From the Sanctuary  
By Michael Sandy

Thank you to the Summer Camp Staff for another job WELL DONE! What a great summer program. The summer staff are all back at school and the wildlife around the Nature Sanctuary are all looking for food to fatten up for winter.

The deer are leading their babies (now juveniles) around showing them what to eat. Rabbits seem to be everywhere munching on clover. Raccoons and opossums are looking high and low for the best of the persimmons and pawpaw, while skunks and turtles are eating grubs and mushrooms on the ground. We even have a snake crawling around the building in search of mice.

Soon the box turtles will be looking for a place to hibernate. They usually use the same place they used the previous year. That is why we tell people hiking the trails to enjoy the animals but not to touch or move them. When a turtle is picked up and moved to a different part of the Wildlife Sanctuary, the turtle will do all it can to get back to its original territory.

This is also the time of year we get a lot of phone codes from people wanting to release turtles in the Sanctuary. Releasing any animal at Martha Lafite is not allowed. The sanctuary is protected for the wildlife that live here naturally, and is not an appropriate release site. The best thing to do when you find a turtle is to help it across the street and leave it as close to where you found it as possible. That way that turtle will be able to find food and it’s home for hibernation. We know that people have released turtles in the Sanctuary without permission, and almost every winter one is found dead on the trail from exposure. The moral of the story is, “leave wildlife where you find wildlife” or at least as close as possible. I find it very sad to find a large turtle, usually without a scratch, dead on the trail. I suspect some of those were someone’s pet no longer able to be given proper care.

Please help us educate the rest of the public, turtles are great fun to watch, study, photograph, draw and even help across the street. Pets turtles should never be released into the wild, and wild turtles need to be left in their territory. Thank you.

Fall and winter special events for the family!

32nd Annual FAIRY TALE FOREST
October 20, 21 & 22nd
5:30 to 8:00 pm

This non-scary Halloween event is sure to delight you and your little ones! Walk through a quarter-mile trail lit with over 100 jack-o-lanterns carved by local students. Meet fantastically fun native animal characters and a few goofy fairy tale folk who are more than willing to give away some treats and maybe a trick or two. Afterwards, go inside the Nature Center to meet real live animals, enjoy our educational exhibits, and make a cool “spooky” craft. Proceeds from this special event benefit the Nature Sanctuary and the education programs. Registration is not required.

Time: Ticket table runs 5:30 to 8:00 pm
Age: All (especially for little ones)
Fee: $8/person  Members: $5/person  Children under 2 are free
$25 for a family pass. (Adults and their children) Please call or visit the nature center to purchase before Saturday, October 15th.

Call to help make costumes, 816-781-8598

ELVES' WORKSHOP
December 17 & 18

32nd ANNUAL FAIRY TALE FOREST
Friday through Sunday, October 20 21 & 22

ELVES' WORKSHOP
Saturday & Sunday, December 16 & 17

Celebrate the holidays with a visit to the Elves' Workshop! Children are invited to visit the Nature Center for face painting, treats, crafts, Santa and more! The Elves' Holiday Store will be open for children only. Parents, please provide a list of gift recipients and shopping money. The Elves will help your child choose the perfect gift for friends or family members. Gifts are priced from less than $1.00 up to $10.00, and are wrapped and labeled compliments of the Elves. While the children are shopping, adults can browse in our gift shop, relax in the exhibit area, and snack on holiday treats.

Time: Anytime from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.
Age: Able to shop without Mom or Dad  Fee: $3/child  Members: $2

Want to help prepare for the event? Look around your house for new, nearly new and slightly used, re-giftable items to donate. We need gifts for children to purchase for their family members of all ages and for their pets. Donations are now being accepted.

