THE PRAIRIE ENTHUSIASTS

THE PRAIRIE PROMOTER

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

Butterfly monitoring

The first three years of The Nature Conservancy's volunteer butterfly monitoring program have been very successful. Thirty volunteers have participated by contributing records and surveys on seven rare butterfly species. Collectively they've documented 813 individuals of the Karner blue (federal-endangered, inhabits pine-oak barrens) and 198 regal fritillaries (federal candidate, state-threatened proposed to change to state-endangered, inhabits prairie)! These intrepid volunteers have discovered two previously unknown populations each for the Karner blue and regal fritillary and reconfirmed one historical Karner population. Their regular surveys at sites with known populations of rare butterflies have filled in much needed information about the abundance, extent and annual fluctuations of these species. But the many zeroes tallied by surveyors are also important for understanding when and where these rare species are and aren't.

Butterfly surveying is fun, interesting, beautiful... and crucial to the conservation of rare butterfly species and their habitats. For the fourth year, butterfly researcher Ann Swengel is leading classroom and field sessions this spring and summer to train volunteers to survey for eight rare species.

Everyone is welcome at these free training sessions. No prior experience is necessary (although appreciated), but enthusiasm and energy help a lot.

Classroom schedule: Sat., April 6 1-4 p.m. Middleton Library (7425 Hubbard Ave.)

1:00 frosted elfin; 1:20 Karner blue; 1:50 phlox moth*; 2:00 cobweb*, dusted*, Leonard's skippers*; 2:30 butterfly ID & surveying; 3:15 regal fritillary*; 3:30 Ottoe skipper* (*designates prairie species).

Field schedule: June 1, 1-4 p.m. Jackson County; July 6, 1-3 p.m., Muralt Bluff Prairie (Green County)

Preregistration is required at least three days before the classroom session. Please call Tania Schusler in TNC office at (608) 251-8140 for more information.

Northwest Wisconsin chapter forming

Prairie enthusiasts from St. Croix, Dunn, and Eau Claire counties will have the opportunity to create the newest chapter of The Prairie Enthusiasts. Whether you have a reconstructed prairie remnant, a prairie remnant or an interest in prairies, grasslands, or the critters that inhabit them, we hope that you will join us in starting a local chapter. We need a minimum of 10 members to start our chapter.

We'll have an organizational meeting Wednesday, April 10 in the Menomonie Public Library, 7 p.m. We'll discuss setting up a board of directors, chapter guidelines, officers, geographic boundaries, and finances. If interested, please call Harvey Halvorsen at (715) 684-2914 (days), or (715) 246-3178 (evenings). Written correspondence should be addressed to Halvorsen at WDNR, 990 Hillcrest, Baldwin, WI 54002.

Seventh annual banquet a resounding success

The Prairie Enthusiasts held its seventh annual banquet at the Idle Hour Mansion in Monroe on March 9. The number of attendees and the amount of funds raised for prairie and savanna communities once again exceeded all previous records. This has been an unvarying trend since the very first banquet! The atmosphere generated by 248 prairie enthusiasts gathered under one roof must be experienced to be appreciated.

Over 200 items were donated for raffle and auction, raising more than $5,800 for biodiversity. Donated items ranged from mouth-watering home-baked goods and refreshing beverages to valuable gift certificates, wonderful books, truly astounding original art work and plants, beautful craft items, prairie seeds and natural artifacts. We extend our heartfelt thanks to each and every donor and to those who opened their checkbooks. A special thanks also to Wisconsin Power and Light, who sponsored this banquet for us ensuring that many more of those donated dollars will go directly to prairie preservation.

We also want to thank those who volunteered to make the banquet run so smoothly: Rich Henderson, Edie Goth, Kathy Kirk, Sue Linder, Rickie Fullmer, Jim Welsh, Ruth Zeller, Reynold Zeller, Paul West, Marty Grell, Dan Weidert, Donna Baller, Kay Barry, Jean Blum, Alan Gibbs, June Muzzi, John Bauman, John Ochsner, Peg Stiles, Jayne Johns, John Harrington, Grace Storch and Alice Mirk. Thanks also to the numerous but unidentified people who rushed in to fill the gaps and keep things moving along. While on the subject of thanks, did you ever wonder who makes the lovely prairie centerpieces found at each and every place setting? Gary and Gail Adams have been producing these little gems in ever-increasing quantities for seven years. Their contribution is a fine example of behind-the-scenes efforts that make the banquet and the day to day operation of TPE so successful.

The banquet had some notable highlights! John Ochsner was recognized by the Prairie Bluff Chapter for his long and exemplary record of volunteerism in the effort to protect what remains of natural communities in southern Wisconsin; Bill Brandt was recognized by the Southwest Chapter for his many years of service and devotion to the cause of prairie preservation; Jack Kussmaul was recognized by TPE as Prairie Enthusiast of the Year for donating both considerable time and legal expertise which have had a direct and positive impact on a number of prairie acquistions; and Rob Baller, who was commended for being instrumental in the preservation of the Rock River Prairie which is now a State Natural Area. The project would not have happened without him.

Finally, attendees were both entertained and entranced

(See **BANQUET**, page 12, col. 1)

President's message

The coldest weather in nearly 100 years has passed and the pulse of prairie conservation is quickening with the return of spring, providing opportunities for prairie enthusiasts to join us in activities through which they can learn about and enjoy our native prairie heritage.

During this past winter, I listened to several Wisconsin Public Radio programs which focused on landscaping with native plants. In addition, there have been a number of recent conferences in southern Wisconsin which addressed this topic. All of the attention given to landscaping with native plants is a wonderful way to heighten awareness of their beauty and value and will hopefully develop concern for their protection in a natural world that is being developed at a rate of 2,500 acres a day!

Although the exploding interest in landscaping with native plants may have many positive consequences, there are some problems which have come to the fore. One of the most serious problems is the apparent increase in stealing native plants from the wild. Rare and showy plants are the most vulnerable to depredation. Plant thieves, however, seem to have no difficulty rationalizing theft under any circumstances. I will assert that removing any native plants not directly in the path of a bulldozer is indefensible. Period. If the native landscaper wants to use transplanted stock, there are many reputable native plant nurseries who will be only too happy to supply good healthy plants!

