

## Missouri Master Naturalist

### Confluence Chapter

### 2023 Annual Report

The Confluence Chapter meets on the second Tuesday of each month at the Weldon Spring Interpretive Center in St. Charles County

#### Chapter data:

- There are currently 56 active members
- Reported volunteer service hours were 5044
- Reported advanced training hours were 808

#### Awards and Recognitions:

- Recertification: 32 members
- Milestone Awards:
  - Bronze: 6 members
  - Pewter: 1 member
  - Gold: 1 member

There were two training sessions for the tri-chapter (Confluence, Miramiguo, Great Rivers): Trainees have the option to join one of these chapters.

Spring training 2023: 40 trainees registered, 36 Graduated, 6 joined Confluence Chapter

Fall training 2023: 49 trainees registered (including 4 trainees from the spring class invited to complete their missed hours); 39 graduated; 3 joined Confluence Chapter.

Among the 2023 Master Naturalist graduating class 4 members received initial certification.

#### Partnerships:

The Confluence Chapter has partnerships that provide members opportunities to serve. The following is a partial list:

- Forest ReLeaf of Missouri - St. Louis section
- Missouri Department of Conservation
- St. Charles Parks and Recreation
- Missouri Extension
- Missouri State Parks (i.e. Don Robinson, Babler)
- Wentzville City Parks
- Missouri Botanical Garden
- Frontier Middle School
- Missouri BlueBird Society
- St. Louis Audubon Society
- Shaw Nature Reserve
- Stream Team
- Wildlife Rescue/Rehabilitation
- Wildlife Surveying (Audubon Society, Cornell University, Eagle Nest Surveys)

- Weldon Spring Interpretive Center

Activities/Programs with member participation:

- Bluebird monitoring at several St. Charles County Parks - There are currently four St. Charles County Parks with bluebird houses. Confluence Chapter members provide observation of bird house activity as well as maintenance and care of the boxes, particularly during the breeding season. Current Parks: Spring Bend, Quail Ridge, Broemmelsiek Park, Towne Park. Information regarding these observations was provided to the Bluebird Society for database analysis. During the 2023 brooding season 211 bluebirds, 80 tree swallows, and 13 chickadees fledged. Collectively, bluebird fledges have doubled over the last 2 years.
- Outdoor Education Classes with St. Charles County Parks. Several members directed second graders from a Wentzville School through our Nature Explore Classroom at Towne Park.
- Several members participated in the Missouri Department of Conservation's Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Sampling weekend.
- Members participation in various St. Charles County Parks Dept. activities (Bluebird monitoring, bluebird box construction, native gardens, Native Explore Classroom, Salamander monitoring, seed collection, stream team) totaled 939.5 hours in 2023.
- Amphibian/Reptile monitoring is conducted at Matson Hill Park in St. Charles County to determine the health of frogs, salamanders, newts, as well as reptiles.
- Potting of native plants distributed at various public events: Members provide native plants to enhance biodiversity in the St. Louis and St. Charles County areas.
- Confluence Chapter has created and provides regular maintenance for several native gardens in the St. Charles County area (Quail Ridge Park, Frontier Middle School, Main Street Garden in Historic St.

Charles. O’Fallon Public Works garden) and St. Louis County (Babler State Park Visitor Center garden).

- A newly revamped garden at Rockwoods Reservation highlights deer resistant native plantings. Designed by Scott Woodbury (Shaw Nature Reserve Horticulturist), it reflects expansion of the old garden footprint with additional plants and hardscape features.
- The Main Street Garden in St. Charles (maintained by a partnership with Confluence Chapter Missouri Master Naturalists and St. Charles County Master Gardeners) has been recognized by the Missouri Prairie Foundation’s Native Gardens of Excellence Program
  - Land restoration (i.e. invasive honeysuckle removal, as well as native planting) at Belleview Farms, a recent addition to our chapter projects located in St. Louis County.
  - Forest ReLeaf: Members assist with nursery management as well as the nursery’s annual “potting days” in early spring.
  - Construction and maintenance of two greenhouses at University of Missouri Extension Center in St. Peters, MO. to aid in growing native plants for use in chapter projects.
  - Confluence Chapter participated in a series of Capstone events at Little Creve Coeur Ecological Area (LCC) near Creve Coeur Park. The events were organized by the Great Rivers Chapter. On three separate dates, experienced Master Naturalists led small groups of Master Naturalists and Trainee volunteers in three sub-sections of LCC to perform a bioblitz and identify flora and fauna species present. The data from these and future bioblitz events will be used to develop management plans for the areas.

\*\*\* Confluence Chapter led a one day event at the Weldon Spring Interpretive Center “Monarch Madness, A Pollinator Festival”. On September 16, 2023, after a four-year hiatus, the chapter organized and produced this popular event. Hosted by the U.S. Dept. of Energy Office of

Legacy Management at the Weldon Spring Interpretive Center, this family friendly festival drew a crowd of over 900 people. Attendees had the opportunity to learn about monarch butterflies and other pollinators, tag butterflies, start their own gardens, and play family friendly games. We are proud that over 50 Confluence volunteers spent the day making presentations, assisting 31 affiliates and vendors, and guiding people to 15 different stations on the grounds.

\*\*\*Members from the tri-chapter (Confluence, Miramiguoa, Great Rivers) organize a Field Day twice/year to combine chapters for a day of advanced training and volunteer activities. Babler State Park has provided indoor and outdoor facilities to accommodate this very successful and interesting event.

\* Stream Team: The Stream Team monitors two sites of the Femme Osage Creek as it flows through St. Charles County where the creek passes under Stub Road and upstream at the Daniel Boone Hays home at Matson Hays Park. The team monitors the creek's water quality by measuring stream flow, collecting and identifying macro invertebrates, and performing a chemical assessment. In 2023, the team performed water quality assessment on three separate occasions.

Confluence Chapter members, along with Great Rivers and Miramiguoa chapter members continued with their assistance working with MU Extension and MDC in implementing a virtual Master Naturalist Training session for the tri-chapters. This effort has been instrumental in creating a training program that includes both virtual as well as in-person training and has enabled the Missouri Master Naturalist program to continue to provide training to those interested.

Photographs

## 1. Advanced Training Event



## 2. Monarch caterpillar



## 3. MMN greenhouses



4. Bluebird box construction



5. Bluebird monitoring



