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Share the Harvest Program Received 212,300 lbs of Venison

FEBRUARY 24TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Share the Harvest Program Received 212,300 lbs of Venison

Jefferson City, Missouri - According to the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC), nearly 4,000 deer hunters donated more than 212,300 pounds of venison from the 2014 Missouri deer harvest to the state's Share the Harvest program.

Share the Harvest is administered by the Conservation Federation of Missouri (CFM) and MDC to help feed hungry Missourians. The program orchestrates the efforts of thousands of hunters, numerous local supporting organizations, and more than 100 participating meat processors to get ground venison to people in need through food banks and food pantries around the state.

Hunters donate their extra venison to participating meat processors who then prepare the donated venison by grinding it into one-pound packages that are given to food banks and food pantries for distribution to those in need.

Processing fees are covered entirely or in part by numerous local program sponsors, along with statewide sponsors that include MDC, CFM, Shelter Insurance, Bass Pro Shops, Missouri Chapter Safari Club International, Missouri Chapter National Wild Turkey Federation, Midway USA Inc., Missouri Food Banks Association, United Bowhunters of Missouri, Missouri Trappers Association, and the Missouri Hunter Education Instructors Association.

Since the program started in 1992, Share the Harvest has provided more than 3.3 million pounds of lean, healthy venison to help feed Missourians in need.

For more information on Share the Harvest, visit <http://mdc.mo.gov/node/2544>.

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MDC Offers Effective Wingshooting Workshop

FEBRUARY 09TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

MDC Offers Effective Wingshooting Workshop

Cape Girardeau, Missouri - The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) presents an Effective Wingshooting workshop March 14 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Duck Creek Conservation Area. This course is designed for upland bird, waterfowl and turkey hunters and is an advanced shotgunning education program designed to evaluate wingshooters and identify problem areas.

“One of the complaints from hunters is that their shooting skills are inconsistent but they can’t determine the cause,” said DeeDee Dockins, MDC Outdoor Skills Specialist.

After evaluating shooting skills, modifications will be applied to existing shooting techniques to improve participants’ wingshooting skills.

“Corrections to existing shooting techniques, gun fit, and gun mount can make huge improvements resulting in more consistent performance in the field,” Dockins said. “Taking fewer marginal shoots, spending less money on equipment and ammunition, and most importantly reducing the wounding loss of the resource are paramount to being an ethical and successful hunter.”

Distance estimation, equipment and ammunition selection will also be topics covered in the course. In addition to boosting wingshooting performance and conservation results, this training can help save money on expenses with fewer wasted shells, she said.

Registered attenders should bring their hunting shotgun, choke tubes, nontoxic shotgun ammunition to pattern, eye and ear protection, a stool or chair, a sack lunch and drink. Clay targets, 12 and 20 gauge non-toxic practice ammunition will be provided.

Dockins said the course is free, but registration is required since space is limited. The MDC’s Southeast Regional Office is taking registrations at (573) 290-5730. For information on other conservation related events in southeast Missouri, go online to mdc.mo.gov/capenaturecenter.

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MDC Cape Nature Center Hosts Maple Sugaring Program

JANUARY 28TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

[MDC Cape Nature Center Hosts Maple Sugaring Program](#)

Cape Girardeau, Missouri - The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) Cape Girardeau Conservation Nature Center will host “Maple Sugaring” Saturday, Feb. 14 from 1-4 p.m. This program is all about the history, equipment and process of making maple syrup and sugar.

“This event is self-guided and partially outdoors so that we can show the entire process of backyard sugaring,” said Angela Pierce, a naturalist at the Nature Center. Pierce said maple sugaring has a long history in America, with earliest records of Indians using syrup for barter in the 1600s.

Though some think sugar maple trees are only found in Northeastern and North central regions of the country, the trees are also found in Missouri and have a rich history of use

for maple sugaring.

Pierce said maple sugaring is a great way for people to discover nature in the cooler months. However, there are techniques that should be used to ensure the health of trees when they are tapped for sap.

“This event will teach the appropriate conservation practices for successful backyard sugaring,” said Pierce.

The maple sugaring program is just one way the MDC helps people discover nature. All groups and ages are welcome and no registration is needed. For more information on this and other events at the Cape Girardeau Conservation Nature Center, call 573-290-5218 or go online to mdc.mo.gov/capenaturecenter.