The mission of Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary is to provide:
- Engaging, hands-on environmental and natural science education for all ages
- Biodiversity of native plants and animals through wise management of our natural resources
- Understanding that all Earth’s inhabitants are part of complex, interdependent ecosystems, and
- Opportunities for quiet reflection and reconnection with the natural world
Species Spotlight: Red-spotted Purple (Limenitis arthemis astyanax)

Another summer has passed here at Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary. The children of summer camp have returned to school, the sun sits lower in the sky, and 90 degree days dim into the 70’s. Despite fall on the doorstep, the products of summer’s rains and rains remain. Fruits on the pawpaw tree begin to ripen. Sycamore leaves glide to the ground. Ironweed, with purple blooms atop tall green stalks, and masses of yellow goldenrod, are plentiful. Autumn butterflies flitter from flower to flower seeking life-sustaining nectar. The Monarch butterfly, which we often focus on this time of year, has taken flight along its annual migration to Mexico. But there are still a great many other fascinating and beautiful butterflies to observe before the cold of winter.

One such butterfly is the red-spotted purple (Limenitis arthemis astyanax). The red-spotted purple is, to my eyes, neither red-spotted nor purple. It appears a lustrous blue that blends to black towards the upper tip of the wings. Its spots are not red, but rather orange, and present on the underside of the wings. A few of these spots are also visible towards the wing tips of the butterfly. Like all butterflies, the red-spotted purple begins life as an egg and hatches into a caterpillar, and undergoes metamorphosis, forming a chrysalis and emerging as an adult butterfly. But unlike all butterflies, the red-spotted purple is a master of mimicry. As a caterpillar, its coloration resembles an inedible bird dropping. These unappetizing looking caterpillars can be found feasting upon a variety of trees and shrubs including cottonwood, serviceberry and, preferentially in Missouri, wild black cherry trees. As an adult, the red-spotted purple adopts a new disguise. It finds protection by mimicking the appearance of the poisonous pipevine swallowtail. Though the red-spotted purple is not poisonous, its similar coloration to the pipevine swallowtail is enough to ward off potential predators. The two species can be distinguished by the thin tail-like projections on the wings of the pipevine swallowtail that are lacking in the red-spotted purple and by the orange markings present on the topside of the wings of the red-spotted purple that are not present on the pipevine swallowtail.

Unlike the aforementioned monarch butterfly, the red-spotted purple does not migrate to warmer climates for the winter, instead it braves the cold here as a caterpillar. Using a leaf and silk, Caterpillars create a safe inhabitation for the season. The caterpillar becomes inactive and reduces the water in its body to keep from freezing solid. Once spring arrives, it will resume life with the intention of becoming a butterfly. The red-spotted purple can be seen from May as school programs wind down at The Nature Center, through October while Fairy Tale Forest is underway. Come visit us to see if you can spot this stunning butterfly. Collin Edwards

