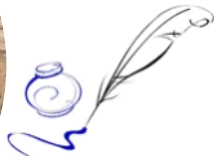




Your Key to Discovering the *Natural Missouri*

Aug 2023, Volume 17, Issue 03



From
Our President

I welcome our new interns. Your adventure as a Missouri Master Naturalist will be interesting and fulfilling if you love learning (Advanced Training) and putting your skill set to action (Opportunities). Your mentor will assist/share in these adventures. You "planted the seed". Now nurture its growth.

The Confluence Chapter Master Naturalists continue to bring honor and recognition from many partners and state government entities all the way to the State legislators. The University of Missouri Extension, the MO Dept. of Conservation and St. Charles County Parks Department are extremely appreciative of all

the support that we are providing from the gardens, the bluebird house monitoring and in the support of public educational programs.

The MU Extension Confluence Chapter Project is progressing well despite Mother Nature's mischievous antics. Thank all of you who are helping in this endeavor.

There is much more to share, but just know that your Chapter officers are here to help where help is needed or just to be ears to listen for you to share your naturalists accomplishments. Along with this, I thank Kathleen Benckendorf for stepping in and taking on the leadership of the Membership committee. I also thank Sandy Oldfield for taking the leadership role of the Award and Recognition committee. A deep thank you to Tom Holt (Membership) and Gary Wester (Awards) for their dedication as leaders of these two committees.

With that said, It is time for each member to consider to become one of the two Chapter officers (Vice-President and Secretary). You will have all the assistance that you need in these two positions, and they are not diffi-

cult or time-consuming. The Chapter manual describes the duties (on the member's webpage), however, there is some flexibility. Our current officers are doing an excellent job!

Stephen

Stephen Baldwin
President, Confluence Chapter



What is it?

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2023 MN Certification Pin

American
Burying Beetle



A partnership of the [Missouri Department of Conservation](#) and [University of Missouri Extension](#)
To engage Missourians in the stewardship of our state's natural resources through science-based education
and volunteer community service.

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Awards and Recognitions



- ⌘ Frank Dvorak and Beth Zona achieved their Recertification in May 2023.
- ⌘ Amanda Templer, Pam Walsh, and Jerry Kaiser achieved Recertification in June 2023.
- ⌘ Jerry Kaiser received the Bronze, 250 volunteer hours award!
- ⌘ Congratulations to all!!



New Trainees-Members



From left to right:
Shannon Humbertson,
Michelle Davis, Ashley Seiss, and
Veronica Hawley.

Shannon Humbertson lives in Cottleville and works at the Olde Town Spice Shoppe. She enjoys reading, exploring new places, history, mythology... She has a lot of different, but interconnected, interests. She likes going on nature walks and hikes, so becoming a Master Naturalist seems like the next step.

Ashley Seiss is a somewhat recent transplant from Nashville, Tennessee. She currently lives in St. Peters and is a teacher at Francis Howell North. Ashley is a certified Master Gardener and beginning the journey to become a certified Master Naturalist was an obvious next step. She says, "My father is a wildlife biologist, so my adolescence was steeped in conservation education and recreation. His parents were also prolific gardeners and good stewards of the natural world. For me, going through the process of both programs is a way to not only further my own knowledge but to connect with and pay homage to my family members who have had such a profound impact on my life, especially my grandmother who passed away just over ten years ago." In her free time, Ashley can be

found puttering around her garden, cooking for her friends and family, reading a good book, or watching Alabama football in the fall. (Roll Tide!) She is grateful for the opportunity to join the Confluence chapter of MMN and appreciates the warm welcome from those in the organization.

Veronica graduated from Saint Louis University with a BS in Geophysics, BA in Applied Mathematics, and later a MS in Geophysics. She has worked in both the public and private sectors with professional experience in the environmental, geotechnical, and energy industries. She is very involved with her kids' Cub Scout pack as a den leader for two of their dens as well as the pack's STEM coordinator and Nova Award Counselor. She became interested in the Missouri Master Naturalist program to continue to be active in the scientific community and to make connections for opportunities to volunteer and learn. She looks forward to continuing her journey with the Confluence Chapter.

After retiring from management in Ag Business in April of 2021, Gary Winter



spent time at the farm in Montgomery County, MO where he grew up and in the Defiance area. He likes to fish, golf, and ride his bicycle on the Katy Trail. He had been a volunteer for the Missouri Department of Conservation for about

four years and met a couple of people there that are Missouri Master Naturalists. He felt this was an opportunity to learn more about the natural world he lives in.

We also welcome Morgan Vyff, Julie Harms, and Michelle Davis. We will have their introduction information on our next newsletter.



New Membership Lead

Kathleen Benckendorf graduated from the fall 2022 Missouri Master Naturalist class and has volunteered to help with the 2023 spring class.

She is now the New Membership Lead, a position formerly held by Tom Holt. Thank you, Kathleen, and congratulations on your new position.

