

TALE FEATHERS

St. Louis Audubon Society, P.O. Box 220227, St. Louis, MO 63122-0227
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Calendar

BEGINNER BIRD WALK FIELD TRIPS

FOREST PARK VISITOR CENTER

FIRST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH AT 815 AM

Special walk just for the new and/or casual watchers.

For info contact Chris at birding@forestparkforever.org.

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

BUSCH WOODCOCK & OWL PROWL

SATURDAY MARCH 12TH AT 5 PM

GOOD TRIP FOR BEGINNERS TO EXPERIENCE THESE BIRDS.

NATURE WALKS FOR KIDS—AGES 6 AND UP

CREVE COEUR LAKE MEMORIAL PARK—TACO BELL SHELTER

SUNDAY, MARCH 13TH FROM 10A TO 12P

RESERVATIONS NOT REQUIRED. IF QUESTIONS, CALL NIKKI AT (314) 566-3445 OR NIKIASTRO@ATT.NET.

FROM I-270, TAKE DORSETT RD WEST TO "T" AT MARINE AND TURN RIGHT. AT BASE OF BLUFF, TAKE FIRST LEFT AND FOLLOW LOT ALONG LAKE TO SHELTER AT TURN-AROUND.

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

HORSESHOE LAKE STATE PARK

SATURDAY MARCH 19TH AT 8 AM

MARCH PROGRAM—BATS—PAGE 6

LITZINGER SCHOOL IN LADUE

THURSDAY MARCH 24TH AT 730 PM

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

HILDA YOUNG CONSERVATION AREA

SATURDAY MARCH 26TH AT 530 PM

TRASH BASH AT CREVE COEUR PARK—PAGE 2

SATURDAY MARCH 26TH FROM 9A TO 12P

TO REGISTER, VISIT WWW.CONFLUENCEGREENWAY.ORG.

WETLANDS FOR KIDS—ALL AGES WELCOME

BUSCH MEMORIAL CONSERVATION AREA

SATURDAY APRIL 2ND FROM 10A TO 3P

CALL (636) 441-4554 OR VISIT WWW.MDC.MO.GOV FOR INFO

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

HAWN STATE PARK

SATURDAY APRIL 9TH AT 630 AM

CREVE COEUR PARK BIOBLITZ—PAGE 2

SATURDAY APRIL 16TH FROM 6A TO 12P

TO REGISTER, VISIT WWW.ACADEMYOFSCIENCESSTL.ORG.

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Prophet of the Prairie

By Carole Ottesen

Say the word "prairie" and most people will think of Willa Cather or Garrison Keillor. Say it to a plants person, and the first name that comes to mind will be Neil Diboll. Diboll (pronounced dih-BOLL) is president of Prairie Nursery in Westfield, Wisconsin. His business ships seeds and plants of prairie and woodland species to gardeners around the country, maintains a retail store, designs and installs prairies throughout Wisconsin, and advises clients on construction and restoration of prairie meadows and gardens.

What inspired a city boy from St. Louis to find his calling on the prairie? Diboll credits Keith White, a professor of ecology at the University of Wisconsin at Green Bay, where Diboll studied. He also says his parents have something to do with it.

"It's all my parents' fault—as is everything in life," he says. Hiking is a family tradition on his mother's side. Diboll remembers his parents often dragging him on wildflower walks in Colorado and in the Ozarks in Missouri.

A Perfect Fit

The love of nature and the outdoors may have been instilled by his parents—his father was a professor and mother a kindergarten teacher—but ultimately Diboll's

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Board Meetings

Open to All. 2nd Tuesday of Every Month at 7 pm. Powder Valley Nature Center at 11715 Cragwold.

Board recruitment is an ongoing process and requires your interest and our need. If you have thought of serving in such a way, stop by or call one of us.

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Newsletter

TaleFeathers is published monthly. For submissions, comments or corrections, contact Mitch Leachman as noted above.

Trash Bash March 26th

We hope you can join us for our semi-annual cleanup of Creve Coeur Park from 9a to 12p on March 26th, with lunch to follow. We are again pleased to be a part of, and receive support from, the Confluence Trash Bash. Please register online at www.confluencegreenway.org.

