

Menke Scholarship to Improve Wildlife Habitat

The Webster Groves Nature Study Society is pleased to announce that applications are being accepted for the Menke Scholarship to Improve Wildlife Habitat. The Menke scholarship honors Don and Nell Menke, (°) long-term members of WGNSS and lifelong birders/wildflower experts, and their son, David Menke, (°°) a wildlife park ranger, all his professional life.

The scholarship's goal is to increase and improve wildlife habitat in Missouri by planting, protecting, managing, publicizing, and in various other ways demonstrating specific habitat improvements for fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals, plants, or invertebrates.

Applicants typically major in nature study (e.g., biology, ecology, botany, forestry, conservation). But meeting the scholarship's goals is more important than the major field itself (e.g., applications from non-nature study fields are accepted). Recipients may work with or intern with conservation programs. The scholarship will not support projects that may harm or endanger wildlife, including attaching or implanting objects.

The scholarship awards up to \$2,000 for one year.

Download the 2023 application information and requirements:

Applications to the education committee must include the following:

1. Abstract not exceeding 250 words; summarizing proposed work, how scholarship funds will be used, and brief biography.

2. Summary description (5 pages maximum) of your work in terms understandable to non-technical reviewers. The summary should include project goals, methodology, and *how results will improve wildlife habitat in Missouri*.
3. Budget of expected costs. Expenses above the award limit are the responsibility of the awardee.
4. Curriculum vitae of an academic career; education and degrees, institutions and dates, a summary of related courses, grades, conservation activities, etc. Transcripts are not required.
5. Two letters of recommendation from current or former faculty. One must be from your advisor and specify; (a) you are a bona fide student currently registered for a B.A., B.S., M.S., or Ph.D. degree, (b) existing funds do not already cover your expenses, and (c) the award would enhance your work.

Please send it as an electronic submission (<10 MB) to Brian Waldrop at brian.waldrop@mdc.mo.gov

Reference: **Menke Scholarship to Improve Wildlife Habitat**

Scholarship Schedule:

1. February 20, 2023: **Application deadline**. Word or PDF format preferred. Costs may be submitted in Excel.
2. April 17, 2023: Award notifications due to students.
3. May 2023: The recipient presents a short research project overview at the WGNSS general meeting.
4. June 2023: Funds awarded to the recipient's institution. The award period is one year.

5. 2023 to 2024: The recipient's article will be published in the WGNSS Nature Note journal and present detailed findings at the WGNSS general meeting.

The winner will be invited to the annual WGNSS dinner meeting in May 2023 to give a short presentation on the project. Within two years of receiving the funds, the winner is asked to submit a summary article for the WGNSS Nature Note journal and acknowledge the grant in any resulting published material.

The award will be made to the applicant's institution, which is expected to establish and monitor a fund appropriate to curate the stipend. The funds may carry over beyond the award year to benefit the awardee's research. The scholarship funds cannot be used to pay overhead to any institution. The scholarship must be acknowledged in any resulting published material.

° Don and Nell Menke were WGNSS members for over 30 years. Don was an avid outdoorsman, naturalist, and conservationist. He enjoyed many activities, such as canoeing, birding, observing wildflowers, building bluebird nest boxes, camping, and photography. Nell was a charter member of the Missouri Native Plant Society. In 1977, she and Betty Nellums started the Tuesday wildflower tours at the Shaw Nature Reserve, and in 1985 she received special recognition for her continued leadership on the wildflower tours. Her journals record flower locations and blooming at the Nature Reserve.

°° Their son, David, one of six siblings, was a wildlife park ranger all his professional life and an outdoor recreation planner for the Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuge. David was an internationally known wildlife photographer, builder of hiking trails, photo blinds, and canoe trails, and a tireless promoter of wildlife observation, particularly birding. *"He had become the go-to person for hardcore enthusiasts to where the rare sighting could be*

found, but he was just as comfortable taking a group of novice birders or an elementary class on their first walk to a wetland.”