

SPRING 2020

GARDENING FOR WILDLIFE EDITION

KANSAS WILDLIFE FEDERATION



OFFICIAL QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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pictured above: prairie blazing star (a Kansas native wildflower) in a landscaping bed in Wichita, Kansas

What's New

AFFILIATE UPDATES

.....

CERTIFIED WILDLIFE HABITAT

.....

MOREL MUSHROOMS 101

.....

TAKE YOUR KID FISHING

.....

GET INVOLVED, STAY INFORMED

President's Message

This issue is dedicated to the joy and wonder that springtime in Kansas might inspire in each of us, though we may be anxious, worn, lonely, and saddened by the global crisis permeating every facet of our daily lives. I do not expect every day in social isolation to be productive or fun, but I do know that dirt and sweat and commitment to enjoying and protecting that which will outlast all of us can offer some level of mental relief, if only temporary.

Let our newsletter help guide you this spring. One rewarding activity might be creating habitat in your own backyard and then certifying that habitat with the National Wildlife Federation online. Get inspired by David Mizejewski's new book "Attracting Birds, Butterflies, and other Backyard Wildlife"—we've printed the introduction for you. You can also check out our interview with a Sedgwick County homeowner blazing a trail in the suburbs with her certified habitat. How about harvesting your own morel mushrooms? Lyndzee Rhine offers some pro tips for your first successful mushroom hunt! And lastly, award-winning writer, Brent Frazee, offers guidance to parents wanting to start their kids on fishing.

Above all else, stay safe, stay healthy, and when you are marveling at Kansas springtime, know that we are right there with you,

Mensaje de la Presidente

Este boletín está dedicado a la alegría y al asombro que la primavera en Kansas podría inspirar en cada uno de nosotros, aunque podemos estar ansiosos, cansados, solitarios y entristecidos por la crisis global que impregna todas las facetas de nuestra vida cotidiana. No espero que todos los días en aislamiento social sean productivos o divertidos, pero sí sé que la suciedad y el sudor y el compromiso de disfrutar y proteger lo que durará más que todos nosotros puede ofrecer cierto nivel de alivio mental, aunque solo sea temporal.

Deje que nuestro boletín le ayude a guiarse esta primavera. Una actividad gratificante podría ser crear hábitat en su propio patio trasero y luego certificar ese hábitat con la National Wildlife Federation en línea. Inspírese con el nuevo libro de David Mizejewski "Atracción de aves, mariposas y otros animales salvajes del patio trasero". Hemos impreso la introducción para usted. También puede leer nuestra entrevista con un propietario del Sedgwick County cambiando la cultura en los suburbios con su hábitat certificado. ¿Qué tal cosechar tus propios champiñones? ¡Lyndzee Rhine ofrece algunos consejos profesionales para su primera caza de champiñones! Y, por último, el galardonado escritor, Brent Frazee, ofrece orientación a los padres que desean enseñar a pescar a sus hijos.

Por encima de todo, manténgase a salvo, manténgase saludable y cuando se esté maravillando de la primavera de Kansas, sepa que estamos allí con usted,



Certify Your Habitat

FROM THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

- ◆ You need 3 examples of food in your habitat area. This could include a bird feeder, seed producing plants, a shrub that produces berries, or flowers that produce nectar. All plants should be native to Kansas.
- ◆ You need one source of water in your habitat area. This could include a birdbath, a pond, or a butterfly puddling area.
- ◆ You need 2 places that provide shelter from weather and predators in your habitat area. This could include a brush pile, dense shrubbery, or a rock pile.
- ◆ You need at least 2 places for wildlife to raise young. This could include mature trees, a nesting box, a meadow, or shrubbery.
- ◆ Finally, you need to employ sustainable practices from at least 2 categories: soil and water conservation, controlling exotic species, or organic practices.

Find specific information using the official checklist from NWF here:

<https://www.nwf.org/Garden-For-Wildlife/Create.aspx>

En Español:

<https://www.nwf.org/Garden-for-Wildlife/Jardín-Silvestre>



Certified Wildlife Habitat at a Butler County residence.

“Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature — the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter.”