MLTNS PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Thursday, October 5 10:00 – 11:30 am and Saturday, October 7 11:00 – 12:30 pm HOMESCHOOLERS and CHILDREN (6&up): Fall Finds
We’ll look at the wonders and happenings of fall leaves and chilly winds. Age: 6 and up Fees: $5/child or $10/family and accompanying adult
Thursday, October 5 6:00 – 7:30 pm Cub Scouts (Wolf): Digging in the Past
Learn about ancient creatures and paleontology as we complete the Digging in the Past adventure! Rank: Wolf Fee: $5/scout
Saturday, October 7 10:00 – 3:00 pm Girl Scouts (Daisies): Daisy Petal Workshop
Come learn ways to “make the world a better place” and “use resources wisely. We’ll also talk more on how to “respect myself and others”. Fee: $5/Daisy
Saturday, October 7 9:00 am – 1:00 pm MLTNS GROUNDS WORK / L&R WORKDAY
Come see how we maintain MLTNS and participate in this work day to help keep the wildlife habitats wild and healthy. (Get volunteer service hours.) Age: 14 and up
Tuesday, October 10 6:00 – 7:30 pm Cub Scouts (Webelos): Earth Rocks
Learn about the geology of Missouri as we complete the Earth Rocks adventure! Rank: Webelos Fee: $5/scout
Friday, October 13 10:00 – 11:00 am and Saturday, October 14 11:00 – 12:00pm Preschoolers: Fall Finds
This time of year the leaves have begun to fall and the wind grows cold. We’ll look at the wonders and happenings of fall. Age: 3-6 years Fees: $5/child or $10/family and accompanying adult
Saturday, October 14 & 28 3:00 pm LIVE ANIMAL FEEDING
Come watch our snakes, turtles and other animals do what comes natural – eating! Fee: Free, donations welcome to support animal care
Wednesday, October 18 10:00 – 11:00 am All Ages: CREEPY, CRAWLY & COOL
Celebrate Halloween early by learning about the creepy, crawly things in nature that are also super cool! We’ll meet some of them in person and make a creepy, crawly craft. Limit 15. Please call to register. Age: Family Fee: $5/per person or $10/family
Friday, October 20 through Sunday, October 22 Ticket will be for sale 5:30 to 8:00 pm 32nd ANNUAL FAIRY TALE FOREST
This non-scary Halloween event is sure to delight you and your little ones! Walk through a quarter-mile trail lit with over 100 jack-o-lanterns carved by local students. Meet fantastically fun native animal characters and a few goofy fairy tale folks who are more than willing to give away some treats and maybe a trick or two. Afterwards, go inside the Nature Center to meet real live animals, enjoy our educational exhibits, and make a cool “spooky” craft. Proceeds of this special event benefit the Nature Sanctuary and the education programs. Registration is not required. Age: All (especially for little ones, non-scary fun evening of make believe) Fee: $8/person Members: $5/person Children under 2 are free $25 for a family pass. Please call or visit the nature center to purchase before Saturday, October 15th.
Thursday, November 2 10:00 – 11:30 am and Saturday, November 4 11:00 am – 12:30 pm PROJECT FEEDERWATCH at Martha Lafite
Help track bird populations at feeders all over North America! Think you need to be an ornithologist to help out bird populations? Think again! Project FeederWatch is an effort to help track bird populations at bird feeders all over North America using individuals just like you. We are a FeederWatch site and could use some help from volunteers who have at least basic feeder bird identification skills to come and count the birds at our feeders. Call us for the best times to come and count! 816-781-8598
Friday, November 10 6:30 – 8:00 pm WINTER STARGAZING
Another exciting installment of our monthly astronomy program! This month we’ll start to get a good look at the winter sky. New constellations coming into view include Pleiades and Auriga. Age: 6 and up Fee: $5/adult, $10/family

Call to register (781-8598)

CHILDREN (6 and up) HOMESCHOOLERS:

LET’S TALK TURKEY
Turkeys are more than just a Thanksgiving meal! The turkey was once suggested as our national symbol instead of the bald eagle. Come learn about the turkey, try your luck at a turkey call. Call to register. Age: 6 and up Fee: $5/child or $10/family

Wednesday, November 8 10:00 – 11:00 am and Saturday, November 11 11:00 – 12:00pm PRESCHOOLERS: LET’S TALK TURKEY
Join us as we learn about wild turkeys, try our luck with a turkey call, and make a Thanksgiving craft. Limit 15. Please call to register. Age: 3 – 6 years Fee: $5/child or $10/family

Tuesdays and Wednesdays (call to sign up for a convenient time)

Starting Saturday, November 12, 2016, through Friday, April 7, 2017 PROJECT FEEDERWATCH at Martha Lafite
Help track bird populations at feeders all over North America! Think you need to be an ornithologist to help out bird populations? Think again! Project FeederWatch is an effort to help track bird populations at bird feeders all over North America using individuals just like you. We are a FeederWatch site and could use some help from volunteers who have at least basic feeder bird identification skills to come and count the birds at our feeders. Call us for the best times to come and count! 816-781-8598

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Another exciting installment of our monthly astronomy program! This month we’ll start to get a good look at the winter sky. New constellations coming into view include Pleiades and Auriga. Age: 6 and up Fee: $5/adult, $10/family
MLTNS PROGRMs AND EVENTS CONTINUED

Saturday, November 11 & 25 3:00 pm
LIVE ANIMAL FEEDING
Come watch our snakes, turtles and other animals do what comes natural – eating!
Fee: Free, donations welcome to Wednesday, November 15 6:30 – 8:00 pm

