

# THE PRAIRIE PROMOTER

VOL. 9, NO. 3

FALL 1996

*"We create landscapes according to our morality, humanity and culture, and these landscapes then determine our fate."*

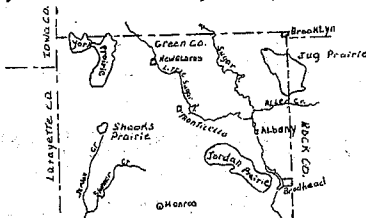
## Green's (York) Prairie

John Stewart made the first settlement in the territory now known as the Town of York in 1838. He came from Union Co., Ohio in 1837, after which he spent one year in Wiota, Lafayette County. He made a claim upon section 27. This claim was mostly prairie, but the west side was covered with timber, in which, near a spring, he built his log house. Mr. Stewart was born in 1806.

The next settler was William C. Green, who came here from Wethersfield, Wyoming County, N.Y. in the fall of 1839, and built a small log house. He returned to New York, coming back the following spring with his wife and children.

Jefferson Fayette Westcott was born March 26, 1826, in the Town of Wethersfield, Wyoming County, N.Y., where he lived until the summer of 1842, when he came to Farmer's Grove, Wis., in company with his brother Ezra, and A.L. Cleveland. They embarked on a brig at Buffalo, and after a long, tedious and perilous trip, arrived at Milwaukee. From there they came on foot, arriving at Green's Prairie one dark, stormy night about midnight, having followed the Indian trail which led from Rock River to Galena. There was, at this time, only two settlers on the prairie, John Stewart and William C. Green, and they boarded with Mr. Green until fall, when they made a claim and built a cabin, where for more than a year they kept "bachelor's hall," supplying their table with bread from corn which they raised, and with meat from the deer and wild turkeys, of which they killed in abundance from the door and window of their cabin.

—History of Green County, Chapter XLIV, Town of York



## Jug Prairie

To this day one of the earliest-settled places in Green county is called "Jug Prairie." This came about by reason of the fact that there were only a few horses in the community, and one of the farmers going to Janesville for provisions was asked by several neighbors to take along their vinegar and molasses jugs to have them filled. There were a dozen jugs in his rig when he came to start, and upon arriving at the store a lounge spoke laughingly of the abundance of his supply. "Yes, sir, I came from Jug Prairie," remarked the man—and the name still is used to designate this part of the township.

—Southwestern Wisconsin: A History of Old Crawford County by John G. Gregory, 1932

## Shook's Prairie

The first application of the Monroe Doctrine was made in the Squatter's War on Shook's Prairie, as the land to the east of Adams Church is called. Jonas Shook, having settled on this land in 1838, was looked on as a leader among the pioneers. In 1847 a man named Wildman who was working for him entered a timber tract which was part of one of the so-called squatter's claims. This was construed as claim jumping, a heinous crime in a new country, sometimes calling forth the "judgement of powder and ball." This was the name given to armed resistance by many of the early comers. Under the Monroe Doctrine, the claim-jumper had to deed the land to the squatter, and this Wildman refused to do. As Shook was looked upon as a man to reckon with in a controversy, the people set on helping the squatter, framed a charge to have Shook placed under arrest and removed from the premises.

After he had been taken to Albany a band of 20 men came to the house and ordered Wildman to come out and surrender, but this he refused to do. They then decided to bring him out by force; but, seizing a butcher knife, he took his stand in a bedroom where, protected in some measure by the bedsteads, he waged such a battle that the attackers gave up, although they numbered 20 to one. After the fracas some of the participants were arrested, but later released for lack of direct evidence. Then followed a long siege of persecution for Mr. Shook. His grain stacks were burned, his stock and fences interfered with, and every manner of distress put upon him, no one ever being caught or convicted of the latter crimes.

In another instance a man who entered a claim over a squatter was taken by neighbors and held partly submerged in an ice pond until he signed the deed. Such methods soon put a stop to claim-jumping in that part of the country.

—Southwestern Wisconsin: A History of Old Crawford County by John G. Gregory, 1932

## Jordan Prairie

The town of Decatur lies in the eastern tier of Green County's subdivisions, embracing congressional township 2 north, range 9 east. It is bounded on the north by the town of Albany; on the west by Sylvester; on the south by Spring Grove; and on the east by Rock County. The surface of this town is quite variable. What is known as Jordan Prairie—which comprises sections 6, 7, 8, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 27 and 28—is a rich productive portion of the town and was the first settled. The soil of this prairie consists of a rich loam mixed with sand, and is superior corn land. It also produces excellent crops of small grain and grass, and on the whole is not excelled perhaps in the state for its general excellence.

—History of Green County, 1884

## President's message

The summer season is nearing an end and our prairies are at their showiest, but in just a couple of short months the prairies will be closing up shop and shutting down for the winter. This dormant season is a critical period for the members of our native grassland communities. The processes of plant growth and seed production, and of insect, bird and mammal reproduction are very costly in terms of energy expended. Thus, the dormant winter season is a welcome rest for many of our prairie species. Likewise, this period is critical for most of the prairie plants' seed. Nearly all of the prairie seeds need cold stratification to stimulate germination come spring. Many species need cold as well as moist conditions to grow the following summer.

