

Nature Connections

News and Events from the Missouri Department of Conservation • September/October 2015



They climb, crawl, fly, hitchhike, and escape. Once they arrive, they clandestinely and quickly often take over. What are they? They are plants that won't stay in place—the invasive species that invade Missouri's forests, grasslands, glades, and waterways, and, maybe, even your yard and gardens. They take over the native species unsuited to compete with them for space, light, nutrients, and water.

These alien or exotic plants arrive in a variety of different ways and not all create problems. Some

were introduced into landscapes intentionally for specific properties—medicinal or edible for example—like the now ubiquitous dandelion and plantain commonly found in urban yards. They aren't a big problem unless, of course, you want a pristine yard. Other introduced species, such as floral garden plants, don't spread rapidly because of special care that is needed for them to survive. Other invasive species, however, have been planted in yards for their attractive qualities and somehow made their escape into nearby wild areas where they crowd out native plants. Still others, like crown vetch and multiflora rose, once were purposely introduced into ecosystems for a specific quality such as erosion control with little knowledge that they could later become prolific invaders. The remainder may have arrived as seeds hitchhiking on shipping containers or cargo.

To the casual observer, it may not matter that a nearby wooded area is now full of callery pear (more commonly known as "Bradford pear") rather than the variety of trees and shrubs that once thrived there. The callery pear blooms with pretty blossoms in the spring and may seem innocuous. On closer inspection, however, you'll notice a dense thicket of the pear trees with little else growing. Gone are the native redbuds, dogwoods, and plum trees as well as many of the understory plants. Because callery pear leaves out earlier than native trees, it also shades out spring wildflowers. Most people will not notice there are fewer insects including butterflies whose caterpillars provide food for countless songbirds. As a result, there are fewer birds and

mammals. Even the fungi and insects living in the soil are affected by the change in plant species. The biodiversity—the variety of life essential to the health of an ecosystem—has decreased dramatically; it's now nearly a monoculture of callery pears where few other plants or animals live. Take that one wooded area and multiply it many times over and you get a picture of the

Invasive Plants

Plants That Won't Stay In Place

detriment invasive species can have on Missouri's natural communities.

A single callery pear can spread by both seeds and vegetative means to create a dense thicket within a few years and it is not the only culprit. Wintercreeper, teasel, shrub or bush honeysuckle, garlic mustard, sericea lespedeza, and numerous other species affect natural communities on land while hydrilla, purple loosestrife, and others are invasive in aquatic communities.

We share our state with more than 2700 plants and approximately 800 species (26 percent) are exotic. Nonnative plants lack the pests, competition, or diseases that may have kept their numbers in balance in their places of origin. In new locations, they often grow unchecked and replace native plant communities.

Many of these invasive plants have been identified by the Missouri Department of Conservation and other agencies as extremely aggressive. As an agency, we work to eradicate these species on the lands we manage as well as educate others about the issues they cause through workshops, programs, and handouts. Landowners are particularly important in combating these exotic plants. Professional landscape, lawn care, tree, and water garden companies as well as arborists are also important in helping conserve Missouri's forests and other natural communities by suggesting native plants over nonnative species. Besides providing beauty to landscaped areas and food for insects and songbirds, native plants also require less maintenance and are typically longer lived.

Learn more about several of these invasive species during a workshop geared toward professionals and landowners on Friday, September 18, from 9 am–12 noon at the Springfield Conservation Nature Center. (See below for details or call the nature center today for a flier for this free workshop.) Let's work toward giving our native plants a fighting chance because invasive plants have *no place* in Missouri.

—Linda Chorce, Nature Center Manager



bush
honeysuckle

Invasive Plant Species Workshop

Springfield Conservation Nature Center

September 18 • Friday • 9 AM–12 NOON

Call 417-888-4237 today to register

*Optional Workday Projects at the
Nature Center • 12:30–3 PM*

This half-day workshop is designed for professionals, landowners, and others interested in learning more about identifying and combating invasive plant species. Workshops will cover why invasive plants are so successful biologically and how they affect the ecology of natural communities. Alternate planting choices will be provided for each species covered. Specific invasive plants targeted include callery pear, exotic honeysuckle, wintercreeper, and hydrilla. Call 417-888-4237 or email <SprfdNatureCenter@mdc.mo.gov> for a flier for this free workshop. An optional work project to remove invasive plants at the nature center will take place from 12:30–3pm. Lunch will be provided to everyone who stays for the work projects.