The term "native" also needs careful scrutiny. I will suggest that when used in the context of a landscaping project, native ought to refer to species that: 1) naturally occur within the region; and 2) share the same genetic information as local populations of those species.

Some commercial growers may define as native any plants which occur naturally in North America. Clearly, however, western prairie species, such as narrow-leaved purple coneflower (*Echinacea angustifolia)* have no place in a native landscaping project anywhere in the Upper Midwest. Similarly, although Riddells' goldenrod (*Solidago riddellii*) is native to Wisconsin, it does not naturally occur in the western half of the state's prairie region and is not appropriate for a native landscaping project there.

The issue of genetic variation is an admittedly controversial one for which there are no unequivocal answers. The essential concern is that introducing genetic material not native to a given region may compromise the genetics of local native plant populations. For example, cream wild indigo (*Baptisia bracteata*) occurs naturally from eastern Nebraska and southeastern Minnesota south and eastward to western Indiana and Kentucky. Populations in the Upper Midwest have adapted to much colder and longer winters and their blooming dates differ from north to south within its geographic range. If seed collected from the southern part of the range is planted and established in our region and eventually cross-pollinates with local populations, the genetic hardiness of the latter could be threatened.

The problem is in defining how far one can go from a local population before encountering genetic variation. Generally, one should try to obtain seeds from within 100 miles of the site. The distance will vary according to topography, soil moisture and sunlight and the appropriate distance may be wider longitudinally but narrower latitudinally.

When ordering seeds or seedlings from any commercial source, the native landscaper should:

1) avoid cultivars (i.e., plants which originated from native stock, but whose genetics have been altered through selective breeding);

2) avoid species which do not occur naturally near the site's locale or within the region;

3) obtain information about the source of the seeds or seedlings. Be aware that some nurseries may obtain seed from throughout a given species' geographic range, propagate it, and then sell the seeds or seedlings. Many nurseries, however, keep careful records about the source of seeds and/or seedlings. Those nurseries which provide information about the specific county or region

See **PRESIDENT**, page 3, col. 1)

PRESIDENT (continued from page 2)

(i.e., northwest Illinois, southwest Wisconsin, etc.) from which seed is collected ought to be considered as worthy of your patronage. Avoid those nurseries who cannot provide unequivocal answers to your questions.

Native plant nurseries can be a valuable source of propagules for the native landscaper. Reputable nurseries offer weed-free, germination-tested seeds and seedlings. In addition, many offer valuable consultation, site preparation and site establishment services. They will earn and deserve your support!

Finally, I'd like to address the term "landscape restoration." Planting an acre or so with native prairie plants is not landscape restoration: it is more accurately termed a prairie planting. Landscape restoration and landscaping with prairie plants are galaxies apart. The former is nearly impossible in the scientific sense, while the latter can be accomplished over the space of a few seasons. To date, no ecosystem has been accurately recreated. Remember that a true ecosystem consists of a host of complex interactions involving soil, moisture and sunlight and a myriad of vertebrates, and invertebrates which have not been fully identified, much less fully understood. If we do not know the full range of organisms and the full complexity of interactions, how can we expect to replicate natural communities and processes?

It seems to me that we need to preserve and study whatever fragments of natural ecosystems which continue to exist. These remnants represent valuable blueprints or models of natural communities, even in fragmented form. In addition, they are the last reservoirs of important and irreplaceable genetic information.

All the native landscaping projects imaginable can't replace one small prairie remnant. While I encourage you to "go native," it's far more important that you do your utmost to preserve the last fragments of the real thing.

North Dakota prairie birds and wildflowers

Last year we went on the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology's field trip to North Dakota. Kim Risen of Wild Horizons of Minneapolis led the trip. The focus was on prairie birds. However, we also looked for plants, herps, and mammals. The bird list totalled 160 species and 19 species of mammals were seen.

This year The Prairie Enthusiasts and Madison Audubon Society are cosponsoring a trip to North Dakota in June. We had a great time last year and this year are assisting Kim with the trip. The trip will begin June 13 with seven overnights and return June 20. Cost will be about $625 per person and includes travel, rooms, meals at Logging Camp Ranch and a $25 donation to The Prairie Enthusiasts. Travel by vans will begin and end in Madison.

Kim is an excellent birder and guide. He works hard to find as many species as possible and makes sure everyone gets a good look at each species. He has been leading trips to North Dakota since the mid-1980s. We will be spending several days at the Logging Camp Ranch in southwest North Dakota. The ranch is located in an scenic area dominated by ponderosa pine with many birds and prairie wildflowers.

We will also explore the prairie pothole region of North Dakota. One of the highlights last year was hiking in a prairie marsh at 11:00 p.m. listening to sharp-tailed and LeConte's sparrows, Virginia rails, and American bitterns and having Kim call in and hand catch a yellow rail. Another memorable sighting was standing on a ridge high above a prairie marsh and observing white-faced ibis, white pelicans, cattle egrets, black-crowned night herons, many species of waterfowl, western grebes, and 2,000 pairs of nesting eared grebes. We will also visit the scenic Teddy Roosevelt National Park.

We hope you can join us. For more information contact us at W7468 Prairie Lane, Arlington, WI 53911 or call 608-635-4160. Space is limited to 16 people.

—Mark and Sue Martin

Meet your prairie butterflies: olympia marble

Just as the last snows of winter dissipate, I eagerly await a spring blizzard of another kind: olympia marbles *(Euchloe olympia).* This native of dry prairie is among the first butterflies to appear in spring. Its annual cycle is closely tied to lyre-leaved rock cress *(Arabis lyrata).* Once the first tiny white blossoms of this tiny herb in the mustard family open, usually around mid to late April in southern Wisconsin, it's time to look for olympias. This butterfly has scheduled the adult stage of its life cycle so that once the females have mated and are ready to lay their tiny whitish eggs, the rock cresses have begun podding. Once hatched, the green larvae are well camouflaged on the pods, their preferred food. They grow quickly so that they pupate (become chrysalises) before the rock cresses have withered. The butterfly metamorphosing inside must be patient, however, for it will remain in the pupal life stage all through summer, fall, and winter. The following spring, regardless of the phenology, the butterflies will begin emerging on cue

at the beginning of rock cress flowering. To find olympias, set out for a spot (such as Spring Green Preserve) where rock cress flowers abound (usually in late April or May). It's best if the sun is shining and the air feels warm.