Unlike the prairie remnants we are working diligently to restore, we do not get a nice long dormant period in which to recuperate. As we move forward with prairie conservation efforts, we are developing important partnerships with other conservation and business organizations. One such partnership is with the Madison Audubon Society. It's been very rewarding for The Prairie Enthusiasts to be cosponsoring the Goose Pond Prairie Jubilee held at the University of Wisconsin-Extension's Arlington Research Farms, south of Poynette. Another relationship has developed with Wisconsin Power and Light. John Laub and Tom Hunt supported The Prairie Enthusiasts for several years and last year cosponsored our banquet. This year they will be printing a new publication about prairie conservation produced by TPE. Probably the most recent partnership is the one with the Wisconsin Chapter of The Nature Conservancy. Because of TPE's focus on prairie conservation and TNC's deep concern about the rapid loss of prairie habitat to development, we are increasingly joining forces and sharing information to save our native grassland biodiversity.

With the loss of our native species increasing every year and with commensurate growth of the threatened and endangered species list, it's clear to me that there can be **no** dormancy for those of us who care about such things. As fewer and fewer volunteers are willing to give of their time for the benefit of future generations of our own and other species, the responsibility is left to fewer of us, so develop-

## THE PRAIRIE ENTHUSIASTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### OFFICERS

Gary Eldred, President  
Edie Goth, Secretary

Rich Henderson, Vice-President  
Alice Mirk, Treasurer

### Directors:

Reynold Zeller  
Kathy Kirk

Walter Mirk  
John Rutherford

Barbara Rutherford

### PRAIRIE BLUFF CHAPTER *Serving Rock, Green and Lafayette counties*

Rob Baller, President  
608-365-2065  
Dorothy Gessert, V.-President  
608-897-4479

Peg Stiles, Secretary  
608-325-4370  
Fred Faessler, Treasurer  
608-325-9374

### EMPIRE-SAUK CHAPTER *Serving Sauk, Columbia and Dane counties*

Rich Henderson, President  
608-845-7065  
Scott Weber, V.-President  
608-346-0179

Charlotte Hallam, Secretary  
608-833-3268  
Jim Welsh, Treasurer  
608-256-5941

### SOUTHWEST CHAPTER *Serving Grant, Crawford, Richland & Iowa counties*

Gary Eldred, President  
608-375-5271  
Gary Adams, V.-President  
608-624-5797

Sue Linder, Secretary  
608-375-2668  
Don Hagar, Treasurer  
608-647-6628

### NORTHWEST ILLINOIS *Serving JoDaviess, Carroll & Stephenson counties*

Jim Rachuy, President  
815-947-2287  
Grace Storch, V.-President  
815-777-9691

Judith Wehrle, Secretary  
815-777-9015  
John Rutherford, Treasurer  
815-594-2591

### WEST CENTRAL *Serving Barron, Chippewa, Polk, Dunn, Eau Claire, Pierce, Pepin and St. Croix counties*

Harvey Halvorsen, President  
715-684-2914  
Chuck Bomar, Secretary/Treasurer  
715-232-8133

Jim Faust, V.-President  
715-962-3852

### EDITORIAL STAFF

#### NORTHWEST ILLINOIS CHAPTER

Rickie Rachuy  
11219 E. Stockton Rd.  
Stockton, IL 61085  
815-947-2287

#### PRAIRIE BLUFF CHAPTER

Robert Baller  
Box 533  
Beloit, WI 53511-3753  
608-365-2065

#### EMPIRE-SAUK CHAPTER

Jim Welsh  
480 N. Baldwin Street, #5  
Madison, WI 53703  
608-256-5941

#### SOUTHWEST CHAPTER

Walter Mirk  
10052 County Highway C  
Woodman, WI 53827  
608-988-4760

#### WEST CENTRAL CHAPTER

Robert Pike  
1642 Hwy. 64 East  
New Richland, WI 54017  
715-246-5975

ing partnerships becomes even more critical! Time is running out for many of our native species and more than likely, when spring arrives and calls upon the resting flora and fauna to renew the eons old cycles, there will be less of them to carry on!

I would urge each and every one of you to check your local chapter calendar of events. The next time you have a Saturday or Sunday when your choice is a football game and popcorn or a family movie, take the family to a work party to cut brush or collect seed and remember—the sleeping prairies and their future are in your hands.

—Gary Eldred

## Contributions needed

No, we are not asking for money this time. We are asking members to contribute prairie art, photographs, poems and articles for The Prairie Promoter. We know that many prairie enthusiasts have talents which ought to receive recognition and which will be appreciated by our readership.

If you are affiliated with a TPE chapter, submit your work to your chapter editor now. If you are a member at large, submit your material to:

Walter Mirk  
10052 CTH C  
Woodman, WI 53827

## Arrow-leaved Aster

It is time for another episode of my mentally aerobic series on wildflower identification. Today's workout: another catatonic aster *from hell!* (A woman shrieks a bloodcurdling scream, followed by deep, maniacal laughter.)

