for the birds! Learn how to clean a wild turkey and a Canada goose. Then learn the best ways to prepare these two delicious birds as Alex Pope and Matt Kafka of The Local Pig demonstrate their skills in turning honks and gobbles into yummy morsels! A \$20 per person refundable deposit is required to hold your spot.

Introduction to Backpacking

October 25 & November 1 · Tuesday
6:30-8 PM (pre-trip training)
November 5-6 · Saturday-Sunday · All Day
(backpacking trip)
Registration required (adults)
Backpacking is an outdoor skill that allows you to experience the beauty and peace of nature. The Discovery Center staff will be offering an introduction to backpacking program that will teach you the skills needed to backpack, what is needed and how to pack. There will be two required pre-trip programs followed by a weekend backpacking trip where you will experience the colors of fall from the trail.

Junior Duck Stamp Exhibit

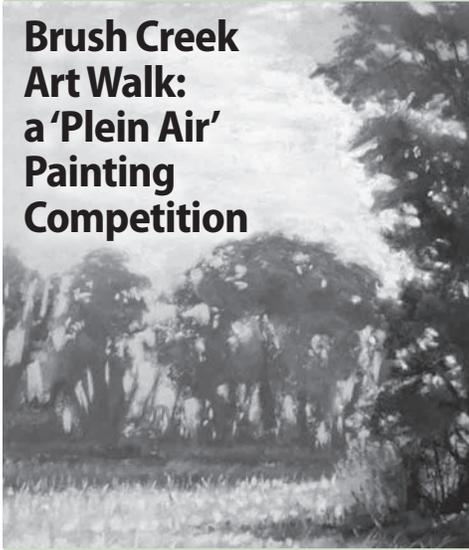
Waterfowl art produced by talented youngsters who entered the Junior Duck Stamp competition will be on display at Burr Oak Woods in September and at the Discovery Center in October. The Junior Duck Stamp is sponsored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service each year to recognize the talents and environmental stewardship of young people throughout the United States. This competition was open to student's kindergarten through high school to create artwork depicting North American Waterfowl. First place winners from each state advance to the national competition. The winning artwork will be produced as the National Junior Duck Stamp for 2016.

Urban Nature

Discovering nature doesn't always mean driving several miles to a large park. Urban Kansas City is home to some great sites for the nature enthusiast. Swope Park which is one of the largest urban parks in the United States provides outdoor opportunities for all ages. Within Swope Park you can explore oak-hickory forests, wetlands and limestone glades. The oak-hickory forest defines the landscape of the hillsides around Kansas City. Many types of acorns and nuts can be found in the forest along with animals like squirrels, deer, turkey, owls and other woodland birds. As you explore the wetlands in Swope Park be on the lookout for great blue herons, salamanders and crayfish. Trees like cottonwoods and sycamores tolerate the moist soil and tower above the ground. A unique habitat to visit is the limestone glades. The word glade means an opening in the forest and they are typically found on southwest slopes. They are hotter and dryer than the surrounding forest and support native grasses and wildflowers. Wildlife to watch for includes hawks, lizards and various insects.

The Discovery Center can help you experience urban nature as well. The annual **HOWLoween III Special Event** will take place on Oct. 14 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. This free event will help all ages learn about urban wildlife. Kids will have a howling good time exploring nature stations like Track or Treat, The Bone Yard, The Bat Cave and much more. It will be a howling fun and unforgettable event for the entire family.

Brush Creek Art Walk: a 'Plein Air' Painting Competition



Like to paint? Like to be outdoors? Consider signing up for the 5th Annual Brush Creek Art Walk a 'Plein Air' painting competition Sept. 16–18.

Join some of the best artists in the region as they compete with brushes, paint and canvas along the Brush Creek Trail. This almost continuous trail of lush, tree-lined walks, fountains and sculptures stretches more than four miles along Brush Creek. The trail runs right past the Discovery Center.