(See **BUTTERFLY**, page 4, col. 1)

BUTTERFLY (continued from page 3)

Watch for (1.5-2") pure white butterflies fluttering just above the short vegetation. You might be amazed how active this butterfly can be on relatively cool spring days. Persevere in tracking one, though, and approach it stealthily, so you can see its patterning when perched. On the front wings above, there will be a few small charcoal spots. But it's the hind wing underside I treasure: bright green marbling, plus a pink flush near the body (if the individual is still fresh).

Gardeners may discount these white butterflies as mere cabbage whites *(Pieris rapae)*, a European import whose caterpillars thrive on broccoli and cabbage and related vegetables and herbs. It's true that the first cabbage whites of the year appear about a week or two ahead of olympias. But the former are a tad larger, more rounded in wing shape, and creamy-yellow on the hind wing below with no hint of green marbling. Cabbage whites have numerous generations throughout the growing season, and so can be seen in the adult life stage in our region until some time in October (in most years). But while they're a very common butterfly in Wisconsin, I've not found them numerous in high-quality dry prairie. If you're in such a place in spring, chances are the white butterflies you're seeing are olympias. Active as they are, frenetically cramming all their adult activities into the few warm days when rock cress flowers abound, I recommend you practice approaching them to confirm their identity and enjoy their delicate beauty.

—Ann Swengel

A day on the Merry Christmas Prairie

A joint of effort between Pendarvis and The Prairie Enthusiasts will direct you on tour of the Merry Christmas Mine Hill Prairie on July 20, 1996.

Prairie habitat gives visitors an opportunity to see what the former lead and zinc mining sites might have looked like when the Cornish miners arrived.

We are in need of volunteers to help with this program.

Call (608) 987-2122, and ask for Bob Kubicek.

Of Baptisia, weevils, and alkaloids

Among the most striking prairie wildflowers of the Upper Midwest are two legumes of the genus Baptisia, the white-flowered *B. leucantha* and the yellow-flowered *B. leucophaea*. Most of you are probably familiar with one or both species, but by what name do you call them? There seems to be a wide range of opinions on the matter.

The white-flowered one, which is tall and has waxy, hairless stems and leaves, is often called white false indigo, white wild indigo or just white indigo, but it is also known as milky indigo, milky false indigo, etc. The term milky is often used by those wishing not to confuse *B. leucantha* with *B. alba*. *B. alba* is the "true" white wild indigo, but fortunately for us it is a species of the southeast U.S. and is thus not naturally found in our region. This helps simplify things for us here in the Upper Midwest. But, don't get comfortable: rumor has it that Neil is considering adding *B. alba* to next year's seed catalog.

The yellow-flowered species, which is shorter and has pubescent hairs on its stems and leaves, is often called cream or yellow wild indigo, cream or yellow false indigo, etc. But just to confuse matters, it is also goes by every possible combination of the words cream, creamy, and yellow with the words wild, false, plains, and prairie all preceding the word indigo, even though the thing doesn't even have a speck of blue on it.

Fortunately, this confusing name situation is easy to avoid by just sticking to the scientific names, right? Wrong! Just when you have finally learned those Latin names, some taxonomist decides to change them! *B. leucantha* and *B. leucophaea*, both long used and accepted in the literature, are now out of favor (at least until the next round of name revisions). A few years ago *B. leucantha* officially became *B. lactea*, which of course in English means milky, hence the preference of some to use the common name milky instead of white when referring to this species (since alba means white and there already is a *B. alba*). The cream colored species is now officially *B. bracteata* (named after the big bracts at the base of the leaves). The hybrid between the cream and milky species (*B. lactea-creami*) is referred to as whole milk prairie false indigo, but just in Wisconsin.

If this name confusion is too much for you, just do as I do and call them simply cream baptisia and white baptisia, and forget about the hybrid (I've never seen one anyway). As long as you're not planning to move to the Southeast, people will know which plant you're talking about. Neil, don't you dare bring *B. alba* to the upper Midwest!

Being legumes, Baptisia are rather nutritious and would likely be on the preferred food list of most four-legged and six-legged herbivores except for one thing: they fight back. Baptisia engage in defensive chemical warfare by producing an apparently unpalatable alkaloid, much like milkweeds and many other plants. The presence of this alkaloid may explain why Baptisia, especially cream baptisia, is so often conspicuously avoided by cattle and horses in grazed prairie while most everything else is eaten to the ground. However, some herbivores have evolved to deal with the Baptisia's alkaloids. Whitetailed deer, for example readily nip off white baptisia flower stalks and browse the foliage and flowers of cream baptisia in May and early June.

When warfare between a particular plant and insect escalates far enough, the insect often specializes to the point that it forsakes all other food (at least in the larval stage), and thus survives **only** on the host species, The insect's presumed advantages in doing this are: lessening competition for food with other more general feeders; and, in extreme cases, incorporating the plant's chemical defense into its body, making it unpalatable to predators. The best known example of this type of relationship is that between milkweeds and the monarch butterfly.

Not only do milkweeds have strong alkaloids, but their sticky sap is also an effective "mouth binding" barrier that very few insects have evolved to overcome. Other milkweed specialists are the orange long-horn milkweed beetle, the orange and black milkweed bug (a shiny, tortoise-like, leaf-beetle) and a moth species.

The situation in Baptisia is not nearly as well developed as in milkweeds. The Baptisia alkaloid appears to be less potent than milkweeds, and they lack a thick sticky sap. Consequently, only one insect appears to be exclusively

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

BAPTISIA (continued from page 4)
restricted to Baptisia, the well known weevil *Avion rostrum.* Anyone with experience collecting Baptisia seed has seen this weevil. Up to a dozen can be found inhabiting a single, unopened seed pod.

