

Conservation Commission plants tree at MDC

The Missouri Conservation Commission observed Missouri Arbor Day on Friday, April 7, by planting a tree at Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) headquarters in Jefferson City. Commissioners David Murphy; James T. Blair, IV; Marilyn Bradford; and Don Bedell were joined by several members of the State Youth Advisory Board of the Missouri Department of Social Services.

The youth and commissioners planted an American holly, or *ilex opaca*. The American holly is a medium-sized evergreen with bright red fruit, often part of Christmas decor. While it is commonly planted in Missouri as an ornamental, it is one of the rarest trees in Missouri, only occurring naturally in southeast Missouri on the lower slopes of Crowley's Ridge Conservation Area in Stoddard County.

"Missouri's trees and forests are truly a treasure, making our communities better places to live, work and play," said Commission Chair Murphy. "The Conservation Commission encourages everyone to get outdoors, take advantage of the beautiful spring weather, and plant some native trees."

Missouri Arbor Day is celebrated on the first Friday of April and National Arbor Day is celebrated on the last Friday of the month. Both events bookend a month-long celebration of trees and forests in communities all over the state.

Trees work for Missouri by producing oxygen, cleaning water, and delivering benefits that shape people's daily lives. Missourians can take advantage of all the ways trees work by selecting native trees to plant and practicing proper tree care.

Get information from MDC on backyard tree care, types of trees for urban and other landscapes, selecting the right tree for the right place, planting tips, watering and pruning info, and more from the Department's website at mdc.mo.gov/tree-health.