As New Membership Lead, Kathleen has reached out to the newer Confluence members asking questions about their experiences and what has helped them to become an active member. You can believe that we will be hearing more about Kathleen and her efforts in the coming months and years.

Currently, Kathleen is working closely with Laura Madden of the Great Rivers Chapter to provide a capstone project and on-going opportunities for inter-chapter collaboration.

Monarch Madness 2023

Date 09/16/2023 (Sat.)

Weldon Springs Interpretative Center





Summer

Summer is a time of activity with work, keeping the property (especially the lawn and garden) in proper condition. It is also time to visit family in other cities/states, to take time to vacation for rejuvenation. In Missouri, it is a time to do outside chores early in the day before the oppressive heat and humidity makes it unbearable to work outside.

As for me, it is also a time for me to observe in minute details Nature from the aquatic to the terrestrial ecosystems. I am thrilled to see plants and animals (e.g. arachnids, insects, birds, etc.) that I haven't seen before.

I began a small garden of a variety of indigenous plants to help draw flies, beetles, butterflies and moths, solitary wasps and bees to feed on the nectar. One of the positives of this action is that I've noticed that different species of insects visit the



same plant at different times of the day. Some species only in the morning, some noonish time, some late afternoon and some evening to before sunset.

Now I'm trying to decide if I want to increase my knowledge database on solitary bees and wasps that I've seen feeding on my plants. The study of Biology has always been my passion and now that I am "retired", I have the opportunity to devote spare time to this effort.

From MN Stephen Baldwin,
President, MN Confluence Chapter



These tiny insects known as aphids are vectors for many of the most lethal viruses affecting cash crops like soy and cotton, and plants in general. Photo ARS, USDA.



JUST WANDERING AROUND ..

MN Frank Dvorak

Some days I take a walk in Veterans Tribute park on Kisker Road. I often see turtles sunning themselves on a log at the pond. One day I stopped at the fishing dock and looked across to the 'turtle log', but I did not see any turtles. Then I looked down and discovered the turtles were having a group swim near me.

I expected the turtles to move away but they just paddled around minding their own business. I counted seven turtles in the water near me. The older turtles had thick green moss (?) on their shells. This pond water is very murky and the turtles disappear instantly when they dip below the surface. I watched them swim around for several minutes then I moved on.

It was a treat to observe the turtles in the water.





Fun at Forest ReLeaf



By MN Steve McCarthy

I first got the impulse to go to Forest ReLeaf at the urging of Confluence's own Tom Nagle. Tom is so persuasive that he could probably sell a burger to a vegan.

Forest ReLeaf sounded like a fun place to work. I got to experience the fun first-hand when I helped put up a chain link fence around the nursery's new addition. You can't beat mixing concrete for the fence posts in a balmy January breeze! And I got to do that with the multi-talented Frank Dvorak. When we put up the new fence, Tom was kind of the Ringmaster of that circus.

There was also one volunteer who I saw there every day, regardless of the weather. I took him to be very dedicated to the organization. Then suddenly I didn't see him there any more. I asked manager Mike Walsh if something had happened to him. "Yeah," Mike said. "He was done with his Community Service time!"

The employees don't seem to mind working with people of a certain age. They make sure we don't pull muscles by having us stretch during break time. And they also tell us to make sure we don't get dehydrated on hot summer days. Rumor has it that we will be playing Bingo at break time soon!

One of my frequent jobs at Forest ReLeaf is checking the irrigation, or as some people refer to it, the "Irritation". Once, I was checking the irrigation out in the expansion area, which has its own fence and gate, separate from the rest of the nursery. There were a multitude of things wrong, includ-

ing leaks, hoses popping out of the pots, geysers where the individual "spaghetti" tubing had popped off of the main hose, etc. I didn't get finished until about 12:15, 15 minutes after volunteers normally left. By that time I was out there alone.

As I gathered up the tool bag and went to the gate, I found that it had been locked. I was locked in! I wanted to climb the fence, but I was wearing work boots that were too wide to fit between the spaces in the chain links. For a while I thought I would have to holler for help to somebody passing by on the bike trail on the other side of the fence. Finally I realized I could pull myself up over the 6 foot fence by standing on a horizontal support that was about halfway up the gate. When I finally got over and went into the main building, the employee who had locked me in apologized profusely.

My other takeaway was that climbing the fence had become a lot harder than it was when I was younger.

One time at break, one member of our group was talking about how she was trying to find a volunteer job to keep her recently-retired husband out of her hair. Said she, "He's driving me crazy". Somebody asked, "How long has he been retired?" She replied, "A week and a half!"

Volunteers have nothing but the best equipment to support our endeavors. There's an (almost) brand new stainless steel sink for us to wash our hands before break. It has both kinds of water: cold, and room temperature. The Gators are always fueled up and ready to roll. During the winter months, if you're lucky you'll get to ride in the "Cadillac of Gators", which has a roof and windshield, dubbed the "Popemobile" by volunteers. The port-a-potty is always clean, and smells as sweet as "when lilacs last in the dooryard bloomed."