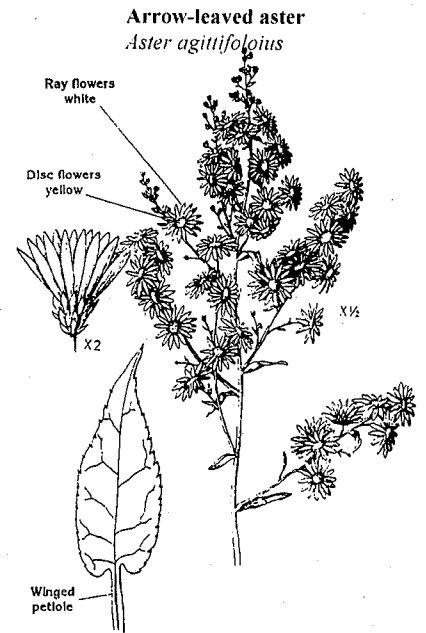
Everyone. And one; and a two. Stretch those brains. We will now discuss *Aster sagittifolius*, Arrow-leaved Aster. This aster grows in open woods and savannas. Occasionally it is found on roadsides where there used to be trees, but they were cut down. And breathe. Twist.

Arrow-leaved Aster grows from one to three feet tall. As its name implies, the leaves are shaped like arrow heads, sort of. The arrow shape is most noticeable on leaves near the base of the plant. As a matter of fact, the basal leaves are green and visible nearly all year long, even under the snow. Now touch your toes, see those leaves. Keep your knees straight.

O.K. Everybody up. The bloom of Arrow-leaved Aster is generally white. This helps in avoiding confusion with the infuriating Shorts' Aster (*Aster shortii*), which is generally blue, and also has arrow leaves, and grows in moist through dry savannas, just like Arrow-leaved Aster. Stretch. But, Arrow-leaved Aster has "wings," small, narrow flaps of green leaf material which line the petiole (the small branch which joins the leaf to the stem). More maniacal laughter. And rest.

Arrow-leaved Aster blooms in the fall, usually October. You can find lots of it at Big Hill Park, Beloit. It grows along the woodland edges and roadsides, if the parks department has not mowed it down the way they always do, those swine. Get out there and see it for yourself. Then, take a shower.

—Rob Baller



Drawing from *The New Britton & Brown*, 1952

## New England Aster

The asters are upon us. That mysterious, arcane group of flowers which everyone recognizes (hopefully) as a group, but panics catatonically when specific identification is attempted. Asters *from hell!*

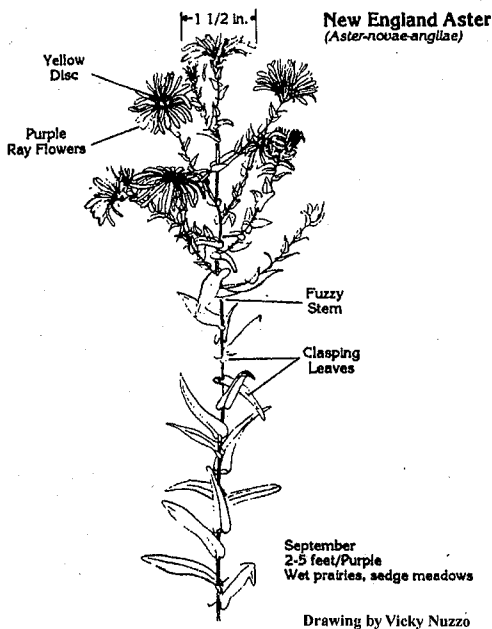
There are at least 13 asters common or semi-common on prairie remnants, woodland edges, and wetlands. The species we will tackle today is the spectacular glorious New England Aster (*Aster novaeangliae*).

New England Asters grow in soil ranging from medium moisture (usually black soil) to very wet soil, even the hummocks of wetlands. These asters will not be found on dry soils or hill tops. And they require full sunlight, so they will not be found lurking in shady woods. They like open damp fields.

The flower is blue-purple, occasionally rose, with a yellow button in the middle. It sits on a plant anywhere from 1-4 ft. tall, loaded with blooms. The leaves are clasping. This means they have no petiole (connecting stem and leaf) but rather the leaves appear to wrap slightly around the plant stem. The best positive identification feature is the tiny glandular resin dots, which can be easily seen on any plant part, using a small hand lens, preferably 10x magnification.

Look for New England Aster along roadsides, especially in ditches, if the township or county has not mowed it down, the way they always do, those swine. It blooms in September and October, along with all the other asters from hell.

—Robert Baller



### Request for historical information

John Ochsner is developing a map of Wisconsin prairies, woodlands and savannas (commonly referred to as "groves") as identified by their historic names.

He is asking for any information you can contribute to this project. Please contact him at 608-862-3816 or W2763 Hwy. 59, Monroe, WI 53566.

