



# The PRAIRIE PROMOTER

*Grassroots Conservation in Action*

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The  
Prairie  
Enthusiasts



## **All the Pretty Little Native Orchids**

*By Mila Lovecky*

**I**n February of 2020, my sister and I visited Olbrich Botanical Gardens in Madison, Wis. At that time, they were showing a special orchid exhibit, which sparked a new interest in me. Later, my sister sent me a book called "The Orchid Thief" by Susan Orlean. I started to look at illustrations of orchids, and my interest grew.

As my junior year of high school came to an end, I began to think about my senior project. I knew I wanted it to involve art. It wasn't until I was hiking in Black River Falls and saw my first pink lady's-slipper that I decided my project would also involve native orchids. I ran back to the car, called my sister and proudly shared my find.

That summer, I spent time in the field observing and taking pictures of our local orchids. Every hike, drive and intense search rewarded me with the sight of one of these gorgeous plants. I saw seven different species at diverse locations and started feeling a strong calling to raise awareness about their decline.

I felt that drawing native orchids was the best way I could represent and help them in a short time frame. Ever since I was little, I've loved house plants, gardens, landscapes and even what other people consider undesirables. When I first met these orchids, I couldn't even believe that they were real, let alone that they were endangered and unknown. My drawings would not only be showing their beauty but also spreading awareness that these gorgeous plants are here.

My mentor for this project was Gary Eldred from TPE. Gary's name had popped up in multiple email threads I had with the organization's leaders.



*Showy lady's-slipper orchid.  
(Illustration by Mila Lovecky)*

*Continued on Page 4*

## Our Mission

The Prairie Enthusiasts seek to ensure the perpetuation and recovery of prairie, oak savanna and other associated ecosystems of the Upper Midwest through protection, management, restoration and education. In doing so, we strive to work openly and cooperatively with private landowners and other private and public conservation groups.

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On the Cover: Compass plant,  
*Silphium laciniatum* (Photo by Burt Levy)



## President's Message – What Good is a Prairie?

Scott Fulton, President

Not long before my mother passed away a number of years ago, we took her to visit the Curtis Prairie at the UW-Madison Arboretum. For those of you who haven't seen it, the Curtis Prairie was the very first place anyone anywhere tried to restore a complete natural community – in this case a tallgrass prairie – from scratch. Starting in 1936, a stellar team of UW-Madison botanists and ecologists (Norman Fassett, John Thomson, John Curtis, Theodore Sperry, William Longnecker and Aldo Leopold, among many others) worked to restore a prairie from scratch in an old horse pasture. Many of the techniques of modern prairie management were pioneered here, and the restoration work is still going strong after 85 years.

The prairie was spectacular in full late-summer bloom. My mom loved the tall grasses and beautiful flowers, and my wife Karen and I pointed out to her the many pollinating insects that were also present. We were excited to be able to show her an example of the kind of work we'd put so much effort into with TPE — a sort of pilgrimage to the place where it all began.

On our way back to the car, my mother asked a question that I've continued to ponder in the years since: "This prairie is certainly beautiful, but what good is it?" Mom certainly appreciated nature, but she was also a pragmatic person. She genuinely wanted to know why we were so passionate about and worked so hard on something that seemed to have little practical value other than as a pretty place to visit.

At the time, I was a bit taken aback. But I remember responding by talking about biodiversity, the threats to pollinators and the importance of developing a better scientific understanding of the ecosystem that gave rise to the agricultural soils of the Midwest. Somehow these answers did not seem complete, and I remember neither my mom nor I being particularly satisfied with them. My wife was a bit miffed at the question itself. In her view, nature and natural communities do not need human justification to be cherished and protected. I also believe this to be true. But unless one shares that belief, the question itself stands unanswered.

In the years since, as I've continued to ponder this question, I've come to believe that our human connection to nature is vital to our existence. The weakening of that connection as we become more and more "civilized" is in fact an existential threat to the very survival of our species. Nature will go on without humanity, but humanity cannot survive separately from nature. I have also come to believe that we not only need to see our connection to nature, but must also come to love nature with the core of our being.

The author Waubishmaa'ingan (also known as Damian Vraniak) wrote in his book *Prairie Relations* that "[o]f the many and varied forms of Life moving across the Land, wildflowers particularly embodied Beauty as they formed themselves over the millennia to be especially attractive to bees and butterflies and most other beings. If we cannot be awake and aware to this Beauty, we have lost something precious indeed. For only if we are awake and aware to this Beauty can we be attracted and eventually become attached to it. Unless Life is precious, we do not cherish it and we ignore its existence. In the case of human beings, usually this ignorance destroys. We deny a relationship and destroy a reality."

In many ways, the most important work we do together at TPE is to awaken ourselves and others to the beauty of these natural communities — and to kindle the attraction and attachment that leads to cherishing nature everywhere. What good is a prairie indeed?

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# Editor's Notes – The People Enthusiasts

Grace Vosen, Editor

The stories and photos in every issue of the Promoter are yours. The layout is deftly assembled by Natalie Koegl at Dairyland Power Cooperative's publications department. While I play a role in the process, the final product is a reflection of everyone who contributed. In other words, I'm not just bragging when I say that we have a beautiful and informative newsletter!

You may be aware that this is my last issue as Editor. While I'm moving on from my staff role with TPE, you'll still be able to find me out on the prairie. I've thoroughly enjoyed serving you as your Outreach and Communications Coordinator.

This issue is also poignant for me because I have the privilege of sharing updates from nearly every chapter. The Chapter Updates section best reflects the grassroots origins of TPE, as people who share a passion combine their efforts and share in their accomplishments. The result is greater than the sum of our parts. Together, we care for the literal grass roots.

And it's the prairie that inspires us to keep going,

rather than any external reward or recognition. What we do with that inspiration produces real results on the landscape — and then the cycle begins again. I'm proud to have played a small role in helping this process along.

Our enthusiasm may be for the prairies, but we also support one another. We meet others where they are and acknowledge that there are many ways to achieve a single goal. These qualities can only make us stronger. I hope I've helped our cause by connecting your chapters with more people who share these values.

The story of The Prairie Enthusiasts isn't just about prairies. It's about the people who saw a landscape in need and acted to fill that need. We still have the inspiration, the drive and the power to act now. Thank you for entrusting your stories to me in this exciting new era.



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## Executive Director's Message

Debra Behrens, Executive Director

*"If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders of Giants." – Isaac Newton, 1675*

Jim McCorkell, founder of the national nonprofit College Possible, taught me the value of challenging cynicism. He talked about it as one of several key traits of an "idealistic leader" — the kind of person who is driven by a deeply held belief in their cause and will pursue their vision despite the obstacles.

Life teaches us to be cynical. Our culture drives home the message. And in many ways, education can reward our cynical thinking (finding the flaw in a theory is one way of advancing knowledge). Challenging cynicism forces you to consider what's possible or good, despite the problems or imperfections that might otherwise prevent you from taking action and making progress. It's something you have to practice, because it's easy to fall back to the place of safety we know so well: identifying problems, criticizing others and believing the worst.

The story of our founding was idealistic to its core. It took a great deal of personal courage and belief to seek out the remnant prairies that so inspired our early leaders. From some of the tales I've been told, I'm not sure that the potential consequences were always completely thought through. But prairie enthusiasts tell these stories today with a touch of nostalgia and a whole lot of mirth because, after all, we've turned out okay. And it's plain that their lifetime achievements have far outpaced any missteps or failures they experienced along the way.

rienced along the way.

In fact, we've turned out more than just okay. This issue of The Prairie Promoter includes the 2020 Annual Report to our prairie community. You will see that we've grown into a thriving \$12.8 million accredited land trust with a strong regional and national reputation for stewarding the lands entrusted to our care.

It's a wellspring of inspiration for me personally to reflect on our journey to this vantage point. It inspires me to challenge cynicism where I find it — in myself and in others. Just imagine what we could accomplish together by pursuing what's possible for our shared future. Imagine that for every problem there was a solution, and that every criticism was an opportunity to learn, grow and improve. What if we began by assuming the best of everyone we encountered in this work? How often would the results of our efforts together prove that we were right to see the good in one another?

We stand on the shoulders of giants. Let's take a moment to appreciate those who made it possible and enjoy the view from here.





When I'd first reached out to him in May, we'd connected instantly over our love for native plants. We had many conversations about his life's work and our shared interests in conservation and art. Shortly after we first talked, we took a field trip to see a population of yellow lady's-slippers growing under a line of telephone poles where brush is routinely cut. He asked me to ponder the uniqueness of this situation: was it better to stop human intervention and let nature take its course, or to continue maintaining the area? We also visited Scott Weber and Muffy Barrett's farm near Baraboo to see their homegrown native orchids.

I'd hoped to complete an illustration of each orchid I saw over that summer. However, as I began my first drawing I realized this would not be possible before the project due date. I was disappointed; I wanted to be able to show off the unique beauty of each orchid I'd been able to meet. Selecting three out of the seven was a difficult decision when they were all so diverse and beautiful. After careful consideration, I chose the yellow lady's-slipper, the showy lady's-slipper and the pink lady's-slipper. I decided to draw these three because they complemented each other and shared many similar characteristics.

Each illustration took upwards of 60 hours to complete. After I decided what photos to use as references, I printed them out and set my proportions. From there, I did a complete sketch of the orchid with a very light pencil. This laid the groundwork for a line drawing in pen that I would then fill in with dots using the stippling method. I

started by finding the darkest part and continued to gradually add dots, ending in the lightest spots. Every minute I spent drawing these small dots helped me understand the shape, detail and structure of the orchids.

I took the illustrations to La Farge to be photographed by Jack Hill, who made prints of my work. These prints were put up for sale, with the proceeds donated to The Ridges Sanctuary's orchid restoration project in Bailey's Harbor, Wisconsin. It was important to me to support a local organization that works to protect the native orchids I know from my adventures. (The prints have sold out, but anyone interested can contact me at [lavenderbuttero8@gmail.com](mailto:lavenderbuttero8@gmail.com)).

Through this project, my interest in orchids has turned into a relationship with them. I always thought of orchids as fragile and synthetic, something you buy from the shopping center that dies a few days later. These feelings changed when I walked into that garden at Olbrich. Here, for the first time, orchids seemed like real plants with their own special places in the world. Then, when I saw them growing on their own, I was awestruck. They were unique and unexpected. I now have a permanent admiration for them.

It's important to me to spread awareness about the continuing decline of native orchids and other native plant species. I think of how they've adapted to live here and how hard they work to survive, and I want to share that with anyone willing to listen. I'm lucky to have found Gary and my other mentors, who eagerly shared their own passion and wisdom with me. Now I can do the same for others.



