

Mississippi Hills Master Naturalist Chapter

2022 Annual Report

The Mississippi Hills Master Naturalist Chapter has completed its fifth year. The MHMN chapter members have been involved in many projects and have completed various advanced training opportunities. An initial training class was conducted in 2022 with 9 volunteers completing the initial training.

MHMN naturalists contributed 3920 **hours of Volunteer Service** and 855 **hours of Advanced Training**.

21 naturalists received their certifications. The chapter ended the year with 36 active members.

One of our naturalists Toni Black-Blackman passed away in September. Toni was a founding member of the chapter. She spent many hours with Becky's Garden, Broadway Garden and Sodalis Nature Preserve providing care to plants and pollinators.

Summary of 2022:

In October the MHMN chapter was awarded the Northeast Regional Partnership Award from the Missouri Department of Conservation for its service in 2021.

The MHMN chapter completed its fourth Master Naturalist Training Class. Nine new interns were added with a graduation ceremony in August.

On Saturday and Sunday, January 29 and 30, from 10 am – 3 pm, Mississippi Hills Master Naturalists assisted the city of Clarksville, MO in the 2022 Clarksville Eagle Days event. This is the third year that our organization has participated in this nature event that draws bird lovers from all over to observe and celebrate the majestic American Bald Eagle.

MHMN naturalists assisted MDC in planting 3500 to 4000 tree seedlings at the Ranacker CA.

The MHMN chapter continues to meet its annual goal of establishing seven prairies per year for seven years that was established in 2020. During 2022 the chapter was successful in establishing seven new prairies. For 2023 the plan is in place for seven more prairies that have been tentatively selected.

MHMN naturalists participated with the Ben Sapp Memorial Antler Shed hunt for youth.

MHMN naturalists participated in 2022 to build fish habitat structures to be used to improve fish habitat on Mark Twain Lake. This project is part of a five year grant the Corps of Engineers received to enhance fishing on the Mark Twain Lake.

MHMN naturalists provided support to students from area schools at the 2022 Pike County Farm Safety days held in August. Naturalists presented examples of how to keep safe in the outdoors. How to identify snakes and avoid them. Ways to avoid mosquitoes and poison ivy was also included

MHMN chapter Naturalists supported the Hannibal Parks and Recreation Wild & Wacky Art adventure event held at the Central Park in Hannibal, MO. Emphasis this year was on native plants and pollinators. Approximately 250 children attended.

In June MHMN naturalists supported the MDC and YESA (Youth Empowered Sports & Activities) in the MDC Discover Nature Fishing program held at Huckleberry Park, Hannibal, MO. Around 5 youth attended the event this year.

MHMN naturalists participated in a MDC fishing pole repair event at the MDC conservation office, Hannibal, MO.

In July MHMN naturalists help build bluebird houses at the Fall Pickers Market event in Bethel, MO.

MHMN naturalists supported the kid's fishing day held at Mark Twain Lake Frank Russell RA. The event was hosted by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers as part of the National Fishing and Boating Week and free fishing days in Missouri. The chapter also assisted the youth in assembling bluebird houses.

The MHMN chapter naturalist Stream Team members conducted one sampling at Peno creek at the Ranacker Conservation Area near Frankford, MO.

MHMN naturalists lead a nature walk at Hannibal Veterans School. Children from grades 1 to 3 attended.

MHMN naturalists participated in the Earth Day Litter Pick-up which was held at Mark Twain Lake. Eighteen volunteers contributed 77 hours and removed 405 cubic feet of refuse.

MHMN naturalists assisted biologists in capturing and banding wood ducks at the Ted Shanks CA.

The MHMN chapter hosted a spring wildflower hike at the Steyermark CA. 35 hikers participated.

MHMN chapter provided a booth on native plants and prairies at the Heartland Seed Open House in Eolia, MO.

MHMN chapter supported the Milkweeds for Monarchs project by planting a milkweed garden at the Sodalis Nature Park, Hannibal, Missouri.

A forest management fall field day was hosted by Vanessa Laatsch at her farm in October for naturalists from the MHMN chapter. Activities provided were chain saw safety, forest nature hike, beginning archery, Dutch oven cooking demonstration and invasive species removal activities.

MHMN naturalists supported the 2022 Mark Twain Lake Eco-Meet by held at the Boudreaux visitor center. The meet consisted of students from Monroe and Madison high schools. The chapter provided a booth with information on Missouri wild turkey biology and restoration of turkeys in Missouri.

On December 17, 2022, The MHMN chapter participated in the 123rd Audubon Christmas Bird Count. The count circle is located at Mark Twain Lake and this is the third year for a count to be conducted on this circle (MOMT). A total of 12 naturalists and two people from the public attended the CBC count day and contributed 30.5 hours and drove 319.5 miles counting birds. A total of 2,382 birds were counted. 41 different species of birds were observed.

CERTIFICATION AND ACTIVE MEMBERS

36 Active Members

21 Annual Re-Certifications

13 Initial Certifications

SERVICE PROJECTS (rounded to nearest whole hour)

Volunteer Service Projects Total: 3920 hours
Program Support 1185 hours
Education/Interpretative 1207 hours
Stewardship Projects 1375 hours
Citizen Science 154 hours

ADVANCED TRAINING

2022 Advanced Training Total Hours 855

CHAPTER PARTNERS

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Mark Twain Lake (1414 volunteer service hours donated)
Hannibal Parks & Recreation & Tree Board (114 volunteer service hours donated)
Missouri Bat Census (26 volunteer service hours donated)
MO State Parks (20 volunteer service hours donated)
MDC (1499 volunteer service hours donated)
University MO Extension (3 volunteer service hours donated)
Stream Team (26 volunteer service hours donated)
Audubon (85 volunteer service hours donated)
Wild Turkey Federation, Hannibal Chapter (1.5 volunteer service hours donated)
USA National Phenology Network (4 volunteer service hours donated)
Xerces Society – Bumble Bee Atlas (7 volunteer service hours donated)
Forest Council (8 volunteer service hours donated)
Clarksville Eagle Days (117 volunteer hours donated)
Pike County Schools (34 volunteer hours donated)
Shelby County Education (37 volunteer hours donated)
University of Wisconsin-Madison (2 volunteer hours donated)

2022 CHAPTER BOARD MEMBERS

President – George Wisdom
Vice President – Kristy Trevathan
Secretary – Bella Erakko
Treasurer – Theresa Casey
Board Members at Large: Bob Kendrick, Keith Cline, Vanessa Laatsch, Mattew Harris, Gale Rublee

Committee Chairs:

Volunteer Service Projects – Gale Rublee
Advanced Training – Kristy Trevathan
Hospitality - Vanessa Laatsch
Website & Time keeper – Anne Coleman

Chapter Advisors:

Kathi Moore - MDC
Daniel Mallory - MUE