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# Recycle Your Live Christmas Tree

JANUARY 02ND 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Recycle Your Live Christmas Tree

**Cape Girardeau, Missouri** - Once the presents have been opened and the feast is eaten, there's one last gift you can give this Christmas season – to your local fish habitat. Christopher Kennedy, a Fisheries Regional Supervisor with the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC), said this time of year brings an easy opportunity to give fish a place to hide from predators and thrive. Kennedy said the best thing to do with a live Christmas tree is to recycle it, by placing it at the bottom of a pond or lake.

Christmas trees provide brush and aquatic vegetation for pond and lake fish. Kennedy likens the addition of a dead tree to fish habitat to how humans furnish our homes. It gives fish resting areas, shade and escape cover.

“Small fish need vegetation and brush to help them hide from predators,” Kennedy said. “Additionally, predator fish like crappie and bass sometimes hide behind a limb to wait for an opportunity to grab its prey.”

Large trees and multiple trees make the best fish habitat, Kennedy said. He encourages neighbors to get together and combine efforts by recycling all their trees together in one lake. To place trees in a pond or lake, they'll need to be anchored with concrete blocks. Kennedy said to place small brush piles next to each other to create larger habitat. Water depth should also be considered. The best depth is 8 feet deep in the water, with the trees placed in a row, he said.

Other ways to recycle live Christmas trees include placing in a backyard to offer cover for

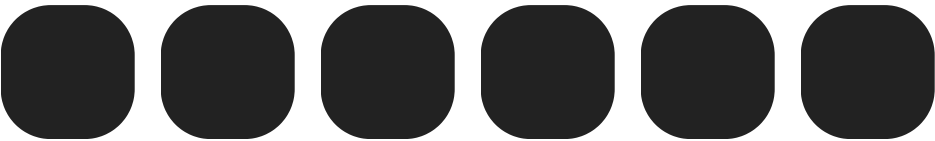
wildlife, or under bird feeders to provide nesting locations in the branches. Live Christmas trees can also be shredded or chipped for mulch.

For more ideas on how to help winter wildlife by developing habitat, go online to [mdc.mo.gov](http://mdc.mo.gov).

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November Deer Harvest Up From Last Year

NOVEMBER 29TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

## November Deer Harvest Up From Last Year

**Missouri** - Building on a strong opening weekend harvest, Missouri hunters went on to check a total of 167,205 deer during firearms deer season Nov. 15 through 25. The number exceeds last year's harvest of 157,273.

The Missouri Department of Conservation reports the top harvest counties were Howell, with 3,418 deer checked; Franklin, with 3,338 and Texas, with 3,170.

This year's harvest is 6-percent larger than last year's figure and 10 percent below the previous 5-year average for the November portion of firearms deer season. When added to the previous, urban, and early youth portions of this year's firearms deer season the November portion harvest brings the year-to-date total to 185,890.

Twenty-five days of firearms deer hunting remain in the antlerless, alternative-methods and late youth portions of deer season. Archery deer season runs through Jan. 15.

The white-tailed deer is Missouri's most popular game species and one of the most prolific, with an estimated population of more than 1 million free-ranging deer statewide. Missouri has nearly 520,000 deer hunters and almost two million wildlife watchers who enjoy deer.

Activities related to deer hunting and watching annually contribute \$1 billion in economic activity to state and local economies, and support more than 12,000 Missouri jobs. Many Missouri meat processors, taxidermists, hotels, restaurants, sporting goods stores, and other businesses rely on deer hunting as a significant source of revenue.

The Show-Me State's white-tailed deer resource also helps feed needy Missourians through the Share the Harvest (STH) program. STH brings together thousands of deer hunters, more than 130 participating meat processors, the Conservation Department, the Conservation Federation of Missouri, and numerous supporting organizations to channel ground venison to tens of thousands of hungry Missouri families each year through donations to local food banks and food pantries. Since 1992, Missouri hunters have donated more than 3.1 million pounds of venison to the needy through STH.

Thousands of private landowners manage their land for deer and deer hunting, and rely on deer and deer hunting to maintain property values.

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# MDC Announces Fall Firearms Turkey Season Count

NOVEMBER 21ST 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

MDC Announces Fall Firearms Turkey Season Count

**Jefferson City, Missouri** - The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) announced that hunters checked 5,691 turkeys during Missouri’s fall firearms turkey season, which ran Oct. 1 - 31. Last year’s fall firearms turkey harvest total was 5,929 birds. Top harvest counties for the 2014 season were Greene with 165 turkeys checked, Franklin with 163, and St. Clair with 160.