*Pink lady's-slipper orchid.*  
(Illustration by Mila Lovecky)



*Yellow lady's-slipper orchid.*  
(Illustration by Mila Lovecky)

# Chapter Support Updates

As a grassroots organization, the mission of The Prairie Enthusiasts is primarily carried out by our regional chapters and volunteers. Each chapter creates its own plan for how they can best serve our mission to ensure the perpetuation and recovery of prairie, oak savanna, and other associated ecosystems of the Upper Midwest through protection, management, restoration, and education.

The Chapter Support Team was formed by our grassroots leadership to maintain the health of the organization and weave together the strength of our grassroots structure with best practices for management and development.

## Introducing Caleb DeWitt

The latest addition to the team is Caleb DeWitt who initially joined us as a part-time administrative assistant and was recently promoted to our Outreach and Fundraising Coordinator. Caleb DeWitt grew up making “maple leaf mud tacos” and has been astounded by the natural world



Caleb DeWitt

ever since. As steward of a mixed-use property near Viroqua, Caleb sees each day as an opportunity to appreciate and make amends with the land. His career spans community service, higher education and the nonprofit world. You can reach Caleb at [cdewitt@theprairieenthusiasts.org](mailto:cdewitt@theprairieenthusiasts.org).

## Best wishes to Grace Vosen

Grace's last day with our Chapter Support team was June 25, but she will always be a prairie enthusiast at heart. We expect to see more of Grace volunteering with our Empire Sauk chapter and working on writing projects at her home in beautiful Sauk County, Wisconsin.

## Strategic Planning

The Board of Directors includes representatives from each of our chapters and will be embarking on creating a new strategic plan for the organization this fall. We are seeking your input, ideas, suggestions, feedback, hopes and dreams for the future of the organization. We've been reaching out over the summer to gather your insights and encourage you to submit any additional feedback to Executive Director Debra Behrens at [dbehrens@theprairieenthusiasts.org](mailto:dbehrens@theprairieenthusiasts.org) by the end of August.

# Education Committee Returns

By Caroljean Coventree

Education is one of the three main purposes of TPE. Our members have significant knowledge, but we don't all get a chance to meet face-to-face with one another. Practitioners sometimes find errors in their management after the fact because information was not readily accessible. For our members and the general public, we want to make our knowledge effectively available. It's fun to learn, and it's also fun to share what we've learned!

To improve and coordinate our efforts in this area, TPE recently reconstituted our Education Committee. Jim Rogala initiated this revival and serves as our chair. Other members include David Hamel, Pat Trochlell, Chris Hughes and myself.

We began our work by creating a charter to guide Committee functioning and responsibilities. These responsibilities include identifying potential educational products of our chapters, helping staff develop grants to fund educational activities, assuring educational products are reviewed for technical correctness and encouraging scientific research on prairie ecosystems.

### As we move forward, our first priorities are:

1. Compiling a list of existing TPE educational materials from Chapter Support and the chapters. Contact David Hamel at [sdhamel@gmail.com](mailto:sdhamel@gmail.com) to lend a hand or share information.
2. Developing a resources page on our website. This project was started under the old Education, Outreach,

and Communication Committee. Contact Caroljean Coventree at [wildflow@baldwin-telecom.net](mailto:wildflow@baldwin-telecom.net) to make suggestions or help compile the list.

3. Developing a Frequently Asked Questions page on the TPE website. This will include replies to questions about fire-dependent ecosystems, such as “What is a prairie?” or “What is the difference between a remnant and a restoration?” It will also include basic land management and land protection questions. Contact Jim Rogala at [jrogala58@gmail.com](mailto:jrogala58@gmail.com) to help with this project.

Other projects have been identified, and the Committee will continue to work on those with help from other volunteers. For example, could you champion our effort to organize and manage the creation of an index for finding articles in past Prairie Promoters? This role might include generating a key words list (you'd get to read the entire collection of Prairie Promoters!), researching the best way to compile the index and possibly finding someone to create a program to link the key words to the appropriate articles. Contact Jim if you want to jump into this project!

We'd love to hear your thoughts. Send comments or questions about the Education Committee to Jim, and watch for updates in the Promoter and eNews. As new educational products are released, we'll let you know.

# Tales from the Field – Benedict Prairie

By Dan Carter, Landowner Services Coordinator

I visited Benedict Prairie for the first time in late 2019. Under funding from the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program, I was assessing the condition of sites that had been identified in a natural areas and critical species habitat protection plan for southeastern Wisconsin in the 1990s.

My work was off to a sobering but not surprising start, because very few sites — even those under protective ownership — had received meaningful stewardship. Most that were fire-dependent communities had seen little or no fire in decades. Invasive species absent in the 1990s inventories now formed single-species stands on many sites. Sedge meadow after sedge meadow was solid hybrid cattail or Eurasian giant reed. Oak woodland after oak woodland was devoid of typical herbaceous plants and choked with bush honeysuckle, buckthorn and Asian bittersweet. Prairie after prairie was boxelder forest or dense thicket.

I faced the unsavory reality that most sites had experienced partial to near complete loss of the elements that had originally supported their designations. While development certainly threatens our last best places, recent and ongoing losses are overwhelmingly driven by insufficient stewardship. This brings me back to Benedict Prairie. What is happening there illustrates how things can turn out differently.

I was unimpressed when I pulled up in front of the UW-Milwaukee Field Station's sign, which was barely visible behind the brush at the western edge of the half-mile long ribbon of former railroad-right-of-way. The sky opened up with a downpour as I got out of the car, so I put on my rubber boots and pushed eastward through about 90 yards of soaking wet buckthorn, bush honeysuckle and gray dogwood thickets. The first opening was a degraded wet-mesic prairie of cordgrass, sawtooth sunflower and invading reed canary grass. I was still unimpressed, and probably would have turned around, but I could make out another opening just beyond. I decided to go a bit farther.



Hoary puccoon in bloom at Benedict on May 12, 2021.  
(Photo by Dan Carter)

In that opening and others farther east were remnants of mesic prairie hanging on among thickets of hazel, plum, gray dogwood, brambles and honeysuckle. Leiberg's panic grass, porcupine grass, bastard toadflax, hoary puccoon and prairie dock confirmed that unlike most of the other former railroad right-of-way prairies in southeastern Wisconsin, Benedict still had prairie worth saving. See Alice Mirk's Glacial Prairie update from the April 2021 Prairie Promoter and Phillip Whitford's article on Benedict in the the UW-Milwaukee's Field Station Bulletin ([https://dc.uwm.edu/fieldstation\\_bulletins/3/](https://dc.uwm.edu/fieldstation_bulletins/3/)) for details about Benedict's rich history.

I drove back to the office and emailed Dr. Gretchen Meyer, Director of the UW-Milwaukee Field Station. I was to-the-point with my assessment of Benedict's condition. When I didn't hear back, I worried that I had been too blunt, but I moved on. There were hundreds of sites to visit and re-assess, most of which would be unrecognizable as natural communities and in far worse condition than Benedict. Dr. Meyer's response came in January 2020 after what turned out to be a sabbatical. The Field Station had been able to burn and do other work on Benedict in the past, but its capacity for stewardship had suffered from staffing reductions. I had figured as much, and I was encouraged and relieved to get a response.

I had only recently learned of the Glacial Prairie Chapter of TPE. In fact, I was so unfamiliar with TPE that my first reference in the email exchange was to "the Tallgrass Prairie Enthusiasts." In any case, I did know that TPE focused on the stewardship of precious remnant sites like Benedict. So I suggested to Dr. Meyer that I connect her with the Glacial Prairie Chapter, and she was open to the idea. A whirlwind of communication between Dr. Meyer, Alice Mirk, Tom Zagar and me followed over the next three days, culminating in Alice asking Dr. Meyer, "How do we begin the process



Volunteers Tom Zagar (left) and Nathan Robertson (right) survey the progress of TPE's prescribed burn at Benedict on March 30, 2021.  
(Photo by Dan Carter)



of coming up with a work plan that fits the UW-M process for having a non-profit group of volunteers work on Benedict Prairie?”

By February, Tom Zagar and Scott Fulton from TPE were meeting with Nathan Robertson and Alan Eppers, who have become critical volunteers at Benedict. Dr. Meyer and I joined them to discuss what was needed for next steps. Benedict needed a management agreement between TPE and UW-Milwaukee, a management plan, volunteers, a burn plan and a qualified burn crew. As the pandemic descended, TPE and UW-Milwaukee created a formal management agreement. A management plan was in place by June. The stage was set for volunteer work to get underway last September, under the coordination of Alan Eppers.

The visual transformation at Benedict has been astounding. You can see the Benedict Prairie sign again. You can walk east along the old right-of-way without having to fight through a dense wall of invasive shrubs.

Late in the day on March 30, after waiting for gusty winds to subside to within prescription, Glacial Prairie Chapter volunteers Tom Zagar, Alan Eppers, Jim Bullock, Steve Peters, Nathan Robertson and I conducted the first burn at Benedict in several years. This was also the first-ever burn led by the Chapter. Alan had written the plan and, with Tom, led the burn. It went off without a hitch, unburdening the prairie of oppressive thatch and providing at least temporary relief from the encroaching brush that remains to be dealt with. We plan on burning a lot more.



The UW-Milwaukee Benedict Prairie sign no longer obscured by brush.  
(Photo by Dan Carter)

The beauty and history of prairies like Benedict are compelling to all prairie enthusiasts. But prairie conservation relies on people in empowered positions to be compelled, either intrinsically or by the appeals of others — and they need to know how to move a project forward rather than just talk about it. Fortunately for Benedict, the life it supports and the people that love it, the right people were in positions to get things going. They were all prairie enthusiasts. Dr. Gretchen Meyer, Alice Mirk, Alan Eppers, Tom Zagar, Nathan Robertson and Scott Fulton deserve special recognition in that regard.



Ongoing brush work at Benedict Prairie.  
(Photo by Dan Carter)



View of the east end of Benedict about six weeks after the spring burn.  
(Photo by Dan Carter)

# Prairie Poetry

## Shooting Star

By Patty Wemstrom

Small, magenta, downward-facing,  
Hiding behind rocks on Sentinel Trail and  
On sloping hills...  
Oh! Suddenly the Palisades explode in blazing pink,  
The winding path reveals a thousand stars.  
In all the woods  
No sight more lovely or more sorrowful  
Greet's our waiting eyes,

Standing like arrows pointing toward the earth  
To where flowers fade and fall  
And we, like fragile evanescent blossoms,  
Return at last.

## The Prairie (inspired by Hanley Savanna)

By Jeni Pearce

The prairie, she rests, and she waits  
For spring rains and birds to call  
For snow to melt and rivers to run  
For the sun to rise  
Like any patient mother would

The prairie, she awakens, and she blooms  
With a slow cry from beneath her mantle  
Across the open soil and into the sky  
While geese honk and woodpeckers drum  
She gives birth to the prairie

The prairie, she sighs  
As crisp autumn leaves blanket her womb  
As short fall days lull her to nap  
As her bounty peaks and begins to wither  
As sunlight fades

The prairie, she rests  
For another season

## Parsnip Predator

By Sandy Stark

From *The Toolbox Poems* (Finishing Line Press, 2015)

It's the one I've waited for. The perfect tool  
for prairie work, a shovel, only better:  
its thin blade slides through compact soil  
with one push, cuts thick stalks underground,  
brings even the sturdiest plant to its knees.