### Rare prairie forb prints available

Gary Eldred's botanical quality prints of 24 rare prairie forbs (reproduced in reduced format in *The Prairie Promoter*, Vol. 3, No. 1 through Vol. 8, No. 4) are available on 11x17 poster stock. Each set sells for \$50 and all proceeds benefit the conservation efforts of the Southwest Chapter. Please send your prepaid order to: Gary Eldred, 4192 Sleepy Hollow, Boscobel, WI 53805.

# Of bison . . . and progress

The year is 1865. You are a pioneer looking for gainful employment on the frontier of the uncivilized west. Work in the eastern factories never suited you much, so you decided to seek the course of the setting sun. There are rumors of gold, gold, gold, but also of bust, bust, bust. You wisely choose to forget the gold for now; you want something a white man can sink his teeth into. Indian fighting.

Lumberjacking. Maybe . . . no. Buffalo shooting. Yes. They say there's millions of 'em, just crawlin' over the plains.

Your mind is made up. You will try buffalo hunting. But how to find them? They could be anywhere, waiting to be shot. The director of tourism and economic development in Carson City says the best way is to locate them is from the air.

You rent a two seater single prop airplane and fly toward the rolling ocean of grass. The city soon fades to grey.

From your altitude of two thousand feet, the expanding prairie has no visual end. Half an hour passes peacefully. Sailing is

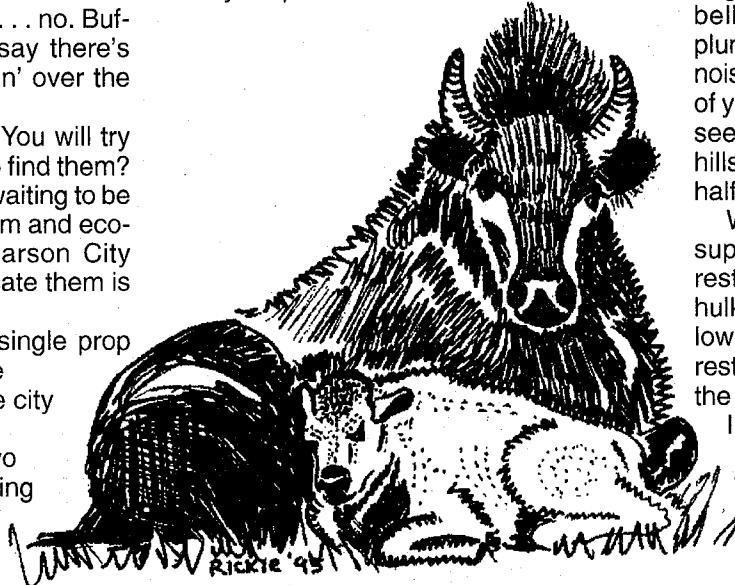
smooth. With the aid of binoculars you spot a black wavering mass to the north. Your plane banks accordingly. Bison!

You move in for a close look. They appear uncomprehending, almost ignorant of your presence. As your shadow sweeps past you notice the creatures move after all. Curious heads bob in the grass, tilt sideways, and snort. The herd, first scattered, now seems as thick as locusts in a wheat field. The plane banks around and beelines back to town.

At the trading post you garrison supplies for the hunt. A large size box wagon, with two spare wheels. Horses and accompanying harnesses. Tallow, salted pork, sugar, flour, beans, whiskey, tobacco and coffee. Water will come from any prairie stream. You buy the finest rifles you can find—two Sharp's .50 calibre "buffalo guns"—one for the first round, the other as an alternate when the first's barrel is too hot. Let's not forget the ramrod. Lots of ammunition. Gunpowder. Skinning knives plus sharpening tools. Bed roll, change of clothes (your stink is not important on the prairie provided you

play the wind). Fire-making tools, cooking pots, utensils.

Dawn arrives. There are perhaps three days' ground travel to where you saw the herd, if they are still there. During most of the journey the Sharp's piece stays loaded by your side. Not for spontaneous bison, but for red-skinned-heathen. Them savages think they own the place, and might object to your presence. With arrows.



Five days pass and no beasts. You pause for rest and a drink at a prairie pothole. The next hill is small, but what lies beyond is just as unknown as if divided by a mountain range. But a freshly baked buffalo pie suggests it is time to move slow. You crawl hands and knees up the slope. The tall grass wind tans your face as you near the summit. Ahead, below, mills the horned quarry you have searched for: small multitudes of bison.

Quietly you fetch the hunting implements and work your way past the hill. As expected, the edge of the crowd is attended by sentinels. They have not caught your scent; their bovine brains remain aloof. The support pod for your rifle is up in a flash and your iron sight finds itself trained on the left ribcage of a great, sentinel bull. BLAM! Gravity pulls the weakened bison legs and the big guy falls. His neighbors look over, snorting, bellowing in bewilderment. What? What?

Unsettled, they move fifty yards. Sentinels lead, with the rest of the herd in tow. Simultaneously you sprint behind them. You pass the fallen bull, and

plunge into the next hiding trough of horse-high bluestem grass.

This game continues until five hides have fallen, and you rotate the rifle so the first barrel cools. Soon three more bite the bullet, and the dust. A momentary wind shift floats your scent towards the crowd. You venture another shot, this one slamming into a wary cow. She stumbles, rises, and limps doggedly after the now stampeding, bellowing herd. She falls, crimson plumes spewing from her nostrils. The noise, the scent, have signaled the end of your hunt. The dust billows and you see the storming bison rain over the hills. This first hunt is over. It lasted half an hour.