—Rachel Carson

Affiliate Updates

- ◆ The Geary County Fish & Game Association held a successful annual wild game dinner and raffle! Check out their recent newsletter to learn about: Women on Target Shooting Clinic, School Trapshooting Program, Summer Trap League Teams, and Hunter Safety courses. More information at their Facebook page and website:
- ◆ The Riley County Fish and Game Association had a fantastic turnout for their annual dinner/auction banquet in early March. See photos from the event and find out more information at their Facebook page.
- ◆ The Ford County Sportsman's Club held a successful 2020 youth first deer doe hunt. Check out photos on their Facebook page and website:

<http://www.gearycountyfishandgame.net>

www.fordcountysportsmansclub.com

Officers and Board of Directors

The Kansas Wildlife Federation promotes hunting and fishing opportunities and associated recreation for the benefit of all hunters, anglers, and conservationists. KWF supports the sustainable use and management of fish and wildlife and their habitats through education, partnerships, outreach, and policy oversight.

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Laura Mendenhall

2020 NWF Alternate Representative
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Geary County Fish & Game Association
Junction City, KS

Riley County Fish & Game Association
Manhattan, KS

Kansas Wildlife Officers Association
Manhattan, KS

New Book from David Mizejewski...

Introduction (an excerpt)

We need to reconnect our cities, towns, and neighborhoods back into the ecosystem they were once a part of.

Wildlife is declining at an unprecedented rate all around the planet. Unfortunately human activity is the most significant cause of this decline. Our land development and agricultural practices, pollution, alteration of rivers and wetlands, and climate change are increasingly changing America's landscape in ways that render it barren for wildlife or kill wildlife outright. As a result, today more than one-third of America's wildlife is at risk of extinction in the coming decades. While the situation sounds grim, you might be surprised to learn that you can help reverse this alarming decline for some species by creating your own wildlife habitat garden.

How can a garden save wildlife? You might think that wildlife conservation is something that only happens in the wilderness areas far from human development. Protecting and restoring wild areas continues to be critical to ensuring wildlife populations remain healthy, but the scope of human impact on

the planet is so great that many wildlife species can't rely on wilderness areas alone. We need to reconnect our cities, towns, and neighborhoods back into the ecosystem they were once a part of by restoring the green infrastructure that supports local and migratory wildlife.

For example, thirty percent of North American birds are in steep decline, including some species that will use a well-planned wildlife habitat landscape in close proximity to people, such as bobolinks, wood thrushes, meadowlarks, western tanagers, bobwhite quail, Florida scrub-jays, or rufous hummingbirds. Wildlife gardens can also help insects like the monarch butterfly, populations of which have plummeted in recent decades, or the once-common rusty-patched bumble bee, the first North American bee species to be listed as endangered. Wooded suburban yards

have already helped the fisher, a member of the weasel family that was almost wiped out, to recover and expand its range. Backyard nesting boxes have helped bluebird populations recover from the loss of natural nesting habitat, and in many areas birds such as purple martins and chimney swifts are dependent on structures provided by humans for nesting. Gopher tortoises and the dozens of other species that rely on their burrows for shelter only survive largely because people have protected or restored habitat for them on private property. Similarly, the New England cottontail is no longer being considered for listing as an endangered



species due in part to farms and landowners who made the effort to restore their brushy, forest-edge habitat – and your own property or other garden spaces can be one piece of habitat that helps do just that.

“Research has shown that wildlife habitat gardens support twice the wildlife and a greater diversity of species compared to a conventional landscape of lawn and nonnative plants.”

While wildlife habitat gardens aren't going to save imperiled species such as polar bears or red wolves or sea turtles that require vast wilderness areas, they can make a big difference for many species of wildlife, helping to keep common species common and in some cases helping species in trouble. Research has shown that wildlife habitat gardens support twice the wildlife and a greater diversity of species compared to a conventional landscape of lawn and nonnative plants. They also give us a daily connection to nature that's sorely lacking from most of our lives, yet important, not only for our own happiness but also to inspire us to support broader wildlife conservation efforts.

