



# Education & Outreach Report

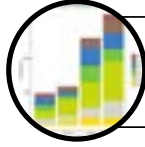
January - December 2024



# Our Mission



**To contribute to the conservation of birds and all wildlife through scientific research, education and outreach, and conservation policy advocacy.**



## Science

To gather information about avian communities and habitat use that will assist state, federal, and private natural resource managers in their efforts to implement conservation programs.



## Education

To provide opportunities for people of all ages to learn about species and their habitats.



## Advocacy

To advocate for sound, science-based conservation policies that benefit birds, other wildlife and environmental quality.

## Board of Directors

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On the cover: *You gotta bug for me?*  
by Lottie Bushmann

## Staff

**Dana Ripper Duke**  
Director/Founder

**Ethan Duke**  
Director/Founder

**Marlee Malmborg**  
Operations Assistant

**Tessa Poolman**  
KC Community Conservation Educator

**Cameron Gromek**  
Plastic Pollution Education Coordinator

**Kaylee Woelfel**  
Bird-friendly Communities Coordinator

**Hannah McFarland**  
BirdSafeKC Project Contractor

**Isabelle Guthrey**  
Central Region Environmental Educator



P.O. Box 16  
Arrow Rock, MO 65320  
660.837.3888  
<https://mrbo.org>  
[facebook.com/moriverbirdobs](https://facebook.com/moriverbirdobs)  
[instagram @moriverbirdobs](https://instagram.com/moriverbirdobs)  
[bluesky @moriverbirdobs.bsky.social](https://bluesky.com/moriverbirdobs.bsky.social)  
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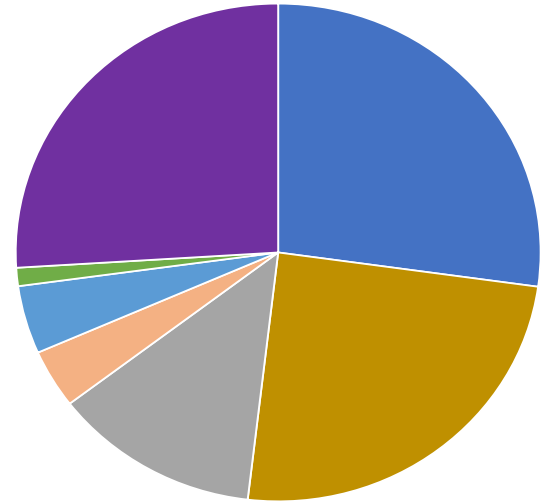
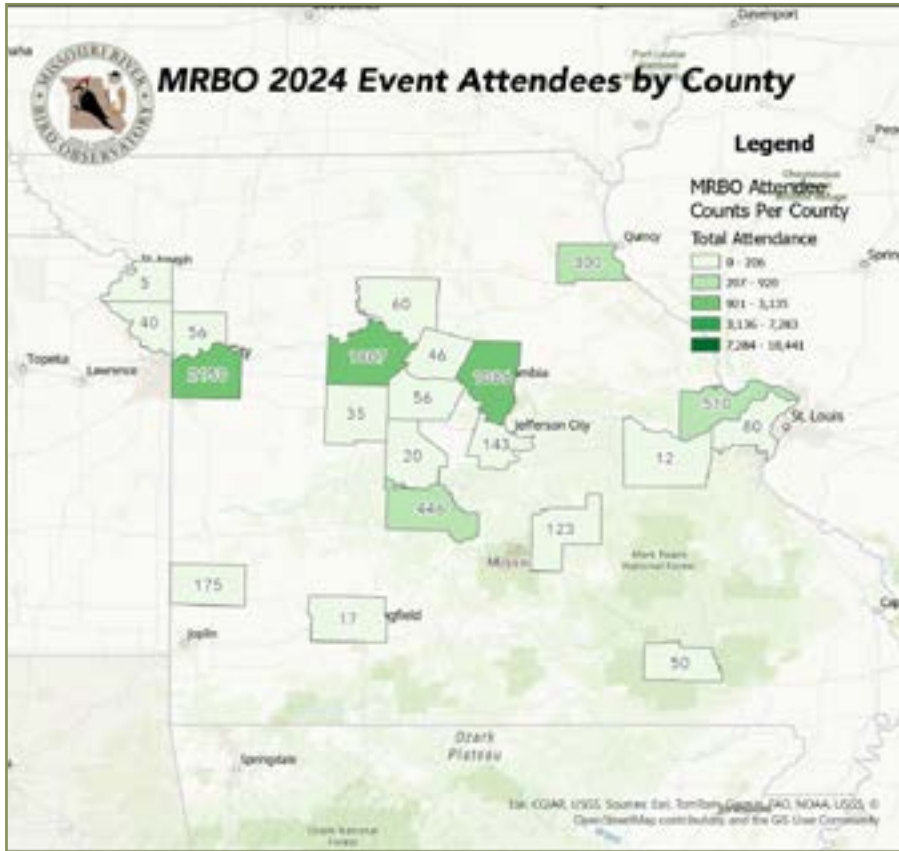
## MRBO's Core Values