With the horse drawn cart you move supplies to the flattened grass. The rest of the day is spent skinning nine hulking carcasses. Your foodstuffs are low; you butcher one for the meat. The rest are left to rot. Maybe they will feed the scavengers.

In town you deal the hides to the manager at the trading post. Most of them will go to pay off the advancement for your supplies the week before. The profit is small. To really live you need more. And there are more buffalo waiting, out on the prairie.

The manager at the post stacks the hides on the flat bed of the wagon out back. When the cumulative inventory numbers a thousand skins from fifty or so hunters, he will send them by wagon train to the steam boat on the river. Then they will float east, to the factories, and beyond. They will become American and European coats, seat covers, fashion accessories, and in later years, pulley belts. The market lies waiting. Word of bison hides travels round. Hunters come. Business booms. Towns thrive. Industries grow. Bison fall. Indian wars escalate. White men profit.

Years pass. You have worked solo, or with teams. On a good day, you may have collected 30 skins. On a two-week trip, two hundred. Sometimes you do not see civilization for a month. But the romance, the want, both drive the guns of progress. More hunters come. Railroads sell tickets. Newer, more efficient Spencer carbines crack the air. By 1880, thirty million bison are dead. On prairie oceans which swam

(See **BISON**, page 5, col. 1)

## **BUFFALO** (continued from page 4)

with herds now drift only sun bleached bones.

Diehard frontiersmen load the wagons to push further north and west than ever before. They squeeze three more years from the range, and the last bison are history. The old-timers come back empty. They seem dazed, unbelieving. Where did the bison go?

Rumors hold that a few dozen hides survive in the unreachable haunts of Big Dry Creek, Montana. Maybe two hundred run amuck in the distant fields of the Texas Panhandle. But they are too few to be tracked efficiently, too remote to kill for profit. The great domino chain of slaughter now crumbles to an end.

The guns, and the market, begin to cool in the dirty breeze of national afterthought. The dust of history settles ever slowly upon stained and bloodied ground. Let us turn the clock forward, and return to the present. With the benefit of our 100 years, we might now ask, "What killed the bison?" Quickly comes the response, "The hunters, and the greed, of course." But I would like to try something else. Why not employ the keen logic favored by so many scientists, politicians, economists, planners, and often, modern environmentalists? We may then deduce that the following developments were fundamentally responsible for the crisis:

1) Technology brought about bison extermination. Examples of this are (a) improvements in firearms and ammunition which made hunting easier and more efficient, and (b) changes in industrial design and production allowed greater consumption and required larger volumes of hides for pulleys, belts and straps. Numerous similar advancements led to unforeseen side effects and overhunting.

2) Bison were exterminated because of economics; the

hunters were just trying to support themselves. Everyone has to earn a buck. The demand for hides grew from the market. The harvesting of hides, plus their shipment, rendering, sales, and consumption, stimulated the economy. It created jobs. Hunting the bison to near extinction was unfortunate, but quite necessary and unavoidable for the economic development and growth of the United States.

3) Overpopulation resulted in killing the bison. If there were fewer people, the impact would not have been so great. The bison fell because too many people tried to do too many things with too little land. In fact, overpopulation is the root cause of all our woes. If we just had fewer people, these things would not have happened; or at least, not happened as much.

It is my deepest hope that the readers now suspect the purpose of my long-winded story. I have intentionally mixed an historic saga with modern, analytic, conventional wisdom. For some reason, bad values, the base of our environmental (and social) crisis then and now, seem invisible to the public when the issue is current. Do we not live and die by our values? And are values not the motives and beliefs which allow and compel us to create a technology, or pattern an economy, or selfishly explode our population? Progress is the result of our values, not the root cause of our problems. Progress, however, certainly amplifies the difficulty. One day, soon, when the majority of species on the planet are extinct and the skies have grown thin, we may at last come to grips with the issue of our BEHAVIOR. We will know that the bison died because it was what people wanted, and what others allowed. We will know that we are the ones who have made our own game plan. Perhaps, we will also find we are dying by our own rules.

—Rob Baller

# **CHAPTER NEWS**

## **EMPIRE-SAUK CHAPTER**

### **Gov. Nelson restoration projects**

#### **"Save Our Savanna Brush-a-thon"**

Saturday, October 19th, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. This youth workday will be an opportunity for many Boy and Girl Scout Troops, schools, and other organizations to brush-out a large area of oak savanna. We are hoping for a large turnout of youngsters and news media coverage of this event. Several volunteers will be needed to help with the brushing, as well as to keep this event running smoothly. Please sign up for this event.

### **Prairie seeding**

Saturday, November 9th, 10:00 a.m. Approximately 15 acres of prairie will be hand-seeded with seed collected earlier in the fall. Many volunteers are needed to seed the area on that day, as well as to help with the seed prepara-

tion during the prior week. The alternate rain date will be on Sunday at the same time. Please sign up for this event.