Creating a wildlife habitat garden is more than just planting a pretty landscape. In any given region, the plants, animals, and other living organisms have interacted with one another and the environment around them for millions of years, forming interacting communities called an ecosystem. Ecosystems are healthy when they are diverse, self-sustaining, and balanced, with no one species dominating all the rest. This is true in wild ecosystems as well as those in our cities, towns and even our own yards and gardens. If you understand this principle and apply it to your garden and landscape, you'll create a beautiful mini-ecosystem that supports birds, butterflies, and a wide variety of other wildlife species.



Here's how it works. Plants are the foundation of wildlife habitat. Without healthy plant communities to provide habitat, wildlife disappears. By preserving or planting native plants that naturally grow in the area and that wildlife need to

survive, you can restore habitat and invite the wildlife back to the land it once occupied. The act of planting for a purpose is the very definition of gardening. By planting native plants to restore wildlife habitat, you become a wildlife habitat gardener.

The National Wildlife Federation's **Garden for Wildlife** program has been helping people do just that for decades. Millions of people have already restored natural habitat in their yards and other garden spaces throughout their communities. Hundreds of thousands have earned **Certified Wildlife Habitat** recognition for their wildlife habitat gardens. Today, these people host the wildlife that would otherwise be banished from their cities, towns, and neighborhoods. By applying what you learn in this book, you can join the National Wildlife Federation's growing Garden for Wildlife movement.

Find
**Attracting Birds,
Butterflies, and Other
Backyard Wildlife**
by David Mizejewski
at the National Wildlife
Federation online shop,
Amazon.com, or your
local library.

Certified Wildlife Habitat in a Sedgwick County Suburb

by Laura Mendenhall

Tina and Al Seemayer of Kechi, Kansas, recently certified their yard through the National Wildlife Federation's Certified Wildlife Habitat program. Tina was kind of enough to share her experience with creating a yard that is both beautiful and inhabitable by native wildlife.

features some impressive blue false indigo (*Baptisia australis*), bright orange butterfly milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*), purple poppy-mallow (*Callirhoe involucrate*), and black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*), all of which produce seeds every year for sharing with friends and family.

grass lawn and is thrilled with how it turned out. Seemayer does get questions and comments, like one couple biking nearby that shouted, "we just love your yard, it reminds us so much of Kansas" and once she



(left) buffalo grass lawn with native wildflowers, bunch grasses, and trees in the Seemayers' yard. (above) caterpillars of the unexpected *Cynthia* moth, a milkweed obligate. Photos by Tina Seemayer.

En Español: (izquierda) césped de *Bouteloua dactyloides* con flores silvestres nativas, pastos y árboles en el patio de los Seemayers. (arriba) orugas de *Cynthia inopinatus* Fotos de Tina Seemayer.

For choosing plants, Tina suggests picking a spot you want to fill, characterizing that location's sunlight and moisture levels, and then finding a native species that will grow in those conditions. The Dyck Arboretum of the Plains, the Kansas Native Plant Society, and kswildflower.org are good resources for finding what is native and what works for each type of condition. Tina's front yard

You may want to plant the same species in medium-sized clusters to create a uniform look and contrast busier-looking blooms next to more compact bunch grasses like little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*).

When asked if she has experienced any complaints from neighbors, she reassured me that no neighbors have complained—in fact, one neighbor planted a native buffalo

had a visitor photographing her front yard.

Seemayer shares the following advice for those of us who are interested in adding some native plants and wildlife to our yards:

If you are on a budget, try just one plant first. If you can't redo a whole yard, that's ok. Work with certain aspects of your yard that you want

to improve. Take out one old plant, put in one new plant.

Pay attention to the height and spread of native wildflowers and grasses and plant accordingly. Purple poppy-mallow is a good, bushy low-grower and coneflowers are tall and relatively compact.

Don't get out the bug spray when you see a plant being devoured by insects. This is WHY you planted native, after all. Tina saw a bunch of caterpillars eating her black-eyed Susans late in the season and to her delight, she researched and found they were checkerspot butterfly caterpillars, not some non-native pest insect!

Finally, enjoy all the butterflies, bees, and birds that will start to utilize your yard!