- Robust data and scientific integrity
- Time-and-cost-efficiency and use of technological innovations
- Fostering the formation of partnerships
- Embracing and encouraging equity, diversity and inclusion
- Empowering and providing opportunities for young people



# Education Program Metrics

In 2024, MRBO delivered 178 programs reaching >8,600 people



- Adult Education
- Community Engagement
- Family Education
- Peer-to-Peer Advocacy
- Peer-to-Peer Science
- Educator Trainings
- Youth Education

Thank you, education program sponsors!



Supporters



David Risberg Memorial Grant Program





# Kansas City Community Education

## Metrics

Programs: 55

Festivals: 7

People Reached: 2148

education, stewardship, and community driven conservation. The Kansas City Community Conservation Educator position focuses on bridging the gap between urban communities in Kansas City and nature by creating opportunities for connection through wildlife observation, exploration and creative endeavors. This work reflects a commitment to building inclusive and impactful initiatives that benefit both communities and the environment.

In 2024, the Missouri River Bird Observatory (MRBO) reached more than 1,870 Kansas City residents through a



On the JVS bird hike

diverse range of outreach and educational programs. This year marked significant progress in advancing community conservation education across the region. New partnerships were established, longstanding collaborations were deepened, and efforts to connect underserved communities with nature continue to strengthen. MRBO's Community Conservation Educator, Tessa Poolman, was at the forefront of these initiatives. She collaborated with organizations like Exceptional Humans, Jewish Vocational Services (JVS), GreenWorks

in KC, and Kansas City Public Library to provide tailored conservation education to diverse audiences. Working closely with Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) staff, Tessa supported Tier 1 programming and participated in special events such as Urban Woods, Xplor Camp, Discover Nature Field Days, and HOWLoween. The dedication to building meaningful relationships with organizations, neighborhoods, and community groups helps to ensure MRBO's programs are accessible, relevant, and impactful.

The central goal of MRBO's Kansas City education initiatives in 2024 was to deepen connections between communities and nature while encouraging participants to see themselves as integral to the natural world. By bringing conservation education directly to residents, the organization aimed to make a lasting and inclusive impact, particularly in areas with limited access to environmental programming and green spaces.

A standout success was Tessa's partnership with MDC Naturalist Susie Harris at the Anita B. Gorman Discovery Center. Together, they led monthly public programs on bird conservation, creating a welcoming space for community members to engage with local wildlife. Topics included Kestrel Nestbox Monitoring, Woodpeckers of Missouri,

Bluebird Box Building, Hummingbirds, Safe Homes for Birds, and Owls. Building on this success, Tessa and Susie will extend their efforts into 2025 with a similar series of bird-focused programs at Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center.



Building Eastern Bluebird boxes at the Discovery Center

MRBO continued to strengthen its school partnerships in 2024. At Académie Lafayette, Tessa returned for the third time to teach second graders about plant growth, using native plants like Columbine to spark curiosity and highlight connections between science and nature. In the fall, she revisited the now third-grade students to explore the concept of specialized structures in animals, introducing them to Missouri's diverse habitats and the adaptations that help local wildlife thrive.

Spring programming featured an Urban Bird Hike for JVS clients, many of whom were families newly relocated to Kansas City. This event introduced participants to local flora and fauna, fostering a sense of connection to their new environment and emphasizing the ecological importance of urban biodiversity. For the second consecutive year, Tessa partnered with GreenWorks in Kansas City to lead bird hikes with the ECOS Nature Club. She also represented MRBO at the Wings Over Weston Student Day, leading a Birding 101 station. This event brought together four elementary schools, allowing students to participate in various interactive stations celebrating the arrival of neotropical migratory birds at Weston Bend State Park, a designated Important Bird Area (IBA).

