



# Missouri Master Naturalist

Loess Hills Chapter



## Make Every Day Earth Day

By: Hayley Howard

On April 22 every year since 1970, environmentally-minded people around the globe have celebrated Earth Day. If you were on social media on Earth Day this year, you might have seen all manner of folks make mention of the day and how to celebrate it. If you tuned into PBS, you may have watched the BBC program *Greta Thunberg: A Year To Change the World*, or possibly you heard the climate activist's impassioned plea "to listen to and act on the science" that she made to the House Oversight Committee during a virtual speech reported through various news outlets on Earth Day. President Joe Biden weighed in on the topic at the Earth Day virtual climate summit and pledged to cut U.S. greenhouse gas pollution in half by 2030 to head off what he deemed the "existential crisis of our time."

### What are the scientists saying?

If you visit climate.nasa.gov, you'll see the scientific consensus that the earth's climate is warming due to human activities. In 141 years of records, 10 of the warmest years have occurred since 2005, and 2016 and 2020 tied for the warmest years on record. Since the globe is warming, so are the oceans. Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets are shrinking, causing hab-



itat degradation and rising sea levels. Glaciers are retreating here and abroad, and spring snow cover is decreasing. Add to that more extreme weather events, like flash flooding and record high temperature events, and you start to see the havoc climate change is wreaking on our home.

### What are you doing?

As master naturalists and purveyors of planet preservation, you have probably already made changes to reduce your carbon footprint. Many, I'm sure, also try

see page 3

## Stopping the Spread of Invasives Can Start at Home

By: Sue Knight

I bought the north half of a 40-acre bean field in December 2001. At the time, having grown up in a small town neighborhood in the 60s, the term "invasive species" was not even on my radar. We seeded the bean field with endophyte-free fescue for pasture before the spring growing season and thus began my

experience with invasive plants.

Within two years of establishing fescue, *Serecea lespedeza* began to sprout along the road side and in drainage areas, of the property. It is a legume and grows like grass but has a woody stem up to 1/4" in diameter. It grew to about 2 1/2 ft tall each season and gradually



see page 2

gained a foothold that it maintains to this day. Any erosion or soil disturbance gives this plant an edge. I tried some spot spraying in the first year, but it was unsuccessful. We have since added a pond, some sheep and replaced some of the fescue with Indian grass/big bluestem pasture. The lespedeza fairly quickly invaded the new brome grass on the pond bank, but the drilled-in warm season mix has gradually been out competing the lespedeza over the past few years in areas where it was seeded. The sheep love eating lespedeza but aren't necessarily a deterrent to its spread.

After joining the Missouri Master Naturalists six years ago, I became more familiar with invasive plants and birds. I began to look for bush honeysuckle on our property. I was pleased to find only a few small bushes in the fence lines that I cut and dabbed with Cross-

bow in the fall to keep it at bay. I did not find bush honeysuckle in the drainage area running through the property, but the adjacent Army Corps of Engineer property was full of it. (There are lots of other invasive plants living there, too.) I continue to check for bush honeysuckle every year.

Just last fall, I decided to do something about the autumn olive trees growing in the drainage area. Many of them had grown into a massive tangle, 10 ft in height with bare dirt surrounding the multiple trunks. Ten years earlier, at the time when our pond was put in, a DNR representative had said the autumn olive was good habitat for birds and wildlife and indeed it is, but since then it has been more prominent on the list of invasive species, and it had gained ground and

*Nature is competitive.  
As naturalists, our aim  
is diversity.*

competed vigorously against other trees such as the native plum and rough-leaved dogwood.

Autumn olive trees are difficult to cut down because they are multi-trunk trees and as branches die and rot, new ones sprout resulting in a tangle of large branches hovering near the ground. I used a hand saw to cut over 20 trees resulting in huge tangled brush piles that will be hard to get rid of in the next couple of years. I painted all of the cut ends with Crossbow, but I anticipate there will be a lot of new sprouts this year. I am also concerned about whether my other desirable trees and plants will compete and fill in the sunny spaces I've created in the drainage area.

This spring, the Callery Pear bloomed spectacularly. It has also recently risen to prominence on the invasive species list, having escaped from the captivity of people's yards.

There are no pear trees on our property, but I was able to count 10 of them on the neighbor's property, where their half of the aforementioned bean field has been largely unmanaged since 2001.

Nature is competitive. As naturalists, our aim is diversity. My experience has shown me that the odds are stacked against us, particularly in natural, erodible and disturbed areas. Management is labor intensive and not very practical along roadsides and in natural areas.