Have you ever wondered how those weevils get in those sealed pods when there are no holes or other evidence of entry? Well, the story begins with a fertilized female locating newly, developing pods in June. She selects a young pod, chews a small hole in its side (which later heals over) and deposits one to several eggs inside. The process is repeated until all her eggs are laid. Each larva within a pod eats 4 to 5 developing seeds (possibly more in some cases) before turning into an adult. If enough weevils are present in a pod, none of the original 30 to 40 seeds will survive. Further south in Missouri, new adults sometimes escape by chewing their way out, while others stay put until the pod breaks open. At our latitude most weevils stay in the pod until it opens (sometimes until the next spring).

Where emerged adults go to over-winter is not known. But, it apparently is a spot safe from fire (possibly in the ground). Sites annually burned, in either spring or fall, (even sites isolated for miles from other Baptisia) still harbor very healthy populations of weevils even after decades of annual fire, to the occasional dismay of seed collectors. Both baptisia species are not equally attacked by *A. rostrum.* At our latitude white baptisia tends to be more infested than cream baptisia, but in Missouri the reverse seems to be true.

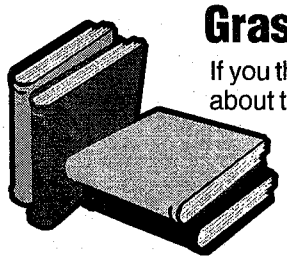
As for other species that eat Baptisia, two lepidoptera (the butterfly *Erynnis baptisiae* and the moth *Papaipema baptisiae)* were long thought to be specialists on Baptisia, but both are now known to feed at least occasionally on other legumes. There are also at least two species of micromoths whose larvae (laid as eggs inserted into the young developing seed pod) eat the immature seeds of Baptisia, then emerge from the pod as adults, leaving behind an eighth inch diameter hole and webbing inside the pod. In Wisconsin, evidence of this type of moth infestation is more often found in cream baptisia than in white. I have not been able to find out whether these micromoths are thought to be restricted to Baptisia or not. Additional species known to feed upon Baptisia, at least in Missouri, include two blister beetles, two leaf-beetles, and a broad-nosed seed weevil. But none of them are suspected of being restricted feeders.

If weevils and seed eating moths weren't enough of a hindrance to seed collectors, it is common to have years at given sites in which white baptisia plants start out with lots of flowers, getting your hopes up for a bumper seed crop, only to end up with flower stalks (on otherwise healthy looking plants) nearly devoid of ripe pods by the end of the season. I have certainly experienced this phenomenon (and I'm not talking about roving bands of seed collectors beating me to the seed). Recent research in DuPage County, Illinois and older work from Missouri provides two possible explanations for this phenomenon.

The first, and most obvious, explanation is lack of pollination. Simply put, no pollination means no seed and pod development. Large bumblebees (*Bombus spp.*) are the primary pollinators of Baptisia. When their numbers are low or there is bad "flying weather," pollination is greatly reduced. Reduced pollination is thought to be the reason for why cream baptisia, which flowers in May, often has far poorer seed set than white *baptisia*, which flowers in June. Cream baptisia has to rely upon limited numbers of overwintering solitary queen bees who have not yet produced a brood of workers, while white baptisia is visited by armies of newly emerged workers. Blooming early does have an advantage, though. Because of earlier phenology, cream baptisia often ends up losing far less seed to insects than does white baptisia.

Poor pollination, however, only partly explains the "absent pod" phenomenon. It turns out that many flowers are

(See **BAPTISIA**, page 6, col. 1)



Grassland book reviews

If you think you've read all there is to know about the prairie, read Richard Manning's new book, *Grassland: the History, Biology, Politics, and Promise of the American Prairie.* Manning's book makes Least Heat Moon's *PrairyErth* seem ponderous and Madson's *Where the Sky Began* superficial. Whereas Madson's book begins with the first European impressions of the prairie, Manning begins with the invasion of North America across the Bering land bridge and weaves a complete story of our success and failure on the grassland that is hard to put down.

One startling discovery is that all the large land mammals now living in America, save the pronghorn antelope, came across the land bridge from Europe, even the bison. All the horses, camels, woolly mammoths, mastodons (at least 33 genera of mammals total) were killed 10,000 years ago. While there are various explanations, Manning makes a strong case for overhunting by humans. In the sediments, the spear points appear, and the mammals disappear. Right away our notion of what is pristine is suspect.

A major theme of *Grassland* shows how our romantic view of the West pervaded over an understanding of the system. When John Wesley Powell explored the West he determined that the aridity of the land should dictate the size and shape of settlement. This view lost out to boosters of the Jeffersonian myth that yeoman farmers could settle the West in grid-like fashion and become the foundation of democracy. "Rain follows the plow," they cried calling Powell and his ilk the "scientific lobbyists". Manning shows how this failed and how the farmers and ranchers on the plains have ceded their power to the bank, the insurance companies and irrigation supplies.

The great irony is that all of our toil has yielded no net gain: "In 1850, with 100 percent of the western range still in excellent condition, with all of the plants and mammal species present—and without the benefit of fences, federal subsidies and their attendant lobbyists, hay balers, reservoirs and canals, cattle trucks and refrigerated cargo ships, predator control, antibiotics, public hearings...there were about 10 million elk and maybe as many as 70 million bison, but probably closer to 50 million. A century's worth of work, warfare, and technology replaced 50 million bison with 45.5 million cattle. One wonders what progress is for."

In spite of this bleak picture, Manning concludes with stories of people working to save what we have left and predicts that the "grassland will return", if only because nothing we have tried has worked for very long. We will learn to live on nature's terms or perish. We must understand the landscape as well as ourselves.

—Scott Weber

BAPTISIA (continued from page 5)

often pollinated and begin pod development only to abort part way through the summer. Apparently pods with low seed numbers are selectively aborted by the parent plant over time, and the primary cause of low seed numbers is more often than not attributable to baptisia weevil feeding. The more baptisia weevil larvae there are in a pod, the fewer seeds present over time, and the more likely the pod will be aborted, and down will come cradle, baby weevils and all. This mechanism appears to provide a crude, but effective, check upon baptisia weevil numbers and a means to insure that some seeds survive. As weevil infestation rates increase, fewer weevils are produced. But of course this abortive procedure poses a moral dilemma for the Baptisia with emotions running high on both sides of the issue.