This family-friendly event is a very easy way to improve the habitat for all its wildlife and our own community. Trash bags and gloves provided. Prizes even awarded for interesting finds. Registration begins at 8:30am at the Tremayne Shelter at Sailboat Cove, just south of the Maryland Heights Expressway on Marine Avenue. ♦



*Photos by M. Leachman, K. Meyer and A. Smith
All were taken at Creve Coeur Lake Memorial Park*

BioBlitz April 16th

The Academy of Science of St. Louis with St. Louis Audubon and St. Louis County Parks leads a baseline BioBlitz at Creve Coeur Lake Memorial Park from 6 am to 12 pm on April 16th. This is a 6-hour, citizen science urban wildlife flash exploration and inventory of the biodiversity of the Park's plant and animal life.

This is the Park's first BioBlitz. Teams of public volunteers led by biologists, naturalists and environmental enthusiasts search natural areas within the park, listing as many different species as they can find. At the end of the day, participants will have a new appreciation of one of St. Louis' most treasured parks. The event is open to all ages, but registration is requested. Visit the Academy's website later this month to register online at <http://academyofsciencestl.org/>. ♦



From the Director

By Mitch Leachman

Habitat destruction is the #1 cause of population decline in birds (and most other flora and fauna), and urban sprawl is the greatest contributor to that destruction in our Region. Yet, the fundamental element of urban sprawl, the small-lot landowner, has the potential to compensate greatly for that habitat destruction.

The spaces around our homes and apartments are often overlooked as bird and wildlife habitat. Yet, especially for birds, butterflies, insects and native plants, every such space has the potential to provide one or more of the essential habitat elements—food, water, cover and breeding space. Further, the owner of the property, if appropriately involved in the restoration efforts, will often become not only a long-term steward of that space, but also an advocate for those practices within their neighborhood and community.

I am excited to be part of a group of St. Louis Audubon volunteers that envision a mosaic of small-lot private, commercial and public bird-healthy habitat across the St. Louis Region. We are developing the St. Louis Audubon at Home program that will provide assistance to small lot, private and commercial, property owners in the St. Louis Metro Area to restore native bird and wildlife habitat on their property. The program will address invasive species (such as bush honeysuckle), native landscaping, wildlife stewardship and stormwater management.

Upon receipt of an application (and small fee) from an interested property owner, trained volunteers will visit the site, perform an assessment and provide written recommendations and technical assistance to the owner. A follow-up certification visit will be performed upon request, with the owner awarded healthy habitat status in accordance with their level of restoration. Additional elements of the program may include community workshops, neighborhood-wide assessment and restoration workdays, backyard bird habitat tours, recognition events, discounts and incentives from landscape and wildlife steward suppliers, and more.

Our plan is to pilot the program this spring and summer with a limited number and type of properties. A full roll-out is intended for 2012. Please watch our website, Facebook page and the April *TaleFeathers* for full details about the pilot. I hope you share my excitement about the program—I just know the birds do! ♦

Field Trips, Etc.

March 12th at Busch Memorial Conservation Area:

Sue Gustafson and John Solodar will lead this evening Woodcock and Owl Prowl. Meet at 5 p.m. (note the time). Take Hwy 94 south from Hwy 40. At 1.3 miles, turn right at light for Hwy D. Go 2 miles to entrance on right. Turn left at T to Hampton Lake and meet in lot.

Mar 19th to Horseshoe Lake State Park: Paul Bauer will lead this all day trip, good for beginners with some light walking, starting at 8 a.m. From St. Louis, take I-70 east to Hwy 111 (exit 6) and turn left. Go ~2 miles to Park entrance and meet in first parking lot on right inside Park.

March 26th at Hilda Young Conservation Area: Josh Uffman will lead this evening Woodcock and Owl Prowl, especially suited for beginners. Meet at 5:30 p.m. for caravan or carpool in the commuter lot in the southwest corner of I-44 and Hwy 109.

April 9th to Hawn State Park: Pat Lueders will lead this all day trip that includes moderate hiking over some rough terrain. Meet at 6:30 a.m. for caravan or carpools in the commuter lot closest to the highway on the southwest side of I-270 and Hwy 30.

All field trips are FREE. Reservations not required, unless noted—consult our website for details. Contact Pat Lueders with general questions at (314) 359-9364.

Prophet of the Prairie

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choice of where and how to pursue it was his own, with a little help from Professor White. After graduating with a degree in environmental science in 1978 and stints working with the U.S. Park Service in Virginia and the U.S. Forest Service in Colorado, Diboll returned to Wisconsin. Reserved, progressive, tolerant, plain, no-nonsense Wisconsin was, culturally, the perfect fit for the young, idealistic ecologist.

