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MDC Awards Angel Pierce for Outstanding Public Outreach

OCTOBER 21ST 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

MDC Awards Angel Pierce for Outstanding Public Outreach

The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) recently named Angela Pierce of Cape Girardeau the winner of the 2015 Outreach and Education Achievement award. Pierce is a naturalist at the Cape Girardeau Conservation Nature Center.

Pierce receives this award for her coordination of the Southeast Region's "Day on the River" event. This annual event attracts more than 2,000 people and helps connect them to the Mississippi River and its importance as habitat and as a natural resource.

"While most people in the area see the Mississippi River, many don't know much about the history and dynamics of the river. Pierce's efforts with this event fill this void," said Sara Turner, MDC manager of the Cape Girardeau Conservation Nature Center.

"Coordinating this large event successfully is an achievement by any standard."

Day on the River typically occurs in early September. However, the nature center has regular programs to help people discover nature all year long.

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Ten New Conservation Agents Hired Throughout Missouri

OCTOBER 10TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Ten New Conservation Agents Hired Throughout Missouri

The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) recently added 10 new agents. The conservation agent class of 2016 graduated during a special ceremony at the Department's Runge Conservation Nature Center in Jefferson City on Wednesday, Oct. 5. During the graduation, the new agents were pinned with a badge by their families and also took the oath to become conservation agents.

“Conservation agents are a very important piece of conservation in this state,” MDC Interim Director Tom Draper said. “These new agents will be some of the finest this

agency has. They will be recognized as the face of conservation. We thank you for that and we thank all of your families for sharing you with us.”

These 10 new agents will be joining the 180 existing MDC agents in serving and protecting Missouri’s fish, forest, and wildlife.

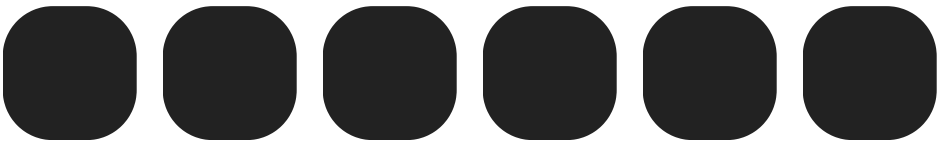
The class of 2016 conservation agents and their assignments are:

- Nicholas Bommarito: New Madrid County
- Derick Childers: St. Clair County
- Sarah Ettinger-Dietzel: Iron County
- Christopher Horn: Cole County
- Clayton Lewis: Madison County
- Parker Rice: Buchanan County
- Caleb Sevy: Washington County
- Zachary Swindle: Shannon County
- Matt Wheaton: Putnam County
- Zachary White: Clinton County

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Cape Nature Center Will Give Tips on Deer Processing

SEPTEMBER 29TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Cape Nature Center Will Give Tips on Deer Processing

Cape Girardeau, Missouri - Once a hunter has bagged a deer, the work is only half over. How to field dress it, skin it, process the meat and store it for future tasty meals are skills hunters need to know. The Cape Girardeau Conservation Nature Center's Field to Freezer program, Saturday, Oct. 8, from 10 a.m. to noon will help hunters learn how to process their own deer.

Attendees will learn how to field dress and properly care for their harvested deer and how to process the venison for freezer storage at this free program. Regulations and supplies needed for processing deer meat will also be discussed.

Pre-registration is required because space is limited. This program is for ages 16 and up. To register, call the nature center at (573)290-5218.

Information about deer and deer hunting in Missouri can be found at mdc.mo.gov/hunting. Information about this and other nature programs at the Cape Girardeau Conservation Nature Center can be found at mdc.mo.gov/CapeNatureCenter.

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Missouri Dove Hunting Season Opens September 1st

AUGUST 26TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Missouri Dove Hunting Season Opens September 1st](#)

MDC reminds dove hunters of 20 more hunting days this year and of numerous conservation areas for hunting.