REFERENCES: Petersen, C.E. and J.A. Sleboda. 1994. Selective pod abortion by *Baptisia leucantha* as affected by a Curculionid seed predator, *Apion rostrum*. The Great Lakes Entomologist 27(3):143-147.

Haddock, R.C. and S.J. Chaplin. 1982. Pollination and seed production in two phenologically divergent prairie legumes (Baptisia leucophaea and B. leucantha). The American Midland Naturalist 108(1):175-186. —Rich Henderson

The Changing Prairie

The Changing Prairie: North American Grasslands (Oxford University Press, 1995) edited by A. Joern and K. Keeler. 244 pp. This new book is an excellent resource for both the professional ecologist and the avid amateur alike. It covers the entire prairie continuum of central North America from western shortgrass to eastern tallgrass, and a wide range of subjects from cultural history and perceptions of prairie, to geologic history, to ecology, to management, to prairie conservation. The book is not an exhaustive review of the literature, but rather a good introduction and summary to the many subjects it covers. Although technical in nature, it is written so that anyone at least moderately interested in prairie will likely find it readable and interesting. The many authors are well known and very knowledgeable in their fields, but representation among them is somewhat skewed toward those most experienced in shortgrass, mixed-grass, or the western fringe of tallgrass prairie. Consequently, at times the information and interpretations presented are not fully applicable to the eastern tallgrass ecosystems of our region. For example, the vegetation of our prairies is less dominated by grass and richer in species diversity than what is described in the book. However, this is only a minor shortcoming of the book, I highly recommend it to anyone wishing to expand their knowledge and understanding of prairie. —Rich Henderson

A lifelong love affair

I was one of the lucky few of my generation to have been introduced to wildflowers at an early age. Growing up in a small southern Wisconsin town in the 50's meant gardens. Everyone had a garden. When I played outside with my friends we were surrounded by gardens. Some were small gardens, but nonetheless gardens. Some were very large, taking up a good portion of the back yard. Besides all the fruits and vegetables imaginable there were flowers. Flowers, flowers, and more flowers. All shapes, sizes, colors and fragrances. We were constantly running by a row of peonies, iris, tulips, lilies or daisies. Every house had a patch of lily of the valley along its foundation. Being careful not to create trouble for yourself, you always watched where your feet landed. Stepping in someone's prized flower bed always meant trouble for you. It's impossible not to notice the flowers when you're trying to avoid stepping on them.

There were four women in my younger life who influenced me most toward my love for flowers: my mother, who taught me my first planting lessons and how to identify many garden plants; my grandmother, whose love for flowers showed in every window; my Aunt Bessie, whose flower gardens in Milton, Wis. was where I spent much of time when we visited there; and the mother of my best friend, Jon Wilde, who was often like my second mother. Her gardens were very diverse, showing her vast knowledge of gardening. She had a degree in botany from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. They were all excellent gardeners and taught me those first important lessons which were the fuel for more knowledge. I was always curious about what kind of flowers were in front of me.

Jon and I were extra lucky in that we also learned much about wildflowers. We learned to watch for them along the roadsides from the car. Of course, wanting to learn more, we began to pay more attention to other living things, like grasses, bushes and trees. Also at about this time (eight years of age or so) we began our lifelong passion for bird watching.

We then learned to separate the native plants from the alien species. When that happened the word prairie came into my vocabulary. Many of the plants I was curious to learn about were native plants of the prairies which once overwhelmed this land. I learned slowly and steadily and in the mid 60's Jon and I started some prairie restoration projects. Jon's passion for the native prairies blossomed before mine and he was usually the teacher. While growing up it was Jon's mother and father who taught us the most about wild plants and Jon got the lessons more often.

We collected seed and scratched it into the ground whenever we thought it might last forever. I had to learn the hard way what forever meant. Often it wasn't very long. I gave a lot of sweat and blisters to a few of these little projects. One that comes to mind was the 10 years of work along a stretch of railroad on the north edge of Evansville, Wisconsin. The prairie ran along the edge of the park. It was mostly grown over in box elder when I first discovered it but the trees were under a highline so they were cut back every 10 years or so. The light permitted many prairie plants to survive.

My first clue of this prairie's existence was when I noticed a single Turk's cap lily blooming as I drove by. After a closer look, I quickly discovered quite a few nice clumps of big bluestem and Indian grass and a couple of prairie dock. As I looked around I found a couple of dried stalks of what were shooting stars earlier in the summer. There were yellow coneflowers, bergamot, Culver's root, and trefoil. It was obvious to me that the trees had to go. I could have waited for the powerline people to cut them down but that might take years and besides, next time they might use a powerful spray.

I spent that whole first winter dragging out box elders and burn-

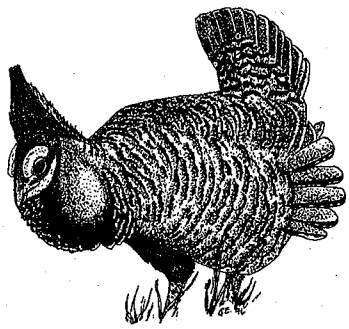
(See **WILDFLOWERS**, page 8, col. 1)

WILDFLOWERS (continued from page 6)

ing them elsewhere. The next spring I could hardly wait to get a fire through the prairie knowing it would be like a breath of fresh air to it. After that I burned it every other year and watched it blossom into something to be proud of. I just assumed it would be there forever.

When I moved from Evansville to live near Stevens Point, I left instructions with a friend to run a fire through the prairie once in a while. Several years later, on one of my trips back, I drove down to have a look at the prairie. I got sick to my stomach when I found that the prairie was replaced with sod and a long single row of pine trees. To say the least I was heartbroken but learned a valuable lesson. A prairie is only forever if there is someone to look out for it. I'm sad to say that many of the places I cherished when I was younger no longer exist. You can never be too sure that these beautiful places will be there forever. Wherever I may live the prairie will always be in my heart. I guess that's the real meaning of "a prairie is forever."