“When I came to Wisconsin, it was interesting to see a culture that balanced the natural environment. It was different from what I had seen in other parts of the country,” says Diboll. “People here know that without stewardship the natural environment will be lost,” he says. “It has value in our culture.”

Wisconsin also won Diboll over with its beguiling prairies. “I’ve always liked plants, but I fell in love with the prairie.”

Love of the prairie inspired him to begin his life’s work. In 1982, “with all of the usual delusions about starting a business,” he says, he took over a “little backyard garden nursery” from its founder, J. Robert Smith. At a time when few people wanted to buy prairie plants—native grasses and wildflowers—or even knew what they were, Diboll began selling them. Or, at least, trying to.

Today “native plants” is a household phrase, and ecology has morphed from a science into a religion for some, jokes Diboll. But in the ’80s, he was far ahead of his time. His was a lonely voice crying in a turfgrass wilderness.

Having Faith

As a result, Prairie Nursery wasn’t an immediate success. “In the beginning, we were considered wackos,” admits Diboll. “We were planting what everybody considered weeds. At first, I couldn’t give the stuff away.” If that was discouraging, it didn’t slow him down. “You’ll go through hell and high water to do what you want to do,” he shrugs. “I was a plant nerd. I didn’t care about money. I had faith.”

He believed then, as he does now, that prairies are one of the best alternatives to a traditional lawn. He ticks off the advantages of a prairie planting with an ease that comes from 30 years of practice. “There are few, if any, needs for pesticides and herbicides—bugs are part of the food chain. If you’re serious about living in harmony with the planet, then landscape with natural ecosystems. It makes ecological sense, it makes economic sense, and it makes emotional sense.”

Despite his early struggles, Diboll soldiered on. Eventually, through faith, focus, and energy, the zeitgeist caught up with him. And his nursery grew. And grew. The original one-half acre and a tiny greenhouse have expanded to 200 acres devoted to seed production, a large propagation house, 10 large greenhouses, and extensive display gardens. The number of employees jumped from two to a dozen full-time employees today. What people once called “the weed farm” is now an internationally known, unqualified success. As owner and president, Diboll is in constant demand as a consultant and speaker.

The Power of Prairie

Prairie is absolutely crucial to Diboll’s life and thinking. Like the mythological giant Antaeus, who drew his life force from the earth, Diboll is sustained, energized, and inspired by prairie.

“There’s something about the flowers and the grasses and the movement. It’s so dynamic,” Diboll says of this complex ecosystem in which “two-thirds of living plants are under the ground.” He sees an analogy between those deep, out-of-sight roots and the people of the Midwest; both are “stable, reliable, well-rooted, and

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Prophet of the Prairie

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well-grounded” with a “you’ve-got-to-get-to-know-me-before-you-get-to-see-all-there-is-to-see” attitude.

In Diboll’s view, using prairie plant communities as a model for gardens would be one way for millions of midwestern gardeners to reduce their carbon footprint and overall resource consumption. Not everyone is willing to evaluate how their gardening practices reflect environmental responsibility, but Diboll does. He thinks about his carbon footprint daily and takes pains to decrease it.

Sweet Home Wisconsin

Nowhere are Diboll’s efforts more apparent than at his home. Located in the heart of Amish country, his 20-acre property is planted almost entirely with natives.

Here, all of the traditional landscaping conventions are absent, but not at all missed. In this loose and easy landscape, there is no heavily-fertilized, bright green lawn, knife-edged, and neatly mown. There are no brick-encircled planting beds or swathes of uniform groundcover. Nor do precisely planted exotic trees stand self-consciously in plump circles of mulch.

Instead, there’s a path of a blend of fine fescue grasses—the mature result of Prairie Nursery’s ‘No-Mow’ lawn mix, one of the nursery’s 22 custom-blended seed mixes. Soft underfoot, it circles the house all the way to a vast vegetable garden and the south-facing ruins of a stone chicken house.

Along the way, around a small shed is a clump of tall Joe Pye (*Eupatorium fistulosum*), queen of the prairie (*Filipendula rubra*), a fringe of dense spike blazing star (*Liatris spicata*), and rattlesnake master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*). Elsewhere, relaxing on the ground is a hybrid silphium. Diboll says it appears to be a hybrid of prairie rosin weed (*Silphium integrifolium*) and compass plant (*S. laciniatum*), but he doesn’t sell it at the nursery because it tends to flop at the end of the season.

