



NEWSLETTER

Owl Prowl at the Remington Nature Center



Debbie and Haley help children with crafts

Owl Prowl at the Remington Nature Center
by Suzanne and Dennis Rush

Remington Nature Center in St Joe hosted their first Owl Prowl on February 23, 2019. In spite of the cold rainy weather, the event was attended by 204 adults and 160 children and youth. Four activities kept them informed and entertained.

John Harmer, with Lakeside Nature Center, along with a rescued Barred Owl, Barn Owl, and Screech Owl, presented two programs about the characteristics and rescue of each of these owls. The audience of both presentations was full to capacity.

When not attending the owl program, families participated in a scavenger hunt throughout the Nature Center looking for a dozen stuffed owl figures located in various exhibits throughout the center. When all the owls were located and their list was completed, each participant received a reward. Many of the children and youth, with the help of volunteers, created an owl hand puppet at the craft table. MMN Chapter Member Volunteers at the Owl Prowl included Jessica Erdrich, Hayley Howard, Debbie Butterfield, Bruce Windsor and Dennis and Suzanne Rush.

Owls eat small rodents, birds, and bugs. The owl's stomach cannot digest some parts from the meal it has eaten. These undigested parts are formed into a tight "pellet" inside the stomach and then are later SPIT UP by the owl. Examination of an owl pellet reveals what the owl has eaten. Participants at the Owl Prowl could buy an owl pellet for \$3.00 from John and with the assistance of staff and volunteers, were shown how to dissect the pellet and retrieve the bones of the animals that had been eaten by the owl. They were instant scientists as they found animal skulls, lower jaws, vertebrae, ribs, long bones, etc.

An outdoor owl walk on the grounds of the Center had been planned and although the weather prevented us all from spending time outside calling to owls on this day, the Remington Center staff and volunteers deemed the first Owl Prowl a tremendous success.

Eagle Days At Smithville Lake 2019



Master naturalists Ginger, Jessica, Bruce, Gary, Gerry and Cliff

Eagle Days at Smithville Lake 2019 by Gerry Crawford

2019 was the 24th year for the Smithville Eagle Days event held on Jan 5th and 6th at the Paradise Point Golf Course club house with a wild eagle viewing area set up at Smith's Fork Park below the dam. This year's event attracted a record number of attendees. Nineteen hundred people were counted attending the live eagle show and the other nature displays of live birds, reptiles and mammals at the club house. Due to the large crowd at this year's program, there will be a search for a larger venue for next year's location.

The primary sponsors and organizers for the event are: US Army Corps of Engineers; Clay County Parks; and the Missouri Dept. of Conservation. USACE Rangers Derek Dorsey and Jamie Picken, coordinate with Operation Wildlife, who provides the live Eagle show; Friends of Lakeside Nature Center and Wings of Love who provide additional live birds; Martha Lafite Nature Sanctuary and CCP, who exhibit reptiles and mammals.

Operation Wildlife of Overland Park,KS again presented multiple outstanding live eagle programs. Bill Whinery on Saturday and Gary Crain on Sunday both experienced vehicle problems the morning of their presentations but persevered to arrive and make excellent shows. Our MMN chapter had a table at the club house with picture boards; brochures; and our LHMMN banner to present chapter info to interested parties. The effort at our booth resulted in 15 good candidates for new memberships. Thanks and a "Good Job" to our members who were there to share info and encouragement to those interested in becoming new members. Bruce Windsor, Dawn Burkheimer, Gary House, Ginger Turner and Jessica Erdrich all deserve kudos for staffing our table and promoting the LHMMN program.



Crowd inside at the Smithville Eagle Days

Another location our members staffed was the viewing area. The numbers of eagles fluctuated throughout the days. Saturday only a few birds were present but Sunday, we blocked the viewing area off much earlier and bird numbers were much better. Staff from USACE, MDC, and chapter members Bill Blackledge, Cliff Amos, Dan McCann, myself and others were on hand to talk with and help direct people to the spotting scopes providing them better views of the wild birds. As always this is a pleasant experience, especially with youngsters and novice birders. Outstanding participation from our members allowed times for all to rotate a bit between the club house and the viewing area to enjoy the wild birds. A big "Well Done" to each LHMMN chapter member who contributed their time and effort to make this event an outstanding success.



Spotting scopes set up at the outdoor wild bird viewing area

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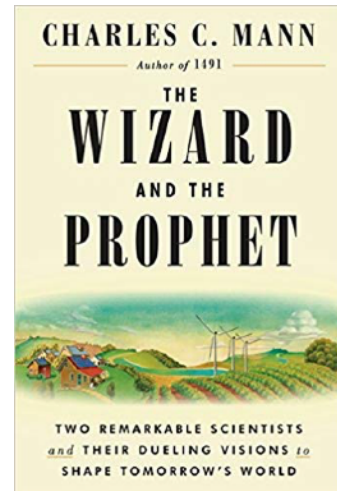
<http://www.the-pigeon.org/fantasybirding/>

Reading Recommendation by Sue Knight

Mann, Charles C.. "The Wizard and the Prophet ". Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group. January 2018.

The author, a historian, touts this book as a non-biased contrast of two different approaches to solving the problem of dwindling resources in an ever more populated world. I enjoyed it as a fascinating look into the work of two significant scientists who helped shape our attitude toward the environment in the 1950s and beyond.

In this book you will read details of the life of Norman Borlaug, a plant pathologist who developed modern day wheat by conducting extensive laborious cross-breeding studies in Mexico on a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. And you will read about the life of William Vogt, an Ornithologist who's background of growing up on Long Island and marshland study led him to shaping the beginnings of Ecology, Conservation and Human Population Control.



This book asks questions:

Are human beings special creatures who can escape the fate of other successful species or is there a law of diminishing returns in technological progress?

What is our future and how will we get there?

Did You Know? Chapter member Bill Blackledge won a prize money Missouri-wide photo contest sponsored by the Missouri River Bird Observatory last year? (photo: Kelly Melies/Democrat-News)



Ethan Duke, MRBO assistant director (left) gives Bill his certificate