



The PRAIRIE PROMOTER

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Grassroots Conservation at Work

New Addition at Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area

by Willis Brown & Cate Harrington

The Prairie Enthusiasts recently purchased a 190-acre parcel, including a historic barn, just west of Barneveld, Wisconsin, in the Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area (MRPHA). The land was purchased from Doug Thomas whose family had owned the property since 1860. Doug has retained a life tenancy on an 11.2-acre parcel on the property, which includes the barn and all of the buildings.

This purchase is a significant addition to a 79-acre tract that The Nature Conservancy (TNC) purchased from Doug's father, Harold Thomas, in 1979. The purchase was made possible with help from TNC and the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program, along with a federal grant related to endangered species that was secured through working with the US Fish & Wildlife Service. Prairie bush clover, a federally-threatened plant is present on the adjacent TNC land along with a population of a state-endangered butterfly, the regal fritillary. Much of the land in the TPE purchase is



*Doug Thomas and the stone barn at the new preserve in Barneveld, WI
Photo by Mark Godfrey, The Nature Conservancy*

currently in agriculture with plans to restore it to prairie. The pasture on the property is already home to regal fritillary butterflies, some prairie vegetation and many species of grassland birds.

In addition to being adjacent to a prairie remnant, the property spans U.S. Highway 151 and is adjacent to the Military Ridge State Trail, making it accessible to many folks driving, bicycling or walking in the area. The land is also part of the Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area, a 95,000-acre area of Dane and Iowa counties that provides much-needed habitat for grassland birds, a cadre of species in serious decline nationwide. It is adjacent to TNC's 1,100+ acre Barneveld Prairie and is within five miles, as the

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Picking the Seeds for Tomorrow

Chris Kirkpatrick, Executive Director

The end of summer is before us, and the prairies are heavy with ripe seeds of the growing season. Many of us are out picking the diverse harvest; drying, sorting, cleaning, and preparing it to be seeded down this fall. This seed will sit through the winter underneath a blanket of snow in preparation to be a new prairie planting in the years to come. It is a season of planning for the future, and as we look toward the end of the year we are also preparing for the future of The Prairie Enthusiasts (TPE). Like the prairie seed that we harvest, there are several exciting giving opportunities that I want to highlight.



As in years past, we are now preparing for our year end annual appeal. We have accomplished much this year, and we look forward to sharing these with you. From newly conserved remnants and amazing restoration projects to successful outreach events, we ask that you please consider making a gift in addition to your membership renewal. One new campaign that we are involved with this year is Earth Share Wisconsin, enabling state employees to make a gift through their employer. If you are a Wisconsin state employee, or know of family or friends who are, you can pursue donating to TPE through this new program.

In addition to membership renewals and the annual appeal, I am proud to state that the Board of Directors has pledged over \$20,000 this year, reflecting the Board's commitment and leadership. We are also in our second year of the Compass Club program, which recognizes members who donate \$1,000+ of unrestricted income. 100% of this giving supports the operations and mission of TPE through protection, management, restoration, and education.

This year we have migrated to a new membership database, and and shortly will be launching a members' portal. This will enable each member to securely log into the new database via our website and access your membership profile. This will enable you to update and change contact information, renew or make donations on-line, but most importantly provide input on your individual skills and interests as well as what chapter(s) you would like to be affiliated with. The final part of the program is a new website format, which we are beginning to work on.

These are very exciting times to be a member of TPE. All of these contributions and support are planting the seeds of our future growth, and like the prairie seeds we plant to expand upon the prairies of tomorrow, I am very excited about TPE's future. Thank you for your support, and I look forward to seeing you out on the prairie!

President's Message

By Jack Kussmaul

It has been a while since I have discussed accreditation. You will recall that accreditation is a program that the Land Trust Alliance offers to accredit land trusts which meet rather rigorous requirements. The program has been in effect for several years and more and more land trusts are pursuing accreditation. The Prairie Enthusiasts has made a decision to try to meet the requirements and to join the ranks of accredited land trusts.

Four years ago we created an Accreditation Committee. It worked on policies of a general nature which did not fall under the umbrella of another committee. Other committees have since been working on meeting the requirements in their areas. We have joined the LEAP program whereby Gathering Waters and The Land Trust Alliance works with us on a regular basis to assist us and to monitor progress.