The Joplin Conservation Office, located in the Wildcat Glades Conservation & 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.

JOPLIN OFFICE HOURS:

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

AUDUBON CENTER HOURS:

Tuesday–Saturday 9 AM–5 PM & Sunday 1–5 PM

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.

Jake's Event

September 19 • Saturday • 9 AM–1 PM
 Location to be determined (Carthage area)
 Call Jerry Hartman at 417-388-2923 to register or for more information and directions (ages 6–15, youth must be accompanied by an adult)
 Discover a new skill and learn more about hunting and fishing with the National Wild Turkey Federation and Missouri Department of Conservation. Events include archery shooting, deer and turkey hunting techniques, bass fishing demonstrations, and waterfowl hunting basics.



Fishing and canoeing an Ozarks stream

September and October Events

Cable Restraint Class

September 19 • Saturday • 10 AM–1 PM
 Neosho National Fish Hatchery (Neosho)
 Call 417-451-4158 to register (ages 6 and up; ages 6–15 must be accompanied by an adult)
 This course is required before you can use cable restraint devices. You will learn how to responsibly and effectively use cable restraints as a humane and effective tool for trapping.

Alternative Methods Sampler

September 19 • Saturday • 3–6 PM
 Fort Crowder Shooting Range (Neosho)
 Registration required (ages 7 and up—ages 7–17 must be accompanied by an adult; handgun shooting is only open to those ages 18 and up)

Join us for this *Alternative Hunting Methods Sampler* and learn about these “other” methods such as big boar handguns, crossbows, and inline muzzleloaders as well as recurve bows, longbows, and atlatls. All equipment, firearms, and ammunition will be provided.

Canoe And Stream Fishing

September 25 • Friday • 8 AM–3 PM
 Elk River–Mount Shira Access (McDonald County)
 Registration required (ages 13 and up; ages 13–17 must be accompanied by an adult)

Discover this beautiful river by canoe and learn basic stream fishing strategies. Staff will discuss basic canoeing skills and demonstrate basic river/stream fishing for smallmouth bass and other Missouri game fish. Learn rod and lure selection, fishing techniques, and local area fishing opportunities. We will cover

fishing regulations, Missouri's trespass laws and how they relate to stream fishing and floating. A limited number of canoes is available. Bring a sack lunch, water, fishing gear/permit, and wear clothes you can get wet.

Trees Work

September 26 • Saturday • 9 AM–6 PM
 Center Creek Park (Carl Junction)
 No registration required (all ages)

For answers to all of your tree questions stop by the *Trees Work* booth at the Carl Junction Bluegrass and Crafts Festival. Community Forester Jon Skinner will discuss the benefits of trees, proper care, and pest/disease control for your trees.

Campfire Cooking For Kids

October 3 • Saturday • 3–5 PM
 Walter Woods Conservation Area (Joplin)
 Registration required (families, all ages)
 Camping this fall? Then come learn some fun and tasty ways to share the outdoor cooking experience with your kids. Come prepared to sample your creations!

Trapping Clinic

October 3 • Saturday • 8 AM–5 PM
 October 4 • Sunday • 7 AM–12 NOON
 Robert E. Talbot Conservation Area (Mount Vernon)
 Call 417-461-4586 to register or for more information (all ages; ages 14 and younger must be accompanied by an adult)

Learn how to trap all species of furbearers in a dry land or water setting. The clinic will be conducted in a one-on-one setting with students working side by side with experts in the field. Students will have the opportunity to gain a fundamental knowledge of trapping through hands-on approach. Skills developed will include trap setting, skinning, and complete fur handling.

Field To Freezer

October 23 Friday • 6:30–8:30 PM
 Wildcat Glades Conservation & Audubon Center (Joplin)
 Registration required (ages 7 and up; ages 7–15 must be accompanied by an adult)
 Don Scott, taxidermist and meat processor, will demonstrate techniques on field dressing your deer, preparing it for a taxidermist, and cutting and packaging deer meat for the freezer. A harvested deer will be used for the demonstration.

