On Wednesday, May 13, eight Obion County 4-H Members competed in the Western Region 4-H Wildlife Judging Contest at Natchez Trace State Park in Wildersville, TN. The Junior High team took first place while the Junior team took third, in a field of 121 total participants of all divisions! Some team members earned wildlife medals and certificates by attending practices and creating a wildlife presentation.

The entire group is pictured with their certificates. First row, left to right, are Nate Lawrence and Isaiah Burns, both of LRE (Lake Road Elementary); middle row, left to right, are Julie Harstin (coach), Reagan Simmons of Hillcrest Elementary, and Amber Lawrence of LRE; back row, left to right are Omar Harris of Ridgemont Elementary, Stephen Cai of Union City Middle School, Madisen Lawrence of Obion County Central High School, and William Hale III of South Fulton Middle and High School.

The winning Junior High Team was made up of (left to right) Amber Lawrence, Omar Harris, William Halle III, and Stephen Cai.

The 3rd place Junior Team consisted of (left to right) Reagan Simmons, Nate Lawrence, and Isaiah Burns.

Pictured here are team members in the top 5 of their divisions: Amber Lawrence, 2nd High Scoring Individual in the Junior High Division and Nate Lawrence, 3rd High Scoring Individual in the Junior Division.

Also in the top 10 of his division was Omar Harris, 8th High Scoring Individual, Junior High.

[Wildlife ID at Contest winners: William Hale III (standing, far right) and Madisen Lawrence (standing, 2nd from right) identify a beaver skull during the contest.

These youth had been studying wildlife at after-school practices since March 31. Four practices were conducted offsite, most with help from local wildlife professionals. Many thanks to the following volunteers who contributed to their success: Tara Dowdy of the Reelfoot National Wildlife Refuge, Michael Hudson of Big Cypress Tree State Park, Cory Hussey of the Reelfoot Lake State Park, and Mr. and Mrs. Jim and Carlene Polk, who hosted them for a practice at their home. Obion County Extension offers programs in agriculture and natural resources 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and resource development. The University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, Tennessee State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Obion County governments are cooperating. UT and TSU Extension provide equal opportunities in programs and employment.