Those volunteers who are willing and brave enough can grab the weed whacker to trim tall vegetation along the fences. This often occurs before big events, like the Concert in the Trees or the Arbormeisters Fest. Diligence is re-

quired, however, to avoid slashing into some poison ivy and spraying it all over yourself. An urgent trip home is then in order to wash with soap and water after such an event.

They give us all kinds of clothing and gear. Well, at least for our upper halves. We've received t-shirts, sweatshirts, baseball caps, stocking caps and mufflers. I'm still waiting for some genuine Forest ReLeaf boxers. I have a suspicion that all the employees already have them.

I always tell people that it's an enjoyable job. The employees really make volunteers feel that they're valued. They take time to educate us on different tree topics during break. I get to work alongside a lot of interesting, smart, hard-working people who are striving to improve the environment.

We get free coffee and snacks, including such delicacies as fresh serviceberries, blackberries, the occasional ripe persimmon, and volunteer coordinator Ellen's own baked goods.

And we help improve the world around us by nurturing trees, which will eventually beautify neighborhoods, stabilize ecosystems, slow runoff during rain storms, and sequester CO2 to help reduce greenhouse gasses.

AND IT'S MORE FUN
THAN A BARREL OF MONKEYS!



Learn about Forest ReLeaf at:

[Forest ReLeaf – Planting trees & enriching communities. \(moreleaf.org\)](http://ForestReLeaf-Plantingtrees&enrichingcommunities.moreleaf.org)





THE COMPETITION CONTINUES! FOR ???

Who has the messiest or most loaded car for a Missouri Naturalist— Leslie Limberg, Mary Meinhardt or our new competitor Frank Dvorak?



Mary thinks she is the winner.

What Say You?

*You can't be suspicious
of a tree,
or accuse a bird
or a squirrel
of subversion
or challenge
the ideology
of a violet.*

~Hal Borland,
"Spring is for Laughter,"
1954

DAYS OF DROUGHT



The Earth is thirsty.

Can we give back
what it has given?
Can we try?

No more concrete,
no more blacktop
No more excavating
her womb
that cares for her wild ones
It needs more gentle
and large care

Is the earth angry
with its swirling winds,
tornadoes, hurricanes, fire,
and ocean warming?

Is it angry with flooding
that tears up the roads,
buildings we have made?
Is it saying, enough, enough!

The Earth is thirsty.
Plant more flowers.
Plant more trees
So the bees can buzz,
the hummingbirds hum,
and the turtle finds
a new home to lay its' eggs,
... And the small salamander
finds an insect
so it can live another day.

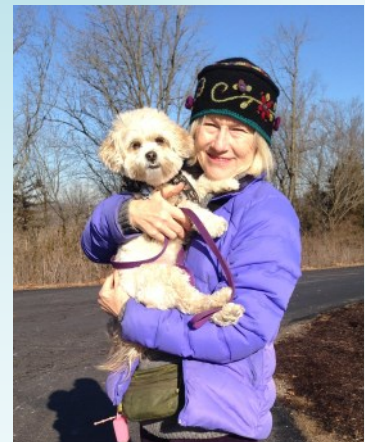
The rain comes and goes.
The question remains:
Will the rain come today?

I plant my flowers,
I plant my trees
but no rain
to quench their thirst.

I hope it comes another day.

By MN Joann Shew
7/3/23
(written before the rains
came)

Inspired by and in memory of
Jerry Lindhorst, a steward of
the earth, who wrote in
December 2022 MMN
Newsletter, about the im-
portance of saving water.



Joann and DC





*Mary, Mary,
Quite Contrary
Oh, Yes! My Garden!*

MN Mary Meinhardt
Photos by Mary Meinhardt

Oh, My—

All of a sudden, it turned out to be a jungle instead of a garden. (It's hard for me to edit, you see—and it's also hard for me to "chop".)

I went through some of my Situations and Solutions, noted in the March Newsletter, and found that I failed terribly on several fronts.

- 1) My attempt to germinate native thistles did not work.
- 2) My resolve to germinate more annuals also did not come to fruition and
- 3) I even let some of the plants germinated die from the hot blistering sun or from sitting in water they did not want. (I'll try again next year.)

Despite those failures, I have succeeded in keeping the



wonderful Star Tick-seed alive and bought plugs as well as germinating some of my own.

They are tough little plants and add a splash of yellow to my woodland areas.

The Purple Poppy Mallow is still alive in a hot well drained area, but I see I need to edit out some of the competition.



I also did well in the area of fruiting trees and shrubs and vines; perhaps due to my failure to "edit".

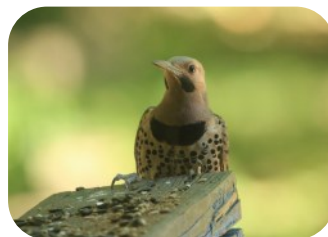
In addition to the plants I added from Missouri Department of Conversation this spring, some of my previously unproductive trees have really produced this year. The Silky Dogwood and Nannyberry bushes are loaded, as are the three types of crabapples in my garden.