A front patio bordered with blue false indigo (Baptisia australis), butterfly milkweed (Asclepias tuberosa), purple poppy-mallow (Callirhoe involucrate), and tickseed (Coreopsis sp.).

Photo by Tina Seemayer.

En Español: Un porche bordeado de Baptisia australis, Asclepias tuberosa, Callirhoe involucrate, y Coreopsis sp.

Foto de Tina Seemayer.

Jardín silvestre certificado en un suburbio de Sedgwick County por Laura Mendenhall

Tina y Al Seemayer de Kechi, Kansas, recientemente certificaron su patio a través del programa Jardín Silvestre de la National Wildlife Federation. Tina fue lo suficientemente amable como para compartir su experiencia con la creación de un jardín que es hermoso y habitable por la vida silvestre nativa.

Para elegir plantas, Tina sugiere elegir un lugar que desee llenar, caracterizar los niveles de luz solar y humedad de esa lugar, y luego encontrar una especie nativa que crezca en esas condiciones. El Dyck Arboretum of the Plains, la Kansas Native Plant Society y kswildflower.org son buenos recursos para encontrar lo que es nativo y lo que funciona para cada tipo de con-

dición. El jardín en el frente de la casa de Tina presenta un impresionante *Baptisia australis*, naranja brillante *Asclepias tuberosa*, *Callirhoe involucrate* y *Rudbeckia hirta*, que producen semillas todos los años para compartir con amigos y familiares.

Puede plantar las mismas especies en racimos para crear una aparien-

cia uniforme y contrastar las flores de aspecto más ocupado junto a las gramíneas más compactas como *Schizachyrium scoparium*.

Cuando se le preguntó si había experimentado alguna queja de los vecinos, me aseguró que ningún vecino se había quejado. Además, un vecino plantó un césped de *Bouteloua dactyloides* y está encantado con cómo resultó. Seemayer recibe preguntas y comentarios, como una pareja en bicicleta cerca que gritó: "Nos encanta tu patio, nos recuerda mucho a Kansas" y una vez que tuvo un visitante fotografiando su patio delantero.

Seemayer comparte el siguiente consejo para aquellos de nosotros que estamos interesados en agregar algunas plantas nativas y vida silvestre a nuestros patios:

Si no tienes mucho dinero, prueba solo una planta primero.

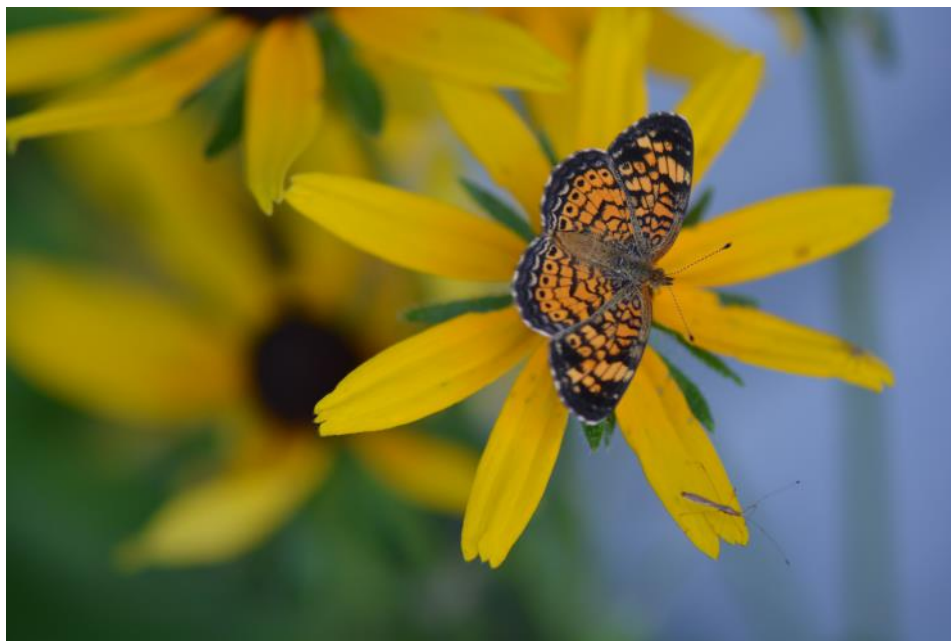
Si no puede rehacer un patio entero, está bien. Trabaje con ciertos aspectos de su jardín que desea mejorar. Saca una planta vieja, pon una planta nueva.

