



# Missourians for Monarchs

by Ann Thorne

David Laderoute has always been interested in gardening, so he joined Master Gardeners. Also, he was interested in nature, butterflies, and birds so he became a Master Naturalist. Lately,

he is the Regional Director of Missouri for Monarchs. Monarch butterflies depend on milkweed for sustenance. Of 17 species of milkweed in Missouri, Laderoute has most of them in his yard.

Laderoute spends 20 – 30 hours a week working for Missouri for Monarchs. Recently, he received a grant from Monarch Watch, which provided milkweed plants. Six huge boxes of plants

proceeded to plant common milkweed, whirred milk and swamp milkweed over three days. Planting wasn't the end; Nelson goes to water

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A typical Monarch butterfly. Males have dots on their wings, and females do not.

arrived at Laderoute's house. Laderoute, Mort Nelson, Sara Farace, and Kim LaFollette

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The Monarchs taking off from Mexico.



The Monarch clusters in Mexico.

the plants often.

The other project Laderoute is working on is enhancing the I-35 corridor, which the butterflies use to fly from Canada to Mexico. Some Master Naturalists in six or

seven states will organize to plant milkweed there. At this time, though, our local Master Naturalists groups are not anticipating helping.

Laderoute worked with the Mayor of St. Joseph to pro-

claim milkweed month in February. He also has plans to plant milkweed at the Erin Hook Memorial Garden and Monarch Waystation at the YMCA Center at 3601 N. Village Drive.

## Loess Hills Schedule

### July 28

Board of Directors meet  
5:00pm, MDC

### August 9th

6:00pm, MDC  
Monthly Business  
(Bob Spurgat will  
conduct)

### August 19 or 20

Telescope discovering.  
Bring your telescopes.  
Ann Thorne's farm.  
Directions to follow.

### August 20

Photography session.  
Bill Blacklage and Corinna & Terry Gray. Hartell  
CA. Food. TBA

### August 25

Board Meeting

### September 10

Insect-O-Rama

### September 17th

Missouri Master Naturalists Meeting, Sedalia, Mo.  
(one day only)

### September 24

National hunting and fishing day, Hartell Conservation area, Plattsburg

### October 1

Missouri River clean up, Kaw Point Park, KCKS, Missouri River Project and Healthy Rivers Partners.



# Friends of Squaw Creek

by Margaret Stanton

Friends of Squaw Creek also participates in Wings Over Weston, so the pictures are of Wings Over Weston.

A member of the Loess Hills Chapter of the Missouri Master Naturalist is serving as president of the group, Friends of Squaw Creek.

Morton Nelson recently became involved in the non-profit organization that

operates in Holt County with outdoor projects. The group is also a partner to the Missouri Master Naturalists.

Friends of Squaw Creek was formed to organize volunteers to aid refuge staff. The group volunteers at public events such as Eagle

Days and they promote habitat projects such as planting native grasses and throwing away litter found around the auto tour route.

In addition to volunteering, they provide supplemental income for unfunded needs that arise on

the refuge. This includes funds to pay

for one intern a year to partner with the refuge biologist, and money for the deer hunt in November for people with disabilities. They also purchase the tags that are placed on monarch butterflies to track their migration.

The group is

currently composed of paying members that live across the country. However, the group would like to increase the number of volunteers that live in the local area that would like to help with outreach events and habitat projects.

The mission of the group is to foster an appreciation for the wetlands and to highlight the rare and endangered



School children hold sign with all the birds at Wings Over Weston on Friday.

serves to aid staff at Squaw Creek National Wildlife Ref-



School children and others hold up binoculars Friday at Wings Over Weston.



Holding on to the the blue bird, a young boy looks at it with concentraion, at Wings Over Weston on Saturday.

species found in the county.

There are no requirements to become a member and outdoorsmen can individually select which events they attend. The annual membership fee is \$5 for students and \$15 for individuals.

For more information on becoming a member, contact the refuge at 660-442-3187 or email Nelson at [morton.nelson@gmail.com](mailto:morton.nelson@gmail.com).



# Regal Fritillaries Butterflies

by MaryJo Ostenberg

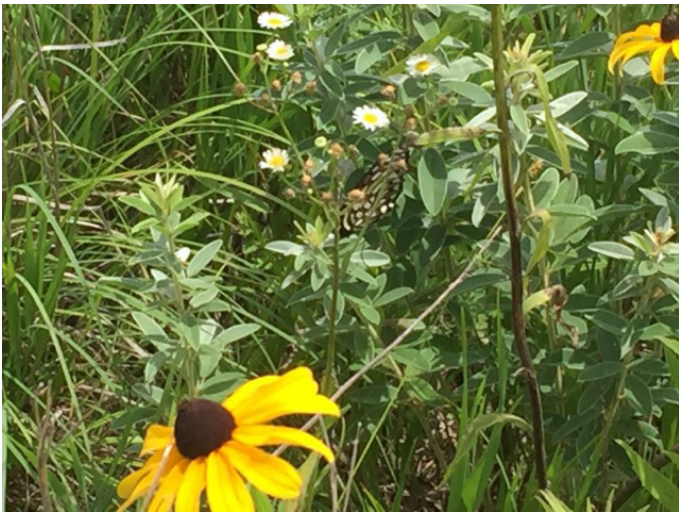
What would inspire Loess Hills Missouri Master Naturalist members to head out with our MDC Natural History Biologist, Steve Buback on a 96 mile long drive in blinding rain and heavy winds? With optimistic hopes of sunny skies

*al habitat type on earth”*. Unfortunately less than 1% of these tallgrass prairies remains. Pawnee Prairie maintained by Missouri Department of Conservation and The Nature Conservancy combined with Dunn Ranch remains one of the largest

high quality tallgrass prairie remnants in Missouri.