Andy Dalton Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center

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



September and October Events

Archery Shooting Basics

September 10 • Thursday • 6–8 PM

Registration required (all ages)

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.

Shotgun Shooting Basics

September 12 • Saturday • 8:30–11:30 AM

Registration required (all ages)

Join us to discover the joys of shotgun shooting. We will discuss shotgun nomenclature, stance, dominant eye, mounting, moving the shotgun, and much more. You may use our shotguns or plan to use your own. Please make sure your shotgun is completely unloaded before arriving.

National Hunting And Fishing Families Shoot For Free Day

September 26 • Saturday • 9 AM–4:30 PM

No registration required (all ages)

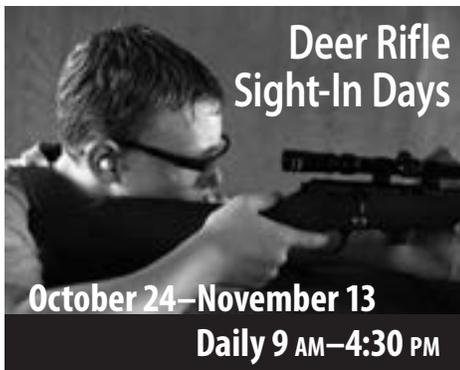
Join us in celebration of *National Hunting and Fishing Day*. Bring your own firearms and ammunition. Enjoy a free day of shooting in honor of *National Hunting and Fishing Day*.

Field To Freezer

October 24 • Saturday • 9 AM–12 NOON

Registration required (all ages)

Novice hunters can learn how to turn harvested game into neat packages of lean, healthy meat. This event covers regulations, field dressing, supplies, transporting, and techniques for processing deer.



Deer Rifle Sight-In Days

October 24–November 13

Daily 9 AM–4:30 PM

No registration required and regular range usage fees apply

Hours are extended and days added for deer hunters to have the opportunity to bring their favorite deer rifles to sight them in. Taking time to sight-in firearms helps ensure a quick, clean kill and reduces wounding loss. This also provides an opportunity for quality family time and honing shooting skills. If you have not been to the range, take a few minutes and review the range procedure video online at mdc.mo.gov/node/25379.

Hunting And Fishing Permits—There's An App For That!

Missouri hunters, anglers, and trappers may now use electronic images of permits on mobile devices as legal, valid permits. For fishing permits and most hunting permits, an electronic image of the permit—such as a PDF (Portable Document Format)—on a mobile device will be sufficient. The exceptions are for deer and turkey permits. Use the free *MO Hunting* mobile app for deer and turkey permits. Deer and turkey hunters must void their permits after harvesting related game animals and report their harvests using the Telecheck harvest reporting system. *MO Hunting* enables Missouri hunters, anglers, and trappers to purchase, view, show, and store current hunting, fishing, and trapping permits and associated details. The app also lets deer and turkey hunters electronically void their permits and Telecheck their harvests directly from the app. *MO Hunting* even uploads Telecheck confirmation numbers back to the mobile device and enables hunters to view details on all deer and turkey they have previously checked.

MO Hunting is available in the Google Play and iTunes stores. Get *MO Hunting* and learn more about the app at mdc.mo.gov/mobile/mobile-apps. Deer and turkey hunters must still tag their harvested game if they leave the immediate presence of the harvested animal. Hunters using paper permits may simply attach the voided permit to the animal's leg. Hunters using the *MO Hunting* app must attach a label with their full name, address, permit number, and date of harvest to the deer or turkey's leg if they leave the animal unattended. After being Telechecked, harvested deer and turkeys may be possessed, transported, and stored by anyone when labeled with the permit or any label that includes the full name and address of the hunter, date taken, and Telecheck confirmation number.

Holiday Closings: September 7 • Labor Day and October 12 • Columbus Day



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: 12 NOON–4:30 PM

April 15–September 13

Monday: 9 AM–4:30 PM

Thursday: 9 AM–7:30 PM

Friday–Sunday: 12 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: 12 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 those on the waiting list.

September Events

Marvelous Mushrooms Of Missouri

September 3 • Thursday • 7–8 PM

Registration begins August 15 (ages 12–adult)

Jay Justice, co-founder of the Arkansas Mycological Society and one of the chief mycologists for the Missouri Mycological Society, will share information about the common mushrooms that can be found in Missouri. Common edible and poisonous species of mushrooms as well as information about unique species will be shared from his 30 years of experience. This program is provided by the Missouri Mycological Society.