Summer brought further opportunities to inspire young learners. At Xplor Camp, Tessa worked with 8 to 11-year-olds, teaching outdoor skills like fire starting and archery while introducing them to prairie insects, macroinvertebrates, and urban birds. MRBO also launched a new partnership with the Urban Impact Center through the summer program series "Project Conservation." Together, Tessa and an MDC Conservation Educator designed five sessions covering relevant conservation topics, delivered weekly throughout the camp. MDC staff, Osage Trails Master Naturalists, and Tessa collaborated to lead hands-on activities that engaged and educated campers. The series concluded with a field trip to Arrow Rock, where campers explored the state historic site and enjoyed a day immersed in nature.





*Xplor Campers on the Blue River*

Fall programming included bird walks and nature journaling for the fall session of the ECOS Nature Club. Tessa also led a bird hike at Heartland Conservation Alliance's Blue River Discovery Days, guiding participants along the Blue River to observe resident birds that rely on this vital natural resource. The Blue River, which absorbs two-thirds of Kansas City's water before flowing into the Missouri River, is a critical asset for the region. Fall activities concluded with the launch of Project FeederWatch at the Anita B. Gorman Discovery Center. Participants were introduced to this citizen science initiative and practiced data collection in real time. Project FeederWatch will continue through April 2025, allowing guests to contribute to bird monitoring efforts every Friday and Saturday at the Discovery Center.



*Blue River Discovery Days*

In addition to community programs, Tessa had the opportunity to present at the Missouri Environmental Educators Conference in Springfield, MO. Her presentation focused on the crucial connections between agriculture and conservation, aiming to inspire both formal and non-formal educators to integrate shared principles from these disciplines into their educational efforts.

Looking ahead, MRBO is poised to expand its impact in Kansas City with the support of an EPA Environmental Education Grant. This initiative focuses on identifying environmental priorities within Kansas City communities and creating tailored curricula and events to address those needs. By aligning conservation education with local interests, MRBO seeks to deepen its connections with residents and inspire a broader sense of environmental stewardship.

The achievements of 2024 have set a strong foundation for the future. MRBO remains steadfast in its mission to fearlessly grow its impact in Kansas City and beyond.

Through innovative outreach, collaborative programming, and meaningful educational opportunities, the organization envisions a future where all residents are empowered to care for their landscapes and embrace their role within the natural world.



*MEAA conference*





# Central Missouri Education and Outreach

## Metrics

Programs: 43

Festivals: 3

People Reached: 1919



## Clockwise from the binoculars:

Blackwater students exploring wings and fur; Kansas City students visit the Big Spring in Arrow Rock; a homeschool group visits the MRBO KnOWledge Nest; the homeschoolers visit the Big Spring; a Fayette Falcon Club member plays the Fill the Bill game; other Falcon members learn how to use binoculars; Kansas City day campers at Arrow Rock State Historic Site; Arrow Rock Star Party with MRBO and Dark Sky Missouri.



## Arrow Rock Natural History Programs



Arrow Rock Natural History programs, conducted in partnership with the Friends of Arrow Rock and Missouri State Parks, took place from mid-April to mid-May. MRBO's natural history hikes were attended by over 550 students from around mid-Missouri.

Saline County native and conservation biology student Isabelle Guthrey conducted the Natural History programs throughout the spring of 2024. She will be returning to run these programs in 2025.





## Young Explorers and Junior Naturalist Camps

The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Young Explorers Camp was held for two week-long sessions in June 2024. Week 1 brought twelve campers along the path of discovery, exploring ponds, springs, prairies and a shared responsibility toward the earth to be good stewards. Campers created a safe place for birds to lay their eggs, made mushroom spore prints, and tasted wild edibles like nettle soup, mulberries, fried cicadas and twist bread. A guided hike led campers to the Missouri River where they were able to use river water to paint a watercolor landscape.



Week 2 brought another group of twelve campers. New explorations that could lead to a greater connection with nature included hiking in the woods, observing insects, nature journaling, flint-knapping, and catching crawdads, tadpoles and fish.

In addition, a new Nature Camp called Junior Naturalist Camp was added for the last week in June. Week 3 brought eight older campers to Arrow Rock to further their understanding of ecological connections. They practiced drawing their observations, carved a stamp and then printed their own creations onto t-shirts. Time for exploring favorite ways to connect with nature were included as well like fishing, birdwatching and foraging.

The Village of Arrow Rock, Arrow Rock State Historic Site, and the adjacent Big Muddy National Wildlife Refuge served as excellent locations for campers to explore conservation and understand the role we can play in preserving and improving habitat for all species.