Presta atención a la altura y propagación de las flores silvestres y pastos nativos y planta en consecuen-

cia. La *Callirhoe involucrate* es buena, tupida, de bajo crecimiento y las flores de *Echinacea sp.* son altas y relativamente compactas.

No mates a todos los insectos que ves cuando veas en una planta. Esto es POR QUÉ plantaste nativo, después de todo. Tina vio un montón de orugas comiendo sus *Rudbeckia hirta* al final de la temporada: ¡eran orugas de mariposa, no una plaga!

¡Disfruta de todas las mariposas, abejas y pájaros que comenzarán a utilizar tu jardín!



A native butterfly nectars on a black-eyed Susan in Tina Seemayer's yard.

Photo by Tina Seemayer.

En Español:

Una mariposa nativa come en una Rudbeckia hirta en el patio de Tina Seemayer.

Foto de Tina Seemayer.

Websites to help you create habitat in your yard and identify new critters: butterfliesandmoths.org, kswildflower.org, bugguide.net, ebird.org, kansasnativesplantsociety.org, dyckarboretum.org/landscaping-with-native-plants/

Morel Mushrooms 101

by Lyndzee Rhine

As you leave the world of humans behind and enter the woods, a strange sense of calm settles upon you. You begin to notice sounds you never picked up before, like the soft squish of damp earth under your boot, the tickle of leaves as the breeze moves through them, and the cacophony of birds singing their hearts out. It seems the hands on your watch are moving slower than normal, and you take your sweet time examining the little things that live among the leaf litter. As you're crouching down to say hello to a snail, an almost alien-like creature makes itself known in your peripheral. It's a mushroom, one which thrives in moist conditions and is coveted by many: the morel.

But what makes the morel so special? For starters, it only comes out in the spring months, specifically late March through early May. If you're looking for an excuse to get outside, morel hunting is a great one. They're easy to identify once you learn how. Not to mention, they are delicious. In fact, they are so prized that they average \$20 per pound and have even been known to sell for more than \$60 per pound.

To get you excited about exploring nature, here is a quick guide on what you need, how to identify morels, what a false morel is, and where and when to find the good ones. **Please note that if you're at all unsure of a mushroom's true identity, the cardinal rule is WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT. It's not worth getting sick over.**

What to bring

Ticks, poison ivy, and potentially dangerous snakes can also be found in the woods. Keep in mind that there are ways to avoid such hazards. It's recommended that you wear long sleeves, long pants, tall socks, and close-toed shoes. It might look silly, but tucking your pants into your socks will save you a lot of the troubles that can accompany ticks. Sunscreen and bug spray are always a necessity. Permethrin is a great insect-repellant product to pretreat your clothes. You'll also need a basket or mesh bag of some kind. You should never transport your morels in a plastic bag. Just like plants need to "breathe," so do



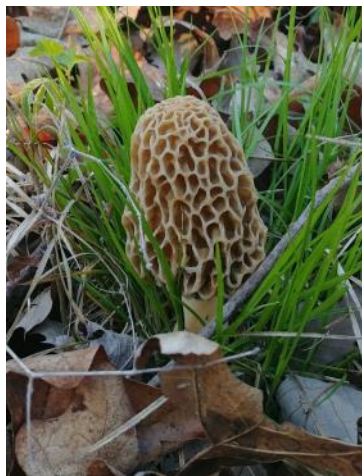
Morel mushroom by Lyndzee Rhine

mushrooms. Keeping them in plastic will cut off the flow of air, make them start "sweating," and speed

up the decomposition process. You'll need a knife to sustainably harvest the mushroom. Finally, you'll need fresh water and snacks if you plan on being out for 2 hours or more.

How to identify a morel

It's recommended that you reference a field guide to help you properly identify mushrooms in the wild. *Mushrooms of the Midwest*, by Michael Kuo and Andrew S. Methven, is highly recommended. It's on the large size, though, and pocket guides are available. Find some quick ways to safely identify morels in the field on the next page...