Story Time With Ms. Ladybug

September 9 • 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.

September Events

For Adults Only–Gills On The Fly

September 9 • Wednesday • 6–8 PM

Registration begins September 1 (ages 18–adult)

Fly-fishing isn't just for trout! Here's your chance to learn basic fly-fishing techniques while catching bluegill (catch-and-release only) at the Bois D'Arc Conservation Area educational pond. Bring your fishing license, drinking water, and your lucky fishing hat! Meet at the pond where fishing equipment will be provided.

Hiking The Ozark Trail Missouri's Best Kept Secret

September 11 • Friday • 7–8:30 PM

Registration begins August 15 (ages 10–adult)

Volunteer Naturalist Sue Schuble and hiking partner Susan Braughton will share glimpses of the 350-mile Ozark Trail and relate stories of their adventures as they hiked/backpacked it section by section. If you want to learn more about Missouri's longest trail, this program's for you!

Backpacking For Beginners

September 17 • Thursday • 7–9 PM

Registration begins September 1 (ages 10–adult)

Join avid outdoorsmen Volunteer Specialist Don Brink and special guest Richard Donaldson for an introduction to backpacking. Learn about the types of equipment, things beginners should know, and places to go in the Ozarks. After attending this program, you'll be ready to venture out on your own.

Babes In The Woods

September 18 • Friday • 10–11 AM

September 19 • Saturday • 10–11 AM

Registration begins September 1 (ages 0–2)

Bring your children ages 0–2 for a guided nature walk with Volunteer Naturalist Dana Tideman. Bring a stroller and join the fun!

Conservation TEEN Club Hike And Seek

September 19 • Saturday • 10 AM–4 PM

Registration begins September 1 (ages 12–17)

Come and explore the Little Niangua River and Mule Shoe Conservation Area. See how this wonderful area fits into the Conservation Department's Comprehensive Conservation Strategy. We will hike some of the area's trails and seek out the Niangua Darter—an endangered species.

Summer Hummers

September 19 • Saturday • 3–4:30 PM

Registration begins September 1 (all ages)

Here's a last chance send-off for the ruby-throated hummingbirds as they head for Mexico. Hummingbird bander Sarah Driver will share her knowledge about these tiny birds and attempt to capture and band some.

Conservation Kids' Club Secret Spider Society

September 24 • Thursday • 7–8:15 PM

Registration begins September 1 (ages 7–12)

What does it take to be in a Secret Spider Society (SSS)? It helps to spin webs, balance on a piece of silk, eat a liquid diet, and live a quiet existence. Join us for a look at the secret life of spiders. The password for this meeting is "eight eyes." Bring a flashlight because we're going on a hike. Please, no younger siblings and only one adult per group of kids. Note the later start time for this meeting.

Nature And The Arts Voices Of Missouri's Rivers

September 25 • Friday • 7–8 PM

Registration begins September 1 (ages 12–adult)

Learn about the interweaving of science and history and the impact of rivers on our state from the person who speaks for the rivers—Bill Turner, author of the Conservation Department's latest publication, *Voices of Missouri's Rivers*. Turner will share his thoughts and research on our rivers and the reason he felt compelled to write this book. A book signing will follow the presentation. Local musician Bob Ranney will conclude the program with a couple of original songs about rivers.

Hiking Club

September 26 • Saturday • 8:15 AM–5 PM

Registration begins September 1 (ages 18–adult)

Mule Shoe Conservation Area is located along the Little Niangua River. Hike five miles and learn why this area is one of the Conservation Department's Comprehensive Conservation Strategy priorities. Meet at the nature center and carpool. Bring a sack lunch and water and wear comfortable hiking shoes. **Hike is rated moderate in difficulty.**

Little Acorns programs are listed on page 5.

Homeschool Outdoor Fair Just Like Lewis & Clark

October 1 • Thursday • 8:30 AM–12 NOON



Call today to register

Enjoy free Lewis & Clark-related educational fun for all ages. Programs, activities, hikes, and

demonstrations about their fascinating journey to discover the west will be provided by Springfield's leading organizations, institutions, and agencies related to the natural world and science.