Participating painters will have three days to complete paintings on-site along the creek. A quick paint competition will be held on the Discovery Center grounds at 10 a.m. on Saturday, Sept. 17. Artists will submit two finalized works which will be displayed at the Discovery Center beginning with an awards reception held at 5 p.m. on Oct. 4 through Oct. 30.

Whether you are a painter, like to watch artists create or just like to admire artwork, the Discovery Center and Brush Creek Art Walk partnership offers an opportunity to enjoy art. For more information visit <https://www.facebook.com/BrushCreekArtWalkFoundation> or contact this year's director, Alex Hamil at alexpaints@kc.rr.com.

Hike Into Autumn Color ...Continued from cover

and **Blue River Glades** are areas where MDC staff and **Kansas City WildLands** volunteers have worked to preserve and restore the unique plants in the rocky, dry terrain. You can check out the leaf color on chinkapin oak trees 200 to 300 years old. For information, visit <http://kcparks.org/>.

In the heart of the city, MDC's **Anita B. Gorman Discovery Center** paths are short but offer pretty sights in autumn. The trails, paved and unpaved, are easily traversed and make good places for toddler-led hikes or walks for those with mobility challenges.

All these places are starting points. But MDC offers much more. Large conservation areas are found throughout the metro and in the counties just beyond. Go to <https://mdc.mo.gov>, scroll to the bottom of the page, click on Conservation Areas and find one near you. Some have trails, others have unpaved service roads

that make good walking trails. Here's a beautiful thing about MDC areas, you can leave the trails and walk across the hills, hollows and meadows if you like.

Some long range trips pretty in autumn include the forested MDC conservation areas in the Missouri River bluffs north of Kansas City and St. Joseph. South of the metro, **Settle's Ford Conservation Area** in Cass and Bates Counties has wetlands and woods. Trees along the **South Grand River** are colorful there in autumn. To the east, several prairies in the Sedalia area offer grassland vistas. Visit the MDC website listed above to find them.

Make time for a walk in the woods or the prairie this autumn. The autumn season, like life, is short and ever changing. Catch the color the best way, in the open air enjoying the outdoors.

— Bill Graham, Media Specialist

Monarchs and Us

The recognizable and iconic monarch butterfly has become the poster child of all pollinators. The popularity of the monarch butterfly exploded in the 1970's, when scientists stumbled upon their overwintering sites in the mountains near Mexico City, Mexico. Until then, scientist did not understand how the monarch survived winter. The incredible migration of the monarch butterfly has always epitomized perseverance, but today it needs our help.

Each year, in order to survive, this delicate insect embarks on an incredible 3,000 mile journey. Even with the complications of distance, weather and predators, the monarch butterfly population was thriving. At its peak in the late 1990's, the population blanketed 44.5 acres within its over-wintering grounds.

Since the peak, the monarch numbers have declined dramatically. In 2014, the monarch population covered only 1.65 acres. This is a 95% decline. Habitat loss is blamed as the largest contributor. Their habitat must include milkweeds in order to reproduce.

We can help! Planting milkweed in your yard is a direct way to help the monarch survive. From common, prairie, butterfly and whorled milkweed, there is a best plant for the conditions at your site. You can also plant other native nectar producing flowers to provide food for their journey. Native plants are the best selection for all local butterflies and pollinators.

In the end, when we help the monarch butterflies, we help ourselves by maintaining a diverse and healthy environment. Everything in nature is connected. Our job is to keep the connection healthy.

Join a monarch tagging program to learn more about butterflies and pollinators at one of our local nature centers. Burr Oak Woods is hosting a Monarch Tagging event on Sept. 10 from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. or 11:00 a.m. to noon. See the listing for reservations.

The Discovery Center will be hosting Monarch Mania on Sept. 17 from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Make plans to learn more about this amazing butterfly and how to attract it to your yard. The Missouri Prairie Foundation will also be on site for a native plant sale from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. If you wish to preorder your choices for pickup, contact Missouri Wildflowers Nursery at 573-496-3492 or email at mowdflrs@socket.net. A percentage of proceeds from plant sales will benefit prairie conservation in Missouri.

— Kathleen Savaiano, Naturalist