In our own backyards, however, we can grow natives, encourage diversity, help desirable plants and hinder aggressive unwanted plants. Many individual small efforts are our hope for the future.

## MDC's List of Most Common Invasive Plants in Missouri

- |                     |                             |                         |                                   |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. autumn olive     | 9. common/cut-leaved teasel | 16. japanese knotweed   | 24. purple loosestrife            |
| 2. bush honeysuckle | 10. didymo (rock snot)      | 17. japanese stiltgrass | 25. reed canary grass             |
| 3. callery pear     | 11. garlic mustard          | 18. johnson grass       | 26. sericea lespedeza             |
| 4. canada thistle   | 12. heavenly bamboo         | 19. kudzu               | 27. spotted knapweed              |
| 5. chinese yam      | 13. hydrilla                | 20. leafy spurge        | 28. tall fescue                   |
| 6. common buckthorn | 14. japanese honeysuckle    | 21. multiflora rose     | 29. white and yellow sweet clover |
| 7. common reed      | 15. japanese hop            | 22. musk thistle        | 30. wintercreeper                 |
| 8. crown vetch      |                             | 23. old world bluestems |                                   |

<https://mdc.mo.gov/trees-plants/problem-plant-control/invasive-plants>

## cont'd.....earth day

to reduce, reuse, and recycle, and some even stepped out on Earth Day to show your commitment to the planet. Maybe you didn't travel by an emissions-free boat to your Earth Day activity destination, as Thunberg has done, but several made a point to get out and do something. And something, my friends, is better than nothing.

Maybe you planted a tree, maybe you picked up trash, maybe you pulled some invasives, maybe you spent time recycling, or maybe you walked somewhere instead of driving. Whatever you did to "do your part," you most likely had in mind the greater good. And that's what we need: more people doing good for the greater good.

Thanks to those of you who joined me for the conservation clean-up day on April 22. While I only spent a few hours cleaning up trash in St. Joseph, the tires and plastic bottles and straws, and fishing line, and countless cigarette butts and beer cans I picked up won't continue polluting our natural areas and waterways. It is both small commitments like these or bigger ones aimed at having a greater impact taken on by everyday people more often that will continue to add momentum to the movement.



Above right: Don St Cyr stumbled across a morel mushroom when he was doing trash pick-up.

Above left: Loess Hills member Don St Cyr spent time collecting trash at Happy Holler Conservation Area northeast of Savannah in Andrew County recently in honor of Earth Day.

*Check out the bottom of the plastic containers you typically buy. If they have a 1 or 2 recycling symbol, they are considered the most readily recycled plastics available.*

*Try to limit your purchase of those plastics that are rarely accepted at your local recycling facility.*

**Which plastics are recyclable?**

Resin Identification Number (RIN) & Type

PETE	HDPE	V	LDPE	PP	PS	Other
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Widely Accepted	Widely Accepted	Rarely Accepted	Rarely Accepted <small>Check local retail bag collections.</small>	Moderately Accepted	Rarely/Never Accepted	Rarely/Never Accepted

How To Recycle

Plastics #1 & 2 are the most desired material. Check with your local service provider for details on your local recycling collection program.

EcoStrategiesGroup.com

# Member News

## Website Hours

All of our 2020 hours, as they were reported to Mary Jo, have been entered into the website. Thanks to Jerry Barnabee for doing this. If you certified, recertified or reached a milestone as a result of those hours, you may have received an automated notice. I think everyone has already received their pins for these milestones from Mary Jo. Please keep entering your 2021 hours as you earn them. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me (Peggy Strickland).

## Annual Certification

Two very busy members of our chapter have already reached certification for 2021. Here's some information about how they achieved this and how they contribute to LHMMN.

**Bruce Windsor** reports: As President of the chapter, a lot of my service hours are administrative. I spend a lot of time in the office, on the computer or phone speaking with Jefferson City, working with our partners/liaisons, working with our board members, drafting the board meeting and monthly meeting agendas, etc. I enjoy it very much.

In addition to the administrative hours, I also enjoy my time in the field. Some of my favorite ways to volunteer through LHMMN would include: Eagle Days, Wings Over Weston, Smithville Fishing Days, Massasauga Snake Survey & Eagle Watch. I joined LHMMN in May 2017 and have thoroughly enjoyed meeting the wonderful members in our chapter.