Wild parsnip, burdock, thistle, ragweed—  
no need to touch things toxic or prickly,  
no real requirement to use extra muscle  
or dramatic heft.

On slopes, it doubles as my walking stick,  
its shaft long enough to steady me,  
its handle made for holding, regaining  
balance and breath.

Already it outshines the sizeable army  
of shovels in my shed, left behind.  
Even my neighbors say they notice  
how often I walk by with it, how it adds  
a little swagger to my step.

Learn about The Parsnip Predator at [theprairieenthusiasts.org/parsnip\\_predator](http://theprairieenthusiasts.org/parsnip_predator) (and test it out for yourself).



*The Parsnip Predator in action.  
(Photo by Gary Whitford Holey)*



# Book Review – Apprenticed to Justice

By Chuck Wemstrom

Every day is Earth Day for prairie enthusiasts, which is just one reason why you're such cool people. But last April, I was invited to celebrate the official Earth Day with a group of friends who had each brought a short reading to share. There were songs, a Carl Sagan quote, a killdeer story, a shooting star poem and a Terry Tempest Williams piece: "I pray to the birds because I believe they will carry the messages of my heart upward."

I read an autobiographical poem by Heather Swan about growing up running wild in the fields and woods of northwest Illinois (see the book review in the April 2021 *Prairie Promoter*). I also read part of a second poem, *Stories of Fire*, from *Apprenticed to Justice* by Kimberly Blaeser. Blaeser is a Native American, a professor at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and a guide into the too-often overlooked lives of contemporary Indigenous Americans.

My friends, who are all members of TPE, immediately identified with the poem. They loved Blaeser's description of a prairie burn. She asks if the fire that restores a prairie can restore a culture and its people. The answer is yes, and the rest of her book is filled with portraits of ordinary indigenous people — friends, neighbors and family. In Blaeser's descriptions, they become extraordinary.

The first poem, "Shadow Sisters," tells the story of two women and spans their whole lives well into old age. And what a story! In a prose poem of short, lively stanzas, Blaeser brings to life the simple acts of working a pedal-operated sewing machine, visiting a casino and everything in between. You're bound to read this poem again and again until you know and love these two sisters the same way you might get to know and love an older great-aunt.

And then it's back outdoors for a quick peek at nature. Three lines, less than fifteen words, no title and still a complete picture that you'll carry with you forever: "Cranes flushed from a field / take flight; rusty hinge voices / call loudly, now recede."

Another favorite is "Somewhere on the Verge." Trees weighted down with "what cannot be seen. The wind that carries the lilac scent splays the leaves and / now we catch a glimpse / of golden feathers." The speaker is remorseful

that she can never capture the perfect photo or that the birds get most of the wild strawberries. With her words, Blaeser paints lovely pictures of a misunderstanding concerning garlic mustard (is it a pest or a lovely bouquet?) and a bittern attempting to hide by freezing.

Poets, like the rest of us, have to deal with the political and the historical even when they might want to just write about their families and the natural world. Blaeser's uncle was a soldier in Vietnam who died trying to save his comrades' lives. His body was never recovered. She is

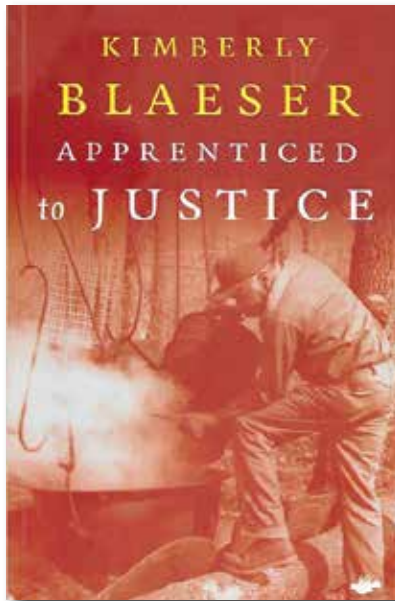
still haunted by the eye-witness account of her uncle's bravery. And in a voice tinged with bitterness in the poem "Red Lake," she asks why the whole nation could stop and mourn the deaths of the Columbine students but barely acknowledge a similar shooting on the Red Lake Reservation.

I was going to save another one of her books, *Absentee Indians*, for another time, but I can't. I have to tell you about *Passing Time*. A Formica kitchen table is a gathering place in a too-small kitchen where friends and family are always coming and going. You learn that the narrator's mother is dying and that Uncle Bill's age, 83, interferes with his ability to harvest all the wild rice. And that this family is dependent on the rice harvest.

The narrator in this poem also tells her story of trying to catch on camera the image of a horned owl. At just the wrong moment, a baby goes running toward the owl making quacking sounds. The startled bird takes off. It hardly matters: Uncle Bill's story, the lost photo opportunity, the cribbage games won and lost and another thousand stories are all about human beings bonding and sharing.

Blaeser teaches in Milwaukee, but she has a summer home outside the Boundary Waters and visits her reservation as often as possible. She works at keeping connected. But she also tells the stories of families who come out to the reservation from the city with their children only once a year. She laments that they are slowly losing their culture, their sense of connection to the land.

I felt lucky to be able to enter Blaeser's world and meet the everyday indigenous people who share our love for the land.



Cover of "Apprenticed to Justice."

# What's the Rush? The Grass? The Sedge?

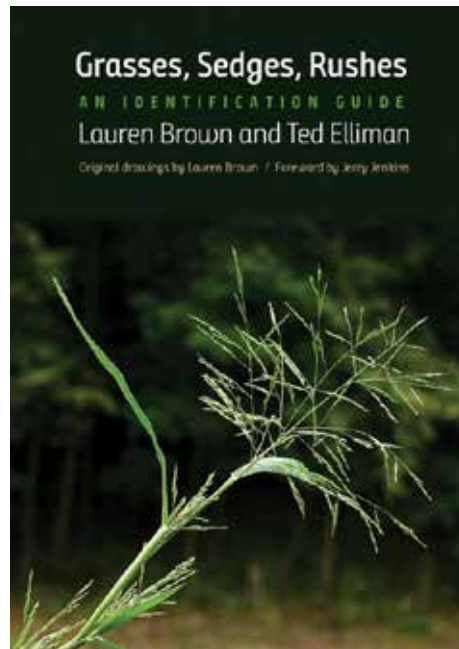
By Grace Vosen

If you're like me, your enthusiasm for positively identifying plants stops short when you run into certain "tricky" families. And none is trickier than the family Poaceae, with Cyperaceae a close second. I have books about grass and sedge identification on my shelf, but they seem useless without a microscope and many hours of study.

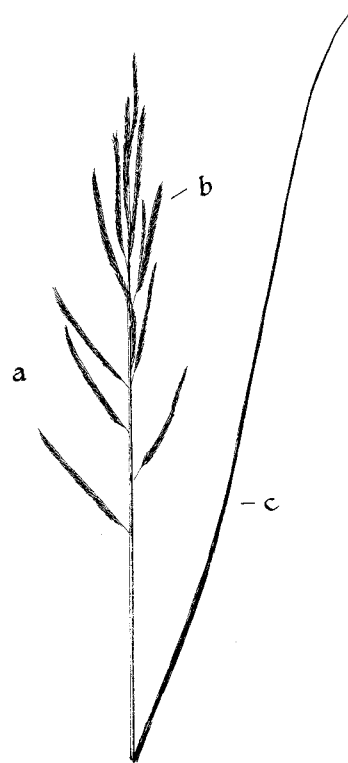
This feeling is normal even among trained botanists. In fact, when the first edition of Lauren Brown's *Grasses: An Identification Guide* was published in 1979, many grass species were so far under the radar that they didn't even have common names. While public interest in grasses and grasslands has grown dramatically since then, few people take time to learn more than a handful of species. The 2020 edition of Brown's book, co-authored by Ted Elliman, aims to change that.

In the Foreword to *Grasses, Sedges, Rushes: An Identification Guide*, ecologist Jerry Jenkins explains why so many graminoid field guides stay on the shelf: they're either too long or too abridged. Achieving the perfect length means leaving out most species while keeping the right ones in. Brown finds this balance by putting herself in the mind of the reader. She focuses on the species that people are most likely to see in their daily lives.

The book covers the north-eastern United States and some of the Midwest, including all of TPE's area. It begins with an introduction to America's most famous grass-dominated ecosystem, the prairie. The authors also share some tips for approaching graminoid identification. Next, a simple key uses



Cover of "Grasses, Sedges, Rushes."



Lauren Brown's beautiful line drawings, like this one of Freshwater Cordgrass, are at the heart of this book.

easily observable characteristics to guide readers to the right species or group. No paleas or lemmas to be found here!

This is the distinguishing feature of the book: its focus on traits observable to the naked eye or with a hand lens. Readers don't need to do extra research, or buy a microscope, before working through Brown's key. It's a perfect tool for getting comfortable with graminoid ID, having been designed for "simplicity, ease of use, and compact size."

At the heart of it all are Lauren Brown's beautiful line drawings, labeled to show notable traits of the plant. The drawings alone would be a reason to add this book to your library. Along with the species description, each page makes note of plants that are often confused with the one being described. In this second edition, photos have also been added to complement the drawings.

Why publish a new edition? According to Jenkins, "plants don't change, but botany does." All species in the book now have common names, and some have new scientific names or ecological information. "Grasses, Sedges, Rushes" is a next step in the journey towards greater public awareness of the plants that share our world. I wasn't aware (or alive) when the first edition came out, but I've joined other readers of Brown's work in renewing my love for the most tricky of plant families.

**"Grasses, Sedges, Rushes" can be purchased directly from the publisher, Yale University Press ([yalebooks.yale.edu](http://yalebooks.yale.edu) — search for "grasses").**

# Prairie Chicken Committees Wrestle with Adverse Trends

By Tim Eisele

The challenges confronting the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Greater Prairie Chicken Species Management Committee and its Advisory Committee are substantial. The committees are toiling on a new plan for the management of prairie chickens in Wisconsin, a species that is clinging to life on prairie nesting grounds in the central counties.

The key, as with other wildlife, is habitat. But while forested land, urban residential land and row-crop agriculture in the state are increasing in area, grassland is decreasing. Prairie and grasslands are now less than one percent of what existed in the state in the 1800s. Biologists believe that row-crop agriculture and forest encroachment are two of the largest threats to the prairie chicken in central Wisconsin.

In addition, the budgets and the “man-power” of the DNR have shrunk over what they were decades ago. Though weakened in this

way, the DNR still has its mission to “protect and enhance the State’s natural resources,” along with citizen-advocates who want to keep the chickens booming on the prairie.

