

Missouri Master Naturalist Mississippi Hills Chapter  
Annual Report 2020

## MISSISSIPPI HILLS CHAPTER 2020 HIGHLIGHTS AND SUCCESSES

This year of 2020 marks our third year as a Missouri Master Naturalist chapter. Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, our members have continued to be active with **2647 hours of Volunteer Service** and **515 hours of Advanced Training**. Out of 34 active members, 14 received their initial certification and 15 received their annual certification. We are very grateful to the many hours Jerry Barnes, website designer, and our website administrator, Anne Coleman, have given to establish our website and train our members on tracking hours. We are also grateful for the variety, quantity, and quality of the virtual Advanced Trainings offered by MDC and MUE. This gave many of our members the opportunity to stay engaged and keep learning in ways that would not otherwise have been possible this year. While we all look forward to getting back to in-person trainings, we hope that online trainings will continue to be offered. We were disappointed that we could not host another initial training course in 2020, but preparations are already underway to host our third one in late 2021 or early 2022.

Stewardship projects included a continuation of the 2019 class's capstone project clearing more of the invasive understory in an area on Cardiff Hill behind Becky's Garden which was the 2018 class's capstone project. Planted this fall in the newly cleared area were 14 native bushes including American Beauty, Wild Hydrangea, and Common Ninebark along with 11 trees including American Plum, Wafer Ash Hoptree, Pagoda Dogwood, and others. It will be interesting to see what thrives in this area and what insects and birds it attracts. It's also an example of the importance and variety of native plants for our community.

Extensive work continued around Mark Twain Lake on USACE property. This included trail maintenance during the height of the Covid lock down, continuing to remove invasive species, and enhancing and establishing six prairie plots around the Indian Creek access area and the the Frank Russell Demonstration area along the new Environmental Trail. Most of this has been led by Bob Kendrick, one of our most active members, who treats his conservation work like a full time job. One of the most remarkable activities Bob initiated and organized was a native seed bank. Native prairie grass and forb seeds (estimated value of \$2000) were collected and labeled by our Master Naturalists and local Master Gardeners. With the guidance of Sam Lord, a Botanist and Ecologist with DNR, these seeds were spread in the above mentioned areas. This endeavor has been a great success and will likely become an annual service project.

Education Outreach and Interpretive programs were much less in 2020 due to the limit on group gatherings, but several members did log hours for the 2020 Eagle Days in Clarksville in January, and assisting with Hannibal Parks and Recreation interpretive programs. One of our newer members, Matthew Harris, spent many hours researching and designing a brochure for the Sodalis Nature Preserve which is one of the most used parks in Hannibal. Hannibal Parks and Recreation is in the final stages of editing the brochure complete with a map. We look forward to doing more EI projects in 2021 which may include helping design interpretive boards for the newly renovated Hannibal riverfront.

Two of our most exciting Citizen Science projects have been establishing a new Stream Team group and an Audubon Christmas Bird Count Circle. Member Lisa Wiese registered and organized the Stream Team group which is monitoring Penno Creek in the Ranacker Conservation Area. George Wisdom with the help of other members like Dennis Foss mapped and registered an area around Mark Twain Lake with diverse habitats. On December 19th, 2020, twenty participants including Mississippi Hills Master Naturalists and other members of the community, counted a total of 3300 birds of 49 different species.

<https://mississippihills.missourimasternaturalist.org/>

## CERTIFICATION AND ACTIVE MEMBERS

34 Active members  
15 Annual re-certification  
14 Initial Certification

## SERVICE PROJECTS (rounded to nearest whole hour)

Volunteer Service Projects Total: 2647 hours  
Program Support = 738 hours  
Education/Interpretative = 441 hours  
Stewardship Projects = 1227 hours  
Citizen Science = 241

## ADVANCED TRAINING

2020 Advanced Training Total Hours = 515

## CHAPTER PARTNERS

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Mark Twain Lake (1061 volunteer service hours donated)  
Hannibal Parks & Recreation (139 volunteer service hours donated)  
Mark Twain State Park  
MDC (223 volunteer service hours donated)  
University MO Extension  
Stream Team (67 volunteer service hours donated)  
Audubon (94 volunteer service hours donated)  
Hannibal Tree Board  
FORREST Council  
White Tails Unlimited, Monroe City Chapter (48 volunteer service hours donated)  
Turkey Federation, Hannibal Chapter

## 2020 CHAPTER BOARD MEMBERS

President – Gale Rublee  
Vice President – George Wisdom  
Secretary – Bella Erakko & Brenda Weiss  
Treasurer – Stevens Plowman  
Board Members at Large: Bob Kendrick, Keith Cline, Kristy Trevathan, Vanessa Laatsch, David Mobley

### Committee Chairs:

Volunteer Service Projects - David Mobley  
Advanced Training - George Wisdom  
Hospitality - Vanessa Laatsch  
Website & Time keeper – Anne Coleman

### Chapter Advisors:

Kathi Moore - MDC  
Daniel Mallory - MUE

## 2021 CHAPTER BOARD MEMBERS

President – George Wisdom

Vice President – Unfilled

Secretary – Bella Erakko & Brenda Weiss

Treasurer – Kristy Trevathan

Board Members at Large: Bob Kendrick, Keith Cline, Vanessa Laatsch, David Mobley, Matt Harris, Anne Coleman

### Committee Chairs:

Volunteer Service Projects - Unfilled

Advanced Training - George Wisdom (until position can be filled)

Hospitality - Vanessa Laatsch

Website Administrator - Anne Coleman

Initial Training - Bob Kendrick

### Chapter Advisors:

Kathi Moore - MDC

Daniel Mallory - MUE