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MDC FREE Fishing Days June 10th and 11th

MAY 25TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

MDC FREE Fishing Days June 10th and 11th

During Free Fishing Days, anyone may fish in Missouri without needing a permit.

Missouri - Want some free fun that gets family and friends outside in nature? Get hooked on fishing with the Missouri Department of Conservation's (MDC) Free Fishing Days June 10 and 11. During Free Fishing Days, anyone may fish in the Show-Me State without having to buy a fishing permit, trout permit, or trout park daily tag.

Aside from not needing permits, other fishing regulations remain in effect, such as limits on size and number of fish an angler may keep. Special permits may still be required at some county, city, or private fishing areas. Trespass laws remain in effect on private property.

Conservation makes Missouri a great place to fish, and Free Fishing Days encourages people to sample the state's abundant fishing opportunities. Missouri has more than a million acres of surface water, and most of it provides great fishing. More than 200 different fish species are found in Missouri, with more than 20 of them being game fish for the state's more than 1.1 million anglers.

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MDC Reports Feral Hog Numbers for First Quarter 2017

APRIL 21ST 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

[MDC Reports Feral Hog Numbers for First Quarter 2017](#)

Trapping, aerial gunning methods prove effective in the first few months of the year.

Jefferson City, Missouri - Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) wildlife biologists on the feral hog strike team have tallied up feral hog numbers for the first three months of 2017. The first quarter yielded a total of 2,332 feral hogs removed by MDC, partner agencies, and private landowners, which is nearly half of the total number of feral hogs removed in all of 2016.

Southeast Missouri removed a total of 1,124 feral hogs in the first quarter, which is where the highest density of feral hogs occurs. The Ozark region removed 706 while the Southwest region removed 359 feral hogs. St. Louis, Central and Kansas City regions all trapped fewer than 100 feral hogs each. Additionally, in one week, more than 250 feral hogs were removed from the southeast Missouri landscape, all through aerial gunning.

“We’ve built significantly on our progress from 2016,” said Alan Leary, MDC’s Wildlife Management Coordinator and leader of MDC’s feral hog elimination efforts. “We continue to engage private landowners and partners in efforts to report hog sightings, continue trapping and deter hog hunting and the illegal release of hogs, and that’s why we’re seeing growing success.”

In 2016, MDC partnered with other conservation groups, agriculture organizations, and the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation to provide the state's feral hog strike team with more trapping equipment for use on both private and public land, and to fund public education efforts on the dangers of feral hogs.

“Because most land in Missouri is privately owned, it’s crucial to engage the public and educate them on the dangers of feral hogs and trapping efforts,” Leary said. “Through ongoing communication efforts, both by MDC and partners, more landowners are learning about feral hogs, asking for help and ridding their property of this invasive species. Examples, such as the one in Taney County where 62 feral hogs were captured in one trap, show landowners that it’s much easier to get rid of feral hogs if you trap the whole sounder, rather than allow hunting and only shooting one or two.”

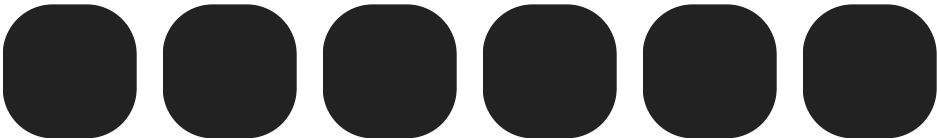
Feral hogs are not wildlife and are a serious threat to fish, forests and wildlife as well as agricultural resources. Economic losses resulting from feral hogs damage in the U.S. is estimated at greater than \$1.5 billion per year. Feral hogs damage property, agriculture, and natural resources by their aggressive rooting of soil in addition to their trampling and consumption of crops as part of their daily search for food.