Another positive is that there are private non-profit conservation organizations, such as TPE, The Nature Conservancy, Dane County Conservation League, and others that put their efforts into raising funds to preserve and expand grasslands. It’s going to take these organizations and the “silent” non-members who enjoy birds, biodiversity and especially prairies to support new efforts to keep prairie chickens from vanishing with the sunset.

The greater prairie chicken was native to the tallgrass prairie of the central United States, extending from Texas to as far north as Ontario and southern Alberta. According to research by world-renowned prairie chicken researchers Frederick and Fran Hamerstrom, then with the Wisconsin Conservation Department and Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin had more than seven million acres of grasslands and open savanna in the mid-1800s (mostly in the southern and western parts of the state). Prairie chickens were found commonly in these grasslands. But as agriculture, brush and woodlands moved in, prairie chickens moved out.

Today, prairie chickens are found on state-managed wildlife areas in central Wisconsin. The birds are considered “threatened,” and population counts show that displaying males have steadily declined since the 1950s. The time is

now if the state is to keep their population from dwindling further.

The DNR had a management plan, developed in 2004, that was being updated in 2017. The Secretary of the DNR at the time, Cathy Stepp, had her agency set aside the plan and place more priority on hunted species.

Current Natural Resources Board chair Dr. Frederick Prehn led the call for a deeper look at what the DNR is

doing to manage prairie chickens and what can be done to keep them on the landscape. Prairie chickens face several problems, but possibly the biggest is habitat. Chris Pollentier, a DNR wildlife research scientist, told the advisory committee earlier this spring that several analyses of land use in the area confirm a significant increase in the amount of cropland, mainly center-pivot irrigation for row crops. In addition, there has been an increase in the amount of tree cover, and a decrease in non-row crop agriculture such as pasture and hay.

With an increase in

cropland and decrease in grassland, one of the needs will be new public and private partnerships so the DNR can work with landowners and provide incentives to provide cover adjacent to public lands. Some possibilities could be acquisitions or easements that will benefit private landowners and provide habitat for wildlife.

Working with private landowners could well be one of the keys if prairie chickens have a future. Those lands surrounding current state lands could be critical to building populations. The DNR might also need to look for help from federal programs, such as the NRCS Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program or Environmental Quality Incentive Program to secure better habitat.

Wisconsin’s new 2021 – 2023 state budget includes a four-year extension of the Knowles/Nelson Stewardship program, at \$33.25 million per year, which could help preserve some additional grassland. The Governor originally requested a 10-year extension at \$70 million per year, however the legislature objected to that.

Wisconsin still needs new set-aside programs to help local farmers idle marginal croplands and establish more wildlife habitat.

The DNR is expected to announce opportunities for public input into its proposed new prairie chicken management plan later this year.

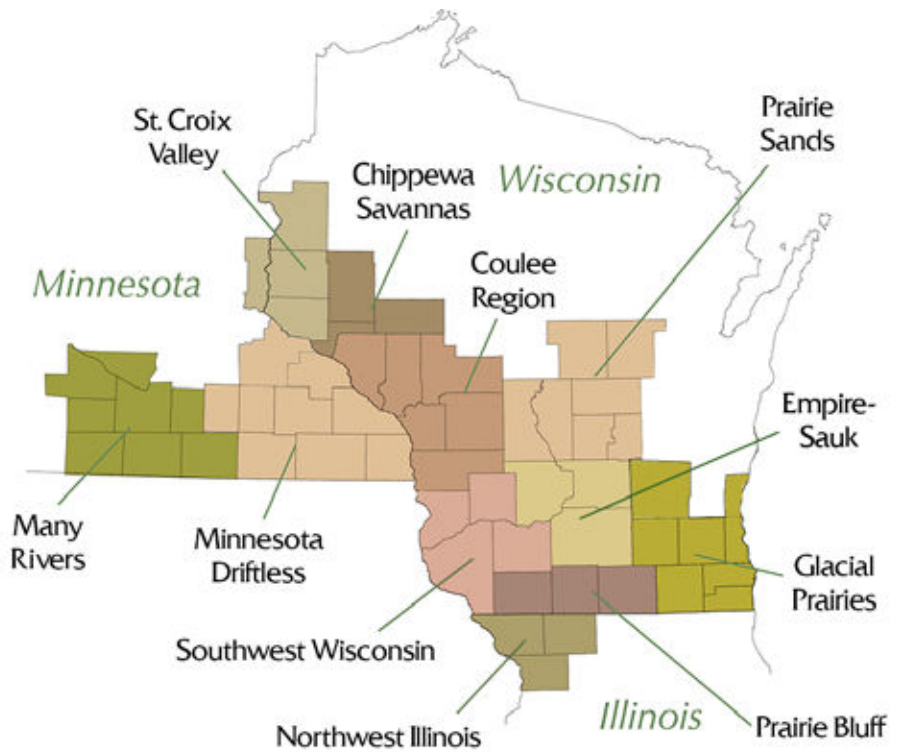
Prairies and chickens are meant for each other!



Several committees are working on a plan for the DNR to help keep prairie chickens booming on Wisconsin grasslands. (Photo by Tim Eisele)



# Chapter Updates



## Chippewa Savannas

*Caroljean Coventree*

Our chapter's territory includes breeding sites for the endangered Karner Blue butterfly. This summer, we began surveying Seymour Prairie for lupine (the host plant for Karners). We plan to extend its range and thus encourage the return of Karners to this site. Chapter volunteers have also joined the efforts of the Karner Volunteer Monitoring program (<https://wiatri.net/inventory/kbb/#training>) to track populations in our area. It has been exciting to learn to identify these little beauties.

This spring, we worked with Quercus Land Stewardship Services to burn a complex area at Dobbs Landing. Being able to squeeze it in between drought and high winds made it a sweet accomplishment. Other activities like burns, seeding and weeding continue throughout the season. If you haven't been to Dobbs Landing lately, check it out. Our work there is beginning to show significant results.

As always, the most important aspect of our chapter is its people. Kathy Stahl has returned for a one-year stint as Chapter President. We're lucky to have her vigor and astute leadership. Our secretary, Annemarie McClellan, produces accurate and timely minutes for all our meetings. In addition, she's heading our effort to develop a system to better document our chapter's activities. We can't run an effective organization without tracking what we do.

Matt Wysocki creates our wonderful monthly eNews bulletins and handles all of our membership issues. His invaluable work keeps us informed and connected. Mark Leach, our Chapter Scientist, and Kathy Ruggles, our Dobbs land manager, are updating our management plan for Dobbs Landing. A special thank-you to all the UW-Stout staff and students who continue to work hard at Dobbs and Seymour.



*Karner blue butterfly.*  
(Photo by Paul Labus, The Nature Conservancy in Indiana)

Our long time Seymour site steward, Pam Maher, recently moved to California — but not before we had a wonderful send-off party. The food was fantastic and it was so good to see each other in person! Joe Maurer and Mark have stepped into her shoes at Seymour.

We're currently seeking a treasurer for our chapter. The job entails attending meetings approximately nine times a year to present a treasurer's report (which is prepared by Chapter Support staff), preparing an annual budget (something which has not varied much in the past few years), and sending in a simple form to request reimbursements. If you're interested, please contact [theprairieenthusiasts.csc@gmail.com](mailto:theprairieenthusiasts.csc@gmail.com).

Finally, this September we'll be hosting a Tiffany Bottoms Train Ride followed by a picnic at Carl Morsbach's wonderful bluff property on the Chippewa River. Watch our Facebook page and eNews for more information. See you there!

## Coulee Region

### Work and Play on Zoerb Prairie

*Jim Rogala*

I selected the date of our May 15 hike on Zoerb Prairie to coincide with when we could use a specific non-herbicide method to control an aspen clone. The clone was on the edge of a newly opened portion adjacent to the prairie, and we imagined the clone would soon spread out onto the prairie. Girdling, the removal of the outer bark, can be a successful method of control for some tree species. For more information on the method, see the blog post at [theprairieenthusiasts.org/girdling](http://theprairieenthusiasts.org/girdling). Most of the 11 attendees had never used this method before, so we began with a quick demonstration.

As it turned out, the clone of aspen to be girdled was very challenging. The outer bark was thick and hard, thus making the task difficult. Nonetheless, we finished girdling the clone and can now look forward to its slow death over the next year or two. Thanks to those that participated, and be assured that this method is typically a lot easier than it was that day.



*Girdled aspen at Zoerb. (Photo by Jim Rogala)*



*One-flowered broom-rape plant sighted that day. (Photo by Jon Rigden)*

With the work out of the way, we moved onto the more enjoyable part of the day and spent time hiking on this bluff prairie looking at plants. In particular, we identified plants that had just started to grow. We ended up adding three species to the species list, including the one-flowered broom-rape. As always, we also talked about management that has occurred at the site and future plans. Some of us continued working after the hike, with a few doing a foliar spray of young buckthorn and others doing more girdling. Sometimes there's a fine line between work and fun!

### Prairie Enthusiasts Hike in Woods

*Jon Rigden*

Our chapter took a break from prairies by offering a hike at Eureka Maple Woods State Natural Area. Located in Monroe County just west of Cashton, this SNA is known for its exceptionally rich display of herbaceous flora. Its moist, steep, north-facing slope is home to a thick layer of common spring ephemerals that is breathtaking in scope and complexity. The interwoven array of flowers such as hepaticas, trout lilies, anemones, spring beauties, dutchman's-breeches, ramps, trilliums, squirrel-corn, Jacob's-ladder, and bellwort are complemented by some unusual plants including the state special concern twinleaf, great waterleaf, and goldenseal. Also seen after some searching was the inconspicuous but rather abundant state threatened moschatel found in a broad band about halfway up the slope. The heavily scaled fiddleheads of Goldie's fern, a special concern plant in Minnesota, were popping up through the spring ephemeral layer. Another fern, the Wisconsin special concern glade fern, has been recently documented on the site but was not seen on this outing. Also documented here but not found on this trip is the Adam and Eve orchid. Eastern leatherwood, an unusual native deciduous shrub, was growing in abundance in the understory.

The trip was a step away from the prairie, but it was exhilarating for those in attendance. We agreed that it was very satisfying just learning that such a place existed!

### Higher Learning

*By Jim Rogala*

The University of Wisconsin-La Crosse offers an Environmental Studies Capstone course. The course includes a chance for students to explore environmental fields through a service learning project. The proximity of the bluff prairies in Hixon Forest to the campus allowed us to develop two student projects, one a Geographic Information Systems project and the other a field mapping project.

The GIS project was to compile all the historical aerial photography available for Hixon Forest. Some of these photos are available free online (like the late 1930s photos), but others required the student to look at other sources. La Crosse County was able to provide the student with 16 years of photography, which the student compiled and archived. We can use these photos to help The Friends of the Blufflands plan restoration work based on the encroachment of woody species over the last 80 years.