## Arrow Rock Nature School



During the 2024 spring semester, the Arrow Rock Nature School hosted five schools, reaching 96 students and 17 adults. Schools included Blackwater, Orearville, Hardeman, Glasgow and a homeschool group. Gilliam was also scheduled but weather canceled their day. The Traveling Nature School reached an additional 109 students and 19 adults at four school visits to Bunceton, Benton and Eastwood Elementary. Most of the students served by the Arrow Rock Nature School are from rural schools in Saline, Cooper and Howard counties. Of the public schools in these counties, most are Title 1 schools. Some of the students are in the Justice 40 Tracts identified by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST). In addition 60-80 percent of the students in Saline and Cooper County participate in the Free or Reduced Lunch Program.



Thanks to a grant from the Missouri Environmental Education Association, the Arrow Rock Nature School developed a lunch time stewardship program to help students implement waste reduction strategies, turning their lunch trash into treasure. The project implemented three strategies: reducing food waste, composting, and recycling. Students were then introduced to the idea of adding the composted soil to raised beds that contain native plants. Students were able to understand how to sort their lunch "waste" into the appropriate areas, planting the "seeds" for a stewardship ethic.



# Bird-friendly Communities Program

**Metrics**  
**Programs: 4**  
**Festivals: 6**  
**People Reached: 1198**

In North America, bird populations are experiencing significant declines due to human-caused factors. About 30% of the North American bird population has been lost since the 1970s, which is about 3 billion birds. As urbanization continues to expand, bird populations will continue to decline at a rapid rate. Integrating bird-friendly practices such as planting native plants, creating safe nesting areas, and other green spaces will ensure birds the resources they critically need especially during migration. Habitat loss is one of the biggest drivers; however, there are other threats that are impacting the populations such as window collisions, light pollution, plastic pollution, cats, and a variety of other contributing factors. The Missouri Bird-friendly Communities Program is striving to address these threats and to encourage communities to become bird-friendly. These communities are not only beneficial to birds but will enhance the quality of life for people by promoting biodiversity and fostering that connection to nature. These efforts in turn will contribute to healthier ecosystems overall.

As of July 2024, Kaylee Woelfel joined the MRBO team as the new statewide Bird-friendly Communities (BFC) Coordinator. Kaylee has been a catalyst for the BFC program and is currently leading the BFC steering committee. The BFC steering committee is made up of several partners including the Missouri Department of Conservation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the St. Louis Audubon Society. Together, they focus on guiding urban areas and municipalities throughout Missouri to enhance their communities by implementing change to reduce threats to bird populations. This work not only supports ecological integrity but bolsters human health and overall well-being. To advance these efforts, Kaylee has been working with and educating communities to promote various bird-friendly designation programs, such as The Urban Bird Treaty (UBT) and the Bird City Network. She is dedicated to expanding these crucial partnerships across the state and collaborating on vital conservation initiatives.

One of Kaylee’s roles is to assist and observe the restoration of St. Louis UBT. Matt Barton, the St. Louis Urban Conservation Specialist, is leading this UBT designation renewal process. The core team submitted its first draft of the UBT report to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in December. This report includes reporting metrics from our partner groups. For 2025, they are discussing long-term goals and will aim to accomplish these goals. In addition, they are working on an implementation plan that will focus on the required categories for UBT. Kaylee is also coordinating with the Kansas City Community Conservation Educator, Tessa Poolman, in the initiation process of UBT for Kansas City. UBT-KC is in its beginning phases and has had several core team and partner meetings. The core

team is starting to develop their implementation plan and hope to get their designation for KC within the next year. Additionally, Tessa and Kaylee are co-coordinators for the BirdSafeKC project and are excited to lead these programs and contribute to various conservation efforts.

Kaylee is also collaborating with Joanna Eckles, the Bird City coordinator at American Bird Conservancy, to establish Bird City Missouri. At the start of October, Kaylee assembled a dedicated core team to help lead this initiative. Since then, the team has made significant progress, including identifying pilot cities, creating a community action list, and laying the groundwork for a successful launch. They are now preparing to launch Bird City Missouri within the next two months, with a strong foundation for community engagement and bird conservation efforts.

UBT and Bird City programs are designations that are attained by urban centers and smaller municipalities by meeting guidelines that benefit birds.



## URBAN BIRD TREATY

*U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services*

**WHAT IT IS**

The Urban Bird Treaty program was launched in 1999 and is a collaborative effort between the USFWS and its participating cities.