The cap is made of honeycomb-like ridges and pits, not folds.

Morel mushroom by Bryson Funke.

The cap is completely attached to the stem.

Morels are hollow throughout, so cut the mushroom in half, top to bottom, to test.



Morel mushroom by Lyndzee Rhine

Colors tend to vary quite a bit as there are several known species of morel in N. America, but all are considered edible. Colors may range from yellow, tan, grey, grey-black, to olive-ish. If the mushroom you're looking at is more in the red/brown category, you're likely dealing with a false morel.

What about false morels?

Of the few kinds of mushrooms that are considered look-alike species, *Gyromita sp.* are the ones you'll most likely encounter during your hunts in Kansas. Some controversy exists surrounding the edibility of *Gyromita sp.*, but these mushrooms are considered toxic. Their appearance can be brain-like or consist of folds. They're reddish brown, brown, or sometimes a tan-yellow color. They're often shorter than they are wide, but not always. Finally, if cut from top to bottom, the mushroom will be chambered or have holes throughout its flesh.

Where can I find morels?

First, it's important to know that morels grow out of the ground. Second, they can be found all over the place in a variety of habitats.



False morel by Lyndzee Rhine.

They've been seen growing in people's yards, in ditches on the side of the road, and in mulch beds. You'll



The inside of a false morel by Lyndzee Rhine.

have the most luck if you look in and on the edge of forested areas. Look for ash, elm, oak, and cottonwood trees, around which morels often grow. Well-drained, sandy soils, like a creek bottom, make good hunting spots as well. Search the ground until you find one, and then slow down to continue scanning the area carefully. Where you find one, you'll likely find others. Make note of where you find it, and search for similar environments. When you harvest one, avoid picking it out of the ground like a weed. You'll damage the mycelium and potentially harm future seasons. Take your knife and cut the stem at the base of the mushroom. This will protect the fungal body and prevent damaging your prize.

(continued on next page)

When can I find morels?

You'll find morels during spring, when daytime highs reach the 60s and lows stay above 40 degrees.

Now that you know the very basics, you can go out and start hunting your own mushrooms! It's great to bring along a friend and share the experience. Always let someone know where you're going and when you'll be back. Don't forget to share the woods. Happy hunting!

Upcoming Events

Outdoor Adventure Camp is scheduled for May 26th-May 31st at Rock Springs Ranch! This camp is for Kansas youth, male and female, age 10-12 years old by this summer. Participants can learn to canoe and fish and participate in shooting sports, crafts, swimming, and a field trip to Milford Fish Hatchery and Nature Center. You can find out details, including the participant application, on the Outdoor Adventure Camp - OAC Facebook page or online at:

<https://kansaswildlifefederation.org/programs/programs-oac/>

You can mail your application with included payment to:

Outdoor Adventure Camp
Theresa Berger, Camp Coordinator
406 S. New York Ave.
Sylvan Grove, KS 67481-9339

For more information, call: 785-526-7466 (evenings) or email: bergkwf@wtciweb.com

We are still accepting applications for camp, but please check the Outdoor Adventure Camp - OAC Facebook page to monitor the status of camp given the current situation with Covid-19. Full refunds will be issued should camp have to cancel for 2020.

The Dyck Arboretum of the Plains is still hosting their sprint **FloraKansas Spring Native Plant Festival**, but it will not be in person. Check their website at: <http://dyckarboretum.org/arboretum-event/florakansas-spring/> for specifics on how to order plants this year. This is a great source for native Kansas plants!

The **Kansas Spring Turkey Season** is still on. Youth and Disabled Opener was April 1, Archery Opener is April 6th, and the Regular Season opens April 15th. Please check the KDWPT website for further information:

<https://ksoutdoors.com/Hunting/When-to-Hunt/Turkey>

Take Your Kid Fishing

by Brent Frazee

Parents, I feel for you.

After weeks of being stuck inside during the coronavirus outbreak, the kids are stir-crazy. And so are you.

But here's a suggestion that might help. Consider adding a new course to your children's classes – Fishing 101.

