

AN EVALUATION OF MISSOURI MASTER NATURALIST PROGRAM: CHANGES IN
VOLUNTEER KNOWLEDGE AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MOTIVATIONS
AND CHANGES IN VOLUNTEER KNOWLEDGE

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ABSTRACT

The Missouri Master NaturalistTM (MN) program educates adults who then volunteer to help manage their community's natural resources. My research evaluated Missouri's MN training program. My first objective determined any improvement in volunteers' knowledge of ecological processes and conservation issues in Missouri after the training. My second objective identified volunteer's motivations, and determined if a relationship existed between volunteer's motivations and any improvement in knowledge.

Results demonstrated a significant improvement in volunteers' knowledge after ($F(2,76) = 50.678, p < 0.000$), due to improvement from the pre-training to the post-training survey ($t(77) = -10.356, p < .000$). No significant improvement occurred from post-training to the six-month follow-up survey ($t(38) = -.057, p > .955$), though volunteers maintained their level of knowledge. Volunteers' primary motivations were values/altruism and a desire to learn. There was no significant relationship between any particular motivation and improvement in knowledge at the end of the MN training program.