We only have a few areas left to complete. Here are some examples. We have given lower priority to registering in states where we solicit a significant amount of funds. We have long been registered in Wisconsin. We have just completed the applications for Illinois and Minnesota and have submitted them to those states. Our application was quickly approved by Minnesota and we are waiting to hear from Illinois. There are some baselines that need to be completed. While we have completed a Board Manual, which is required, it has not yet been posted to the website

which we need to do. We need to do more work in assessing and meeting stewardship needs for all of our properties.

I attended the annual Land Trust Alliance Rally in Providence, Rhode Island, for three days in mid-September. I was attracted to this in part because of the programs on becoming accredited. Half of my time at the conference was at accreditation programs. These included one held by presenters from land trusts that have recently completed the process. Following the rally, I hope to focus on areas where we are still falling short and bring these into compliance so that we may actually submit the application for accreditation within the next couple of years.

One of the requirements that we have initiated is appointing a three member committee to conduct an annual review of the by-laws. Each year the membership of the committee changes so that we are getting fresh perspectives and ideas annually. The committee takes a hard look at our current governance document and recommends any changes to stay current with the needs of our growing and evolving organization. The subject of board term limits was raised in this connection. The majority, but not all board members, felt that this might be a good idea but it may not be practical as difficult as it sometimes is to recruit board members. It was specifically agreed that this question will be part of the annual review. Thanks to Linda Lynch, Mark Leach and Nick Faessler for agreeing to serve on this year's committee.

In my next message I will report on the LTA Rally and what I am able to take away from it.

Photos from TPE Picnic & Annual Meeting



The TPE summer picnic and annual meeting was held at Twining Park in Monroe, WI on July 19.
Both photos by Evanne Hunt



(L to R) Jim Rogala, Jim Freymiller and Mark Leach.
Jim Freymiller reported to the Board on his Skinner Prairie property, which TPE is considering acquiring as a preserve.

TPE was incorporated in Wisconsin in 1987 as a private nonprofit, tax exempt corporation under section [501(c)3] of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations are tax-deductible. The Prairie Promoter is a quarterly publication of The Prairie Enthusiasts. No part of this periodical may be reproduced without permission. We welcome articles, announcements, artwork and photographs relevant to prairie and savanna ecosystems. Mail or e-mail submissions to local chapter editorial volunteers or to The Prairie Promoter editor. Deadlines for submission of material are Mar. 14 (Spring issue); May 30 (Summer issue); Aug. 15 (Fall issue); and Dec. 5 (Winter issue). If you would like to receive electronic notification of the newsletter, please e-mail Joe Rising at TPE@theprairieenthusiasts.org.

Save the Date!!
TPE Annual Conference & Banquet: March 21, 2015 at UW-Stevens Point, WI

Double Oak Savanna Dedicated

by Jack Kussmaul

There were times when Alice and Walter Mirk were not sure they would ever see it happen, but the dedication of Double Oak Savanna finally took place on Saturday, October 4. This 23 acre gem, located in the Town of Millville in northern Grant County, was a project they had worked on for 25 years, and it was five years ago when they were ready to turn it over to The Prairie Enthusiasts. A series of problems challenged this effort. First there were zoning issues that took some time to resolve. Next was a problem with getting Knowles-Nelson Stewardship funding. The application was good and the project was within about two weeks of final approval. Then a new governor took office and all stewardship funding was stopped while the whole program was being revisited. Another year of waiting passed before a new application was submitted and funding was approved. Because of a quirk in the transition from the old program to the new program, funding was awarded for the full purchase price rather than the normal half. Because the Mirks donated back the entire sale price, the size of the endowment was double what it would have been had the first application been approved. Sometimes things work out much better than expected.

Closing took place in the summer of 2012. We held off on the dedication until 2013, because we wanted to do a burn on the property to get it looking its best. A late spring 2013 burn was called for. The weather was perfect when the burn was scheduled. Wild fires in other parts of the state, however, led to a state wide burning ban. When it was lifted it rained and then it was too late in the season to burn.

Driftless Area Land Stewardship was contracted to do the burn this spring. They looked with dismay at the rugged terrain over which they would have to prepare firebreaks. Consulting with DNR, which owns all of the surrounding

property as part of the Lower Wisconsin Riverway, they got permission to use roads on the DNR property as fire breaks. This meant that instead of only 23 acres being burned, over 100 were in the burn unit. We expect this relationship with DNR to continue.