Benches and a swing offer places to stop, sit, and contemplate these visions of quintessential Wisconsin. Sitting there, it is easy to make the connection to the landscape that Diboll has come to treasure. “People have a need to be connected to the earth, but our culture encourages exploitation and destruction of the natural world,” says Diboll who has worked to make a connection happen ever since he began selling the plants that nobody wanted. Since then, much has changed, leaving him optimistic.

“In the last 30 years we have realized the value of our environment,” he says. “We’re dependent upon it for our very survival. If we destroy it, we’ll go with it. That’s the bottom line for me. It’s not just the plants; it’s the whole warp and weave of the fabric of life on this wonderful planet.”

Editors Note: This article excerpt is published with permission from the American Horticultural Society (www.ahs.org). The original article was first published in the September–October 2010 issue of *The American Gardener* magazine. To read the complete article with photos, visit their website at http://www.ahs.org/publications/the_american_gardener/10/09/profit_of_the_prairie.pdf. ◆

Conservation Lobby Day March 29th

Just a reminder to plan a visit to our state capitol on Tuesday, March 29 for Conservation Lobby Day from 9am to 4pm. Don't miss this opportunity to educate your legislators about energy efficiency and clean water and air. Support new legislation that will reinstate geographic sourcing for renewable energy back to Missouri. You can learn more about the issues and register for the event with Missouri Votes Conservation at www.movotesconservation.org. ◆

Bats

Thursday, March 24th at 7:30 pm

Catherine Redfern of the World Bird Sanctuary will celebrate UNESCO's 2011 Year of the Bat with a multi-faceted presentation at Litzsinger School in Ladue. Join us and learn about their amazing abilities like echolocation that allows them to detect and avoid objects as fine as a single human hair.

In Missouri, bats are an important predator of flying insects; in other places, they eat fruit and pollinate many plants. 14 different species of bats are found in Missouri. Sadly, many of those may be threatened by the rapidly-spreading and still poorly-understood White-nose Syndrome. The fungal infection has killed over a million bats in just the five years since it was discovered.

Catherine grew up in Mashatu Game Reserve in Botswana and became Secretary and Fundraiser for BirdLife Botswana, a BirdLife International Affiliate. Later, as Project Manager for Cayman Wildlife Rescue, she was responsible for rehabilitation of injured wildlife – mostly songbirds and seabirds. She also managed education programs for the Cayman Parrot and the Cayman Islands Bat Program.

Litzsinger School is at 10094 Litzsinger Road in Ladue, right on Lindbergh south of Highway 40/64 and Plaza Frontenac. Park closest to Lindbergh and enter the gymnasium. Questions, call Mitch Leachman at (314) 599-7390. ◆



Little Brown Bat (left) and Indiana Bat

Photo by Adam Mann

Wild Utah: America's Red Rock Wilderness

Tuesday, April 19th at 7:00 pm, Powder Valley Nature Center

Robert Redford narrates a multi-media slideshow documenting citizen efforts to designate public lands in southern Utah's spectacular canyon country as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System. This journey through red rock splendor invigorates and motivates viewers to participate in the movement to protect these unique lands.

"Wild Utah" will be shown in conjunction with a presentation on the current status of the Utah wilderness movement by Clayton Daughenbaugh, Midwest Regional Organizer for the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance. The Alliance and its partners in the Utah Wilderness Coalition seek to gain local support for the "Citizens' Proposal" to protect wilderness areas in Utah's red rock canyonlands. Though portions of the proposal have received protective status current threats continue. Comprehensive legislation is pending in Congress and administrative decisions by the Department of Interior are ongoing.



A short business meeting, our Annual Meeting, will precede the program and will include the election of the board of directors. All are welcome to attend, but only members may vote.

From the intersection of Interstates 44 & 270, take Watson Rd. to Geyer Rd. Turn north on Geyer and cross the bridge to Cragwold Road on your left. Go west on Cragwold for 1 mile to nature center entrance on right. Follow drive to parking lot. Enter building through left entrance. Questions, call Mitch Leachman at (314)-599-7390. ◆

Conservation Update

By Craig Lanham

Hopefully you had a chance to read Dave Tylka's article in the January issue of *TaleFeathers* on the Missouri Dept of Conservation (MDC) practice of Patch-Burn, Grazing with Cattle (PBGC) on Missouri's very limited high quality prairies and natural areas. After further review, SLAS sent a "Letter of concern" to MDC Director Don Ziehmer. His Deputy Director Tom Draper responded. Both letters are available on our website, www.stlouisaudubon.org.