—Dan Hazlett



TPE receives conservation easement

On January 9, The Prairie Enthusiasts, represented by Gary Eldred, and the Rachuy family of Stockton, Illinois, met in the law offices of Nack, Richardson and Kelly of Galena, to create a conservation easement on 65 acres of land located near Stockton. The purpose of the easement was to "assure that the Property will be retained forever in its natural and substantially undisturbed condition and to prevent any use of the Property that will significantly impair or interfere with the conservation values of the Property."

The easement specifically transferred to The Prairie Enthusiasts the right to "(a) protect and restore the conservation values of the Property; (b) enter upon the Property at reasonable times in order to enforce the terms of this Easement; provided that such entry shall not unreasonably interfere with Grantor's use and quiet enjoyment of the Property; (c) prevent any activity on or use of the Property that is inconsistent with the purpose of the Easement; and (d) require the restoration of such areas or features of the property that may be damaged by any inconsistent activity or use."

The easement prohibits the landowner from "any activity on or use of the Property inconsistent with the purpose of this Easement, except as specifically approved by the Grantee, including, but not limited to, erection of structures, construction of roads, excavation or moving of earth, dumping of any material, and the introduction, removal or damaging of plants or animals." The land owner "reserves to himself, and to his personal representatives, heirs, successors, and assigns, all rights occurring from his ownership of the Property, including the right to engage in or permit or invite others to engage in all uses of the Property that are consistent with the purpose of the Easement."

This marks the first time that The Prairie Enthusiasts have entered into this type of agreement. The land currently consists of prairie, pasture and fields. It will be completely restored to prairie by the Northwest Illinois Chapter.

Note from the editors

We now have a scanner which can directly transfer **typed** copy into the computer program where it can be reformatted for the newsletter. This will save TPE time and money. Whenever possible, please submit **typewritten** material for the newsletter so that we can utilize the scanner.

Thank you!

TPE joins Land Trust Alliance

At the December meeting, the board of directors voted unanimously for The Prairie Enthusiasts to join The Land Trust Alliance (LTA). The purpose of this Washington, DC organization is to help groups like The Prairie Enthusiasts learn about new ways to protect natural resources and promote land conservation. The annual membership fee is $150. Other organizations that have joined the LTA include: Grand Prairie Friends of Illinois, Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation, Illinois Audubon Society, Minnesota Land Trust, Gathering Waters, Open Lands Project, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, Natural Land Institute and the Sand County Foundation.

At the February meeting, the board of directors voted to purchase from the LTA $150 worth of books, brochures and periodicals. Some of the titles include: *"Doing Deals: A Guide to Buying Land for Conservation," "The Standards and Practices Guidebook: An Operating Manual for Land Trusts," "The Conservation Easement Stewardship Guide: Designing, Monitoring and Enforcing Easements,"* and *"Appraising Easements: Guidelines for Valuation of Historic Preservation and Land Conservation Easements."*

Included with this purchase are materials intended for the chapters to use in conversations with local natural area landowners. A booklet entitled *"Conservation Options: A Landowner's Guide"* is particularly good. Jim Rachuy has volunteered to help coordinate the chapters' use of these materials and to try to answer questions.

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

Sunday, Mar. 31 Work party, 10 a.m., Kalscheur, 608-375-5271 (KALSCHEUR)

Saturday, Apr. 6 Work party, 10 a.m., Vale, 608-375-5271 (VALE)

Sunday, Apr. 14 Work party, 10 a.m., Kalscheur, 608-375-5271 (KALSCHEUR)

Saturday, May 4 Work party, 10 a.m., Vale, 608-375-5271 (VALE)

Sunday, May 26 Work party, 10 a.m., Kalscheur, 608-375-5271 (KALSCHEUR)

Sunday, June 9 Work party, 10 a.m., Kalscheur, 608-375-5271 (KALSCHEUR)

Sunday June 30 Work party, 10 a.m., Vale, 608-375-5271 (VALE)

MEETINGS

Sunday, April 21 Chapter meeting, 1 p.m., Clubrooms (basement of Boscobel Library) election of directors and annual meeting to follow. Potluck.

Sunday, May 19 Chapter meeting, 1 p.m., Mirk residence, 608-988-4760

Sunday, June 6 Chapter meeting, 1 p.m., Linder residence, 608-375-2668

PRAIRIE BLUFF CHAPTER

Saturday, Mar. 23 Prescribed burn school (see story, page 9)

Sunday, Apr. 14 Pasque flower hike at Muralt Prairie. Meet at 1 p.m. at the site parking lot on Hwy. 39, 608-862-3816

Tuesday, Apr. 16 Chapter meeting, 7 p.m., Turner Hall, Rathskeller, Monroe

Sunday, May 5 Woodland wildflower hike at Abraham's Woods, 1 p.m. at the site, 608-862-3816

Tuesday, May 21 Chapter meeting, Marshall Bluff Bowhunter's Clubhouse. BYO picnic and kittentail hike, 6 p.m., followed by meeting at 7 p.m.

Tuesday, June 18 Chapter meeting, 7 p.m., Honey Creek Park in Monroe. Following the meeting Kathy Kirk will give a slide presentation on the 1995 Hine's emerald dragonfly population study in Door Co. BYO picnic supper, 6 p.m., if interested

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.

KOLTES

Meet on Bong Road, ½ mile east of Hwy. 113 between Madison and Waunakee. Leader: Paul West, 233-5807.