The second project was also done on a hill prairie in Hixon Forest. It was developed in response to the known





*Snake found on one of the mapped rocks in Hixon Forest this spring. (Photo by Jon Rigden)*

importance of suitable basking rocks for pregnant female timber rattlesnakes. We've observed some of the rocks on this prairie being used by these snakes in the past. New basking sites may also have been created by recent restoration efforts, which included the clearing of trees and brush overtopping rocks felt to be ideal for basking. The student measured rock characteristics such as size, slope, aspect and crevice size as well as rock setting information such as location, canopy, adjacent vegetation and distance to nearby rocks. A total of thirty-two rocks were mapped. We think this information will be helpful for planning future restoration efforts, especially as it applies to the snakes.

There should be ongoing opportunities to mentor students on projects each fall and spring. We hope to participate and to provide a meaningful experience for students, while at the same time collect information that we can use to better manage prairies and savannas. Thanks to both of the students and their course instructor Dr. Alysa Remsburg for a successful first mentorship experience.

## Glacial Prairie

### Work at Shining Oaks Pays Off!

Alice Mirk

Our chapter manages a TPE conservation easement on Shining Oaks Preserve. Shining Oaks is a diverse mosaic of interspersed habitats, ranging from riparian wet meadows to rich uplands supporting majestic white oaks that pre-date European settlement there. These ancient trees contain their own climatological and ecological archival data, which document the historic land use and conditions of the region.

The easement encompasses approximately 48 acres near Cambridge in Jefferson County, Wisconsin. Currently, the dominant cover types include wet meadow, shrub carr, savanna and mesic forest. Glaciation caused varied topography and deposited zones of differing soil types. The entire 48 acres is bounded by glacial formations, most notably the eskers on the east side and a drumlin in the southwest corner. Within this mosaic, vegetation management is challenging due to limited access, steep slopes, highly interspersed cover types and invasive species.

Shining Oaks supports a diverse assemblage of plant species, including relict examples of oak savanna communities. These relicts contain native plants that reflect and preserve the genotype of Wisconsin's floral heritage. The Wisconsin threatened plant kittentails occurs in two separate areas of the property: "Shirley's Savanna" and the North Knob. The property also contains intact examples of glacial landforms and topography associated with ground moraine, including kettles, ridges and outwash plain.

The property is endowed with abundant water resources including ample groundwater, as evidenced by the high water table. Surface water features include a navigable stream bisecting the preserve, an excavated ditch and an ephemeral pond. The hydrology performs important functions including groundwater recharge, groundwater discharge, stormwater attenuation, flood storage and water quality protection in the Rock River watershed.



*Seeing stars at Shining Oaks Preserve. (Photo by Emily Goetz)*



Finally, the property supports diverse resident wildlife populations, including mammals (such as whitetail deer, fox squirrels, gray squirrels, red squirrels, raccoon, cottontail rabbit and coyote) birds, (such as wild turkey, blue jay and chickadee), herptiles (such as leopard frog, spring peeper and painted turtles) and invertebrates (such as rusty patched bumblebee, and tiger swallowtail butterfly). It provides suitable habitat to fulfill the life cycle needs of a complex ecosystem.

Because of the variety of cover types, this property has the potential to provide a wonderful opportunity for conservation education. It also provides important migratory bird habitat. Since the easement was completed in 2020, the work TPE needs to do to keep this landscape healthy has begun in earnest.

For management purposes, the property has been segmented into units based on vegetative community type and landform. While some gradual transitions of cover types occur, boundaries between units have been identified in the management plan to facilitate management of homogeneous blocks of cover in the landscape mosaic of the preserve. For purposes of access, the previous owners carefully cut and maintained trails throughout the property and built a bridge over the creek.

Our chapter's work began on the North Knob that was choked with honeysuckle, buckthorn, brambles and other invasives. After three work parties, the west side of the North Knob was cleared and a dent had been made on the east side. The picture below shows that these efforts paid off with a shooting-star extravaganza! Also released from brush were the kittentails, early buttercup, spiked sedge, Pennsylvania sedge, grape fern and sensitive fern.

After we finish the North Knob, our next project will be to remove brush encroaching on the savanna just south of the homestead. This is a site where kittentails have been spotted in the past. A big thanks to Emily and Chris Goetz, the current owners of Shining Oaks Preserve, who host and participate in our workdays! Stay tuned for more progress.

## Research at Benedict Prairie

*Eduardo Calixto, University of Florida Department of Entomology and Nematology*

Ever wonder why some plants produce pungently flavored or aromatic chemicals? These compounds have evolved over millions of years, primarily driven by interactions with herbivores and pollinators. Our study seeks to resolve how different environmental conditions, such as precipitation and soil nutrient availability, have influenced these interactions and ultimately the structure of environments. For that, we're conducting experiments in Montana and Wisconsin analyzing different plant species, such as wild bergamot), and their insect herbivores and pollinators. Our study design involves using white flags to mark our plants, as you'll be able to see at Benedict Prairie during this summer. In one of the studies, we sowed wild bergamot seeds to evaluate the rate of seedling recruitment and how the density of individuals impacts plant growth and foliar damage caused by herbivores. In another study, we'll observe how the diversity of plant species impacts the diversity of pollinators and seed production of wild bergamot. With the results of both studies, we'll be able to better understand how climatic change



*Focal wild bergamot plants are marked with white flags at Benedict. (Photo by Eduardo Calixto)*

and plant diversity influence ecological interactions, which is paramount for supporting conservation measures in places where organisms are endangered — such as the prairie remnant at Benedict Prairie.

## Seed Orchard Established

*Alice Mirk*

Richard Bautz, our team leader for our Waukesha County workdays, is a man with a green thumb. He's a leading small mammal expert in southeast Wisconsin and has worked on prairies and savannas for over 30 years. He has had an excellent success rate with growing threatened native species from seed to replant on WDNR land. It occurred to him that establishing a seed orchard to nurture prairie and savanna species from local genotypes would not be a bad idea, given the need to re-establish native plants in degraded areas.

Richard needed space for the raised beds once he built them and approached the field station of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee at Waukesha. Professor Emeritus Marlin Johnson and Professor Teresa Schueller, current manager of the field station, gave the idea a thumbs-up. Richard will be establishing a dozen raised beds and hoops sponsored by the Glacial Prairie Chapter. This year, Richard plans to grow a variety of seedlings in the beds, including blazing-star, hoary puccoon, gray goldenrod and prairie-clovers. Richard will also take requests for special needs from the Department of Natural Resources and the field station for species hard to grow from interseeding.

Once ready, the seedlings will be used on both private and public lands that are permanently protected.



*An example of a raised bed for seed production. (Photo by Richard Bautz)*

## Many Rivers

*Jim Vonderharr*

Our chapter mourns the passing of one of our founders, Scott Seigfreid. Scott passed away on Tuesday, March 2, 2021 after a courageous battle with cancer. He was 63 years old.

Scott was enthusiastic about nature, conservation and prairie restoration. It was his passion for prairies that led him and friends Randy Schindle and Henry Panowitsch to form the Many Rivers Chapter of TPE in 2010. His appreciation for the outdoors continued to blossom as he discovered the beauty of capturing it through photography. Scott was perhaps at his happiest during the last few years of his life, when he was able to travel south to discover more of nature's beauty.

We'll forever have our own memories of Scott with the different ways he impacted us. He was certainly my mentor in the restoration of my 15 acres of prairie. However, there will be one thing we all share. Those who knew Scott well will never look at prairie flowers, birds or wildlife in the same way. A memorial bench is being donated by our chapter to be placed in Bluff Park in North Mankato, Minn., Scott's home town.

In other chapter news, we've had a pretty successful burn season this spring: roughly 85 acres for 10 prairie owners, a big increase over last year's total. A total of 33 volunteers supplied manpower for these burns. We've purchased or upgraded some of our burn equipment and have undertaken a serious evaluation of the "paperwork" required by TPE Chapter Support. A few of our goals for the rest of 2021 are to be able to get back together for in-person chapter meetings, hopefully being able to host our annual picnic and (of course) plan for a fall burn season.



*Scott Seigfreid capturing his favorite ecosystem on camera.  
(Photo by Jim Vonderharr)*

## Minnesota

### Birding at Prairie Creek Wildlife Management Area

Almost 20 prairie enthusiasts enjoyed a morning of grassland birdwatching at Prairie Creek Wildlife Management Area, a property owned and managed by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, in Rice County. The June 12th field trip was hosted by the Minnesota Driftless Chapter and was led by Craig Koester, who helped create the site from a portion of his family's farm in 2013. Assisting Craig was Gerry Hoekstra and Kevin Smith, two area birders with exceptional bird ID skills who are very familiar with the birds of Prairie Creek WMA.

The group had excellent views of several species of grassland birds: grasshopper sparrow, bobolink, eastern meadowlark, and dickcissel. Some of the discussions enjoyed that morning revolved around the conservation threats facing dickcissels on their South American wintering grounds, and the way many grassland birds employ a flight song to attract mates and advertise the boundaries of their breeding territory.

And of course, there were prairie plants to be found and enjoyed by the botanically inclined. Some of the species found included porcupine grass, golden and heart-leaved Alexander, horse gentian, false gromwell, and hoary puccoon.



*Henslow sparrow (Photo by Craig Koester)*



*Bobolink (Photo by Craig Koester)*



Kevin logged his birds into eBird and here's his list, as well as a link to his eBird trip list:

rock pigeon (Feral Pigeon) 1  
great blue heron 1  
turkey vulture 2  
red-tailed hawk 3  
downy woodpecker 1  
American kestrel 1  
eastern kingbird 1  
American crow 2  
tree swallow 4  
barn swallow 4  
gray catbird 3  
American goldfinch 2  
grasshopper sparrow 1  
clay-colored sparrow 6  
song sparrow 6  
bobolink 4  
eastern meadowlark 2  
red-winged blackbird 14  
brown-headed cowbird 4  
common grackle 2  
common yellowthroat 3  
yellow warbler 1  
dickcissel 11

For more information about Prairie Creek Wildlife Management Area, visit the DNR's website <[https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/wmas/detail\\_report.html?id=WMA0201501](https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/wmas/detail_report.html?id=WMA0201501)> as well as the website of the Friends of Prairie Creek <<https://prairiecreekwma.wixsite.com/fopc>>. For more information about birds at the site see <<https://ebird.org/hotspot/L2898265>>.



Prairie Creek WMA TPE field trip (Photo by Stephen Winter)



Prairie Creek WMA TPE field trip (Photo by Stephen Winter)



Prairie Creek WMA TPE field trip (Photo by Stephen Winter)



# Prairie Bluff

Tom Mitchell

The prescribed fire training that was part of TPE's online conference in February delivered to our chapter three new volunteers who each participated at least once during our spring burn season. Julie Glass, Fil Sanna and Shannon Roznoski started as apprentices, putting into practice the lessons that were introduced during the virtual session.