Springfield Conservation Nature Center

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

October Events

Conservation TEEN Club Beginning Archery

October 3 • Saturday • 9 AM–12 NOON

Registration begins September 15 (ages 12–17)

You don't have to be a hunter to become a skilled archer. Learn a new skill and spend time practicing at the nature center. No experience is necessary. Gear and snacks will be provided.

Beginner Archery For Women

October 3 • Saturday • 1–2:30 PM

Registration begins September 15 (women and girls ages 12–17 accompanied by adult female)

Beginner Archery

October 3 • Saturday • 2:30–4 PM

Registration begins September 15 (ages 8–adult)

You don't have to be a hunter to become a skilled archer. Learn a new skill and spend time practicing at the nature center. No experience is necessary and archery equipment will be provided.

Primitive Skills Day

October 4 • Sunday, 1–5 PM

No registration required (all ages)

Primitive Skills Day returns! See demonstrations in flint knapping, bow and arrow construction, making cordage out of plant fibers, beadwork, and fire making from some of the Ozarks best primitive skills specialists. Try your hand at some of these age-old skills and enjoy Dutch oven cooking demonstrations. Drop by anytime.

Not-So-Spooky Spiders

October 13 • Tuesday • 7–8 PM

Registration begins October 1 (ages 5–adult)

Join us as we untangle the web of deceit about these amazing arachnids and learn why they really are not so spooky. Bring a flashlight for a short search for spiders that live along the trails.

Story Time With Ms. Ladybug

October 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.

Discover Nature Fishing Lecture Series: Smallmouth Bass Stream Fishing

October 14 • Wednesday • 7–8 PM

Registration begins October 1 (ages 7–adult)

Ozarks streams offer excellent smallmouth bass fishing. Learn what type of tackle to use, places to go, and the current research and management activities surrounding this strong fighting fish from Conservation Department Fisheries Management Biologist Dave Woods. This is the first in a series of monthly indoor programs to prepare you for future fishing trips.

Babes In The Woods

October 16 • Friday • 10–11 AM

October 17 • Saturday • 10–11 AM

Registration begins October 1 (ages 0–2)

Bring your children ages 0–2 for a guided nature walk with Volunteer Naturalist Dana Tideman. Bring a stroller and join the fun!

Hiking Club

October 17 • Saturday • 8:15 AM–5 PM

Registration begins October 1 (ages 18–adult)

See the spectacular scenery that Ha Ha Tonka State Park has to offer. Volunteer Naturalist Carmen Hallock leads this five-mile hike. Meet at the nature center and carpool. Bring a sack lunch and water and wear comfortable hiking shoes. **Hike is rated as moderate to difficult.**

Oh, Deer!

Managing Urban Deer Populations

October 22 • Thursday • 7–8:30 PM

Registration begins October 1 (ages 10–adult)

Seeing deer in urban areas used to be unusual but now it can be an everyday occurrence. Healthy deer populations require management. Too few deer decreases the opportunity to see one in the wild and too many deer create issues for both deer and people including habitat destruction and an increase in deer/vehicle collisions and disease. Urban Wildlife Biologist Ashley Schnake shares the latest scientific data and strategies for keeping deer populations healthy and in check.

For Adults Only—Hike And Float

October 24 • Saturday • 9 AM–12 NOON

Registration begins October 1 (ages 18–adult)

Hike And Float For Families

October 24 • Saturday • 1–4 PM

Registration begins October 1 (families, ages 12 and up with an adult mentor)

What better way to enjoy an autumn day than by a hike and a float trip. We'll hike two miles on the nature center and Ozark Greenways trails then float back to the nature center on Lake Springfield.

Halloween Happening

Mystery Of The Missing Martin

October 29 • Thursday • 6:30–9:30 PM

October 30 • Friday • 6:30–9:30 PM

No registration required (all ages)

Get ready for some nighttime fun during our annual guided Halloween hikes. In the style of *Wild Kratts*, learn about the "Wild Rats—An Adaptation Adventure" as you work with some folks who resemble cast members to help solve the *Mystery of the Missing Martin*. Guided hikes will be led on a first-come, first-served basis with the last hike leaving at 9pm. Indoor activities and games will be provided to keep you entertained while waiting for a hike. Free popcorn and sodas will be served. Fun for all ages!