There was more good news this summer when a DNR crew staked out the survey boundaries. It turns out that Double Oak contains an area next to the high quality prairie everyone thought the state owned. A work party in November will be cutting out red cedars which have choked prairie growth and will now allow for expansion of the quality prairie area.

The morning of the dedication there was rain and snow in the area, which fortunately ended an hour before the program. Attendance was excellent in spite of the cold and wind. Walter led a two hour hike around the property, which in the rough terrain seems like much more than 23 acres. There was a short program which ended with Walter and his granddaughter unveiling the Double Oak Savanna sign. A pot luck meal was then enjoyed by a hardy group bundled up against the cold.

The dedication was a great ending to the long saga of getting this parcel protected.

Walter Mirk at the dedication of the Double Oak Savanna preserve on October 4, 2014
Photo by Jack Kussmaul



New Addition at Military Ridge (continued from Page 1)

bird flies, to TPE's 570+ acre Mounds View Grassland. The reader may wonder why TNC did not purchase the property; the organization was interested but ultimately decided to work with TPE instead due to the historic barn.

The barn, built by Welsh stone masons (Doug Thomas' great-grandfather, who originally purchased the property, was born in Wales) is readily visible from Highway 151. It was one of the structures featured on a Wisconsin Public Television show entitled: "Wisconsin Barns: Touchstones to the Past." The Driftless Area Land Conservancy purchased a conservation and historic preservation easement from the Thomas family to permanently protect the 190-acre Thomas farm and historic barn in 2005. In addition to restoring the land to prairie, one of TPE's goals is to have the barn eventually become a visitor and environmental education center focused on the MRPHA and prairie/grassland conservation that will be used by all of the MRPHA partners.

"In the future, we hope to work with the community and our partners to form a "Friends of the Thomas Stone Barn" group to contribute the knowledge and expertise with historic buildings that we lack, and help make the barn a place where people can gather and experience our prairie and agricultural heritage," said Rich Henderson of the Empire-Sauk Chapter. "We are grateful to The Nature Conservancy for making this acquisition possible, and we look forward to partnering with them and the Driftless Area Land Conservancy in assuring that the land and barn are maintained for future generations to experience and enjoy."

TPE's executive director Chris Kirkpatrick added, "It is very exciting to purchase the Thomas property. The combination of purchasing a critically important property to expand upon the grassland complex in southwest Wisconsin, while helping protect a historically important stone barn, is a unique opportunity. The project is also a great example of landowners, non-profits and government agencies collaborating together."

Profiles of TPE Chapters Now Online

by Jim Rogala

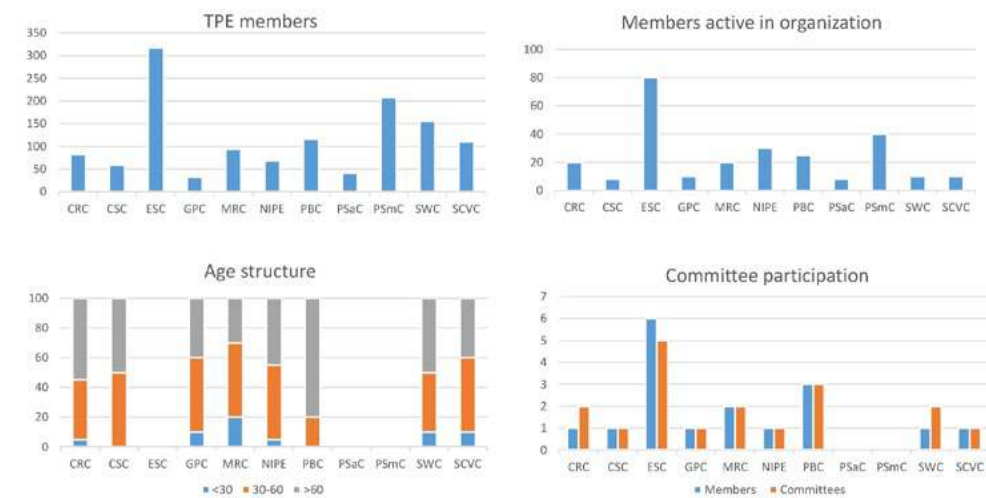
The TPE Board formed an Ad Hoc Committee at the March 2014 Board Retreat. The committee's task was to begin to clarify ongoing organizational issues and to develop strategies to begin to resolve those issues. In the committee report to the Board at the July Board meeting, eight specific recommendations were made. Also included in the report were three documents generated to assist in execution of the recommendations. In this newsletter, we introduce one of the three documents: results from a chapter questionnaire.

