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opening windows for young minds



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# Our Stream Team

by Rachel Young  
photographs by August Kryger




**Hi!** My name is Trevor. I'm 5 years old, and I live in Missouri, near a river called the Jack's Fork. Before I was born, my grandpa Ted and grandma Pat decided they wanted to help keep the river clean. So they started a club called Stream Team 713. I like our other name better—the Jack's Fork River Rats!

The River Rats make sure the water is clean and healthy for fish and people. And now I'm big enough to help take care of the river too. Come see!

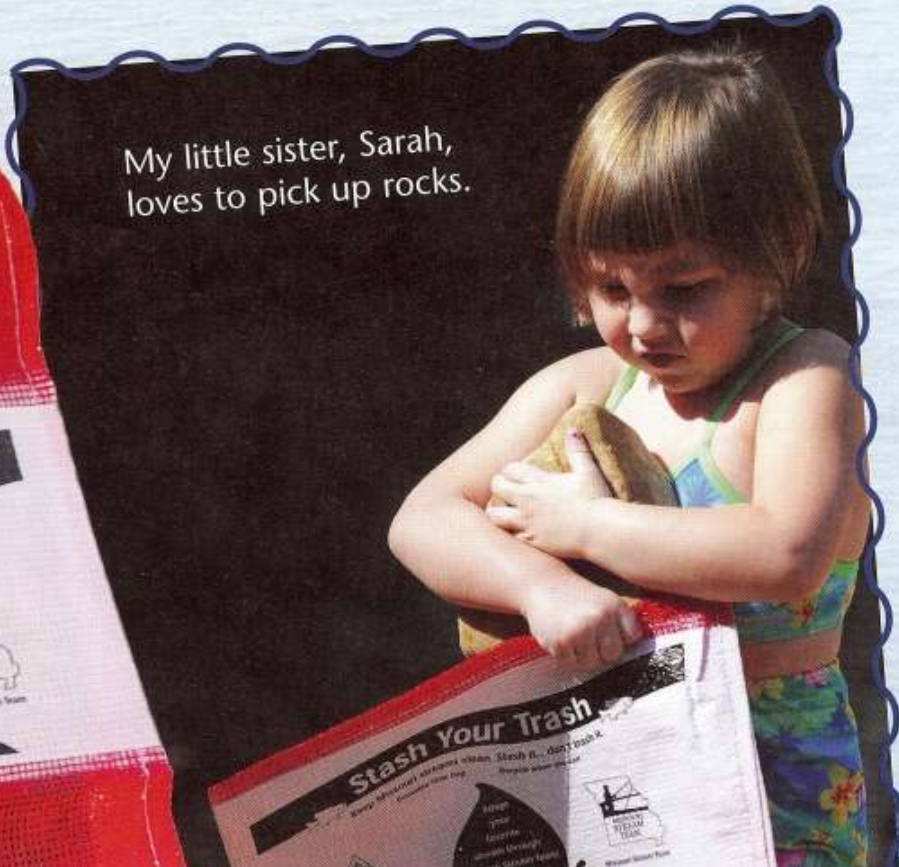






Picking up trash is sort of like a treasure hunt. My friends and I find bottlecaps, cans, candy wrappers, and all sorts of stuff. But there used to be even more garbage here.

In one weekend, my grandparents once picked up 6 tons of trash. That's as much as an elephant weighs! That garbage wasn't good for the river or the animals and plants that lived there.



My little sister, Sarah, loves to pick up rocks.

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Missouri Department of Conservation

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Missouri Stream Team





Look! Jeffery found a tire!



So the River Rats taught people who were fishing or canoeing on the river to take trash with them rather than throwing it in the water. Now there's much less trash for us to pick up.

Here's all the garbage we found today. If we keep telling people not to trash the river, maybe one day we won't find any garbage here.





Now it's time for my favorite job—looking for water bugs! The bugs like to burrow into the mud and rocks at the river bottom. So some big kids do a funny bug dance to stir up the rocks. My grandpa has a big net to catch the bugs as they float downriver.



Some bugs don't care how dirty the water is, but other bugs can only live here if the water's clean. If we find lots of bugs who need clean water, then we know the river is clean enough for fish and for us.



Each kid gets a little box with a magnifying glass on top. We fill the boxes with water, then Grandpa puts a bug inside.





Look at all the cool bugs we found! When we're done counting, we put them back in the water. We want there to be lots of bugs in the river, so the fish have something to eat.



I like the hellgrammite. It's a funny-looking bug, and it's fierce like a little lion.

We're done cleaning up and counting bugs. Now it's time for swimming! I love taking care of the Jack's Fork River. We help make sure it's a clean and safe place for me and my friends to play.

Wait for me!