Please limit to one per month.

Little Acorns

Programs are 45 minutes in length.

September Events

Registration begins September 1 (ages 3–6)

'Possum Trot

September 10 • Thursday • 11 AM or 1:30 PM

September 19 • Saturday • 11 AM

Where do opossums live? Do they swing by their tails? What do they have in common with dinosaurs? "Trot" on over to find out the answers to these questions as well as many others.

Miniature Music Makers

September 17 • Thursday • 11 AM or 1:30 PM

Grasshoppers, crickets, and katydids provide some of the familiar sounds of summer. Join Volunteer Naturalist Nancy Ryan and learn how and why they make "music" and make a little insect music yourself.

Mudbug Mystery

September 22 • Tuesday • 11 AM or 1:30 PM

September 26 • Saturday • 11 AM

Have you ever heard of a mudbug? Come and learn about these "crusty" creatures, also known as crayfish, and see some up close.

October Events

Registration begins October 1 (ages 3–6)

Sensational Seeds

October 8 • Thursday • 11 AM or 1:30 PM

Bring your little "sprout" and find out what seeds need to travel, get planted, and grow.

Bear Travel

October 16 • Friday • 11 AM or 1:30 PM

October 17 • Saturday • 11 AM

The black bear population is increasing. These interesting animals represent all things that are wild in the Ozarks. Join us as we learn about these amazing animals.

Spider Safari

October 21 • Wednesday • 11 AM or 1:30 PM

October 24 • Saturday • 11 AM

Spiders aren't so bad! Scurry in to learn what spiders eat, where they live, and why they're good to have around.

Temporary Exhibits

September

Prairie-Touched By Light

The Great Plains Fire Science Exchange

Accompanied by Photography
by A.D. Daniels and Bob Ball

October

A Botanical Year In The Ozarks

Original Illustrations by Linda S. Ellis

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.

September and October Events

Outdoor Senses Hike

September 19 • Saturday • 10–11:30 AM

Registration required (families, all ages)

This easy hike will test all five of your senses. We will try not only to see and hear nature's beauty, but we will also feel, smell, and taste some unusual things that are all around us. Bring a bottle of water and your curiosity. This will be a low impact half-mile trail suitable for all ages.



Halloween Hike–Which Is Which?

October 23 • Friday • 7–9:30 PM

Registration required (families, all ages)

This is our annual Halloween experience to learn more about nature. Night guides will lead you to several stations to help learn more about the not-so-creepy things around us. In addition, learn which things are black, which things are poisonous, and which things are native. Beware that when the hike is over there may be Witch's Brew in the auditorium. Bring a flashlight and come learn about the really cool things "which" we might find in the dark. This will be a low impact half-mile trail suitable for all ages.

Don't Spread Didymo

As you get ready to do some fall fishing in the Ozarks, it is important to remember that there may be a potential alien lurking in the water. Its name is Didymo (*Didymosphenia geminata*), a globally invasive single-celled algae (diatom) which also known as "Rock Snot" and "Boulder Boogers." Didymo is a nuisance species that has been in North America for 150 years; it has only recently become a problem for the cold running freshwater streams of the Midwest United States, Europe, and Asia.

Most of us have not encountered it, but it is a type of algae that grows all too well in colder streams. The closest infestation is in the White River near the Arkansas-Missouri border. Normally you would not think that too much algae would be a bad thing, but Didymo secretes massive amounts of branching stalks, creating dense mats that can smother entire stream beds with mats as thick as eight inches and can ruin just about any river or creek.

Because it can be spread easily from stream to stream, we need your help to keep it from spreading. First thing is not to visit more than one stream without cleaning your boots, nets or fishing gear with a mild bleach solution. Second, porous bottomed boots (like felt-soled waders) are no longer legal in Missouri unless they have been treated to make them no longer porous. Visit mdc.mo.gov/node/15265 for instructions on treating waders. Finally, if you find Didymo in a stream, contact your local Conservation Department office.

We want everyone to know that Missouri is a great place to hunt and fish. Keeping Didymo out of our streams will keep you enjoying our streams for years to come. To learn more about Didymo, visit mdc.mo.gov/node/16930.