OWL PROWL
Join us for a “hootening” good time! During this evening program we’ll hike the trail and hunt for owls. We’ll conclude with dissecting owl pellets (one pellet per child or individually paid person).
Remember to dress for the weather. Age: Family Fee: $6/person, $12/family
Saturday, November 18th 1:00 – 3:00 pm
Girl Scouts (Juniors); Get Moving Workshop: Energy in Nature
Our naturalist will teach the girls about how energy makes its way through the many paths of nature.
Rank: Junior Fee: $5/girl
Thursday & Friday, November 23 & 24

Tracks and Signs
Come learn about animal tracks and feel the pelts of the animals that leave them behind. We’ll take a hike to search for signs of animal life!
Age: 3-6 years Fee: $5/child or $10/family
Tuesday, December 5: 6:30 – 8:00 pm

WINTER WREATH WORKSHOP
There’s nothing like the smell of a natural winter wreath! Bring your favorite decorations or use some of ours to create the perfect holiday wreath.
Please call to register. Age: 12 and up Fee: $20/wreath
Saturday, December 13: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

WINTER RUGGED WORKSHOP

There’s nothing like the smell of a natural winter wreath! Bring your favorite decorations or use some of ours to create the perfect holiday wreath.
Please call to register.
Age: 12 and up Fee: $20/wreath

Friday, December 9 & 23: 3:00 pm
LIVE ANIMAL FEEDING
Come watch our snakes, turtles and other animals do what comes natural – eating!
Fee: Free, donations
Saturday, December 9: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Age: Family Fee: $5/person, $10/family

GIFT MEMBERSHIPS
From: Denis & Susan Wendell  to:  Lora & Shaun Rhudin, Landon & Lexi Rhudus
SPONSORSHIPs AND GRANTS:
American Century Investments, Liu Wenhui, Fringe Festival KC
NUTS AND BOLTS:

Call to pre-register (816-781-8598).
Saturday, December 16 & Sunday, December 17: Anytime from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

ELVES’ WORKSHOP
Celebrate the holidays with a visit to the Elves’ Workshop! Children are invited to visit the Nature Center for face painting, treats, crafts, Santa and more! The Elves’ Holiday Store will be open for children only. Parents, please provide a list of gift recipients and shopping money. The Elves will help you choose the perfect gift for friends or family members. Gifts are priced from less than $1.00 up to $10.00, and are wrapped and labeled compliments of the Elves. While the children are shopping, adults can browse in our gift shop, relax in the exhibit area, and snack on holiday treats.
Age: Able to shop without Mom or Dad. Fee: $3/child
Want to help prepare for this event? Look around your house for new, nearly new and slightly used, re-giftable items to donate. We need gifts for children to purchase for their family members of all ages and for their pets. Donations will be accepted from now until December 10th.
Saturday, December 24 & 25 & Sunday, January 1 & 2
MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!!
The Nature Center will be closed for these holidays, but the grounds and trails will be open for you to enjoy a hike or walk off some extra desserts!

Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary

Thank you to:
Hawthorn Bank, Hallmark Cards Inc. Corporate Philanthropy, East Clay Rotary, Brant’s Clothing, Commerce Bank, Backyard Bird Center

THE CORPORATE SPONSORS

THE MEMBER SUPPORT

The Nature Center will be closed for these holidays, but the grounds and trails will be open for you to enjoy a hike or walk off some extra desserts!
TO CURRENT RESIDENT or

More info at the website
www.NatureSanctuary.com

Call 816-781-8598
Like us on Facebook
Follow us on Twitter
Donate, become a member or renew membership online
https://squareup.com/market/MLTNS

Come out and take a hike with us.
Martha Lafite Thompson nature sanctuary
407 n La Frenz Road
Liberty, Missouri 64068

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Naturalist .................. Collin Edwards
Admin. Assistant .......... Daranya Rasa
Maintenance .............. Frank Gannon
Thank you to our Volunteer Staff

I love shopping with Santa’s Elves!

MLTNS - “THE NATURE SANCTUARY” - Liberty, MO

MLTNS AND TRAILS
April through September
open daily 8am - 8pm
October - March
open daily 8am - 5pm

The Nature Center is closed on major holidays. Hiking trails are open every day unless weather hazards or maintenance dictate closing. Please stay on the trails, thank-you.