The intent of the chapter questionnaire was to provide Board members an overview of the chapters to help better inform decisions regarding how the organization operates. In addition, these surveys provide valuable

information to let each chapter know how other chapters operate. That understanding can illustrate commonalities, but more importantly give chapters alternatives to improve their operation. The survey was completed by chapter leadership, with staff providing some membership and financial data.

A summary of the survey responses was used to create chapter profiles using figures, tables and lists of responses. An example of one of the pages is illustrated here. The entire summary has been posted under the TPE "chapters" webpage (www.theprairieenthusiasts.org/chapter/chapter.htm). The summary of chapter profiles is a living document to be updated as needed. If the information depicted for your chapter needs updating, please contact Jim Rogala (therogues@charter.net).

Chapter member information



Update on TPE Burn Policy

by Jim Rogala

The Land Management Committee (LMC) hopes that TPE can fully implement the burn policy for the 2015 spring burn season. The missing pieces that were postponed last year were 1) burn boss and line leader approval and 2) no formal review of burn plans. Several chapters have recently provided data to the committee for the purpose of approving burn bosses and line leaders. The data is quite impressive, and illustrates the depth of experience and training of those burning with TPE. We encourage all chapters to submit data on experience/training, even if the chapter doesn't intend to conduct TPE sanctioned burns.

Based on a recommendation from the Ad Hoc Committee, the LMC intends to improve communication about the TPE burn policy. Several strategies have already been developed. Updates in the newsletter, such as this article, are one strategy. We have formally assigned LMC members to act as liaisons with each chapter to provide more assistance in understanding and executing the requirements set forth in the burn policy. We also plan to greatly enhance the TPE prescribed burning webpage with such things as a "lessons learned" section and more references. With the upcoming new website, we hope to have a discussion forum available for information exchange. We have begun to create a canned presentation for a crew member level training that can be modified as desired by each chapter. Stay tuned for more updates in future Promoters!

Kalscheur Savanna Bridge Completed

by Kristin Westad

TPE's Kalscheur Savanna is suddenly a lot easier to manage. This summer, a local contractor installed a wooden bridge across Olson Creek. The bridge links the legal access from Highway K to the 19 acres of prairie and savanna. We no longer have to depend on favors from the neighbors to get equipment to the site.

At least 15 years ago, Prairie Enthusiasts stashed a few retired wooden utility poles in a corner of the preserve. Linden contractor Mark Rochon used those salvaged poles as the main supports for the bridge. In Spring 2013, many of you responded to a request in these pages by donating money towards this bridge. Thanks for your help! Your generosity exceeded the cost of the bridge, so we are applying the remaining funds to managing the savanna.

In winter of 2013, a volunteer work party felled and burned up a giant black willow that was growing right where we wanted the bridge to go. In addition to making way for the bridge, that work also brought more sunlight to the angelica, joe-pye weed and sedges growing along the bank.

Special thanks to Amy Staffen (shown celebrating in the photo), whose persistent pluck kept the project on track through a series of hurdles. At one point, she tapped into her trove of personal contacts to find a way around paying \$10,000 for hydrologic data required for a permit. That's quite a contribution.



Amy Staffen on the new bridge at Kalscheur Savanna.
Photo by Kristin Westad

Please enjoy the new bridge by bringing a friend to visit Kalscheur Savanna some day soon. It is a couple miles South of Hollandale, WI. You can find directions at www.ThePrairieEnthusiasts.org.

The Buckthorn Baggie

by Matt Hamilton

Buckthorn is an invasive plant overtaking many of the woodland plots across the Midwest and Canada. If not controlled or eliminated, buckthorn can totally destroy all native plants in our woods.