—John Miller, Interpretive Center Manager

Southwest Regional Office

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

Cable Restraint Trapping

In 2004, the Missouri Trappers Association and the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) entered into a cooperative agreement to provide Missouri resident trappers with training on the best use of cable restraints on land. A cable restraint utilizes a cable as well as a relaxing type lock to capture certain furbearers such as coyotes and foxes. The animals are held by the cable restraint alive until the trapper is able to retrieve them. This device differs from a common snare, because a snare is not legal to set on land and is intended to euthanize the animal.

A cable restraint does not utilize a spring or any powering device to close the loop. It uses the animal's forward motion as it walks to close the loop around its neck. As the animal walks forward, the animal will feel the constriction of the cable. As the animal pulls forward the cable tightens, but once the animal stops the cable relaxes and releases the pressure. The cable restraint acts like a collar and leash on a domesticated dog.

The use of cable restraints is closely regulated by MDC. The regulations are in place to prevent undue harm to the animal as well as present a positive light on trapping as a wildlife management tool. Part of the regulations restricts the location that a cable restraint can be placed which prevents the animal from being entangled in a solid object. A cable restraint

cannot allow an animal to become entangled in rooted vegetation greater than 1/2 inch in diameter. Also, the cable restraint cannot be closer than 12 inches from a fence when it is fully extended. This prevents the animal from being entangled in a fence which could harm the animal.

As with all traps, the cable restraint has to be labeled with the trapper's information which allows Conservation Agents to determine who is operating the traps. The cable restraint also utilizes a deer stop which prevents it from closing too tightly in case a deer steps into the loop. The restraints also incorporate a breakaway device that will allow the loop to break open and release the animal if it applies sufficient pressure. The device helps prevent dogs or other unintended animals from being held in the restraint.

If a trapper would like to use cable restraints, they must complete a cable restraint training course. The classes are conducted by Wildlife Damage Biologists, Conservation Agents, or other MDC personnel. Local cable restraint classes are listed above and all classes statewide are listed online at on.mo.gov/1GwxKXo.



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

– Andrew Barnes, Conservation Agent

Cable Restraint Classes
Neosho National Fish Hatchery –
September 19 • Saturday • 10 AM–1 PM
Call 417-451-4158 to register
Robert E. Talbot
Conservation Area Shop
October 4 • Sunday • 1–4 PM
Call 417-461-4586 to register

Hunter Education Sessions

Classroom (Knowledge) Sessions

Location

Springfield Conservation Nature Center September 11 • Friday • 6–10 PM
October 9 • Friday • 6–10 PM
Wildcat Glades Conservation & Audubon Center September 30 • Wednesday • 6–10 PM

Skills Sessions

Location

Springfield Conservation Nature Center September 12 • Saturday • 8 AM–12 NOON or 1–5 PM
October 10 • Saturday • 8 AM–12 NOON or 1–5 PM
Andy Dalton Shooting Range September 5 • Saturday • 8 AM–12 NOON
October 3 • Saturday • 8 AM–12 NOON
Wildcat Glades Conservation & Audubon Center September 21 • Monday • 6–10 PM
October 5 • Monday • 6–10 PM
October 14 • Wednesday • 6–10 PM

Date/Time

Date/Time

Reminder

Hunter Education certification has two parts: knowledge and skills. You must complete and pass **BOTH** sessions to earn your certificate. For more information on Hunter Education, contact your local Missouri Department of Conservation office or visit the Conservation Department website at mdc.mo.gov/node/3095.

Visit mdc.mo.gov/node/3722 to register for these sessions and to check for session changes and/or other locations.

Halloween Hikes

Which Is Which?

Shepherd of the Hills
Fish Hatchery and
Conservation Center

October 23 • Friday • 7–9:30 PM
Registration required (all ages)
See page 6 for more details.

Halloween Happening Mystery Of The Missing Martin

Springfield Conservation
Nature Center

October 29 • Thursday • 6:30–9:30 PM
October 30 • Friday • 6:30–9:30 PM
No registration required (all ages)
See page 5 for more details.

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 online to <mdc.mo.gov/govdelivery>, enter your email and subscribe to "News, Events and Newsletters - Southwest Region."

20% off Special

A guide to hunting, identifying, and cooking the state's most common mushrooms. A must-have for outdoor lovers, mushroom enthusiasts, and cooks, the book features color photographs and detailed descriptions of 102 species. As a bonus, chanterelle quiche and 23 other simple and elegant recipes will awaken your foraging instincts!