In spring 2021 we put fire on the ground at 28 sites and burned 219 acres, some remnant and some planted, including prairies, savannas, woodlands and wetlands. We burned parts of seven of our sites and contracted to burn for 14 members. Thanks to our stalwart crew members, especially John Ochsner, Steve Hubner, Gary Kleppe and Chris Roberts. And thanks to the landowners who provided snacks and refreshments after the fires.

The chapter received a generous bequest from the Estate of Gerald and Barbara Larson, longtime TPE members, that was administered by their son Todd Larson to be used for our work at Green's Prairie Cemetery. We thank Jerry Pedretti for facilitating this donation. The funds will be spent on land management, gravestone repair and the flagpole project at the settlers' cemetery that is located near the Larson farm in the Green County town of York.

Volunteer Shannon Roznoski has completed the DNR's Rare Plant Monitoring Program and is now helping us gather information on state-listed plants that occur on our prairies. We started with Hill's thistle, which is listed as threatened in Wisconsin but is widespread at Ittis Savanna and Muralt Bluff, where we counted 230 thistles in less than half an acre. This species, a short-lived perennial, is a Midwestern endemic with a range centered on the Great Lakes states. Its basal rosettes with prickly purplish leaves were easy to find in the recently burned units. The thistle is named for Illinois botanist Ellsworth Jerome Hill (1833-1917), whose personal herbarium of 16,000 sheets can be found at the University of Illinois.

Another example of citizen science is a project by chapter volunteer Rebecca Gilman to list our sites on Cornell University's eBird website. This database gives the location of birding hotspots, and our grasslands have been known to host meadowlarks, bobolinks, bluebirds, song sparrows, grasshopper sparrows, field sparrows, Henslow's sparrows, dickcissels, kingbirds, sandhill cranes, wild turkey and the occasional upland sandpiper and northern harrier. Populations of grassland birds are in precipitous decline across the Midwest due to habitat loss. Restoration of these natural areas is important to the survival of many once-common species. Please visit our sites and post your observations on eBird!

The southeast corner of Muralt is an area where our land management crews have been burning, mowing and brushing to reduce the density of an overgrown tangle of cedar, shrub and vine that was unburned for over 100 years and ungrazed for 50 years. Invasive honeysuckle crowded out the natives and reduced sunlight for grasses and forbs. The native shrubs — sumac, dogwood, hazel, plum, prickly ash, elderberry,

raspberry, nannyberry and hawthorn — strung out along the south fenceline now serve as a barrier to the drift of herbicide overspray from the adjacent farm field. Our land management may also have resulted in the appearance of a new species, golden alexander, with a few plants in the southeast corner. This species is not shown on any existing plant list, which is notable because botanists recorded the flora at Muralt in 1973, 1974, 1976, 1985, 1988, 1991 and 1992.

Compass plant is also more plentiful in this corner of Muralt Bluff. In the last decade, South Muralt was our sole source for seed from this tall, iconic prairie plant, the subject of a passage from Aldo Leopold: "What a thousand acres of *Silphiums* looked like when they tickled the bellies of the buffalo is a question never again to be answered, and perhaps not even asked." While there are not a thousand acres of compass plants remaining in all of Green County, we're adding these seeds to our plantings to increase their numbers.

Fields of yellow — dandelions — are a ubiquitous sight in early May in southern Wisconsin, so it was delightful to find native wildflowers of similar color in abundance at Butenhoff Prairie and Stauffacher State Natural Area this spring. At the former site, which we burned last fall, it was hundreds of clumps of hoary puccoon, whose orange-yellow was in stark contrast to the blackened soil. At the latter site, burned this spring by Nate Fayram and Bridget Rathman's state natural areas crews, it was yellow star-grass, a slender pale yellow beauty, spread out among the rocks protruding through the thin topsoil



*Hill's thistle in bloom. (Photo by Shannon Roznoski)*



## Prairie Sands

Ray Goehring

Prairie Sands Chapter members spent the spring and summer working together and visiting each other's prairies, especially during lupine season. David and Shelley Hamel had a group come on May 26th to see the hills of Hugh Ittis Prairie turning blue in lupine, witness the first flight of the Karner blue butterfly and eat lunch overlooking a pitcher plant bog. According to Shelley, we were seeing the male Karner blues. The females hatched a few days later.

Paula and Ralph Christensen also invited chapter members to see their lupine-filled Westfield prairie over the Memorial Day weekend.

On June 12th, chapter members had a workday at Dale and Beth Johnson's Oxford Prairie. We pulled wild parsnip, ate a wonderful lunch provided by our hosts and enjoyed tales of their prairie restoration history.

If you wish to have a group visit your favorite prairie or help you with a special project, contact Ray Goehring at raygoe@yahoo.com. It's generally better to get the word out a week or so in advance so more people see the announcement.



*Shelley Hamel and Ed Smith among 35 acres of lupine.  
(Photo by David Hamel)*



*The intrepid work crew at Johnson's Oxford Prairie. (Photo by Dale Johnson)*



## Southwest Wisconsin

Jack Kussmaul

After a year of conducting chapter board meetings by teleconference, it was a joy to meet in person on May 17 in the late afternoon sun on the porch of Roger and Pat Smith's home in rural Boscobel. The most exciting news to come out of that meeting was that the chapter will be offering a \$1,000 annual scholarship for students in the field of conservation. Details are being worked out, and we'll begin accepting applications in early 2022.

After living with a burn ban last year, we're pleased to report that we held burns on four of our sites this spring. With a contingent of students and faculty from UW-Platteville joining us, we had a large crew to burn the Heather's Prairie portion of Borah Creek Preserve. Burns at Iris Drive were completed with the Gays Mills Volunteer Fire Department. Kristin Westad and a small crew burned at Thomas Wet Prairie.

We also contracted with Adaptive Restoration to burn Eldred Prairie. Because of issues with breaks, this site had not been fully burned for several years. This spring, Jesse Bennett, with his forestry mower, cut breaks through the thicket around the perimeter to make it possible to burn the entire parcel. On a Sunday morning, Mike Healy from Adaptive Restoration called to say he was short some crew members but could burn that day if we could recruit some volunteers. We got four people at the last minute and had a successful and badly needed burn.

Other types of work have continued on our sites. We seem to have largely won the battle with oak grubs at Eldred and multiflora rose at Borah Creek. Our volunteer base is small but dedicated. We had 20 people join us for a turtle workshop on June 26, which was conducted by Rebecca Christoffel and held on the Jack Kussmaul property on the Lower Wisconsin River.

We will hold a tour of private restoration sites on September 11. On that date, we'll begin with the property and antique car collection of Jim Dworschack, and move on to the Gary Adams property for a tour and lunch. Both are in northern Crawford County. We'll move on in the afternoon to the adjoining Mike Nee and Phil Jennings properties near Richland Center. Details can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.



UW-Platteville Reclamation Club members assist with a burn at Borah Creek. (Photo by Steve Querin-Schultz)



Sunset after the burn at Borah Creek. (Photo by Dan Fisher)

## St. Croix Valley

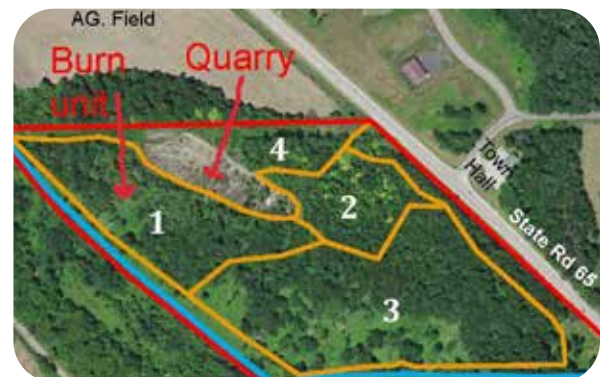
Evanne Hunt

### Prescribed Burns

A variety of barriers meant we only completed one prescribed burn this spring, but it was spectacular! We burned unit 1 (see map) at Alexander Oak Savanna on March 13. Thank you to our volunteer burn crew: Abby Mueller, Alex Bouthilet, Carl Nelson, Evanne Hunt, Harold Bend, Harvey Halvorsen, Jerry Peterson, John Arthur, Mike Miller, Prescott Bergh and Wayne Huhnke!

### Special Shout-Out

A special thanks to Phil Bouthilet, Torie Anderson and Mady Rohl. To celebrate Earth Day, they spent five hours at Alexander clearing trees and brush in the old quarry. Their work opened an area with struggling little bluestem, purple prairie-clover and rough blazing-star. With more sunlight, these plants — and the pasque-flower, ground plum, prairie turnip and prairie bush-clover seedlings planted last year — will have a much easier time. Alex Bouthilet arranged the workday. Thank you!



Management units at Alexander Oak Savanna.



The Alexander burn crew. (Photo by John Arthur)



# The *Prairie* *Enthusiasts*



## 2020 Annual Report



“Restoring land without restoring relationship is an empty exercise. It is relationship that will endure and relationship that will sustain the restored land.” -Robin Wall Kimmerer

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## Executive Director's Message

**W**e are still absorbing the impact of all that took place in 2020. Yet from the turmoil and isolation we endured, The Prairie Enthusiasts are emerging ripe for renewal.

As we've connected more deeply with nature, our role as stewards has been strengthened. Our Landowner Services Program launched and was soon flooded with requests for advice on restoration projects. Chapters rallied after spring burn cancellations and safely conducted our most ambitious fall burn season yet. We adapted to new technologies and overcame barriers to connect with and build our prairie community.

Your search for a new Executive Director gave you the opportunity to reflect on your progress and imagine what continued growth might look like for our grassroots organization. And my, how we grew! We welcomed 188 brand-new members to The Prairie Enthusiasts and increased operating revenue by 15%. Through the transformative power of giving, a little ingenuity, and a lot of dedication, we're finding our way forward.

The credit for this success is not mine to claim. But I take tremendous pride in the organization you've built and look forward to our work together in the years to come. Thank you for your service, your kindness, your energy and your boundless enthusiasm for the prairies we protect and steward together. And thank you for welcoming me to a community I love a little more each day.

With hope for our future,



**Debra Behrens**  
Executive Director



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## Restoration & Land Management

**O**ur prairie community has been built through our shared connection with the lands we steward. For some, 2020 was a more isolated time of working alone on our own land, carrying out independent service projects or on rare occasions working with limited small groups of volunteers outdoors at a minimum 6-foot distance. Most spring burns were cancelled, but our site stewards and chapter volunteers devoted countless hours of planning and effort to ensure that stewardship of our sites was not neglected. Seeds were collected and invasives managed, and our prescribed burns roared back to life again in the fall season.