**Gerry Crawford** is our chapter liaison with Smithville Lake USACE; Smithville Clay Co Parks; Wings Over Weston and MODOT Adopt a Highway. He started with the chapter in 2011. For volunteer activities, he reports: "The Backyard bird watch 3 days; and e-bird data reporting. I'm currently observing 2 eagle nests for the MDC Eagle Watch program. Both nests have 2 hatchlings at this time. Will start the LMVP water quality monitoring next week. Participated in the Massasauga Rattlesnake survey at LBNWR."

Gerry also reports that on a recent trip he called Corey Kudrna, who used to be a biologist at SCNWR then transferred to Mingo NWR, for advice on Mingo NWR; and had a nice tour of that refuge, which is in swamp country. This isn't related to LH, but sounds interesting! Congratulations, Bruce and Gerry, and thanks for all that you do for our chapter.

---Peggy Strickland, Hours Coordinator

## Members Help with Modified Wings Over Weston Event

Itching to get back to in-person, group volunteer work, several Loess Hills members showed up to help with the Wings Over Weston prep event held at Weston Bend State Park on Saturday, April 17.

Wings Over Weston was canceled for 2020 due to COVID-19 and was adapted for 2021 to be a beginner bird bag giveaway instead of the normal, hands-on educational event.

Prepping for this year's event involved assembling 300 hummingbird feeder kits and stuffing those and educational materials into the giveaway bags. All those in attendance appreciated the opportunity to help in some way and see their master naturalist friends.

Other members volunteered their time to help distribute bags during the drive-through event at the park April 30-May 1.



Above: Lynn Tushaus, Kathy Bunse, and Charles Bramlage work on stuffing bags.

Below: Volunteers pause for a group picture at the two-hour bagging event for 2021 Beginner Bird Bag Giveaway for Wings Over Weston, held April 30-May 1, at Weston Bend State Park.



## 2021 Advanced Training Schedule\*

May 11, 2021.....The Part MDC Fisheries Plays in Conservation in Missouri presented by Tory Mason, fisheries biologist for Northwest Region MDC

June 8, 2021.....Missouri Wildflower Id with MDC Natural History Biology Steve Buback

July 13, 2021.....Missouri Canines with MWSU Professor Dr. Cary Chevalier

August 10, 2021.....Karst Systems of Missouri, more info to come.

September 14, 2021.....Botany program, more info to come.

October 12, 2021.....Missouri Bats with MDC Bat Ecologist Jordon Meyer

November 9, 2021.....Loess Hills Formations in Mo with local historian Jim Lehr

\*schedule subject to change



# Farm Favorites: Blue Birds, Blue Lobelia



*Above:* The winter of 2021 also gave us about 2 weeks of sub 20 degree daily highs. We had a few unusual visitors to our heated birdbath. Here is a photo of 4 bluebird visitors taken Feb 10th 2021.



*By: Sue Knight*

*Above:* Last July gave us 13" of rain. As a result, a few beautiful great blue lobelias came up in one of our pastures. Here is a photo of one with Hansel, one of our ram lambs, from summer 2020.

## BALD EAGLE NEST MONITORING

Several Loess Hills MMNs, including Jessisca Erdich, below, are participating in the 2021 MDC Eagle Nest Monitoring project, which gives the department valuable information on eagle reproduction in the state.

Erdich has three active bald eagle nests near the Missouri River.



do more  
**CITIZEN  
Science**

Field Observations  
Data Collection  
Report Findings

Upcoming Citizen Science Opportunity:  
**Bumble Bee ATLAS**  
Online training for this project will be May 11 and May 13. Register online at: <https://www.mobumblebeeatlas.org/events.html>

## MISSOURI TICK RESEARCH STUDY

The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) and A.T. Still University in Kirksville are asking people to save ticks they encounter and mail them to the University. The ticks will be used for a new scientific research study to help better understand the state-wide distribution of tick species and the human pathogens they carry. The submission form for this project is online at [www.atsu.edu/missouri-ticks-and-tick-borne-pathogen-surveillance-research](http://www.atsu.edu/missouri-ticks-and-tick-borne-pathogen-surveillance-research).

*Right:* Loess Hills MMN Don St Cyr has already collected his first tick and mailed it into researchers.

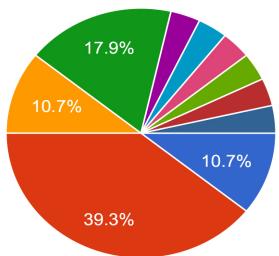


# MO Survey Results

Asking nature-loving folks to declare their favorite bird, flower, or tree is like asking a Beatles fanatic to decide on the greatest Beatles song of all time. It's tough to narrow it down when you love them all! Regardless, Loess Hills members were surveyed about aspects of Missouri's nature they love most, and here are the results.