I am currently a junior at the University of Wisconsin - Madison earning a degree in mechanical engineering. Growing up, my dad put me to work removing buckthorn every summer. I realized that buckthorn is a huge problem, and could not believe that there was no easy product to control it. Lots of chemicals can kill buckthorn, but with many undesirable side effects. Another option is to pull the buckthorn out by hand. This is a lot of hard work, and after pulling the buckthorn out one year, the following year hundreds of buckthorn seeds germinate and start the cycle over again. Another major problem is when pulling the buckthorn out by hand was on a hill, major erosion can occur due to loose soil and no roots holding the soil in place. This makes the problem even worse.

As a result of the buckthorn problem, I invented the Buckthorn Baggie and went through several years of testing, documenting, and refining the product so that it would be

100% effective and have a kill rate of 100%. This is one of those products that is so simple and effective, I often hear, "Wow, why didn't I think of that?" (to which I think, "You weren't the one tearing it out every summer").

Here are the simple instructions:

- 1) Cut the buckthorn down leaving a 6" stump. For safety, cut should be at 90 degrees.
- 2) Place a Buckthorn Baggie over the stump - fanning out the bottom.
- 3) Zip tie the Buckthorn Baggie to the stump.
- 4) Return after stump is 100% dead and reuse on another buckthorn plant

The patent-pending Buckthorn Baggie is chemical free, does not disturb the soil, results in no erosion, and is reusable. The Buckthorn Baggie also works on any other plants that promulgate from the stump or root ball

For more information, please contact Matt Hamilton at buckthornbaggie@yahoo.com or (651) 734-8332 or visit our company website at www.buckthornbaggie.com.

Editor's note - Matt sent me the above article unsolicited, and I thought his product looked to be of interest to TPE members.



Monarch of the Prairie
2014 TPE Photo Contest Finalist by Frederick Blank

CHAPTER NEWS

EMPIRE-SAUK CHAPTER

2014 Prairie Tour

The Empire-Sauk Chapter 2014 Prairie Tour was held on August 9, which turned out to be a spectacular summer day. The day included tours at the Rettenmund Prairie and Pleasant Valley Conservancy in Black Earth, WI, as well as a major event at the Mounds View Grassland Preserve in Brigham, WI. The Mounds View event included live music from a number of local performers and staffed exhibits on burns, invasive plants, seed collection & processing, birds and insects. The highlight for most visitors was the tractor hayride down into the valley of the Schurch-Thomson Prairie section of the preserve, where we provided guided nature walks focusing separately on plants, insects and birds.

As with the event last year, the local Culver's franchise provided both publicity and funding for the event. Thanks to them and to the over 35 TPE volunteers who made our Prairie Day event a big success!



Hayride at Schurch-Thomson Prairie
Photo by Diane Hills

Bumble Bee Surveys Conducted at Schurch-Thomson Prairie

On May 26, Susan Carpenter, the Native Plant Gardener at the UW-Madison Arboretum conducted a survey of the bumble bees found in burned and unburned areas of a remnant at the Schurch-Thomson Prairie unit of the TPE Mounds View Grassland preserve. Susan reported:

"Bumble bees were visiting Wood Betony and Shooting Star. I saw one bee on Cream Baptisia, which is just starting to bloom. It was very quiet, so I could hear the high-pitched buzz pollination on the flowers as well as the low-pitched flight buzzing. This is to be expected on the Shooting Star, but I also heard it for some bee species on the Betony. *Bombus griseocollis* was the most-photographed species. Great to see most carrying pollen, indicating that the nests are established."

Species identified and photographed (and later confirmed by Christy Stewart, Gary Zamzow and Robbin Thorp) were *Bombus impatiens*, *B. griseocollis*, *B. vagans*, *B. fervidus*, *B. bimaculatus*, *B. affinis* (SI, *Xerces proposal for Federal Endangered Species status*), *B. auricomus* (fly-by, no photo).

Rusty-Patched Bumble Bee
(*Bombus affinis*)
on Wood Betony
(*Stachys officinalis*)
at Schurch-Thomson Prairie
Photo by Susan Carpenter



MANY RIVERS CHAPTER

by Deanna Pomije

Peichel's Prairie Tour

Remember times gone by when Sunday afternoons were designated for visiting with family and friends? On Sunday afternoon, August 10th many of us Prairie Enthusiasts did just that; we got together to visit with one another and to tour some amazing prairies. Gerald Peichel, near Fort Ridgely invited his fellow Prairie Enthusiasts out to tour his magnificent prairie, which overlooks the grand Minnesota River. We gathered to explore the prairie and share our passion for prairie.