Adult gobblers accounted for 964 of the harvest, or almost 17 percent. Adult hens

accounted for 1,588 of the harvest, or almost 28 percent. Juvenile gobblers accounted for 950, or almost 17 percent, and juvenile hens for 2,189 or about 38 percent.

MDC sold 14,117 fall firearms turkey hunting permits for this past season, a 5-percent drop from last year.

The central region of the state saw about an 8-percent increase in harvest from 2013 with 759 birds. The Kansas City region dropped about 1-percent from 2013 with 681 birds. The northeast region dropped about 3 percent from 2013 with 588 birds. The northwest region dropped about 13 percent from 2013 with 477 birds. The Ozark region dropped by about 9 percent from last year with 784 birds. The St. Louis region harvest increased by about 9 percent from 2013 with 528 birds. The southeast region fell by about 15 percent from last year with 687 birds. The southwest region dropped by about 4 percent from 2013 with 1,187 birds harvested.

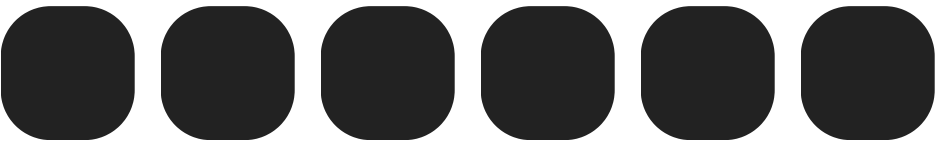
Fall archery turkey hunting resumes again from Nov. 26 through Jan. 15, 2015.

For fall firearms turkey harvest results by county and type of bird, and other 2014 turkey harvest figures, go online to the MDC website at [mdc.mo.gov/node/27845](http://mdc.mo.gov/node/27845).

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## Opening Weekend Deer Harvest Tops 91,000

NOVEMBER 17TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

### Opening Weekend Deer Harvest Tops 91,000

**Firearms Opening Weekend Deer Harvest Tops 91,000,  
up by 30,000 from 2013**

**Top Harvest Counties were Franklin, Howell, and Callaway!**

**Jefferson City, Missouri** - The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) reports that hunters checked 91,460 deer during the opening weekend of the 2014 November Portion of Firearms Deer Season this past weekend. Top harvest counties for the opening weekend were Franklin with 1,839 deer checked, Howell with 1,793, and Callaway with 1,791.

Last year's firearms opening weekend deer harvest was 61,446. Other recent prior-year harvest totals for firearms opening weekend were: 2012: 69,614; 2011: 89,728, 2010: 97,856, and 2009: 86,202.

For 2014 harvest totals by hunting portion and county, visit [mdc.mo.gov/node/29442](http://mdc.mo.gov/node/29442).

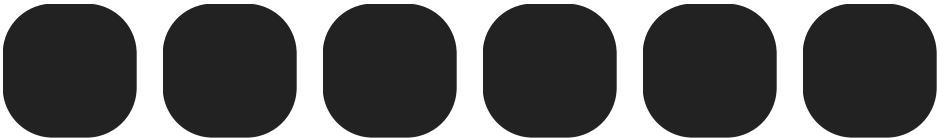
MDC also reports that there were three deer-hunting incidents over the weekend with two being fatal. One fatality was in Ste. Genevieve County where a heater in a hunting blind exploded, killing the hunter. The second involved a fall from a tree stand in Crawford County. A third non-fatal incident involved a hunter in Phelps County shooting himself in the leg while loading his rifle.

Shown in the photos is Owen Flowers of Dexter, Missouri with his 8 pt buck he killed during bow season.

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# Beat Black Friday Blues with Nature Shop Buys

NOVEMBER 17TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Beat Black Friday Blues with Nature Shop Buys](#)

**Cape Girardeau, Missouri** - Are you dreading the crowds and conundrums of holiday

shopping? Kick off your shoes, fire up the laptop or tablet, and take care of Christmas shopping with nature-themed gifts online.

The Missouri Department of Conservation's Nature Shop ([mdcnatureshop.com](http://mdcnatureshop.com)) makes shopping for outdoorsy friends and family a breeze. The site even has a gift registry where you can leave hints about what you would like to find under the tree on Dec. 25. If you prefer not to buy online, you can call 877-521-8632. Conservation Heritage Card holders get a 15-percent discount. Mail, phone, and online orders are subject to sales tax and shipping and handling fees.