**THREE MAIN GOALS:**

1. Conserve urban habitat
2. Reduce urban hazards to birds
3. Engage communities in bird conservation, science, education, and recreation

**REQUIREMENTS:**

- Population size of cities must be 100,000 or more
- Core group of at least three partner organizations and city government support
- Must submit a letter of intention along with a 3-5 year implementation plan that focuses on program goals and actions



## BIRD CITY NETWORK

*American Bird Conservancy & Environment for the Americas*

**WHAT IT IS**

The Bird City Network program was launched in 2009 and is a sister program to the Urban Bird Treaty program. The American Bird Conservancy and Environment for the Americas have collaborated to bring people together to create a healthier community for birds and people.

**MAIN FOCUSES:**

1. Improving habitat
2. Addressing threats
3. Engaging people
4. Promoting sustainability

**REQUIREMENTS:**

- No population requirement (for communities of any size)
- Bird City Program team to fill out and submit an application
- Must fill out an intent form outlining community actions for birds and other wildlife





Over the past eight months, Kaylee has focused on building meaningful relationships and developing the BFC program. Looking into 2025, she hopes to continue making great strides with UBT efforts in both Kansas City and St. Louis, Bird City MO, and developing fundamental partners such as The University of Missouri, Daniel Boone Regional Library, Columbia Audubon Society, Boone County Nature School, and more!

One other exciting development is the growing interest in Boone County from local partners who are enthusiastic about installing window treatments to help prevent bird strikes. Kaylee has enjoyed networking with these partners and educating the public about her work and the broader mission of MRBO. She has had the opportunity to engage with the community at various festivals and public events across the state, helping to raise awareness about bird conservation efforts and the importance of protecting bird populations.

*Several presentations in the 2024 Winter Learning Series addressed bird-friendly community issues.*



Throughout 2024, MRBO also hosted or participated in a variety of programs to promote bird-friendly practices among households, communities, and municipalities. Many of the programs are based on one or more aspects of the *Seven Simple Actions to Help Birds*, a framework developed by Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the American Bird Conservancy.



# Plastic Pollution Education Program

## Metrics

Programs: 13

Festivals: 3

People Reached: 760

## Digital Outreach

E-newsletter articles: 4

Social media posts: 6

People reached: 4,638

Plastic has become deeply embedded in every aspect of modern life. Over the past two decades, global plastic production has more than doubled, with an astonishing 460 million metric tons now being produced annually. Derived from petroleum-based fossil fuels, plastic is a synthetic material that is combined with various chemicals to impart desirable properties, such as durability, flexibility, and resilience. Over

16,000 chemicals are involved in the production of plastic, many of which pose significant risks to both environmental and human health. Classes of chemical compounds such as PFAS and Bisphenols have gained widespread attention due to their harmful effects on human health. Unlike organic materials, plastic does not biodegrade; instead, it breaks down into smaller fragments known as microplastics and nanoplastics (MNPs). These tiny particles are found in the air we breathe, the soil where we grow our food, and have been detected in human organs, such as the heart and kidneys. In Missouri, plastics have become integrated into agriculture, with plastic mulch and PFAS-laden sludge increasingly being used as fertilizers. As the widespread use of single-use plastics continues to grow, increasing public awareness and fostering collective action have become essential strategies in curbing the plastic pollution crisis.

Through a partnership with Missouri Foundation for Health (MFH), MRBO and Streams Team United (STU) have created a statewide program to help address the plastic pollution crisis. This program has a focus on engaging communities, and their many organizational partners, in collaborative education and grassroots advocacy work.



Cameron and Dana at the Conservation Federation of Missouri Affiliates Summit in September, alongside Mary Culler and Emily Young from Streams Team United. This summit marked the first in-person meeting for the full plastic team, providing an opportunity to kick off discussions of the initiative.



Cameron engaging with a community member at the Arrow Rock Heritage Festival. The event provided a valuable opportunity for Cameron to connect with the public and begin fostering trust in anti-plastic advocacy.

In September of 2024, MRBO welcomed new staff member Cameron Gromek. Serving as the Plastic Pollution Education Coordinator, Cameron has begun the development and implementation of unique educational programming focused on the reduction of plastic use and pollution. Through the Plastic Pollution Education Program, MRBO aims to shift public perception of plastics, ultimately contributing to the reduction of plastic production, use, and waste. The end goal is to lay the groundwork for people-driven, grassroots change regarding plastic pollution.