We agree with the MDC goal of improving prairie and grassland bird populations on these areas. Yet, at this time we do not think introducing cattle to these areas is a good idea, or introducing cattle to any MDC Conservation area or property is a good idea. Cattle are not wildlife. They are not native to Missouri, the United States, or the whole Western hemisphere. Cattle were first introduced by the Spanish in the 1600's. Since then the damage to wildlife in the name of cattle has been devastating, especially to our native wildlife, prairies and so on.

It has been shown that PBGC is great for cattle and should be used by Ranchers, Farmers and Cattlemen. SLAS readily supports the use of PBGC in cattle operations on private property, including MDC's participation with the cattle community to improve bird habitat as well as cattle. There are a lot of great Cattlemen and Farmers in this State that are passionate about the wildlife they live with on their property.

There are still many unanswered questions and MDC seems to want to continue with what amounts to a cattle operation on very delicate lands originally paid for by the citizens of Missouri as wildlife resources.

We will continue our dialogue with MDC and keep our members informed on this very controversial issue. If you would like additional insight from an expert, consider attending the talk by Paul Nelson detailed below. ◆

Patch-Burn Grazing: Is It Right for Missouri's High Quality Prairies

Tuesday, March 29th at 7:30 pm

Living World, St. Louis Zoo

Paul Nelson, US Forest Service Ecology and Land Management Planner, will be speaking on the implementation of patch-burn grazing (a rotational system alternating a grazer such as bison or cattle and the use of prescribed fire) on tall grass prairies within Missouri. These Missouri prairies are some of the last remaining fragments of a once dominant ecosystem. Paul will discuss some of the success and dangers associated with this management practice.

Patch-burn grazing is a management tool that is becoming increasingly common on prairies throughout Missouri and the Midwest. The purpose of patch-burn grazing is generally to increase landscape heterogeneity. The result is a landscape that provides a variety of treatment types that theoretically allow for increased flora and fauna diversity.

As of 2009, this system is currently being applied by the Missouri Dept of Conservation (MDC) on 11 different prairies managed by MDC, representing 17% of the prairies managed by MDC. Included within the prairies are several designated Natural Areas including Niawatha prairie and Taberville prairies. The result of patch-burn grazing upon floral composition of the treated natural areas has been the source of much contention lately.

Paul Nelson is one of the premier ecologists in the State of Missouri. He authored the *Terrestrial Natural Communities of Missouri*, a classification system that describes Missouri's diverse ecosystems. Nelson has also served as lead illustrator of ten botanical books. This program is presented as joint venture between the Saint Louis Zoo, Forest Park Forever, and the Missouri Native Plant Society. ◆

Riverlands Field Trip Recap

By Joe Eades

The Audubon field trip to Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary (RMBS) on February 19 was attended by about 30 people, including many new faces! It was billed as a gull trip, but we missed the mark on peak numbers and diversity. The day was a turning point between winter and spring. Spring migration was evident or at least suggested by migrant waterfowl, including several overhead flocks of Northern Pintail and geese. Almost all of the Trumpeter Swans seem to have departed. We had a fly over or two. Winter ducks, such as Common Goldeneye and Common Merganser were still quite evident. Gull numbers were moderate, with perhaps 1,000 birds present, almost all Ring-billed. We saw one first-cycle Thayer's Gull. The ice was melting and we witnessed the spring break-up as the river's channel was choked with floating ice chunks.

There were many Bald Eagles in trees and on the ice, totaling around 40 birds. A fly-by Peregrine on the Lincoln Shields side of the area was a nice sight. The highlight of the trip was a drake White-winged Scoter, looking clownish with his caricature facial pattern. We tallied close to 40 species at RMBS and added a few more with a trip up to Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge above Pere Marquette State Park. A flock or two of White Pelicans were seen at RMBS and on the ride along the Great River Road. Several groups of migrating Snow Geese, totaling around 6,000 birds were seen migrating along the ridgeline above Pere Marquette. A few smaller, likely Ross' Geese were seen in one or two of the flocks. A fair variety of ducks were seen at RMBS and at Two Rivers, including Redhead, Ruddy Duck,