The Empire-Sauk Chapter celebrated a major milestone with the expiration of the Managed Forest Law contract at Mounds View Grasslands. After years of waiting, they could

***The Prairie Enthusiasts devoted 46% of its 2020 budget to restoration and land management activities.***

finally harvest the walnut trees crowding out open-grown oaks and begin restoration work on a 25-acre savanna. Rosebud and Duchess, a pair of Suffolk Punch work horses, became the heroes of the day as they hauled out the logs that would be sold to help fund the restoration.



(Photo by Stephen Winter)



(Photo by Eric Preston)



## Working with Landowners

The Prairie Enthusiasts' founding members have many stories of boldly knocking on the doors of complete strangers in their search for remnant prairies. After decades of working closely with our dedicated volunteer stewards, many landowners have come to share our enthusiasm for these rare natural communities and have permanently entrusted them to our care. Since then, we've continued our tradition of working closely with landowners and through these relationships The Prairie Enthusiasts have protected a total of 3,540 acres, actively managing 36 owned preserves and 14 conservation easements.

In 2020, we launched our Landowner Services Program to help those with conservation goals better assess the restoration opportunities and management needs of their lands. With funding from The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Landowner Services Coordinator Dan Carter was hired in the spring. His first field season exceeded all expectations. No more knocking on doors... today, the landowners are coming to us! This is a credit to the work that has been done for decades to raise awareness and build an appreciation for prairie landscapes.



*TPE Landowner Services Coordinator Dan Carter on his first site visit in May 2020 with Coulee Region Chapter members John and Rita Hoffman at their property in Viola, WI*

### 2020 Landowner Services Program Activity

**66 landowner visits in 3 states  
and every chapter region**

**46 short plans and  
7 detailed management plans developed**

**1,436 total potential project acres**

## Outreach & Education

In 2020, we learned to adapt. Most field trips and in-person learning opportunities were cancelled, though there were a few limited-attendance, socially-distanced outdoor events and burn trainings held following The Prairie Enthusiasts' COVID policy.

We also learned to try new things. The Empire-Sauk Chapter innovated a successful online burn school that gave us the confidence to host more events online. The Prairie

Enthusiasts' Annual Meeting and Picnic, usually a small gathering, was a lively virtual celebration that drew nearly 100 members.

And we learned to make good use of our time at home. Inspired by the fifth-grade students of Mayville Middle School in Southeastern Wisconsin, Glacial Prairie Chapter member Walter Mirk finished his ambitious and versatile Wisconsin prairie curriculum that is now available to teachers for their classrooms and to our chapters for outreach activities. Now that he has put the finishing touches on the Wisconsin curriculum, Walter has started a version for Minnesota and plans for Illinois and Iowa curricula to follow.



*(Photo by Rob Baller)*

**In 2020 The Prairie Enthusiasts hosted  
or participated in:**

**12 Field Trips**

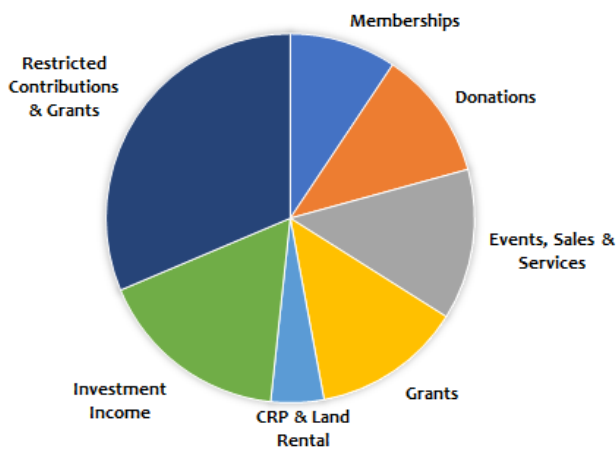
**12 Other events and activities**



# Statement of Activities

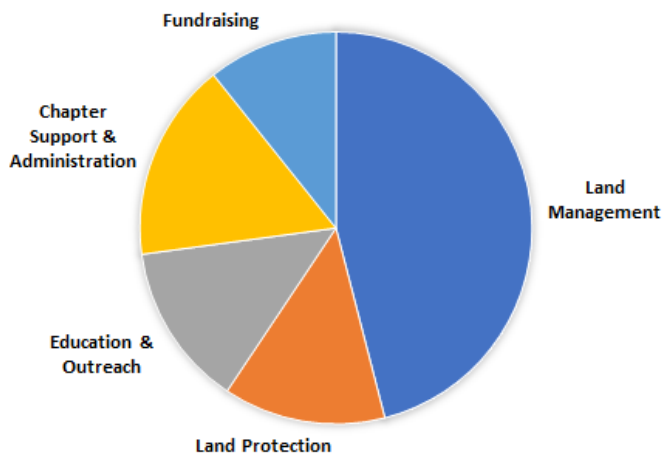
## Revenues, Gains & Other Support

Memberships	\$	141,423	9%
Donations	\$	171,333	11%
Events, Sales & Services	\$	199,297	13%
Grants	\$	197,702	13%
CRP & Land Rental	\$	70,095	5%
Investment Income	\$	255,355	17%
Restricted Contributions & Grants	\$	472,950	31%
	\$	1,508,155	100%



## Expenses

Land Management	\$	429,151	46%
Land Protection	\$	124,919	13%
Education & Outreach	\$	125,773	13%
Chapter Support & Administration	\$	153,141	16%
Fundraising	\$	100,146	11%
	\$	933,130	100%



# Statement of Position

## Assets

<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash & equivalents	\$	578,860
Receivables	\$	70,848
Other	\$	29,836
	\$	679,544
<b>Property &amp; Equipment (net of depreciation)</b>		
Land & improvements	\$	9,434,344
Equipment	\$	13,615
	\$	9,447,959
<b>Investments &amp; Restricted Cash</b>	\$	2,662,740
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	\$	12,790,243

## Liabilities & Net Assets

<b>Liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable	\$	23,806
Deferred revenue	\$	6,465
Accrued salaries & expenses	\$	37,485
	\$	67,756
<b>Net Assets</b>		
Unrestricted	\$	753,188
With donor restrictions	\$	11,969,299
	\$	12,722,487
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b>	\$	12,790,243

## Notes

1. Financial statement as of Dec. 31, 2019, audited by Johnson Block & Company.
2. Includes both The Prairie Enthusiasts, Inc. and The Prairie Enthusiasts Trust.
3. Donated land and easements totalling \$737,400 not included in Restricted Contributions.

# Upcoming Events

By Grace Vosen

**W**ould you like to attract more people to your upcoming event? When your chapter adds an event to the calendar on The Prairie Enthusiasts website, it will be shared on social media and in eNews, and added to the list of upcoming events in each issue of The Prairie Promoter. This will take the place of the annual field trip flyer, providing a rolling schedule for upcoming events and more opportunities to share them with a wider audience. If you need help with this process or want more details, contact [info@theprairieenthusiasts.org](mailto:info@theprairieenthusiasts.org).

**Join the Southwest Wisconsin Chapter and Wisconsin Land Trust Days for a chance to see what private landowners are accomplishing on their prairies!**

**When:** September 11, 2021 at 9:30am - 3:30pm

**What:** We'll begin that morning at the Dworschack property in Soldiers Grove, WI. We plan to leave there at 11:30 to go on to the Adams property for a picnic and tour. At 1:30, we'll move on to spend the rest of the afternoon at the adjoining Nee and Jennings sites near Richland Center. We are looking at a full and most interesting day!

**Where:** We will meet at 48244 Norwegian Hollow Road, Soldiers Grove, WI. The second site is at 14462 County Road H, Soldiers Grove, WI. The third site is at 31354 County Road JJ, Richland Center (the fourth site is just next door).

**Notes:** Pack your own lunch. If you have any questions, you may contact Jack Kussmaul at [jack.kussmaul@gmail.com](mailto:jack.kussmaul@gmail.com) or 608-988-4309. The day of the tour, he may be reached at 608-778-5299 (wherever there's cell reception).



## Welcome New Members

March 1 - June 13

Kathy Adams  
Jill Andersen  
Corina Anderson  
Todd Argall  
Tony Arhart  
Jay Arneson  
Tyler Barber  
Tim Baye  
Bob Beck  
Elizabeth Bruckner  
Frank Cadwell  
Dirk Denzin  
Julie Dolinky  
Lynnette Dornak  
Diane Farsetta  
Melissa Gibson  
Carl Gierke  
Emily Goetz  
Lizz Hall

Richard Hannah  
Marissa Hart  
Philip Hazel  
Chris Hyberger  
Kevin Jacobson  
Jim Kell  
Karen Kendrick-Hands  
Briana King  
William Koepke  
Sarah Kraszewski  
Valerie Lancelle  
Mark Lindquist  
Jason Ludwigson  
Stephen Lyrene  
Donald Marx  
Alfred Matano  
Margaret McGlone  
David Mittlesteadt  
Aaron Olson

Martha Piepgras  
Ellen Powers  
Todd Rathbun  
Ted Robinson-Meyers  
Laurie Rogers  
Pattie Salter  
Ronald Schwarz  
Charles Shepard  
Jenn Simons  
Rizwan Siwani  
Christopher Smith  
Margaret Sprague  
Jan Strommen  
Diane Thelander  
Gary Van Domelen  
Kenneth Vogel  
Evelyn Williams  
Nadine (Dee Dee) Zwettler



# Thank You Donors

We thank the following who donated to TPE between March 1 - June 13.  
These gifts are truly generous and appreciated.