With youth sports, school programs, church events and meetings shut down, this would be the perfect time to get outdoors and get back to basics. You don't have to drive long distances or invest a lot of time and money to do it. A nearby farm pond, small lake or strip pit would be the perfect classroom.

Remember to follow coronavirus health guidelines—go out in small groups, preferably family members you live with, and practice social distancing with others.

But if you're not much of a fisherman yourself, where do you start? Well, we're going to teach the teachers.

Start small

Too many times, I've seen parents outfit their kids with long fishing rods they can barely lift, heavy line, big hooks and even bigger bobbers.

Then they can't figure out why their kids aren't catching fish and quickly get bored.

It's better to think small—small rods and reels, small bait, small trips, small fish.



A small fish can produce a big smile on the face of children. Photo by Brent Frazee.

To a kid, a 5-inch bluegill is just as noteworthy as a 5-pound bass. It's all about getting bites.

I recommend outfitting your young kids with something that matches their size. A 5-foot light-action rod with a small push-button reel is perfect.

I'm not a big fan of the packaged combo rods and reels that come with logos of cartoon characters. They are short, and they don't have the light-action tips that help kids detect subtle bites.

That's just my opinion, but I think parents are better off buying a slightly longer rod and a smaller, more efficient push-button reel.

Line size is also important. Some of the packaged rods and reels come with line as heavy as 10-pound test.

I recommend rigging your child's reel with 4-pound test line. That lighter line allows the bait to dangle more naturally and for the young angler to feel even the slightest bite.

Pinch a small split shot onto the line and use a small hook—either a No. 6 or No. 8 long-shank.

That size will catch the smallest of fish. And the long shank will allow mom or dad to more-easily retrieve the hook.

Avoid snaps or swivels. That extra hardware often causes small fish to shy away. And keeping with that "smaller is better" theme, use the smallest bobber you can get away with; remember, the least amount of resistance often will get a fish to take the bait.

Baiting the hook

Again, start off with small baits.

A big, juicy nightcrawler might seem like the way to go, but the little “bait stealers” such as bluegills or green sunfish will quickly tug that off the hook.

Go to either redworms, small pieces of nightcrawlers or crickets to get a kid started. For crappies, buy the smallest minnows the bait shop has and use a bobber just big enough to keep that bait from pulling it under.

Location

Look for someplace where a child is going to get lots of bites, and someplace where they can fish from the bank.

By staying on shore, you’re close to the parking lot when a child runs out of patience. In a boat, it’s often a long ride back to the dock. A farm pond is an ideal place to start be-

cause it gets little fishing pressure and often is loaded with fish. A small community lake or state fishing lake also can be good.

Look for a place where there aren’t a lot of trees along the bank. Kids are famous for casting baits or lures into trees.

And try to go when you have your best chance of catching fish. Fish are more active on cloudy days rather than bright, sunny days. They like low-light situations. Early in the morning or late in the evening also are good times.

Patience

Parents, leave your rods and reels at home. This is about the kids. Focus on helping them.

At first, don’t plan to stay long. Remember, a kid’s attention span isn’t as long as yours. Pack a lunch, plenty of snacks and some juice boxes.

Don’t get discouraged when the kids lose focus, even if the fishing is good, and start chasing frogs or skipping rocks. The fishing is just part of the overall outdoors experience.

Make sure your kids are dressed properly – for example, a sweatshirt if it’s cool or a rain jacket if it is supposed to rain.

Last, take lots of pictures of your kids with their fish. Make them feel proud.

Follow these guidelines, and chances are, you’ll have a little fishing buddy begging to go with you the next time you venture out.

Brent Frazee is an award-winning writer and photographer who lives in Parkville, Mo. You can see more of his work on his blog, brentfrazee.com.

How To Get Involved with KWF

Visit our new website: www.kansaswildlifefederation.org to learn about becoming a member or donor and to keep track of upcoming events in your area.

Follow us on Facebook (Kansas Wildlife Federation, Inc.), Instagram @kswildlifefed, and Twitter @KSWildlifeFed for the latest news on conservation in Kansas and to learn about upcoming events.

Thank you for reading our newsletter.