Cameron has spent his first 4 months on staff building his expertise through training with Beyond Plastics. In addition to educational coursework, he has begun developing educational programming regarding plastic reduction and engaging various community organizations throughout the state. The first educational program Cameron undertook was for the Lake of the Ozarks Missouri Master Naturalists Chapter. Cameron developed and delivered an educational presentation on the impact of plastic pollution, aimed at informing master naturalists about the environmental hazards posed by plastic. The program provided an in-depth analysis of the factors driving the overproduction of plastic and highlighted actions that organizations can take to reduce plastic pollution within their communities. Cameron has established a positive relationship with the Lake of the Ozarks Missouri Master Naturalists Chapter and is expected to deliver another educational presentation with them in spring 2025.

Cameron staffed the MRBO booth at both the Coopers Landing Conservation Expo in Columbia and the Arrow Rock Heritage Festival in Arrow Rock, promoting plastic pollution awareness. At each event, Cameron distributed educational flyers and engaged the public with interactive displays that illustrated the scale of the plastic pollution crisis. These events provided Cameron with an opportunity to connect with community activists and initiate meaningful conversations about the harmful impacts of plastic pollution. At the Coopers Landing Conservation Expo, Cameron gave a brief radio interview with KOPN 89.5FM and spoke on MRBO's mission and the state of the plastic pollution crisis.

Dana Ripper, Director of MRBO, has been actively engaged in the statewide anti-plastic initiative for five years. In 2024, she





delivered multiple presentations addressing plastic pollution. Dana first spoke to the Columbia Garden Club about the current state of the plastic pollution crisis. She then presented to the Federated Garden Clubs of Missouri on the topic, 'The Imperative to Move Beyond Plastic.' Following this, Dana trained a group of educators from the Missouri Master Naturalist State Chapter on 'Plastic Pollution in Nature.' At the Rock Bridge Water Festival, hosted by the Bonne Femme Watershed, Dana interacted with community members on various plastic-related issues. At the National Wildlife Federation annual convention in June, Dana hosted a workshop for professional advocates, focusing on climate, health, and justice in the context of the plastic pollution crisis. This past autumn, Dana spoke at both the Conservation Federation of Missouri Affiliates Summit and the Big Muddy Speaker Series on the broader topic of plastic pollution. Dana and Cameron are also scheduled to speak at the 2025 Missouri Natural Resources Conference and will continue their statewide outreach efforts.



*Plastic advocacy workshop at the National Wildlife Federation conference in Washington DC.*



### Brand Audits

MRBO has collaborated with Missouri River Relief for several years to augment river cleanup efforts by conducting plastic brand audits on the waste collected from the Missouri River. A brand audit is a participatory science initiative that involves counting and documenting the brands found on plastic waste to help identify the companies responsible for plastic pollution. Brand audits are typically supported by a team of volunteers eager to gain insight into the sources of the waste removed from rivers. The data gathered from brand audits is submitted to the national organization, Break Free From Plastic, for inclusion in their annual report. MRBO participated in brand audits at Sugar Creek, St. Joseph, St. Charles, and New Haven in 2024.



*Volunteers sorting and cataloging plastic waste at the Sugar Creek brand audit. This hands-on experience often surprises volunteers, highlighting the persistence of plastic in water and its inability to decompose.*

During the brand audit in New Haven, Cameron participated in his first river cleanup. This event provided an opportunity for him to initiate open discussions with volunteers, learning from their personal experiences and perspectives on plastic use. Through these conversations, Cameron was able to educate volunteers on the impact of plastic in their daily lives.

### Digital Outreach

In 2024, Cameron developed and launched a digital outreach campaign aimed at raising awareness about the environmental and health impacts of single-use plastics. The campaign is delivered through two primary channels: MRBO's monthly E-newsletter and regular social media posts on Facebook and Instagram. Since September, Cameron has contributed a monthly article to the E-newsletter, forming a series that offers practical advice on reducing your plastic footprint and educating others about the risks associated with plastic. More recently, Cameron has begun creating infographics for regular social media posts, designed to raise anti-plastic awareness and empower community members to make well-informed decisions regarding plastic use. Looking ahead to 2025, Cameron is enthusiastic to expand his digital outreach through continued monthly E-news articles and regular social media updates.





## Missouri Young Birders Club

The mission of the Missouri Young Birders Club (MYBC) is to bring together young people to enjoy, experience, and conserve Missouri's birds and other wildlife. MYBC members connect from all over the state during virtual monthly meetings and participate in regional conservation opportunities organized by chapter leaders and other organizations across the state.

**Metrics**  
**Programs: 16**  
**Membership: 45**  
**New members in 2024: 18**

The goal of the club is to raise awareness, foster appreciation for birds, and engage members in actions that help protect nature. By providing opportunities for youth to enjoy, experience, and conserve Missouri's birds and other wildlife, the club fosters a deeper connection with nature. This connection can lead to more environmentally friendly behaviors, benefiting both the community and the natural environment.