What I thought might be wild grape is actually Heart leaved Peppervine (*Ampelopsis cordata*), a native that supports 11 species of caterpillars including the Eight Spotted Forester caterpillar and some Sphinx moths—and you know what caterpillars mean??—more food for baby birds in addition to fall fruit for the birds! The Peppervine grows fast and will definitely need a bit of "editing".

With all those bugs and berries, my yard has become a regular bird nursery. We have seen so many baby birds! Our yard supports five to six pair of cardinals and they are all having young at the same time. I have at least one Cardinal mama still hatching eggs in one of our front yard shrubs.



We've never seen so many Gray Catbirds and at least three broods of Blue Jays, and two of Brown Thrashers! I don't want to mention the European Starlings, the Eurasian Tree Sparrows and the House Sparrows, but we've seen those also. Black Capped Chickadees, Northern Flickers, and Carolina Wrens were also among the new babies.



And we had hunters! We haven't seen as many Cooper's

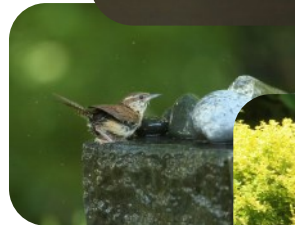
Hawks and Barred Owls as usual, but the Green Heron has been here multiple days. It has been satisfied



fishing for the tiny little fish that remain after predators have taken our six and 10 inch goldfish. We've accidentally frightened away the Great Blue Heron that sat on the rooftop looking down at our little pond and wonder how many it may have gotten.

Every little thing that visits must have its photo taken (if possible). Some of my favorite are included here! Note: The hummingbird loves the figwort that Carmen described last year.

As I might have noted before: My garden is for the birds! And I like it that way.





MEMBERS' GALLERY

By MN Leslie Limberg

Do you speak dog?



Elaine Browning Sure Does.

Elaine was a farmer's daughter of sorts. Her great grandmother loved nature, and had a powerful impact on her. What especially caught Elaine's future skill was the world of dogs.

To make a long love story shorter, what most of us don't know is, since the pandemic, Elaine has won a plethora of competition ribbons from Purina Farms. Yes, Elaine, a human-dog mix herself, is smitten with nature, animals, and now especially with Shetland Sheep Dogs.

One in particular named Cooper, is a pure bred Shetland Sheep Dog or Shelties as they're called. Cooper is stunning at a distance, even if he barks ferociously protecting his yard from invaders. It's his silky multi-colored coat of deep thick long elegant hair ... only a beautician would lust over.

Thanks to Elaine's intuition, Cooper is now officially a therapy dog in libraries, hospitals and nursing homes.

AND... he trains with Excellence In Motion (EIM) at

Westinn Kennels in Wentzville. He is regularly shown at Purina Farms Event Center in AKC Agility trial events. This is the real deal: where medals & ribbons happen.

Cooper & Elaine have won many Blue Ribbons and other awards in only the past 3 years. Their work is fun & HARD ... And wow... they learn fast, running at top speed, jumping, leaping, judging distance & direction through gates, poles, tunnels, dog walks, a-frame, and teeter.

Phew... this is not for the faint of heart, as it is diligent partnership and work.

Who knew? These two naturalists were a match made in heaven.



THANK YOU, TOM HOLT!

MN Leslie Limberg



Once upon a time our own Missouri Master Naturalist, Tom Holt, was director of training and development for Shell Oil Company. Additionally he was a talent manager, knowledge manager and worked for McDonnell Douglas. Tom was one of our 25 initial chapter members in 2005. What better credentials for the design of our chapter—a real "people person."

As a Missouri Master Naturalist Tom has proven his expertise initially as the Advanced Training coordinator, a

Tri-chapter Seminar coordinator, and as chapter Service Coordinator. Now-a-days, he's our Membership Coordinator soon to pass the baton to our new membership coordinator Kathleen Benckendorf .

AND... twice as our Monarch Madness coordinator.

Gosh, wowie...

Next time you see him, please shake his hand and thank him, OK????

THANK YOU, TOM HOLT!

Here's to the man who labors and does it with a song. He stimulates his neighbors and helps the world along.

~Walt Mason



Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves. As age comes on, one source of enjoyment after another is closed, but Nature's sources never fail.

~John Muir,
Our National Parks





GREAT OPPORTUNITY

There is an opportunity to help continue to develop the Missouri Master Naturalists section of the MU Extension - St. Charles. I cordially invite all those who can participate in this endeavor. There are no special skills needed, nor does one have to bring tools as those will be available.

Tom Nagle and I started work, as approval was given by the Extension Council, for MMN to have our designated area established with greenhouses, etc. by October 1st.

Since we don't know how much time can be spent in its development, due to weather and man-power issues, if we do some

each week or two, we can accomplish much toward the end goal.