If you like to see and touch items before buying, or if you need an excuse to get out and about, visit one of the brick-and-mortar Nature Shop outlets at Conservation Department nature centers in Kirkwood, Cape Girardeau, Springfield, Kansas City, Blue Springs, and Jefferson City. They offer a surprising array of reasonably priced gifts, from butterfly pendants and bird calls to field guides and children's binoculars.

The Nature Shop's newest item is *Waterfowl Hunting and Wetland Conservation in Missouri – A Model of Collaboration*. This coffee-table book is an exhaustive compendium of every aspect of waterfowl conservation and hunting in Missouri. It is a sure hit for anyone who is intrigued with the history of decoys and calls, legendary duck hunters and retrievers, waterfowl art and the lore of private duck clubs. Copies of the 480-page book, illustrated with hundreds of historic photos, art and contemporary photography, are available for \$40. Proceeds from sales of *Waterfowl Hunting and Wetland Conservation in Missouri* will be dedicated to wetland and waterfowl conservation.

One perennial favorite gift is the Natural Events Calendar, with 12 months of daily notes about everything from meteor showers to the hatching of bald eagle eggs. At \$7 each, it's the gift that keeps giving all year long.

Foodies on your holiday shopping list will love the book *Cooking Wild in Missouri*, a collection of recipes that incorporate wild fish, game, nuts, berries, and mushrooms. It has everything from creamed morels and pawpaw gelato to blackberry cordial. More adventurous cooks might want to try catfish tacos or venison moussaka. This lavishly illustrated book sells for just \$15.

For the paddlers on your list, there is the newly updated *Paddler's Guide to Missouri* (\$8). This 94-page book lists access and take-out points, landmarks, and other features of 58 streams in every corner of the state.



Hunting, fishing, and trapping permits are additional gift possibilities. At \$19, a Resident Small-Game Hunting and Fishing Permit provides a full year of outdoor fun. Giving a Nonresident Small-Game Hunting Permit (\$80) or a Nonresident Fishing Permit (\$42) encourages out-of-state family members to come home more often. Permits bought on Dec. 1 or later are good from the date of purchase through the following permit year, which ends on the last day of February. So recipients get 15 months of use out of them.

The Apprentice Hunter Authorization (\$10) is an affordable gift that can create memories for a lifetime. This item is not a permit, but rather an authorization to buy hunting permits without first completing hunter education. This is made to order if you have a friend or relative who is intrigued by the idea of hunting but doesn't want to invest time in hunter education to satisfy his or her curiosity. Not only will they get to experience your favorite outdoor pastime, you will share the experience, since hunters using the authorization must hunt with you or another hunter education-certified mentor.

The ultimate hunting/fishing gift is a Resident Lifetime Conservation Partner Permit. This entitles the holder to the privileges associated with a Resident Hunting and Fishing Permit, Trout Permit, Migratory Bird Hunting Permit, and Conservation Order Permit for life. The price varies from \$70 to \$800, depending on the recipient's age. Resident Lifetime Fishing Permits also are available.

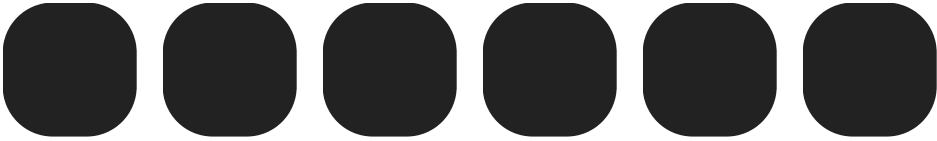
Regular permits are available from vendors statewide or online at [mdc.mo.gov/node/9258](http://mdc.mo.gov/node/9258). Lifetime permits are available at [mdc.mo.gov/8849](http://mdc.mo.gov/8849), or by calling 573-522-4115, ext. 3574.

Friends and family who work to improve their land for wildlife will appreciate tree and shrub seedlings from the George O. White State Forest Nursery. It has dozens of species, including decorative trees and shrubs like the flowering dogwood and redbud as well as a wide variety of oaks, evergreens, and other forest mainstays. For prices and ordering information, visit [mdc.mo.gov/node/3328](http://mdc.mo.gov/node/3328), or call 573-674-3229. The nursery accepts orders through April. However, many tree and shrub species sell out before then. Orders are shipped starting in February.

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