SOUTH CENTRAL CHAPTER

WORK PARTIES

Tuesday, May 14 Chapter meeting, 7:00 p.m. Henderson residence, 608-845-7065

Thursday, May 16 Inventory party, 5:30 p.m. Wisconsin Power and Light Merimac site. Will carpool from Pasqual's Southwestern Deli, 6913 University Avenue, Middleton. 5:00 p.m. To meet on the site call Jen Baffett at 608-252-5707 for directions

Tuesday, May 21 Work party, 5:30 -7:00 p.m., aspen girdling at Koch Prairie. Bring girdling tools, such as chisels or screwdrivers. Leader: Paul West 233-5807. Meet at Hwy. K, 1/4 mile west of the intersection of K and Hwy. 12 outside of Ashton Corners

Thursday, May 23 Inventory Party, 5:30 p.m. Merrimac/Lodi prairies. Carpool from Pasqual's Southwestern Deli, 6913 University Avenue, Middleton. 5:00 p.m. To meet on the site call Steve Richter at 608-251-8410 for directions

Sunday, May 26 Madison Audubon Society birding trip at Thomson Prairie and Blue Mounds State Park (for more information, contact MAS at 255-BIRD)

Saturday, June 8 10 a.m. Field identification of grasses and informal field trip focusing upon the field identification of upland grasses and sedges, The Nature Conservancy's Spring Green Preserve. Habitats at the preserve include sand barrens, sand prairie, bluff prairie, dry savanna (oak barrens), and oak woodlands. Led by Rich Henderson (608-845-7065). If you have the books Grasses of Wisconsin and Spring Flora of Wisconsin you may wish to bring them along. (Will be repeated in Sept. to cover late season species)

Thursday, June 6 Inventory Party, 5:30 p.m. Brooklyn Wildlife Area. Carpool from Kohis Grocery in the Nakoma Plaza, Madison, 5:00 p.m. To meet on the site call Steve Richter at 608-251-8140 for directions

Tuesday, June 18, Work party, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m., parsnip removal at Koltes Prairie. Remember to wear long pants and shirts and please bring shovels. Leader: Paul West, 233-5807. Meet on Bong Road, 1/2 mile east of Hwy. 113 between Madison and Waunakee

Wednesday, June 19 Madison Audubon Society birding trip at American Family headquarters grounds (for more information, contact MAS at 255- BIRD)

Thursday, June 27, Work party, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m., parsnip removal at Koltes Prairie. See June 15 for details.

Tuesday, July 9 Chapter annual meeting and potluck at Bluestem Farm. Savanna restoration tour, 5 p.m.; potluck dinner 6 p.m. Scott Weber and Muffie Barrett, S5920 Lehman Road, Baraboo (head west on Lehman Road off Hwy. 12 approximately 3 miles south of Baraboo)

CHAPTER NEWS

PRAIRIE BLUFF CHAPTER

Chronicle of the Briggs Wetland, Chapter 9

For the one hundred and sixteen gizzillionth time I would like to review the financial flood plain of Briggs Wetland. The waters of contribution and empathy have surged and receded with the tides of human compassion, and fresh dollars and new cents can be seen laying upon the finer shores of the Raccoon Creek and the spring pond. It is as though the piggybanks of heaven have opened above us, their drops have coalesced, and now our storm sewers of gratefulness are temporarily overloaded.

God I love poetry.

On April 28, 1994, two years ago already (!) the Natural Land Institute of Rockford, IL paid $30,000 to the Church of Latter Day Saints for 23.878 acres of marsh and tilled upland. This parcel we now call "Briggs Wetland." As per plan and gentlepersonally agreement, NLI acquired a Department of Natural Resources grant worth $19,000, and the Prairie Bluff Chapter has been raising the $11,000 balance to buy the wetland from NLI.

Unfortunately, our cow grazing neighbors to the north, Charles and Jan Potter, propelled NLI to undergo a land swap, in which three acres of Briggs upland were traded for three acres of Potter's marsh. This trade was approved by the Prairie Bluff Chapter as a means of keeping the cows out of the marsh. What we didn't know, however, was that the impending cost of this transaction would amount to $3,000 worth of surveyor's fees, title insurance, appraisal costs and NLI office time and expenditures. Now we are in a debate over what to do about this ugly bill, for which we are asked to pay $1,000 per acre without actually getting any land.

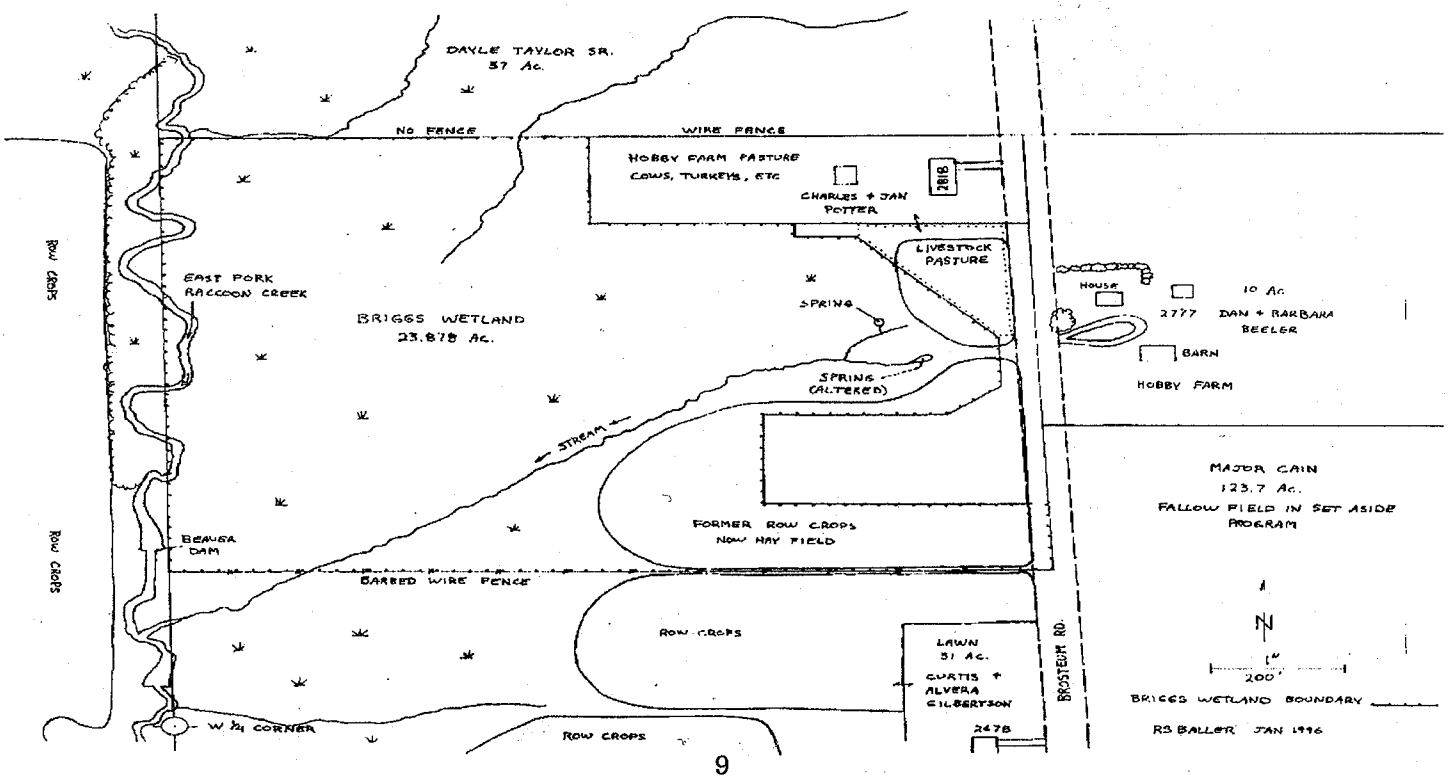
Meanwhile the fund raising continues. It has been a good year. We are happily shocked to report that through a combination of auction items at the 1995 banquet, burning prairie plantings and remnants, selling hot dogs at Dick's Supermarket in Monroe, serving breakfast at the Corral in Monroe, fundraising with Rich Henderson and Ted Cochrane at Briggs on July 29, selling T-shirts and adopting forbs, touring state record trees with John Ochsner in Dane County and numerous unexpected and truly profound donations from magnanimous contributors, we have topped $5,000 in 1995. And most of it was nickels and dimes. Yes, we are grateful.