The club's growth and achievements would not have been possible without the dedication of our adult chapter leaders, as well as the invaluable support from Missouri Department of Conservation staff, Missouri State Parks staff, and the Missouri Birding Society. Special thanks go to these organizations for creating incredible presentations based on topics chosen by our young birders. Lastly, we extend our gratitude to the parents, grandparents, and guardians who help our young birders attend events and pursue their passion for birds. Thank you for your continued support! Stay connected with MYBC and learn how to get involved by visiting our website: [moyoungbirders.org](http://moyoungbirders.org) or following the Missouri Young Birders Club on Facebook.

### 2024 Monthly Meeting Topics



### Winter 2024 Photo Contest for MYBC members only!

Submit up to two photos for a chance to win a prize!

#### Prizes!

Bald Eagle Grand Prize - Binoculars  
 Red-tailed Hawk Prize - MYBC Tshirt  
 Barred Owl Prize - MRBO Water Bottle  
 American Kestrel Prize - Suet Feeder  
 Eastern Bluebird Prize - Birds of MO Poster

#### Photo Contest Rules

- Only two photos per member can be submitted.
- Photos must have been taken by MYBC member.
- Photos can be shot with any type of camera or photography device.



## Field Trip Highlight

Fall MBS/MYBC Event

6 participants + 2 leaders

Species highlight: Belted Kingfisher

MYBC partnered with the Missouri Birding Society during the Society's fall meeting in Kansas City to host a youth birding field trip. Three new birders joined the hike, followed by a lunch where participants shared their favorite sightings. The event concluded with two new MYBC registrants. Special thanks to Sara Scheil, Michael O'Keefe, and Sally Urdang for their leadership and coordination.

Looking ahead, MYBC aims to:

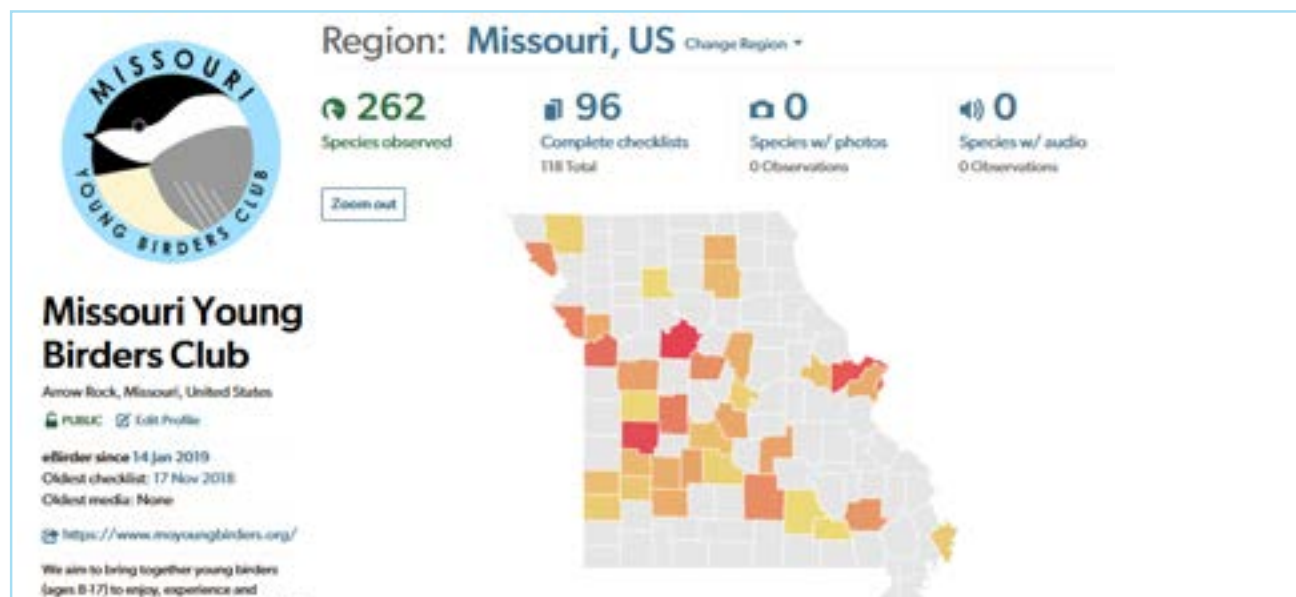
- Expand its membership to include more youth from rural and urban areas, creating a more diverse community of young birders
- Organize bi-annual field trips for each regional chapter
- Expand conservation activities, including native plant projects and bird-safe initiatives in local communities



MYBC field trip to Waterfall Park in Independence



MYBC Ozark Chapter meeting and field trip



MYBC community science eBird map for 2019-2024. This map shows how many bird lists were submitted to eBird by MYBC. These lists help further scientists' understanding of bird abundance and diversity.