## \$1000 or more

Anonymous to the Empire-Sauk chapter, in honor of Rich and Kathy Henderson, for the Hanley Farm Trust acquisition	to the Empire-Sauk chapter for the Hanley Farm Trust acquisition	Paul & Linda Bishop Chuck & Julie Bomar Susan Boulineau in memory of Kathryn Richardson	Jan Ketelle to the Empire-Sauk Chapter for the Mounds View barn repair
Anonymous to the Empire-Sauk chapter for the Hanley Farm Trust acquisition	Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin to the Empire-Sauk chapter for land management at West Dane Conservancy	Laura Brown & Mark Shahan Annual Appeal	John & Kathy King Deb Knudsen
Chuck Bauer & Chuck Beckwith to the Empire-Sauk chapter for the Hanley Farm Trust acquisition	Tom Neujahr & Julie Underwood to the Empire-Sauk chapter for the Hanley Farm Trust acquisition, in appreciation of Ursula Muehllehner's leadership and example.	Patrick Caffrey & Peg Zappen	Sarah Kraszewski & Brendon Panke
Joan Braune to the Empire-Sauk chapter for the Hanley Farm Trust acquisition	Jeannie Roberts & John Voegeli	Kathleen Carlyle & Ken Smith	La Crosse Distilling Company
Kathie & Tom Brock to the Empire-Sauk chapter for the Hanley Farm Trust acquisition	Kurt & Susan Sroka Annual Appeal	Richard Cates to the Empire-Sauk chapter for the Hanley Farm Trust acquisition	Scott & Valerie Lancelle Michael Lasecki
Barbara & Ted Cochrane to the Empire-Sauk chapter for the Hanley Farm Trust acquisition; in honor of Rich Henderson	Gail Van Haren to the Van Haren Endowment fund	Greg Cochrane Rollin & Nancy Cooper in memory of Joan Thomson	to the Empire-Sauk Chapter for the Mounds View barn repair
Dick & Jane Dana to the Empire-Sauk chapter for the Hanley Farm Trust acquisition	Kristin Westad Mari & Gary Wolter to the Empire-Sauk chapter for the Hanley Farm Trust acquisition	Jerry & Juanita Dahlen Judy Decker to the Northwest Illinois Prairie Enthusiasts chapter for the rare plant garden	Thomas Cunningham & Susan Lipnick
Chuck Gates & Candy Schrank to the Empire-Sauk chapter for the Hanley Farm Trust acquisition	\$500 - \$999 Anderson Land Company Frank & Kristi Cadwell Kevin Dewan	Dirk Denzin Kirk Elliott	Douglas Lloyd
Good Oak, LLC Conference Sponsor	Ronald & Sheila Endres to the Empire-Sauk chapter for the Hanley Farm Trust acquisition	Ronald & Sheila Endres to the Empire-Sauk Chapter for the Mounds View barn repair in honor of Muffy Barrett	Nathan & Jessica Marti
Philip Hazel	Stantec Consulting Services Conference Sponsor	Judy Decker to the Northwest Illinois Prairie Enthusiasts chapter	Don Marx to the Empire-Sauk chapter for the Hanley Farm Trust acquisition
Tod Highsmith to the Empire-Sauk chapter for the Hanley Farm Trust acquisition	Douglas & Carol Hancock	John & Karin Exo Bridie Fanning	Sandy McManus to the Empire-Sauk Chapter for land management at Moely prairie
Greg Hottman & Melanie Tavera to the Empire-Sauk chapter for the Hanley Farm Trust acquisition	\$100 - \$499 Amy Alstad	Susan Forster-Cox in memory of Kathryn Richardson	Alice & Walter Mirk
Kimberly Kreitinger & Eric Preston	Mike Anderson & Patricia Fahrenkrug	Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation to the Northwest Illinois Prairie Enthusiasts chapter	Alice & Walter Mirk in memory of Tom Brock
Roma Lenahan to the Empire-Sauk chapter for the Hanley Farm Trust acquisition	Todd Argall	Kay Gabriel	Ann & David Moffat
Walter & Jean Meanwell	Barbara Bach	Mary Garves in honor of my dear friend Anna Motivans' 90th birthday	Bill & Ginny Nelson
	Jane Barnett	Nancy Gloe	Bill & Ginny Nelson to the Empire-Sauk chapter for land management at Moely prairie
	Tim Baye	Alice Gould	Network for Good
	Dan & Lorraine Beck	Christopher & Ann Green	Darrin O'Brien
	Ben & Debra Behrens	Amy Gribb	Ed & Seliesa Pembleton
	Sandy Bennett	Lizz Hall	Joel Petersen & Gail Vick
	Tom & Marjie Bennett	Richard & Margaret Hannah	Chuck Phillipson in honor of Gary Eldred's induction into the WCHF, for land management at Muralt Bluff
	Kent & Linda Bergemann	Roberta Herschleb	Don & Marti Piepgras
		Judy & Alan Hoffman	Kent Prather & Julie Haas
		Larry Hands & Karen Kendrick- Hands	Bob Retko & Kay Wienke
		John Kessler	Ted Robinson-Meyers
			Karen Mesmer & Robert Rolley
			Town of New Glarus
			Chuck & Judy Shepard

# Thank You Donors

Mary Sobol  
to the Empire-Sauk Chapter  
for the Mounds View barn  
repair

Keith & Karen Solimar  
Kevin & Maria Spaight  
Kevin Sparks

John Steinke  
Tripp & Allison Stroud  
Dennis Tande

Gof Thomson  
Jacob Valentine, III  
to the Empire-Sauk Chapter  
for the Mounds View barn  
repair

Jacob Valentine, III  
Gary Van Domelen  
George Vernon  
Loren Wagner  
in memory of Jerry Gunderson  
a quiet, "under the radar",  
prairie pioneer

Davin Wedel & David Paul  
Agnes Welsch  
Kathleen Wessels  
Mary Williams  
Dan Winkler  
Levi Wood  
Rosalind Woodward  
Katy & Dave Wortel  
Annual Appeal

## Under \$100

Anonymous  
Kathy & Ben Adams  
Jill Andersen  
Erik & Corina Anderson  
Tony Arhart  
Wendy & Jay Arneson  
Drew Ballantyne  
Tyler Barber  
Bob Beck  
LeAnna Bender  
Kandace Bergstrom  
in memory of Kathryn  
Richardson  
Jamie Bolwerk  
Elizabeth Bruckner  
John & Carol Cantwell  
Toby & Arabelle Carlson  
in memory of Joan Thomson  
Daniel Carter  
Gina Cherny  
Barbara & Ed Christie  
Laura Cogan  
Caroljean Coventree  
Mary Crawford

Sal (Sarah) Daggett  
Linda Davis  
Julie Dolinky  
Lynnette Dornak  
Althea Dotzour  
Joel & Sandy Dunnette  
Stephanie Eastwood &  
Barbara Meyer  
Billy & Dianne Eisenhuth  
Jim & Patti Ellis  
Annual Appeal  
Diane Farsetta  
Tim Fenske  
to the Empire-Sauk Chapter  
for the Mounds View barn  
repair

Graham Floreani  
Anne-Marie & Wil Fryer  
Carol & Ned Gatzke  
Chris Gibson, Rowan Gibson, &  
Sage Gibson  
Carl Gierke  
Emily & Christopher Goetz  
Thomas Goetzman  
Jacob Grace  
Anne & Larry Graham  
Dorothy Graves  
in honor of Anna Motivans'  
90th birthday  
Frank Grenzow  
Gail & Jerry Guenther  
Bethney Pickhardt  
Anne Habel  
Mary (Bober) Hamilton  
in memory of Kathryn  
Richardson  
Carol Hardin  
Marissa & Westley Hart  
Dale Heusinkveld  
Lars Higdon  
Steve Hubner & Mary  
Zimmerman  
to the Empire-Sauk Chapter  
for the Mounds View barn  
repair

Evanne Hunt  
Chris Hyberger  
Kevin Jacobson  
Marsha Janota  
Elizabeth Jensen  
Ron Johnson  
Dr. Matthew Kaproth  
Dale Karow  
James & Sue Kell  
Briana & Douglas King  
in memory of Lisa Powell  
Joe Kirst

William Koepke  
Craig Koester  
Janice Krane  
Walter Kugler Jr.  
Asenath LaRue  
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Brooke & Jon Lewis  
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Jason Ludwigson  
Linda Lynch  
John & Mary Kay Lyons  
Stephen Lyrene  
Janet Maciver  
Rita Mahoney  
Brett Mandernack  
Alfred Matano  
Elizabeth McBride  
Patricia McConnell  
in memory of Kathryn  
Richardson  
Margaret McGlone  
for love of the prairie  
Richard Merten  
David Mittlesteadt  
Sheri Moor  
Melody Moore  
Sara Nelson  
Laura & Greg Nessler  
Annual Appeal  
Michelle Nighthoak &  
Dale Ivarie  
Kevin Nigon  
Kevin O'Brien & Jodi  
Dansingburg  
Aaron Olson & Anna, Hank,  
Nora, Greta, & Annika  
Randy Palmer  
Alexandra Paral  
Kelsey Parry  
Jerome Pedretti  
Steven Peters  
John Peterson  
Helen Poser  
Ellen Powers  
Mary Kay Puntillo  
Todd & Karen Rathbun

Mary Roen  
Charles Roessler  
Laurie Rogers  
Tom & Heather Romaine  
Mary & Tom Rondeau  
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James & RuthAnn Schultz  
Ronald Schwarz &  
Laura Moberly  
Scott Seys  
Barb Siekowski & Jim Quick  
Jenn Simons  
Rizwan Siwani  
Christopher Smith  
Glenn Smith  
Marriah Sondrea  
in honor of Maggie Jones and  
David Linton  
Mark & Patricia Sonnenberg  
Kevin Sparks  
to the Empire-Sauk Chapter  
for the Mounds View barn  
repair  
Melissa Sparrow-Lien  
Kathy & Gabor Speck  
Gary & Margaret Sprague  
Dawn-Marie Staccia  
Leon Boland &  
Katherine Stahl  
Maggie Steele  
Annual Appeal  
William Stein  
Jan Strommen  
Diane Thelander family  
Mary & Jim Viereggs  
Ken & Laura Vogel  
Tim Walsh & Jean Chwae  
Debby Walters  
Linda Welch  
Wanona & Bill Ceisel  
Kurt Westbrook  
Evelyn Williams  
Stephen Winter  
M. Resha Wyman  
Dee Dee Zwettler

## Legacy Giving

Please consider The Prairie Enthusiasts in your will or estate plans. If you've already done so, please let us know, so we can thank you personally for ensuring future generations will have access to prairies and savannas. For more information please contact Debra Behrens(608) 638-1873, ext. 1 or [dbehrens@theprairieenthusiasts.org](mailto:dbehrens@theprairieenthusiasts.org).





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[www.ThePrairieEnthusiasts.org](http://www.ThePrairieEnthusiasts.org)

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Your annual membership dues with The Prairie Enthusiasts help us carry on our mission of educating about, protecting and restoring prairies, oak savannas, and related natural communities of the upper Midwest. Ensure that your membership is current to continue receiving future issues of *The Prairie Promoter*.

Renew online by visiting [www.ThePrairieEnthusiasts.org](http://www.ThePrairieEnthusiasts.org) or mail a check and the form below to:

**The Prairie Enthusiasts, P.O. Box 824, Viroqua, WI 54665**

### Questions?

E-mail Caleb DeWitt at [cdewitt@theprairieenthusiasts.org](mailto:cdewitt@theprairieenthusiasts.org)  
or call us at (608) 638-1873, Ext. 4

## Thank you!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

The Prairie Enthusiasts is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization,  
and contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

### The Prairie Enthusiasts Membership Levels:

- ☐ \$35 Little Bluestem
- ☐ \$50 Big Bluestem
- ☐ \$100 Shooting Star
- ☐ \$250 Blazing Star
- ☐ \$500 Monarch
- ☐ \$1,000 Compass Plant
- ☐ \$5,000 Bur Oak

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**The Prairie Enthusiasts, P.O. Box 824, Viroqua, WI 54665**

### Questions?

E-mail Caleb DeWitt at [cdewitt@theprairieenthusiasts.org](mailto:cdewitt@theprairieenthusiasts.org)  
or call us at (608) 638-1873, Ext. 4

### Thank you!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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- ☐ \$5,000 Bur Oak