Featured Publication for
September and October

Available at the Springfield Conservation
Nature Center and Southwest Regional Office.

Conservation Showcase:

Diamond Grove Prairie Conservation Area

LOCATION: Diamond Grove Prairie Conservation Area (CA) is made up of 2 tracts located west of Diamond. The Carver Road Tract, a 240-acre unit, can be reached by taking V Highway west from Diamond 2 miles to Carver Road then .75 miles north on Carver to the prairie. The large Lark Road Tract, 612 acres, is 4 miles west of Diamond on V Highway then north on Lark Road 1.25 miles.

NATURAL FEATURES: Diamond Grove Prairie CA is a remnant of a much larger tallgrass prairie ecosystem that once dominated much of northern Newton County. While only a remnant, Diamond Grove Prairie still represents one of the largest remaining intact tallgrass prairies in far southwest Missouri. The prairie probably looks much the same as it did in the early 1800s when the first land surveyor on the area described it as "rich, rolling prairie."

Being a tallgrass prairie, Diamond Grove is dominated by tall warm season grasses including big bluestem, little bluestem, Indian grass, and switch grass. Tall dropseed and Virginia wild rye are also very common on certain portions of the area. Another very important component of the tallgrass prairie flora are the native forbs, or wildflowers, that adorn the prairie with rich color throughout the warm weather months. The list of wildflower species is much too large to include in this forum but the common ones include leadplant, pale purple coneflower, fringed poppy mallow, western sunflower, and blazing star. Some of the more uncommon species found there include Barbara's buttons, royal catchfly, and shining blue star. Management of the area the previous season dictates to a large extent the distribution and expression of wildflower species. Interested observers are encouraged to focus on previous season hay and prescribed fire units for the showiest displays.

While the flora of the area receives much of the attention, the grassland bird assemblage should not be overlooked. The large size of the area attracts many declining grassland bird species and bird watchers will almost certainly observe Henslow's sparrow, grasshopper sparrow, dickcissel, and eastern kingbird during a visit from May to August. Bell's vireo and northern bobwhite are also common in the more shrubby portions of the areas. Winter bird watching can also be rewarding as a different community of birds can be observed. For a listing of which species have been observed on the area, visit <www.mobirds.org/CACHE/Reports.aspx> and search for Diamond Grove Prairie CA.

MANAGEMENT: The Missouri Department of Conservation uses a variety of management tools to protect and enhance the rare tallgrass prairie natural community found there. The careful use of prescribed fire is the most common prairie management tool used. Burning removes dead vegetation buildup, helps control unwanted shrub and tree invasion, and stimulates growth and seed production of wildflower and grasses. Prescribed burning is conducted only under a carefully developed prescription to meet specifically-defined goals and may be conducted anytime from August through mid-April. We also use, to a very limited extent, haying by local farmers to control woody invasion, simulate some of the effects of fire, and prepare fire lines for prescribed burning operations. Local staff and contractors also work to remove unwanted trees from the prairie and associated draws and fencerows.

The Conservation Department has recently initiated a prescribed grazing program on the Carver Road Tract. Grazing by a wide variety of herbivores was a historical natural process that helped shape the tallgrass prairie natural community and provided many benefits to a host of grassland flora and fauna. The grazing program is strictly controlled to provide the benefits of grazing while avoiding overgrazing or water quality issues. Cattle graze May to August 15 at a low to moderate stocking rate. The Department's Resource Science Division is also conducting a large scale 15-year study of grazing on the area, specifically monitoring effects of grazing on many aspects of the plant community. Grazing only occurs on the Carver Road Tract as the Lark Road Tract serves as a no grazing control unit.

HUNTING: Diamond Grove Prairie Conservation Area is open to statewide regulations for hunting except that deer hunting is permitted by archery methods only and no single projectile firearms can be used for hunting of any kind. Deer hunting options on the area are fairly limited given the method restrictions and lack of tree cover. Still, some large bucks roam the area. Quail and rabbit hunters will find more opportunity, though numbers of quail coveys are low.

CAMPING AND HIKING: No camping or horseback riding is allowed on the area, but the area is open to hiking all year.

—Frank Loncarich, Wildlife Management Biologist