Feral hogs have expanded their range in the U.S. from 17 to 38 states over the past 30 years. Their populations grow rapidly because feral hogs can breed any time of year and produce two litters of one to seven piglets every 12 to 15 months. Feral hogs are also known to carry diseases such as swine brucellosis, pseudorabies, trichinosis and leptospirosis, which are a threat to Missouri agriculture and human health.

To report feral hog sightings or damage, go online to mdc.mo.gov/feralhog.

<https://showmetimes.com/Blogpost/v77d/MDC-Reports-Feral-Hog-Numbers-for-First-Quarter-2017>

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MDC Encourages Motorists to Give Turtles a Brake!

APRIL 19TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

[MDC Encourages Motorists to Give Turtles a Brake!](#)

MDC encourages motorists to give turtles a brake!

Slow down when you see a turtle in the road and try to safely steer around it.

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) encourages motorists to give turtles crossing roads a brake. Turtles are struck by cars throughout warmer months, but are at special risk this time of year because they are on the move. Young males make up most of the travelers as they search for territories of their own and for females. Females are also crossing roads in search of nesting sites. Comfort is also a factor. Like other reptiles, turtles are cold-blooded so basking on warm asphalt feels good on cool spring days.

MDC encourages motorists to slow down when they see a turtle in the road and check to be sure they can safely steer around it. If helping a turtle cross a road, keep human safety as the number-one concern. Check for traffic and move the turtle across the road in the direction it is traveling.

Three-toed box turtles, ornate box turtles, and common snapping turtles are species often seen crossing roads in Missouri.

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MDC encourages people to Be Bear Aware!

MARCH 20TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

MDC encourages people to Be Bear Aware!

Don't feed bears. Avoid encounters. React right.

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. - As blossoms and buds emerge each spring, so do Missouri's estimated 300 native black bears. As they leave their winter dens this time of year, finding food is their main focus. The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) reminds people to "Be Bear Aware" by not feeding bears and not providing potential sources of food.

"As black bears become active in the spring, they are on a mission to find food," said Laura Conlee, a resource scientist and black-bear researcher with MDC. "It is very important for Missourians to recognize potential food attractants in their area. Things such as bird feeders, trash, barbeque grills, and food waste left out at camp sites can all serve as huge attractions for bears. Keeping our areas free of attractants, and letting bears find natural foods is in everyone's best interest. If you see a bear, enjoy the sighting, let the bear be, and be sure you don't offer it any food. Most importantly, never intentionally feed them."

Conlee added feeding bears makes them comfortable around people, which can also make them dangerous.

A FED BEAR IS A DEAD BEAR

"When bears lose their fear of people, they may approach people in search of food or may defend the food sources or territory they associate with people, which can make them dangerous," Conlee said. "When this happens, the bear has to be destroyed. A fed bear is a dead bear."

She added a fed bear that becomes a problem in one place cannot be relocated to another.

“Once a bear learns people can provide food, they will seek out other places such as camp sites, residential areas, and farms in search of food,” she explained. “Bears also have an excellent memory and will often return year after year to places where they were provided food.”

AVOID ATTRACTING BLACK BEARS

MDC offers these tips for avoiding attracting black bears to possible food sources:

Don't leave pet food sitting outside. Feed pets a portion they'll eat at each meal and remove the empty containers.

Store garbage, recyclables, and compost inside a secure building or in a bear-proof container until the day of trash pick-up.

Keep grills and smokers clean and store them inside.

Don't use birdfeeders from April through November in bear country, or hang them at least 10 feet high and 4 feet away from any structure.

Use electric fencing to keep bears away from beehives, chicken coops, vegetable gardens, orchards, and other potential food sources.

Keep campsites clean and store all food, toiletries and trash in a secure vehicle or strung high between two trees. Do not burn or bury garbage or food waste.

AVOID ENCOUNTERS AND REACT RIGHT

While close encounters are uncommon, MDC offers this advice when outdoors in black-bear country:

Make noise while walking or hiking to prevent surprising a bear. Clap, sing, or talk loudly.