I will remind members that any time spent on this chapter approved project can be part of the hours assessment for yearly recertification.

We look forward to your participation in this opportunity.



Cordially,

Stephen Baldwin
President,
Missouri Master Naturalist,
Confluence Chapter

Bird Watching

MN Frank Dvorak

I enjoyed watching a green heron stalking a fish, or maybe a tasty frog this afternoon at the park. I was on the home stretch of my walk as some movement caught my attention while crossing the bridge by the pond. A serious looking bird was wading at the edge of the pond and staring intently into the water. I too saw some ripples and guessed the bird had seen a potential snack. I rested my phone on the rail of the bridge to stabilize my photos and watched the drama.



The bird moved very slowly forward, and lowered its body to water level to avoid spooking its victim. I watched and waited. The bird watched and waited.



I took a few more photos with my phone and wondered if it was time to move on. After all, I did not have to stalk and catch my dinner.

Then it happened. The bird lunged forward and plucked its catch in its beak. The bird turned back to the shore line and worked to secure its dinner in its beak. I snapped a few more photos, but the movement made for a blurry photo. The drama was over, so I moved on.



I appreciated the pause on my walk to watch the heron and observe its hunting method. I was impressed how the heron changed its posture during the hunt, from a bird standing tall to shrunk down at water level, yet ready to move quickly when the prey was in range. I enjoy when I take a moment to observe what nature has to offer.





Our Current Heat Wave

Submitted by MN Beth Zona

What NASA and the European Space Agency have concluded about our current heat wave **By Thomas Lifson The American Thinker July 31, 2023.**

The current heat wave is being relentlessly blamed on increasing levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, but there is a much more plausible explanation, one that is virtually endorsed by two of the world's leading scientific organizations.

It turns out that levels of water vapor in the atmosphere have dramatically increased over the last year and a half, and water vapor is well recognized as a greenhouse gas, whose heightened presence leads to higher temperatures, a mechanism that dwarfs any effect CO2 may have.

So why has atmospheric water vapor increased so dramatically? Because of a historic, gigantic volcanic eruption last year that I — probably along with you — had never heard of. The mass media ignored it because it took place 490 feet underwater in the South Pacific.

Don't take it from me; take it from NASA: When the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcano erupted on Jan. 15, it sent a tsunami racing around the world and set off a sonic boom that circled the globe twice. The underwater eruption in the South Pacific Ocean also blasted an enormous plume of water vapor into Earth's stratosphere — enough to fill more than 58,000 Olympic-size swimming pools. The sheer amount of water vapor could be enough to temporarily affect Earth's global average temperature.

"We've never seen anything like it," said Luis Millán, an atmospheric scientist at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Southern California. He led a new study examining the amount of water vapor that the Tonga volcano injected into the stratosphere, the layer of the atmosphere between about 8 and 33 miles (12 and 53 kilometers) above the Earth's surface. In the study, published in Geophysical Re-

search Letters, Millán and his colleagues estimate that the Tonga eruption sent around 146 teragrams (1 teragram equals a trillion grams) of water vapor into Earth's stratosphere — equal to 10% of the water already present in that atmospheric layer.

That's nearly four times the amount of water vapor that scientists estimate the 1991 Mount Pinatubo eruption in the Philippines lofted into the stratosphere. NASA published the above in August 2022. Half a year later, a newer study increased the estimate of the water vapor addition to the atmosphere by 30%. From the European Space Agency: In a recent paper published in Nature, a team of scientists showed the unprecedented increase in the global stratospheric water mass by 13% (relative to climatological levels) and a five-fold increase of stratospheric aerosol load — the highest in the last three decades.

Using a combination of satellite data, including data from ESA's Aeolus satellite, and ground-based observations, the team found that due to the extreme altitude, the volcanic plume circumnavigated the Earth in just one week and dispersed nearly pole-to-pole in three months.

Another scientific paper explains the "net warming of the climate system" on a delayed basis. NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory further explains: Volcanic eruptions rarely inject much water into the stratosphere. In the 18 years that NASA has been taking measurements, only two other eruptions — the 2008 Kasatochi event in Alaska and the 2015 Calbuco eruption in Chile — sent appreciable amounts of water vapor to such high altitudes. But those were mere blips compared



The eruption of Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcano in the Pacific in January was so powerful that it shot water vapor high enough to touch space, the first time an earthly volcano has been observed achieving that feat. TONGA GEOLOGICAL SURVEY TEAM, WIKIMEDIA COMMONS (CC BY 3.0)

to the Tonga event, and the water vapor from both previous eruptions dissipated quickly.

The excess water vapor injected by the Tonga volcano, on the other hand, could remain in the stratosphere for several years. This extra water vapor could influence atmospheric chemistry, boosting certain chemical reactions that could temporarily worsen depletion of the ozone layer.