### **Seed collecting**

See Calendar of Events section for dates and locations. We will be collecting from 5:00 p.m. until dark each day, but feel free to stay as short as you like. Wear layered, long-sleeved clothing, long pants and all terrain footwear. We do not collect in the rain. Bags, buckets, and pruners are provided. There is no need to sign up . . . just show up! We are also out collecting on most other evenings and some weekend days, so call to find out where we will be. In addition, we gladly accept donations of seed that you have collected in those "secret" spots of yours!

Please call me at (608) 233-5658 for more information on any of these events. I keep saying this, but . . . autumn is truly a great time to experience the prairies!

—Dan Weidert



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(After each work party announcement is a reference word. Please check individual stories for more information about other events.)

## SOUTHWEST CHAPTER WORK PARTIES

- Sat., Sept. 22** Seed collecting, Vale, 10 a.m., 608-375-5271 (VALE)
- Sat., Oct. 5** Seed collecting/brush cutting, Kalscheur, 10 a.m., 608-375-5271 (KALSCHEUR)
- Sat., Oct. 12** Seed collecting/brush cutting, Bush Clover, 10 a.m., 608-375-5271 (BUSH CLOVER)
- Sun., Oct. 20** Seed collecting/brush cutting, Kalscheur, 10 a.m., 608-375-5271 (KALSCHEUR)
- Sat., Oct. 26** Seed collecting/brush cutting, Vale, 10 a.m., 608-375-5271 (VALE)
- Sun., Nov. 3** Brush cutting, Bush Clover, 10 a.m., 608-375-5271 (BUSH CLOVER)
- Sat., Nov. 16** Brush cutting, Vale, 10 a.m., 608-375-5271 (VALE)
- Sun., Nov. 24** Brush cutting, Kalscheur, 10 a.m., 608-375-5271 (KALSCHEUR)

## MEETINGS

- Sun., Oct. 20** SW Chapter meeting, Linder residence, 1:00 p.m. 608-375-2668
- Sun., Nov. 17** SW Chapter meeting, Linder residence, 1:00 p.m., 608-375-2668
- Sun., Dec. 15** SW Chapter meeting, Linder residence, 1:00 p.m., 608-375-2668

## PRAIRIE BLUFF CHAPTER

- Sat., Sep. 28** Green County Record Tree Tour, 608-862-3816
- Tue., Oct. 15** Chapter meeting, 7:00 p.m., Turner Hall Rathskeller, Monroe
- Tues., Nov. 19** Chapter meeting, 7:00 p.m., Turner Hall Rathskeller, Monroe
- Tues., Dec. 17** Chapter meeting, 7:00 p.m. at Marshall Bluff Bowhunters Clubhouse followed by potluck dinner

## NORTHWEST ILLINOIS CHAPTER

- Wed., Sept. 18** Chapter meeting, 7:00 p.m., Rachuy residence, 815-947-2287

## WEST CENTRAL CHAPTER

The September meeting will be held at a location near River Falls. Call Harvey Halvorsen at 715-684-2914 for details.

## EMPIRE-SAUK CHAPTER WORK PARTIES

- Sat., Sept. 28** 9:30 a.m. - Noon, Brush cutting and trash removal, Koltjes Prairie. Leader: Paul West 608-271-0504 (KOLTJES)
- Mon., Sept. 30** 5:00 p.m., Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson State Park (NELSON)
- Tues., Oct. 1** 5:00 p.m., Seed collecting, Greene Prairie (GREENE)
- Thurs., Oct. 3** 5:00 p.m. Seed collecting, Koltjes Prairie (KOLTJES)
- Fri., Oct. 4** 5:00 p.m., Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson State Park (NELSON)
- Mon., Oct. 7** 5:00 p.m., Seed collecting, Curtis Prairie (CURTIS)
- Wed., Oct. 9** 5:00 p.m., Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson State Park (NELSON)
- Thurs., Oct. 10** 5:00 p.m., Seed collecting, Greene Prairie (GREENE)
- Fri., Oct. 11** 5:00 p.m. Seed collecting, Koltjes Prairie (KOLTJES)

- Mon., Oct. 14** 5:00 p.m., Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson State Park (NELSON)
- Wed., Oct. 16** 5:00 p.m., Seed collecting, Greene Prairie (GREENE)
- Thurs., Oct. 17** 5:00 p.m. Seed collecting, Koltjes Prairie (KOLTJES)
- Fri., Oct. 18** 5:00 p.m., Seed collecting, Curtis Prairie (CURTIS)
- Sat., Oct. 19** 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., Brush and tree cutting, Mt. Pleasant Savanna. Bring loppers, bow saws, or chainsaws. Leaders: Jerry Dahlen 608/527-5807 and Paul West 608-271-0504 (MT. PLEASANT)
- Sat., Oct. 19** 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., Brush cutting, Gov. Nelson State Park (see story, page 5)
- Tues., Oct. 22** 5:00 p.m., Seed collecting, Greene Prairie (GREENE)
- Wed., Oct. 23** 5:00 p.m., Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson State Park
- Thurs., Oct. 24** 5:00 p.m. Seed collecting, Koltjes Prairie (KOLTJES)
- Fri., Oct. 25** 5:00 p.m., Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson State Park (NELSON)
- Sat., Nov. 9** 10 a.m. Prairie seeding, Gov. Nelson State Park (see story, page 5)
- Sat., Nov. 16** 9:30 - Noon, Brush and tree cutting, Koltjes Prairie Leader: Paul West 608/271-0504 (KOLTJES)

## KOLTJES

Meet on Bong Road, one-half mile east of Highway 113 between Madison and Waunakee. Seed collecting leader: Dan Weidert, 608-233-5658.