Travel in a group if possible.

Pay attention to the surroundings and watch for bear sign, such as tracks or claw or bite marks on trees.

Keep dogs leashed.

Leave a bear alone! Do not approach it. Make sure it has an escape route.

If encountering a bear up close, back away slowly with arms raised to look larger. Speak in a calm, loud voice. Do not turn away from the bear. Back away slowly. Do not run.

A native to Missouri, black bears were abundant until the late 1800s when they were nearly wiped out from unregulated killing and from habitat loss when Ozark forests were logged. MDC research shows that a small number of native black bears survived. Over time, their numbers increased and continue to do so. Results of ongoing black-bear research by MDC staff and others show that the animals have been sighted in about half

the counties in Missouri, primarily south of the Missouri River, with most bears located in the southern third of the state in the Missouri Ozarks.

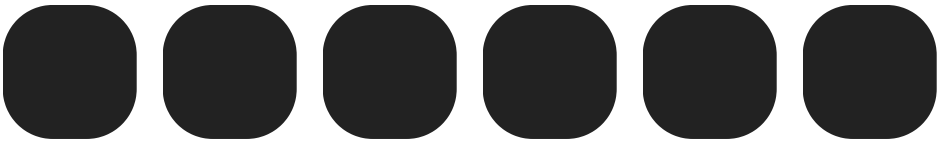
Black bears are a protected species in Missouri. MDC anticipates a limited hunting season as a population-management method once black bear numbers reach a population estimate of about 500 animals. The current estimate is about 300. No details regarding the anticipated future hunting season have been developed.

MDC asks people to report bear sightings by calling 573-522-4115, ext. 3080.

LAST UPDATED ON MARCH 20TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Schools Invited to Fight Litter and Win Prize Money

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2,500 Student Archers Competing at MoNASP State Tournament

FEBRUARY 28TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

2,500 Student Archers Competing at MoNASP State Tournament

MDC encourages community support at MoNASP state tournament in Branson March 24-25.

Jefferson City, Missouri - About 2,500 student archers from schools around the state will compete at the Missouri National Archery in Schools Program (MoNASP) ninth annual state tournament on March 24-25 at the Branson Convention Center. The public is welcome to attend to support the participants. This year's tournament will have a gate fee of \$7.

MoNASP is coordinated through the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) and the Conservation Federation of Missouri (CFM) in partnership with about 600 participating schools and numerous supporting organizations throughout the state. More than 170,000 Missouri students participate in the program. MoNASP is an affiliate of the National Archery in Schools Program (NASP) and promotes education, self-esteem, and physical activity for students in grades 4-12 through participation in the sport of archery.

"Missouri is a great place to hunt and fish, and a great place for shooting sports such as archery," said MDC MoNASP Coordinator Eric Edwards. "MoNASP not only teaches students the lifelong skills that come from archery, but it also helps them excel in the classroom."

More than 12,000 student archers around the state have competed so far this winter in local tournaments with the hope of qualifying for one of the 2,500 spots at the state tournament. Student archers, who shoot qualifying scores at the state tournament, will earn spots at the NASP national tournament this spring in Louisville, Ky.

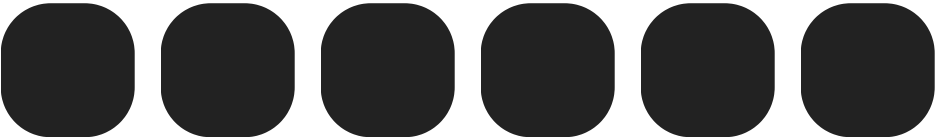
Shown in the submitted photo: Student archers from around the state will compete in the MoNASP ninth annual state tournament on March 24-25 at the Branson Convention

Center.

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Schools Invited to Fight Litter and Win Prize Money	Enjoy Eagle Days at Duck Creek, Mingo, and Wappapello Lake
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