It could also influence surface temperatures. Massive volcanic eruptions like Krakatoa and Mount Pinatubo typically cool Earth's surface by ejecting gases, dust, and ash that reflect sunlight back into space. In contrast, the Tonga volcano didn't inject large amounts of aerosols into the stratosphere, and the huge amounts of water vapor from the eruption may have a small, temporary warming effect, since water vapor traps heat. The effect would dissipate when the extra water vapor cycles out of the stratosphere.

So there you have it: we are in for extra atmospheric heat "for several years" until the extra water vapor injected by this largest-ever-recorded underwater volcano eruption dissipates. Jeff Childers, who brought these scientific data to my notice, writes: Here's why corporate media is ignoring the most dramatic climate event in modern history: because you can't legislate underwater volcanoes. You can try, but they won't listen. So what's the fun in that?

Corporate media only exists to further political ends. Since volcanoes aren't subject to politics, why bother? But though scientists are baffled, corporate media and its repulsive allies are busily blaming ocean warming on carbon dioxide — a ludicrous notion. I am the first to admit that none of this — not the atmospheric CO2 theory of global warming, nor the effect of the largest ever known undersea volcanic eruption — is scientifically proven. But before we impoverish ourselves trying to reduce CO2 emissions (while watching China dramatically increase them), let's practice real science and not jump to conclusions based on an imaginary "consensus."

[The Hunga Tonga volcano eruption touched space \(sciencenews.org\)](https://www.sciencenews.org/article/hunga-tonga-volcano-eruption-touched-space)
(<https://www.sciencenews.org/article/hunga-tonga-volcano-eruption-touched-space-lightning>)

Used by Permission

Heat, Ma'am!...
it was so dreadful here,
that I found there was nothing left for it
but to take off my flesh and sit in my bones.

~Sydney Smith, Memoir by his daughter Lady Holland





From Our Members



Newly hatched Eastern Blue birds. Box 16, Quail Ridge MN Alison Robbins

Boxfull of Eastern Tree Swallow hatchling. This is Box 18 at Quail Ridge.



Three Baby Dinosaurs — Robins' Nest MN Elaine Browning



Did you know that goldfinches sometimes eat aphids, though the birds are generally considered to eat only seeds? Thanks for the help with the aphids. Eat all you want! MN Frank Dvorak



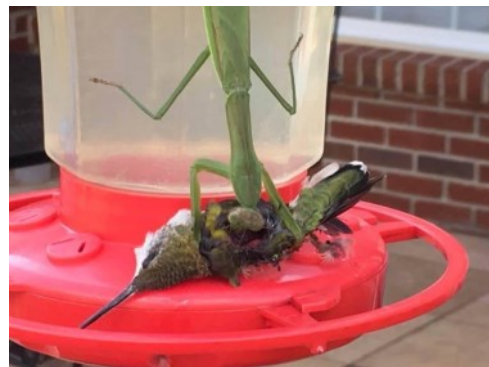
MN Karen Sue Stevens July front yard garden—always a surprise!



Heart Leaved Peppervine MN Mary Meinhardt



Just resting ... Russ Walker



Check your feeders several times a day!
MN Leslie Limberg





STARGAZING AT BROMMELSEIK

MN Frank Dvorak



Following up on the chapter's May 2023 Advanced Training presentation by the Astronomical Society of Eastern Missouri (ASEM), several Confluence members and family headed to the Astronomical Viewing Area at Brommelseik Park on June 23 and gazed at the Moon and stars.

I arrived at sunset and looked around to familiarize myself with the layout. The site has a network of concrete equipment pads and connecting paths. ASEM already had their equipment in place. A variety of large and small telescopes were set up on the pads. I took a few photos at the viewing site since light was fading fast. The site was much busier after dark and more visitors arrived.

A few bright objects were visible as dusk fell. Early viewers like myself were able to examine the moon and Venus. Did you know Venus has phases? Planets such as Venus rely on the sun to illuminate them, like our moon. The relative position of the sun illuminating Venus and myself observing on Earth resulted in a side view, and hence a crescent shape when seen through a telescope.

This Friday was the regu-

lar ASEM public viewing night and there were many others who came out to stargaze. Several groups included young people, who asked questions like 'can you show me a double star?' ASEM members were ready to show and explain. An interest in natural phenomena is good at any age, and I was pleased that young people were here to check out the stars.

Several telescopes had rather complex mountings with electronics for alignment and tracking celestial objects. As often the case with computerized gizmos, some were not cooperating. On another pad, a member was operating a manual telescope that needed periodic tweaks to keep the object in



chart. Oh well. I did recognize the big dipper.

My viewing highlight was seeing the sparkling, moving ribbon of recently launched Skylink satellites. I have never seen anything like it. SEM knew that SpaceX had launched a cluster of satellites earlier in the day from Cape Canaveral. The satellites were predicted to pass

overhead that night. I am familiar with seeing a single satellite moving rapidly across the night sky. Now imagine 56 satellites moving together in a string. The band of sparkling satellites flowed overhead and I watched in amazement. The ribbon formation occurs because there are 56 satellites released in a string from the launch vehicle. Later each satellite starts maneuvering

to its operational position and the ribbon disappears.