Jefferson City, Missouri - With dove hunting season in Missouri opening Sept. 1, the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) reminds dove hunters of its more than 180 conservation areas around the state that allow dove hunting, including nearly 100 planted in crop fields that attract the popular game birds. Crops include sunflower, corn, millet, wheat, and buckwheat.

MDC is offering hunters 20 more days of dove hunting this fall. Mourning doves,

Eurasian collared doves, and white-winged doves may be taken from Sept. 1 through Nov. 29 from one half hour before sunrise to sunset with a combined daily limit of 15 and a combined possession limit of 45 for all three species.

Get more information on dove hunting – including permit requirements, places to hunt, recipes, and more -- online at huntfish.mdc.mo.gov/hunting-trapping/species/dove. Information on dove hunting is also available through MDC's "2016 Migratory Bird Hunting Digest" available starting in mid-August where hunting permits are sold.

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MO Conservation Commission Approves Hog-Hunting Ban

AUGUST 24TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

MO Conservation Commission Approves Hog-Hunting Ban

Hunting feral hogs will be prohibited on Conservation Department lands effective Sept. 30.

Jefferson City, Missouri - At its meeting on June 24, the Missouri Conservation Commission approved changes to the Wildlife Code of Missouri that would prohibit the hunting of feral hogs on conservation areas and other lands owned, leased, or managed by the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC). The new regulation prohibiting hog hunting on MDC areas does not apply to private property.

The Commission's decision followed consideration of feedback received during a public comment period on the topic that ended in May. The effective date of the regulation change will be Sept. 30. Potential penalties for illegal hog hunting could include fines and the loss of hunting privileges.

MDC discourages feral hog hunting in Missouri. Research from other states shows that hog hunting increases feral hog numbers and locations because it provides incentives for illegal releases of hogs for future hunting. Releasing hogs to non-enclosed areas or to the wild is illegal in Missouri. MDC encourages the public to report these types of illegal activities to local conservation agents.

Instead of hunting hogs to help reduce their numbers, MDC encourages hunters and others to report feral-hog sightings to their local conservation agents or MDC offices. Staff can then confirm local numbers and locations, and determine how best to capture and eliminate the entire group of feral hogs.

MDC owns or manages about 1,000 conservation areas around the state with about 30 known to have feral hogs, mostly in southern Missouri. According to MDC Wildlife Division Chief Jason Sumners, hog hunting on conservation areas interferes with efforts by MDC staff to trap and eliminate entire groups of feral hogs, called sounders.

"The regulation change prohibiting hog hunting on conservation lands is a direct result of

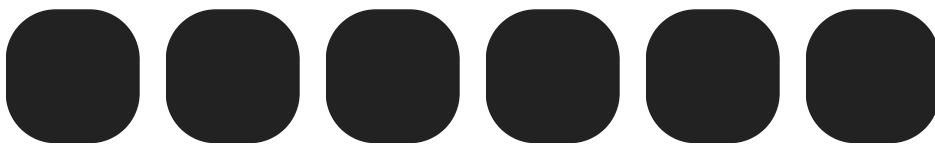
some misguided individuals disrupting trapping efforts by MDC staff," Sumners explained. "MDC staff set large, corral-type traps on areas where there are known feral hogs. They then bait the area with corn for several days or weeks to attract the targeted group of hogs, get them used to the surroundings, and get them concentrated in the trap before triggering it. This work takes weeks, with the goal being to trap the entire group of hogs. After weeks of work to catch the sounder of hogs, we then get an individual who finds out about the site, shows up at some point, and shoots a hog or two. The rest of the group then scatters and moves to a new location. As a result, weeks of work have been wasted and new areas now have feral hogs."

Feral hogs are an invasive, nuisance species in Missouri and are not wildlife. They cause significant damage to wildlife habitats, compete with native wildlife such as deer and turkey for food, prey upon native wildlife such as turkey and quail, destroy natural areas along with agricultural lands, pollute ponds and streams, and spread diseases to domestic livestock and people. For more information on feral hogs, visit the MDC website at mdc.mo.gov/feralhog

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Black Bear Travels Nearly 400 Miles Across Southern Missouri

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