Peichel has restored prairie on all his past cropland. Great care was taken over the years to ensure the restoration was a success and prospered toward diversity. A true jewel on Peichel's land is a steep bluff hillside, a unique remnant prairie. The bluff-side has southern exposure facing the broad Minnesota river valley. One can see for miles in either direction from this spot as the large trees along this exposed bluff have been cleared. Truth be told, the remnant still struggles with the encroachment of shrubby vegetation, namely sumac. Despite the woody vegetation there's still an amazing diversity of plants etching out a living here. Plants such as prairie turnip, ground plum, prairie violet, green milkweed and pasque flower all call this steep bluff prairie their home. In all, 45 species of forbs have been seen on this site.



Chapter tour of
Pichel's Prairie.
Photo by Deanna Pomije

Soon after meeting Mr. Gerald Peichel, anyone would soon come to realize how important all his diverse prairie lands are to him. He beams when he starts to talk about his land and truly wants to leave a legacy of incredible prairie habitat for future generations to preserve and cherish. Peichel is a very active retired gentleman always willing to invite someone or a group out to his land and show them around telling them his restoration story. This story, by the way continues. He is currently seeking to enroll a wet area into a wetland restoration easement.

The local Many River's Chapter's met earlier this day for a potluck brunch and filled up on pancakes. We discussed chapter business briefly then split up to explore Peichel's remnant prairie. Early afternoon Peichel's son came along with a tractor and wagon, which we quickly filled up with twenty some prairie enthusiasts to tour the vast

restored prairie. Randy Schindle of the DNR led the tour expounding on the details of the restoration and explaining the difference between a remnant and a restored prairie.

Coming back from the tour a few true die hard prairie seekers crossed over into Fort Ridgely for yet another prairie and historic tour of the Fort and its inspiring land. The Fort was built in the 1850s and provided protection for the newly settled land. It played a prominent role in the Dakota Conflict of 1862. The park is about 475 acres of wooded ravines and open meadows on the north bluff of the Minnesota River Valley. Overall it was a grand Sunday to visit together and explore prairie.

Upcoming Chapter Events

- Burn plan writing workshop coming this fall – stay tuned.
- Workdays to control brush at various locations
- Continued work evenings, most Tuesdays on a 3 acre restored prairie at Rasmussen Woods Park in Mankato.
- Possible fall burns.
- If interested in hosting a prairie tour, please contact Bridgette Winkels at 507-779-8569. Tours can be anytime, start thinking about a tour for next year.

For contact information please call Deanna Pomije at 507-600-9900 or by e-mail at prairie4moon@gmail.com.

PRAIRIE SANDS CHAPTER

by Ray Goehring

Prairie Days Events

August Prairie Days for the Prairie Sands Chapter was a huge success. We had a booth at Portage County Farm Tech Days on August 11 - 13th in Plover, Wisconsin where we talked to many people from all over the state, handed out hundreds of milkweed seed packets and brochures with information about TPE. The seed was donated by Prairie Nursery and the materials for the seed packets and assembly were donated by chapter members Keith and Sally Schnese. We also had a cut flower display which drew a lot of attention and prompted many questions. Thank you to chapter members Jean Clark, Keith Schnese, Hans Hesser, Fred & Karen Wollenburg, Dick & Ray Goehring, and Shelley Hamel for working the booth.

On Friday, August 15th we had over forty people (including 5 chapter volunteers) attend a tour of the prairie and garden of Dr Robert and Sally Freckmann in Stevens Point. Dr Freckmann is the founder of UW Stevens Points Freckmann Herbarium and Sally has a masters degree in Botany with an emphasis on mosses. Their landscape reflects the diversity of their interests and combined knowledge. Both generously lead tours or answered questions and invited the group to wander through the gardens after the tour. We are so very grateful for their generous hospitality.