ASEM hosts these astronomical viewing sessions every Friday night throughout the year, weather permitting. I plan to return at a different time of year for another look at the stars, and to learn about astronomy from the ASEM members.

See their website for stargazing updates and read their newsletter.

[https://www.asemonline.org/ASEM\(asemonline.org\)](https://www.asemonline.org/ASEM(asemonline.org))



Jim Twellman
SEM Master Observer

view, but it was always operational and attracted many viewers. I heard terms like Newtonian and Dobson that I would look up the next day on the internet. You should too, and understand why the eyepiece is near the top end of a Newtonian telescope.

The sky continued to darken and several constellations became visible to the naked eye. ASEM provided handouts of the current star positions however, when it was dark enough for the stars to be visible, I could no longer see the





Krista Taves
President
Friends of Belleview

Friends of Belleview

(501c3) was created by those who value Belleview Farm Park as a natural treasure. Belleview Farm Park is located in the Meramac Valley west of Castlewood State Park and north of Sherman Beach County Park in St. Louis County, Missouri.



Our Mission is to promote and protect the vision of Harold Donnelly, a conservationist, who through his service as a Board Member of Open Space Council of St. Louis, helped to found Forest 44, Castlewood State Park, and Bee Tree park. He generously gifted Belleview to St. Louis County on the condition that it will be, in perpetuity, a wildlife and nature preserve. It is now under the control of the City of Wildwood.

We welcome all who share Mr. Donnelly's vision:

- ∞ to renew Belleview Farm Park through ecological restoration;
- ∞ to prioritize the well being of the wildlife and nature above all else;

- ∞ to open Belleview Farm Park to the public.

Our purpose is to advocate for Belleview, fundraise for Belleview, develop and maintain a volunteer base to restore and sustain Belleview, and recruit community partners to support Belleview as a wildlife and nature preserve.

Since our founding in 2019 we have:

- ∞ Received \$31,000 in grants from the Missouri Department of Conservation for woodland invasive removal with 20 acres now cleared with tree stand improvement
- ∞ Cleared 7 acres of honeysuckle with our own volunteers
- ∞ Established the Donnelly Memorial Garden, populated with natives that will feature plants used in the prairie restoration project which started in the fall of Fall 2021
- ∞ Cleared a path to restore two springs in the park
- ∞ Supported Wildwood in receiving an MDC grant for \$25,000 to restore 5 acres of prairie,
- ∞ Formed partnerships with Open Space Council of St. Louis and the Confluence Master Naturalists which co-host work days with us
- ∞ Installed 2 riparian buffers, one at the head of one of the creeks to address erosion and the other to protect two springs.
- ∞ Planted hundreds of common and swamp milkweed seedlings
- ∞ Built a core of volunteers who are dedicated to Belleview Farm Park's restoration
- ∞ Host workdays on the 2nd Saturdays of the month, excepting the hot summer months.



To get updates on our progress and the dates of our workdays please email

friendsofbelleview2@gmail.com.

We'd love to hear from you!





THE GARDENS



The most loved Sycamore in the whole wide world.



Quail Ridge Photos by MN Jane Porter and MN Sandy Oldfield



The Magic Gardeners: To the left the Deer then to the right Frank Dvorak, Leslie Limberg, Beth Zona, Mary Meinhardt, and Jane Porter (Joann Shew and DC were absent this day).

The Quail Ridge Rain Garden



This Rain Garden receives all the water draining from a pavilion to the North of the garden. Miraculously it harbors an Oak tree, a self planted Black Cherry tree, a Buttonbush tree, a False Indigo tree, and several water loving native plants (Sedges, Lilies, Swamp Milkweed, Obedient Plant, Mist Flowers, Mallows, Ironweed and some others.)





We're at it again!
Our 3rd Bluebird Box
Building Party since 2005.

MN Leslie Limberg

And boy, were we organized! This was not an ordinary Barn Dance. All doors open wide, good sunlight and not too hot for St. Charles County's Missouri Master Naturalists.

Gary Schneider, true to his generous nature, donated boards. Mark Zupec and Lloyd Alinder, with their awesome wood working expertise, brought their table saws.

Christine Evans brought her famous drill press for cutting holes. Stephen Baldwin, of course brought his riveter & grinder for baffle construction. (BTW, putting together metal stove pipes for baffles is definitely a two-man job, requiring strong hands and arms! UGH. Thank you Jerry Kaiser and Gary.

Then our team of project managers (Jill, Jeanice & Les) and Bluebird monitors (Amanda & Nicole) directed the show. In four hours, including time out for lunch and ice-cream, we had 12 boxes complete.... oops, plus add time for the forgotten roof hinges. Thx Gary.

All in all, a most satisfying party of naturalists, committed to Bluebirds, Tree Swallows, and Chickadees.

We now have installed 20 boxes at Brommelsiek Park, soon 20 at Quail Ridge and fresh boxes to trade out, and soon 2 fresh replacements at Spring Bend.