What is your favorite Mo bird?

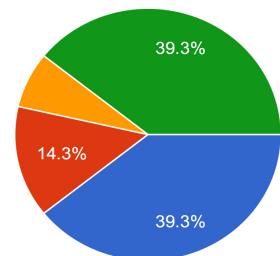
28 responses



- Turkey
- Bald Eagle
- Wood Duck
- Barred Owl
- Fox Sparrow
- Turkey Vulture
- Cedar waxwing
- All of them
- Tufted titmouse
- Carolina Wren

What is your favorite Mo season?

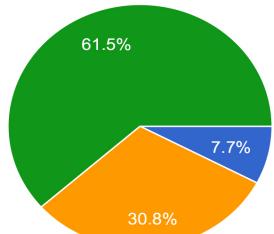
28 responses



- fall
- summer
- winter
- spring

What is your favorite Mo mammal?

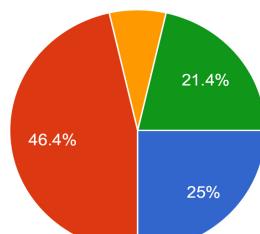
26 responses



- black bear
- eastern fox squirrel
- white-tailed deer
- red fox

What is your favorite Mo ecosystem?

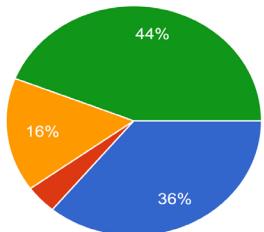
28 responses



- prairie
- woodlands
- glades
- wetlands

What is your favorite Mo state park?

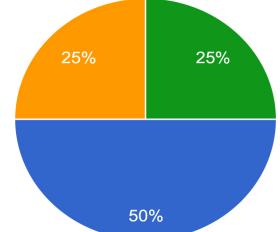
25 responses



- Ha Ha Tonka (photo courtesy mo state parks)
- Echo Bluff (photo courtesy mo state parks)
- Johnson's Shut-Ins (photo courtesy mo state parks)
- Bennett Springs State Park (photo courtesy mo state parks)

What is your favorite Mo insect?

28 responses

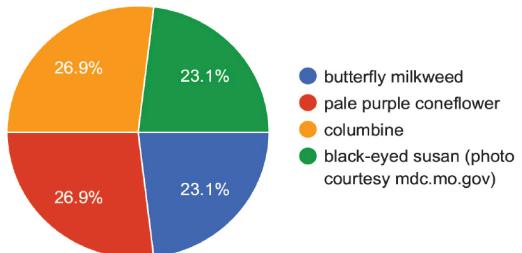


- monarch butterfly
- seven-spotted lady beetle
- dragonfly
- yellow garden spider

Of particular note were the results that showed an overwhelming majority response, such as the 61.5 percent vote for the red fox as the favorite mammal, beating out the black bear and the white-tailed deer, and the bald eagle taking the most votes (39.3%) as the favorite bird. Almost 54 percent voted hiking over birdwatching (17.9%) and hunting/fishing (21.4%) as their favorite outdoor activity.

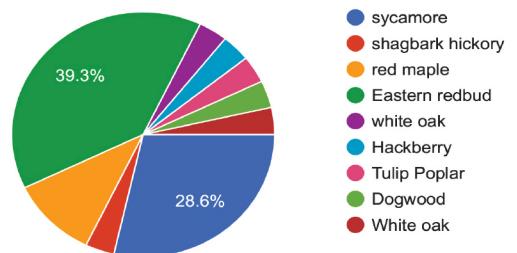
What is your favorite Mo flower?

26 responses



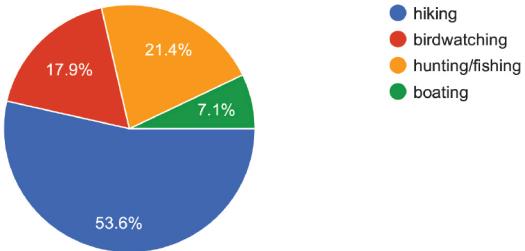
What is your favorite Mo tree?

28 responses



What is your favorite Mo outdoor activity?

28 responses



1



## Name That Bloom!

Use the following clues to name that bloom!

1. This small tree's scientific name is *Viburnum prunifolium*.
2. Carrying the fruit of this blooming shrub/tree (*Aesculus glabra*) could be good luck.

2