Northern Shoveler, Green-winged Teal, and American Wigeon. On the way back we saw a wheeling flock of about 60 Turkey Vultures along the bluffs just above Alton. ◆



White-winged Scoter (left) and Short-eared Owl



Al Smith Photos

Baldwin Lake Field Trip

By Pat Lueders

Our goal on this annual trip is to see all five species of geese regular to our area, unfortunately we missed the Ross's Goose. We had hundreds of Snow Geese that were close enough to scan through but could not find one. We saw some small groups of Greater White-fronted Geese mixed in with Canada Geese, and 3 Cackling Geese standing next to Canada for an easy ID and striking comparison. The amount of Snow Geese in this area is unbelievable and quite a site when they are stirred up by the numerous Bald Eagles. We had some ducks and grebes at the south end of the lake including Northern Shoveler, Ruddy, Coot, Common Goldeneye, Canvasback, and Common Merganser. There was a small group of Horned Grebe (maybe 8) and numerous Pied-billed. It was amazing how few gulls we saw, there were a few Ring-billed and Herring, compared to the numbers seen in previous years. We saw a Hermit Thrush in that area as well as many Am. Tree Sparrows, Song Sparrows, and a few Swamp Sparrows.

Our target birds at Peabody Coal are shrikes and Short-eared Owls. We searched without luck for a shrike but did see numerous Northern Harriers and Red-tailed Hawks throughout the area. Almost all of the lakes were frozen so we saw little waterfowl except for the ducks in the air. Thousands of Snow Geese and a few flocks of Greater White-fronted Geese were landing in the fields east of the main road. As we waited for the short-eared Owls to appear, we saw six harriers disappear in the long grass to roost. The sunset was worth the trip and the wait. As we were leaving the area a little after 6 pm, we saw 3 Short-eared Owls from the road close to the cross road at the park entrance. ◆

Opinion: What's going on over at MDC?

By Craig Lanham

Serving Nature and You

MDC protects and manages the fish, forest, and wildlife resources.

We also facilitate your participation in resource management activities, and provide opportunities for you to use, enjoy and learn about nature.

Editor's Note

The opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of St. Louis Audubon. Opinions by others on relevant topics may be printed at the Editor's discretion.

The statements shown above are directly from the home page of the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) website.

I am a huge fan of MDC. I proudly talk about how our Conservation Department is head and shoulders above the other States. MDC's conservation, hunting, fishing, education, and wildlife programs are the best anywhere.

Lately though, one issue in particular has left me scratching my head wondering what is going on over at MDC?

Recently three men in Ray County, Missouri were investigated for poaching wildlife that are protected under the Wildlife Code of Missouri. It was decided that no charges were to be filed against them.

The story is that two Ray County Coon hunters turned their dogs loose and they tracked and treed an animal. The protected animal showed a non-aggressive nature used by animals to get distance from whatever it fears, and ran right up into a tree for safety. The Coon hunters shot and killed the animal.

The Coon hunters then convinced a Cattleman buddy to claim that this protected animal was killing his cattle so he killed the protected animal.

MDC Investigators did a great job at uncovering a flat out lie about a killing of a protected animal. But apparently the powers at be in Jefferson City decided not to prosecute after the hunters confessed to a lie, shortly after the Cattleman confessed to his lie. MDC said that their investigation showed that the hunters feared for their safety—so no prosecution for an animal protected by Missouri Law.

The animal was a Mountain Lion. What does a Mountain Lion have to do with birds? Everything. The Audubon Society was conceived as a conservation society and remains that way today. The killing of a protected species whether it is a Swainson's Warbler, Bald Eagle, an out of season deer, or a Mountain lion needs to be presented to a Judge and a Jury. The killing of any animal that is protected under any law should never be taken lightly by any Department tasked with protecting them.

In States with healthy Mountain Lion populations they are game animals and one of the more common methods to get a trophy mountain lion is to chase it with a pack of dogs. This forces it to run up a tree because it is easier to shoot it laying on a tree branch, where it won't be attacked by a pack of dogs. Kind of like Coon hunters.

The information on the Mountain lion was taken directly from a MDC press release. The complete text can be found at <http://mdc.mo.gov/newsroom/hunter-admits-shooting-mountain-lion-ray-county>. ◆

Many Thanks to All Our 2010 Donors!!

Board President Dave Rogles, Executive Director Mitch Leachman, and the entire Board of Directors extend their heartfelt thanks for your support this past year. You are critical to our success!

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