## CURTIS

UW Arboretum Curtis Prairie, Madison. Meet at the McKay Center parking lot on Arboretum Drive. Seed collecting leader: Dan Weidert, 608-233-5658.

## GREENE

UW Arboretum Greene Prairie, Madison. Meet at the parking lot at the corner of Seminole Highway and the Beltline frontage Road. Seed collecting leader: Dan Weidert, 608-233-5658.

## NELSON

Governor Nelson State Park. Meet at the park office at the main entrance on Highway M north of Middleton. Seed collecting leader: Dan Weidert, 608-233-5658.

## MT. PLEASANT

Mt. Pleasant Savanna. From Belleville, go west on STH 69/92 for 3 miles. Continue northwest on STH 92 for 2.5 miles to the junction with CTH A. Go west (left) on CTH A one mile to the junction with CTH U. Go south on CTH U for 1/4 mile to Bowers Road. The site is on the east side of Bowers Road 1/4 mile beyond the junction with CHT U.

## BUSH CLOVER

Drive north from Lancaster on Hwy. 61. Go left on Co. K. About 4 miles up Co. K, go left on Badger Rd. Follow Badger Rd. around one curve and prairie is on right.

## VALE

Drive to Albany. Rt. 59 crosses Sugar River. One or two blocks w. of Sugar River, go right on Sugar River Hwy. Go one block. Left onto Mineral. Follow Mineral for .1 mile to North Taylor. Go straight on Purington Rd. for 3.7 miles. Right on Schneeberger for .2 miles. Go left on farm lane w/trees on left and cropland on right. Farm lane swings right behind row of trees—park on left after this corner.

## KALSCHEUR

From Hollandale (SW Iowa Co.) go south from Hwy. 39 on Co. Rd. K about 2 miles south. Site is on left (east) side of road. Look for parked cars along road.

## **NORTHWEST ILLINOIS CHAPTER**

### **Annual picnic**

Over 30 Prairie Enthusiasts gathered at Apple River Canyon State Park in Illinois for the annual TPE picnic and annual meeting. July 13 was an excellent summer day and good food and good hiking were enjoyed by all who attended.

Before the general membership joined us, we held a business meeting and election of officers. Jim Rachuy (president), Grace Storch (vice-president), Judith Wehrle (secretary) and John Rutherford (treasurer) all agreed to serve for another term. John and Barbara Rutherford were voted to be our chapter's representatives to the PE Board and will be taking Jim and Rickie Rachuy's place at those meetings.

Thank you to our hard working "elected officials" and to all who came and brought good food and good company!

### **Tribute to Land Acquisition Fund**

A tribute of \$200 was received from Jim Quick and Barbara Siekowski in honor of the marriage of Jim Rachuy and Rickie Fullmer on June 29, 1996. This tribute was made by Jim and Barbara to the Land Acquisition Fund and is much appreciated by the NIPE Chapter.

### **Next meeting**

The next business meeting of the NIPES will be held on September 18, at 7 p.m. at the home of Jim and Rickie Rachuy in Stockton. Among other things, we will be setting a seed collection schedule for the fall, so bring your calendars. If you need directions, call Rickie.

## **SOUTHWEST CHAPTER**

### **Deer browsing effects forb seed production**

An interesting but informal survey on a high quality prairie remnant near Muscoda has shown some disturbing effects of deer browsing on select prairie forbs. On June 8 a population census was taken of Indian Turnip (*Psoralea esculenta*) on the site. Each *Psoralea* was marked with a 12-inch red flag. The small five-acre site had 103 plants, of which 88 were nonflowering. On June 22 the plants were rechecked to determine successful pollination and seed development. We found, to our amazement, 39 of the 188 plants had been eaten by deer. In some cases even the flags had been chewed on (which leads one to wonder if the deer were attracted to the flags?)