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Eagle Days at Duck Creek and Mingo Coming Soon

JANUARY 26TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Eagle Days at Duck Creek and Mingo Coming Soon

Missouri Department of Conservation to co-host Eagle Days at Duck Creek CA and Mingo National Wildlife Refuge

Puxico, Missouri - Bald eagles are large birds of prey and in winter they follow waterfowl flocks that often settle on southern wetlands in large numbers. Together, eagles, geese and ducks provide a dramatic winter show. Hosted by the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Eagle Days event includes wildlife viewing opportunities outdoors and indoor nature programs Saturday, Feb. 7, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Pat Holloway, an MDC education consultant, said families and visitors of all ages can expect a fun, adventurous event that will help conquer cabin fever.

”Join us for an outdoor nature experience and discover cool facts about bald eagles, which were chosen as our nation’s symbol in 1782,” Holloway said, adding that visitors are encouraged to dress appropriate for outdoor winter weather.

Staff from Dickerson Park Zoo will present educational programs featuring a live eagle throughout the day. The Mingo National Wildlife Visitor Center will display items related to eagles. Several outdoor spotting scope sites on Mingo National Wildlife Refuge and Duck Creek Conservation Area (CA) will provide opportunities to view eagles, ducks and geese in the wild. Both Mingo and Duck Creek are expansive areas, so visitors are encouraged to pick up a brochure containing a map of the eagle viewing stations when they arrive.

All Eagle Days activities are free. Mingo National Wildlife Refuge and Duck Creek CA are located along highway 51, north of Puxico. For more information about Eagle Days

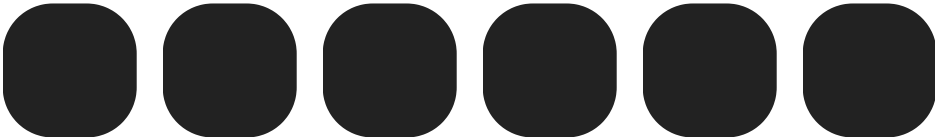
events, call Mingo National Wildlife Refuge at (573) 222-3589 or MDC at (573)290-5730. To learn more about eagles and places to view them in Missouri, visit the MDC website at mdc.mo.gov/events/eagledays.

Article by Candice Davis. Photo submitted by MDC.

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Missouri Deer Season Ends with Large Harvest

JANUARY 21ST 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Missouri Deer Season Ends with Large Harvest

Current-Year Harvest Up Nearly 8,000 From Previous Year!

Jefferson City, Missouri - Missouri's 2014-2015 deer-hunting closed Jan. 15 with the conclusion of the state's archery season. The Missouri Department of Conservation reported that the total deer harvest for the current season was 260,552, which is 7,978 more than the 252,574 deer checked during the previous year.

Hunters checked 51,755 deer during the current archery season with top counties being Jefferson with 1,080, St. Louis with 1,063, and Franklin with 1,032. The harvest for the previous year's deer archery season was 1,248 fewer at 50,507.

The 2014-2015 archery turkey season also closed Jan. 15 with a total of 2,587 birds checked compared to the previous year of 2,546 birds checked. Top counties were Greene with 64, Franklin with 60, and Callaway with 54.

For more information on the 2014-2015 deer harvest, and past-year deer harvest summaries, go online to <http://mdc.mo.gov/node/29442>.

MDC also reported 14 hunting incidents during the 2014-2015 deer hunting season. Four were fatal and involved a fall from a tree stand, a heater explosion in a deer blind, a gunshot wound from another hunter, and a heart attack while hunting.

Dates for the 2015-2016 firearms deer season are:

Urban portion – Oct. 9 through 12

Early youth portion – Oct. 31 and Nov. 1

November portion – Nov. 14 through 24

Antlerless portion – Nov. 25 through Dec. 6

Alternative-methods portion – Dec. 19 through 29

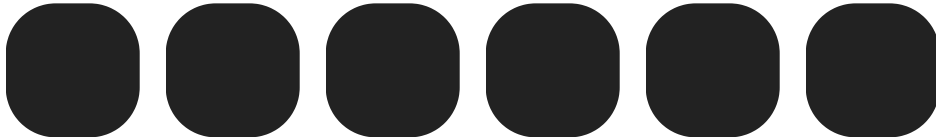
Late youth portion – Jan. 2 and 3

The 2015-2016 archery deer and turkey season will run Sept. 15 through Jan. 15, excluding the November portion of deer season, Nov. 14 through 24.

Conservation makes Missouri a great place to hunt deer and turkey. For more information, go online to www.mdc.mo.gov.

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