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Missouri Master Naturalist class offered at St. Joseph

Missouri Master Naturalists mix science with service. They aid conservation programs and help people discover nature. The Loess Hills Chapter in St. Joseph will hold training sessions Feb. 25 to May 20, which include both classwork and field trips.

The Master Naturalist program is a partnership between the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC), University of Missouri Extension and the volunteers who serve in the program.

Master Naturalists are given special training regarding nature in the region where chapters are based. Members help out at MDC public events, conduct education demonstrations, take field trips and hold social events tied to a shared love of nature. To become a certified Master Naturalist, participants must complete an initial training course, eight hours of advanced training, and contribute 40 hours of natural resource-related volunteer service through a local chapter.

The training for the Loess Hills Chapter will be held on Tuesday nights 5:30 to 9 p.m. at the MDC Northwest Regional Office, 701 James McCarthy Drive on the campus of Missouri Western State University. There will also be five Saturday field trip sessions. Participants must register by Feb. 14. The training course fee is \$100. An orientation meeting for those registered or those interested in the course will be held 5:30 to 8 p.m. on Jan. 21 at the MDC Regional Office.

To register for the training or for more information contact T.J. Peacher, 816-271-3111 Ext. 235. Information about Master Naturalist programs is available at <http://extension.missouri.edu/masternaturalist/>.