These birds are prolific! This year so far over 100 birds have fledged our boxes at 4 county parks: Towne Park, Spring Bend, Quail Ridge, and Brommelsiek Park.



These birds are prolific! This year so far over 100 birds have fledged our boxes at 4 county parks: Towne Park, Spring Bend, Quail Ridge, and Brommelsiek Park... such a profound experience awaits! Call Leslie at 636-398-8809.



This is a Rose Mallow bud from our Native Habitat Garden at the University Extension.

Beeeeeautiful!

We would like to extend an invitation to all members to visit The Native Habitat Garden at the University Extension, 260 Brown Rd. in St Peters.

It's the garden immediately on the left, by the turquoise mailbox.

MN Leslie Limberg



Said the other, little daisy,
"I am very well content
To live simply in the meadow
where the sun and rain are sent;



Where the bees all gather sweetness,
and the dew falls on my head,
And the radiance of the moonlight
is all around me shed.
The grass and clover blossoms
admire my beauty all day long,

As I listen to the music of a bird's
delightful song..."

~Gertrude Tooley Buckingham,
"Two Little Daisies," 1940s
[The other little daisy was wishing to be a rose.—tg]





- Thank you to the new interns who chose to join our Chapter. You are the future of our group, and we look forward to working with all of you.
- Thank you to all the members who contributed to the Newsletters with your informative articles, interesting observations, project summaries,

- updates, and stellar nature photos.
- Thank you Carmen Santos for all the time and effort you put into the creation of this Newsletter. Your efforts truly make it outstanding.
- Tom Holt our outgoing Membership Coordinator for an outstanding job.
- Kathleen Benckendorf for stepping in and taking on the leadership of the Membership Committee.

- Sandy Oldfield for taking the leadership role of the Award and Recognition committee.
- Gary Wester (Awards) for his dedication as leader of the Stream Team and Award and Recognition Committee.



WHEN THE BEE COMES TO YOUR HOUSE, LET HER HAVE BEER, YOU MAY WANT TO VISIT THE BEE'S HOUSE SOME DAY.



~CONGO PROVERB

Our Leadership

- President—Stephen Baldwin
- Vice President—Martha Hessler
- Secretary—Emily Brower
- Treasurer—Beth Zona
- Advanced Training—Deborah Moulton
- Volunteer Coordinator—Alberta McGilligan
- Membership Services—Kathleen Benckendorf
- Chapter Librarian—Amanda Templer
- Facebook Page—Gail Gagnon
- Newsletter—Carmen Santos, Leslie Limberg, Elaine Browning, and Mary Meinhardt
- Advisors:
 - Rebecca O'Hearn, MDC, Rebecca.O'Hearn@mdc.mo.gov
 - Matt Herring, University of Missouri Extension, herringm@missouri.edu
 - Eli Isele, University of Missouri Extension, elihuissele@missouri.edu

Project Leaders:

- Confluence Chapter Stream Team #3612—Gary Wester
- Babler State Park—Alberta McGilligan
- Quail Ridge Prairie Demo and Rain Garden—Leslie Limberg and Frank Dvorak
- Bluebird Monitoring—Connie Campbell and Leslie Limberg
- Nature Explore Classroom Education—Connie Campbell
- O'Fallon Public Works Project—Frank Dvorak
- Monarchs & Pollinators Network—Bob Lee and Tom Holt
- Birding Club—Gail Gagnon
- Main Street Garden—Martha Hessler and Tom Nagle
- Cuivre River and Don Robinson State Park—Bob Coffing
- Outdoor Classroom, Frontier Middle School—Jeanice and Jerry Kaiser
- Amphibian Monitoring—Steve Teson
- Native Seed Collection & Distribution—Phil Rahn and Leslie Limberg

- Native Flower Potting & Distribution—Alberta McGilligan
- Rockwoods Reservation Native Garden—Karin Foster and Nancy Newcomer
- Bellevue Farms—Alberta McGilligan
- Progress South Middle School Garden Clean Up - Leslie Limberg
- Native Habitat Garden at University Extension at St. Peters—Leslie Limberg
- Past Presidents
 - Connie McCormack
 - Scott Barnes
 - Jerry Lindhorst
 - Cliff Parmer
 - Leslie Limberg
 - Alberta McGilligan
 - Martha Hessler
 - Alison Robbins



The Confluence Chapter was founded in 2005 as the fifth Master Naturalist chapter in Missouri. The chapter was formed by twenty-four individuals from St. Charles County, St. Louis County, and St. Louis City after completing the Missouri Master Naturalist™ training program. We share a common interest in nature and in volunteering to help protect, preserve and restore Missouri's natural heritage. Most of our members live in the region west of the Missouri-Mississippi Confluence and from both north and south of the Missouri River. We operate according to the bylaws and operating handbook of the Missouri Master Naturalist Program developed by the Missouri Department of Conservation and University of Missouri Extension. Visit us at <http://www.mmnconfluence.org/>