Steve Buback said, “Historically, regal fritillaries ranged from the mixed grass prairies of Kansas, Nebraska and the Dakotas to the East Coast. Much of the Eastern

counts have not been made for over 20 years and most records were based on one occurrence only. Because reports of steep decline persist the USFWS is considering Federal listing for this iconic prairie butterfly. But without current population counts this action could be taken needlessly. To facilitate a more accurate count of the regal fritillary and assist USFWS with this decision making, the Department of Conservation is working to update heritage record numbers for the species. The Missouri Master Naturalist program is sponsored by the Missouri Department of Conservation and the MU Extension. Loess Hills members work closely with MDC on many species survey projects such as this one. Not



Karen LaFollette

This shows the Regal Fritillary butterfly. This is the only one caught on camera July 6.

to the north we’re off to hunt for hidden treasure. We’re on a quest for the Regal Fritillary, *Speyeria idalia* on Pawnee Prairie near Dunn Ranch.

Regal fritillaries butterflies are a prairie species and depend on high quality remnants for their existence. According to the Missouri Prairie Foundation “Ecologists rank temperate grasslands—which include Missouri’s tallgrass prairies—as the *least conserved, most threatened major terrestri-*

populations of regals have disappeared, and the Midwestern populations have been in steep decline.” Where populations do occur such as Pawnee Prairie, anecdotal accounts indicate the populations are somewhat stable. However accurate



Sue Knight

Steve Bruback and MaryJo Ostenberg standing in the field on July 6.

only is this survey a chance

to be part of an effort that may impact this species for decades to come but it's also a chance to see one of our most beautiful prairies. It's a chance to wade through acres of teeming wildlife. It's a chance to gaze on the blooms of bunch flower,



Kim LaFollette stands in a field of green with yellow flowers.

butterfly weed, coneflowers, indigo, coreopsis, lead plant and more. The sights are amazing. The smells are intoxicating. The sounds of bob-o-links, sparrows, and wrens, birds of all kinds, bees and insects join in a soothing symphony. Pouring rain? High winds? We'll take our chances!

So along with Steve Buback, Brent Gilliard and MaryJo Ostenberg left the MDC office early morning July 6<sup>th</sup> for the drive to Pawnee Prairie. Kim LaFolette and Sue Knight met us there.

Joined by two Dunn Ranch employees all together that lovely day (that turned out sunny with a great breeze)

we surveyed a total of 5.6km, spent 12 person-hours actually looking (once they started flying), and surveyed a total area of perhaps 224,000 square meters. We documented a total of 56 regals. In Steve's words, "Over-

all populations looked pretty good and I think the densities were about what I have been anticipating." The day was not without its war wounds. One section where cattle had grazed with heavily infested with ticks. Both Knight and Ostenberg got tangled in dewberry and raspberry bushes and Buback stepped on a prairie bumble bee nest and was stung right through his shirt.

But this all goes with the territory and we're ready to go again! Galliard had some great luck. He scared up a prairie chicken with her two fledglings. He got a great look at the family.

LaFolette said, "We had had a great time. We learned a lot. It was so useful!"

Knight said, "It went really well. It took almost an hour for the butterflies to take off. It was the coolest thing I have done. Really fun and useful. I'd be glad to do it again."

## Loess Hills

### Officers 2016

#### President

MaryJo Ostenberg

#### Vice-President

Robert Stuber

#### Secretary

Janet Mason

#### Treasurer

Tom Aldrich

#### Design

Ann Thorne

#### Logo (on cover)

Laurel Defreece



# Wings Over Weston

by Ann Thorne

Wings Over Weston took place May 8<sup>th</sup>, starting at 9:00 a.m. at the Bee Creek Tobacco Barn, a quarter mile south of the main park entrance. More people volunteered this year from several organizations, including Osage Trails and Loess Hills Chapters of Missouri Master Naturalists, Burroughs Audubon, The Wildlife Society of Missouri Western, and Platte County Parks, the Conservation Department, the Missouri State Parks, and the Veterinarian Society of Missouri.

This year the Veterinarian Society of Missouri brought hawks for everybody to see. There was always a crowd by their tent. They had red-tailed hawks, other hawks, owls, and an American kestrel.

There was also a place on a picnic table where people could make bluebird hous-



photo by Ann Thorne

Two young woman, students at Missouri Veterinarians Society, hold an owl and a American kestrel.

es. Gerry Crawford was in charge of the supplies, and Bob Spurgat, Darrel Magee, Don Vaughn, Gary House,



photo by Bob Spurgat

A small child makes a bluebird house.

belongin to Osage Trails, helped build the bluebird houses.

There was also a booth where people could make a hummingbird feeder out of



photo by Ann Thorne

There were people making hummingbird feeders all day long.

plastic bottles, with netting and perches for the hummingbirds to placed their feet on. It drew a large crowd. Charles Bramlage, Lynn Tushaus, and Ann Thorne were the staff.

There was also face painting.

Lots of girls wanted their face painted.

The Wildlife Society of Missouri Western, with the help of John Rushin and Jack Hilsenbeck, held a birding program. This program



photo by Ann Thorne

The Wildlife Society at MWSU put up mist nets. This is a bluebird caught in one of the nets.

catches song birds in a mist net, then bands them, weighs them, and releases them. This, too, attracted a crowd interesting in seeing the birds banded and released.

2016 was our 7<sup>th</sup> annual Wings Over Weston that celebrated the centennial of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Our weather was gorgeous with cool temperatures and sunny skies. On Friday, we welcomed 144 fourth graders, chaperones, and teachers. On Saturday, our attendance was 807; an increase of 23% from 658 in 2015.