Fred Wollenburg talking to visitors at the Farm Tech Days booth.
Photo by Ray Goehring

The final August Prairie Days event for the chapter was the Members Only tour of Hugh Iltis Prairie on Saturday, August 23rd. Property owners, David and Shelley Hamel, lead the tour of their 110 acre property and served a delicious lunch on the deck of their "bog" house which overlooks their pitcher plant bog. Besides puzzling at unusual plants like jointweed (*Polygonella articulata*), false heather (*Hudsonia tomentosa*), Polk and Clasping Milkweed, Sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia*) and Pitcher plants (*Sarracenia purpurea*), the group examined the huge badger den present in the sand dune. Attending were both new and present chapter members: Mark and Marilyn Thwaites, Anne Graham, Eric Klein, Carol Kropidowski, Ray Goehring and, of course, Shelley and David Hamel.

All in all, we had a wonderful and active series of events and signed up several new chapter members. Welcome to new members: Anne Graham, Eric Klein, Carol Kropidowski, Mark and Cheri Wolverton.



David & Shelley Hamel leading the field trip among a colony
Clammy False Foxgloves (*Aureolaria pediculara*) at Hugh Iltis Savanna.
Photo by Ray Goehring



Dr. Robert & Sally Freckmann giving a tour of their prairie garden.
Photo by Ray Goehring

ST. CROIX VALLEY CHAPTER

by Evanne Hunt

Prairie Day

The St. Croix Valley chapter held Prairie Days on Saturday, August 23, at Willow River State Park. Approximately 100 people attended either a demonstration, talk, or the exhibit area. We partnered with the St. Croix Valley Bird Club, Willow River Organization for Wildlife Learning (OWL), Wisconsin DNR's Western Prairie Habitat Restoration Area, and the Somerset Boy Scout Troop 144. The St. Croix Valley Bird Club and the Willow River OWLs invited Dr. Stanley Temple, UW-Madison emeritus professor, for a talk on the iconic Passenger Pigeon.

The day started with two prairie walks – one for adults and one for families. Leaders of the walks identified desirable birds as well as invasive species. 3M chemist Jack Rasmussen, the "Buckthorn King," demonstrated ways to cut, pull, and poison the buckthorn. Jack provides samples of the recommended herbicide triclopyr for private use. Under Jack's direction, the Somerset Boy Scout Troop 144 cleared a dump truck load of brush.

We also invited exhibitors to bring games and information about wild plants and animals, including the popular "Ducks on Sticks," live snakes, turtles and hawks. Our zap board enabled everyone to test their knowledge by matching up plant photos with their names. At noon Somerset Boy Scout Troop 144 sold hot dogs, brats and drinks.



"Zap Board" at
St. Croix Valley
Prairie Day
Photo by Evanne Hunt

Work Parties

The chapter has been busy during the late summer with Prairie Days, herbicide spraying, and seed collecting. Thanks to our volunteers Sandy Borden, Greg Brown, Patrick Fleming, Wayne Huhnke, Evanne Hunt, Valerie Kubal, Burt Levy, Mike Miller, Mike Perry, Eric Sanden and Russell Yttri.

Please join us this winter as we continue maintenance on our project sites. All work days start at 10:00 am. Come for 1, 2, 3, or 4 hours -- any time you can spare is appreciated!

Sat., Nov 1 - Foster Conservation Area
 Sat., Nov 15 - Alexander Oak Savanna
 Sat., Dec 6 - Foster Conservation Area
 Sat., Dec 20 - Alexander Oak Savanna.

Check the website or call Evanne (715-381-1291) to confirm the date and location. Changes are possible between the newsletter deadline and the work day.



St. Croix Valley Chapter herbicide spraying & seed collection.
 Photos by Evanne Hunt

SOUTHWEST WISCONSIN CHAPTER

by Jesse Bennett & Rose Sime

Music on the Prairie

The Southwest Chapter of the Prairie Enthusiasts held their first music festival, "Music on the Prairie", on Sunday, September 28th at Borah Creek Prairie, 11949 Mount Ridge Road, Fennimore. The prairie hike portion of the extravaganza took intrepid explorers across a former cornfield, now a newly-established prairie planting, and through "Heather's Prairie," the ecologically-rich portion of Borah Creek SNA that originally caught the eye of prairie enthusiasts in 1988. TPE Site Steward, Jesse Bennett, was joined by a number of long-time prairie enthusiasts as well as a number of new faces. We discussed the management history of the site and observed a great number of uncommon species including the federally-endangered Prairie Bush Clover, Marbleseed, Wild Quinine, and Downy Gentian. The experience surely gave participants a sense of the richness of the region's pre-European settlement natural communities as well as TPE's role in protecting and managing our preserves.

