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Discover Nature Girls Camp Hosted by MO Conservation

JULY 28TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

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*Submitted by
Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Editor*

Wappapello, Missouri - Thirty-six girls ages 11 to 15 recently attended Discover Nature Girls Camp at Camp SEMO, near Wappapello, for three days and two nights. Conservation agents, biologists and other conservation staff members led the camp, hosted by the Missouri Department of Conservation.

“Our goal with this camp is to get more young women involved in the outdoors and conservation,” said Conservation Agent Christa Cox. “We find that not as many women continue to take part in hunting or other outdoor activities throughout their lives as men do. So, we hope this camp will help to form a foundational appreciation for the outdoors that will keep these young women more involved in the outdoors and conservation well into the future.”

Activities at the camp included learning about archery, shooting skills and firearm actions, tree stand safety, outdoor safety, water safety, fish identification and fishing, orienteering, camp cooking and a bat trapping demonstration.

“Many of the girls were excited about the archery session,” Cox said. “We were able to watch many of them improve their skills in this event. They also enjoyed

the nature trails and canoeing quite a bit.”

Shawndra Burkhart, of Jackson, sent her 11-year-old daughter, Carrisa, to the Discover Nature Girls Camp. Burkhart said the camp worked out so well for Carrisa, she hopes to be able to send her younger daughter to the camp next year.

“The fact that they were able to do their hunter safety test at the camp was very helpful, and all of the outdoor safety rules that they learned are valuable for everyday living,” Burkhart said.

Burkhart said her daughter “wouldn’t stop talking about how much fun she had.”

“She learned a lot but she also had a blast. She liked the boat ride especially, but there were a lot of different things she enjoyed,” Burkhart said.

Cox said that as a woman working in conservation, seeing that enthusiasm from the campers and sharing her outdoor knowledge with the younger women is rewarding.

“Passing along my knowledge and skills on to other females and sharing the joy that I have experienced in the outdoors with them was exhilarating,” she said.

Cox said this year’s camp was a success and she believes the experience will have a positive impact on the girls that attended.

“I encourage every young girl of any interest or skill level in the outdoors to attend one of these camps,” Cox said.

Cox said the Discover Nature Girls Camps will continue throughout the state as well as in Southeast Missouri. Information on future Discover Nature Girls Camps throughout the state can be found online at mdc.mo.gov.

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