Other more casual observations revealed that about ¼ of all the Compass Plants (*Silphium laciniatum*) on the site (between 50 and 100) had been heavily browsed, resulting in heavy damage to all leaves and unsuccessful flowering. Likewise, the Flowering Spurge (*Euphorbia corollata*) had been browsed to the point where very few plants had any top growth at all. There are somewhere between 100 and 250 Wood Lilies (*Lilium philadelphreum*) on the site and judging by the number of plants six to eight inches in height found in the earlier survey, the prospects for a spectacular bloom looked promising. During a later survey of blooming

Wood Lilies, only four blossoms could be found, and we noted that many plants had been grazed from a height of 12 to 14 inches down to about five to seven inches. Although these surveys were completely informal, there can be no doubt that an overabundance of white-tailed deer in this area has diminished the reproduction of several forb species on this site.  
—Gary Eldred

### **Mead's milkweed update**

In the spring of 1996, the Prairie Promoter had a short article on the effort to reestablish Mead's milkweed on one of the Southwest Chapter's prairie remnants here in Grant County. At that time one thin, scrawny little seedling was planted with great care and hope, but without great expectation in order to minimize what could well turn into a disappointing loss! Lo and behold, here it is nearly September and Harley II (I named the milkweed after a wonderful orphaned fox squirrel my friend Kim raised) looked great. Maybe I should say it looked taller, as it was still thin and scrawny!

Thanks to Muffy Barrett at Little Bluestem Nursery near Baraboo, Harley II now has eight companions. All seedlings look great, but it's a long road ahead for these very rare troopers and only our care and time will tell if they are truly home for good. I'd also like to thank Muffy for propagating about 150 Purple milkweed (*Asclepias purpurascens*) seedlings that were reestablished at our savanna restoration in southeastern Iowa County. They also seem to be doing quite well. Thanks, also, to David Lowe, who worked feverishly to get them in the ground. P.S.: I didn't name the 150 Purple milkweeds!  
—Gary Eldred

### **Special thanks**

Thanks to the rec trail in Lafayette County, who donated 2 gallons of Roundup for the third spraying on the seed orchard.

## **WEST CENTRAL CHAPTER**

### **August meeting**

We held our August meeting at Marilyn Kanne's home on Aug. 22 and toured some local prairies and prairie restoration projects, including Marie Hilig's project at the Rock Falls drag strip. A potluck dinner was held afterwards, followed by the regular business meeting. During regular business, we reviewed and approved the West Central Chapter's "Chapter Guidelines." We have a full slate of nine board members now. In other business, we discussed our "Outdoor Skills Day" program/booth for The Prairie Enthusiasts at Willow River State Park, which was held on Aug. 24. We are also planning a field day in late September or early October to plant prairie grasses and flowers at the trail head of the Red Cedar State Trail in Menomonie. This is an event sponsored by the Friends of the Red Cedar Trail, with technical assistance and labor provided by our chapter of TPE.

In July, member Deb Konkel led a group of enthusiasts in plant identification at the Willow River State Park Visitor Center. They also toured the local prairie remnant, Old Baldy. Park officials are trying to woo us into helping them manage their interpretive prairie plantings.

—Harvey Halversen

## EDITORIAL POLICY

1. Articles of general interest must be relevant to prairie/savanna ecosystems. Material received will be prioritized as follows: original material; essays, art, (poetry, photography, drawings); reprinted material.
2. Securing reprint rights is the responsibility of the individual who submits the material.
3. The calendar of events will be limited to items relevant to prairie/savanna ecosystems.
4. Deadlines for submission of material are as follows:  
February 15 - Spring Issue    May 15 - Summer Issue    August 15 - Fall Issue    November 15 - Winter Issue
5. Publication dates: April 1 - Spring Issue    July 1 - Summer Issue    October 1 - Fall Issue    January 1 - Winter Issue

### THE PRAIRIE ENTHUSIASTS

GARY ELDRED  
4192 SLEEPY HOLLOW TR.  
BOSCOBEL, WI 53805

A Non-Profit  
Organization  
THIRD CLASS  
**BULK RATE**  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 10  
Boscobel, WI 53805

**THE PRAIRIE ENTHUSIASTS - MEMBERSHIP FORM**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE CHECK CHAPTER YOU WISH TO JOIN, OR GENERAL MEMBERSHIP:**

- Southwest Chapter       South Central Chapter  
 Serving Grant, Crawford, Richland & Iowa Counties      Serving Sauk, Columbia & Dane Counties
- Northwest Illinois Chapter       Prairie Bluff  
 Serving Jo Daviess, Carroll & Stephenson Counties      Serving Green, Rock & Lafayette Counties
- General Membership (outside of chapter areas)

**MEMBERSHIP LEVEL:**

- \$10 STUDENT       \$15 INDIVIDUAL       \$25 CONTRIBUTOR

- \$50 SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP       \$200 INDIVIDUAL LIFE

**MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:**

The Prairie Enthusiasts  
 c/o Alice Mirk  
 10052 County Hwy. C  
 Woodman, WI 53827  
 608-988-4760

Can we provide your name and address to:

YES      NO

Other environmental organizations \_\_\_\_\_

Other prairie enthusiasts in your area \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE CHECK AREAS OF INTEREST:**

- Writing newsletter articles  
 Organize field trips  
 Grant writing  
 Seed collection  
 Prairie information - specify: \_\_\_\_\_
- Develop educational material  
 Plan social activities (banquet, picnic, etc.)  
 Fund raiser  
 Restoration projects  
 Site management activities (burning, brush cutting, etc.)

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**



For further information, contact:  
**Gary Eldred**  
 4192 Sleepy Hollow Tr.  
 Boscobel, WI 53805