Following the hike, the crowd enjoyed a flavorful pot luck lunch in the newly restored barn. Toes were a tappin' and hands were a clappin' as an enthusiastic crowd enjoyed the music of Pie City Ramblers, a local bluegrass band. Thus ended another great day on the prairie.



The Pie City Ramblers
 perform at the
 Borah Creek Prairie barn
 Photo by Steve Carpenter



Downy gentians (*Gentiana puberulenta*) on Borah Creek Prairie
 Photo by Steve Carpenter

In Memory of Gail Adams

Gail Adams, a long time Board Member of the Southwest Wisconsin Chapter of The Prairie Enthusiasts and one of the original organizers of TPE passed away on April 2, 2014.

The Chapter has purchased a bench with a plaque honoring Gail's hard work as a Prairie Enthusiast to be put outside the Soldiers Grove Library.

If you would like to contribute to that memorial, please send your donations to the Southwest Wisconsin Chapter of TPE in memory of Gail Adams.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

The following people have joined TPE during the period June 1 – September 30, 2014

Rodney Sykora, Minneapolis, MN
 Rebecca Gilman, Argyle, WI
 Anne Graham, Stevens Point, WI
 Andrea & Raymond Young, Hanover, IL

Sharon Imes, LaCrosse, WI
 Mark & Cheri Wolverton, Waupaca, WI
 Carol Kropidowski, Iola, WI
 Andrew Wood, Rochester, MN

Sharon Cahill, Apple River, IL
 Nita & Gary Gilbertson, Gratiot, WI
 Eric Klein, Stevens Point, WI
 Becky Kruse, Argyle, WI

THANK YOU DONORS

We thank everyone who made a donation to The Prairie Enthusiasts during the period June 1 – September 30, 2014. These gifts above and beyond membership dues and the annual appeal are truly generous and appreciated.

\$500 or more

Culver's C. Topf Wells & Sally Probasco

\$100 - \$499

Kevin Kawula
 For Avon Ridge Project
 Kevin Magee
 In memory of Susan Connell-Magee
 Ruth Kearley & Chamond Liu
 Richard Oberle
 Sandra Grieger
 Patrick Handrick
 Jan Kettle

Jon Rigden
 Citizens Natural Resource
 Stantec
 William Hogseth & Crystal Halvorson
 Daniel Wallace
 Chris Hughes
 Lytton Musselman
 For the Double Oak Savanna
 Galen & Grace Hasler

Citizens Natural Resource
 Ray & Rodonna Amiel
 In memory of Charles Adams
 Eddie & Cheryle Goplin
 Chris Hughes
 Don & Julie Pluemer
 Tim & Sherri Dohrmann

Under \$100

Steve Richter & Laura Cominetti
 John & Kay Day
 Roger Williams
 David & Karen Bakken
 George & Betty Kruck
 Harvey Halvorsen
 In memory of Don Alstad,
 fellow hunter in Erin Prairie
 Karen & Martin Voss
 David Bakken & Karen Bakken
 George & Betty Kruck
 Tim Pulis

Kathleen Sulzer
 Mary Trewartha
 Jan Axelson
 Stephanie Eastwood
 For Avon Ridge Project
 Susan & Howard Cosgrove
 James Theler
 Barbara Meyer
 For Avon Ridge Project
 Anonymous
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 Memorial for Nell Wellington Beardmore
 James Theler

Ed & Karin Strenski
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TIME TO RENEW? (*hint: check the renewal date printed above your address*)

Did you know you can renew online? Visit: ***www.ThePrairieEnthusiasts.org***

Or, mail a check and the form below to:

The Prairie Enthusiasts, P.O. Box 1148, Madison, WI 53701-1148

Questions? E-mail Joe Rising (Communications Coordinator) at TPE@theprairieenthusiasts.org.

Thank you.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____

The Prairie Enthusiasts Membership Levels:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Student | <input type="checkbox"/> \$200 Blazing Star |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Little Bluestem | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Compass Plant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$40 Big Bluestem | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 Monarch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$65 Pasque | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000+ Compass Club (100% to TPE) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Shooting Star | <input type="checkbox"/> \$5,000+ Bur Oak Benefactor |