# Programs and Events

Across Missouri and in the virtual space

**Metrics**  
**Programs: 63**  
**Festivals: 12**  
**People Reached: 2655**



Rolla Outdoor Collaborative School Fall Festival, September



Presentation at Daniel Boone Regional Library Ashland Branch, September



Get Outdoors festival in Blue Springs, April



Green Democracy webinar, October



Presentation at Missouri Native Grasslands Summit, April



Prairie State Park Jubilee, September



- January 8th - Intro to the Learning Series: Why These 11 Topics Matter for Wildlife Conservation - Dana Ripper & Ethan Duke, MRBO
- January 15th - The Missouri Legislature's 2024 Session and the Environment - Charles Miller, Missouri Confluence Waterkeeper
- January 22nd - Nearby Nature: Trends in Urban Biodiversity From the Global to Local Scale - Dr. Christine Brodsky, Pittsburg State University
- January 29th - The Problems with Plastics - It's Worse Than You Think! - Rebekah Creshkoff, Beyond Plastics Speakers Bureau
- February 5th - Rare Insects of Missouri and Their Conservation - Steve Suback, Missouri Department of Conservation
- February 12th - Light Pollution and Birds - Travis Longcore, UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability
- February 19th - What Does Coffee Have to Do With Birds? - Sarah Kendrick, US Fish & Wildlife Service
- February 26th - Your food - Prairie, Birds, and Beef Production - Steve Chubine, Rancher/Grassland Biologist
- March 4th - Nature's Best Hope - Doug Tallamy, University of Delaware, Audubon Writing Author
- March 11th - Dicamba 2,4-D and There: Old Chemicals Causing New Problems - Robbie Doerhoff, Missouri Department of Conservation
- March 18th - Creating Safe Passages for Migrating Birds - Krystal Anton, Johnson County Community College
- March 25th - The Swine Republic: Struggles With the Truth About Agriculture and Water Quality - Chris Jones, Research Engineer/Author



Ozark Prairie Master Gardeners Field Day, September



Presentation to Missouri Department of Conservation staff, January



Bonne Femme Water Festival, June





Presentation at Conservation Federation of Missouri annual convention, March



Gateway Outdoors Expo, November



Cooper's Landing Conservation Expo, September

## Arrow Rock Birds, Bees & Blooms Festival



The 2024 Birds, Bees, and Blooms Festival was a huge success, marking the second year of the festival's integration with the Arrow Rock Garden Market and Vintage Bazaar. Held on the last Saturday in April, this vibrant event attracted over 750 visitors who enjoyed nearly 40 booths with nature-related vendors, and a variety of hands-on activities and educational walks.

Highlights included morning bird walks, fishing with the Missouri Department of Conservation, a Bald Eagle program put on by the World Bird Sanctuary, wild edible walks, a presentation on neotropical migrants, and a talk on native pollinators. These engaging experiences helped deepen attendees' connection to nature and sparked greater awareness about local wildlife and conservation.

Thank you to our volunteers, partners, and attendees for making last year's event a memorable celebration of the beauty of birds, bees, and blooms!

**SAVE THE DATE! April 26th, 2025**



Photos courtesy Jaylene O'Keefe



## MRBO's BirdHouse A Hub for Nature Enthusiasts

From late April through October, MRBO's BirdHouse opened its doors to hundreds of visitors, offering an immersive experience into Missouri's diverse natural communities—and, of course, the wonderful world of birds! During the 2024 season, guests explored the BirdHouse's cozy library, interactive educational displays, charming gift shop, and peaceful outdoor viewing area, perfect for birdwatching. One of the highlights was the *KnOWledge Nest*, a beautifully crafted diorama showcasing Missouri's natural communities in stunning detail.

The 2024 season may have come to a close, but we're already looking forward to re-opening for the 2025 season on April 26th during the Birds, Bees, and Blooms Festival. We can't wait to welcome you back to explore, learn, and connect with nature!







P. O. Box 16  
Arrow Rock, Missouri  
65320



*Family Love* by Carol Weston