If not for the Potter transaction, we could pay off the balance now. But please don't stop the donations from coming in: we have maintenance costs still to cover. Prairie Bluff recently purchased two gallons of Garlon herbicide at a cost of over $200. It's concentrated stuff. The herbicide will help us bring the buckthorn of Briggs Wetland to its knees.

Prairie Bluffers Gary Felder, Fred Faessler, John Larson, John Ochsner and Rob Baller met on the frozen marsh in January to pummel the brush with bow saws, loppers, chemicals and assorted medieval curses. The damage was inspiring. More is to come.

Finally I wish to say a few things about the map of Briggs Wetland. The map employs a combination of features taken from a real property description map, an aerial photo and my memory. My intent was to show the general characteristics of the place for the benefit of our faithful readers and supporters. Please feel free to visit the wetland, located on the west side of Brosteum Rd. in Rock County, WI. Brosteum is a mile long stretch between Beloit-Newark Rd. and Cleophas Rd. If the donations continue as this last year, the place will be ours soon. Get out your Rock County map and go see it. But don't roll your car in the steep ditch.

—Rob Baller



Prescribed burn school

A prescribed burn school will once again be offered by the Prairie Bluff Chapter of The Prairie Enthusiasts Saturday, March 23 in Monroe. The class will be held at the Monroe Parks Dept. Garage at 1048 6th Ave. The one-day session will provide basic technical instruction along with hands-on experience for those wishing to participate in prescribed burns at the volunteer level.

Individuals interested in attending the class should call Fred Faessler at 608-325-9374 by Wednesday, March 20. The course will cost $20. Checks should be made payable to the Prairie Bluff Chapter of The Prairie Enthusiasts.

Participants should wear cotton or wool clothes (blue jeans and long-sleeved shirts preferred) with leather gloves and leather hightop shoes. Participants may bring a sack lunch or choose from a number of nearby restaurants. The class will begin with registration and coffee at 8:00 a.m.

Prairies lose a friend

This past January the Prairie Bluff Chapter suffered the loss of longtime member and friend Bob Gessert of Brodhead. Bob combined a natural curiosity about prairies and the natural world along with a common sense approach to things that made him a valuable asset to our chapter. In addition to his enthusiasm for chapter projects, Bob was an easygoing, good-humored fellow to work with. We will miss him.

A number of donations have been made in Bob's honor to the Briggs Wetland purchase fund. Anyone interested in making a contribution should contact Fred Faessler. Those making contributions so far include: George and Kay Barry, Donna Bahler, Jean Blum, Carol Johnston, John Ochsner and Reynold Zeller. —John Ochsner

NORTHWEST ILLINOIS CHAPTER

Wanted, dead!

Recently, the Illinois Audubon published a list of Illinois' 20 most invasive alien weeds. The list was compiled by John Schwegman, botany program manager for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Here's the list:

- Amur Honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackii*)
- Amur Maple (*Acer ginnala*)
- Autumn Olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*)
- Common Buckthorn (*Rhamus cathartica*)
- Crown Vetch (*Coronilla varia*)
- Cutleaf Teasel (*Dipsacus laciniatus*)
- Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*)
- Moneywort or Common Loosestrife (*Lysimachia nummularia*)
- Multiflora Rose (*Rosa multiflora*)
- Oriental Bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*)
- Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*)
- Tall Hedge (no citation given)
- Tartarian Honeysuckle (*Lonicera tatarica*)
- White Sweetclover (*Melilotus alba*)
- Wild Parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*)
- Winged Burning Bush (*Euonymus alatus*)

I showed the list to several local experts and they suggested adding the following:

- Bird's Foot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*)
- Blackberry Lily (*Belamcanda chinensis*)
- Canada Bluegrass (*Poa compressa*)
- Canada Thistle (*Circium arvense*)
- Chinese Plumegrass (*Miscanthus sacchariflorus*)
- Cypress Spurge (*Euphorbia cyparissias*)
- Day Lily (*Hemerocallis fulva*)
- Giant Chickweed (*Stellaria aquatica*)
- Giant Foxtail (*Setaria faberi)*
- Glossy Buckthorn (*Rhamnus frangula*)
- Japanese Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*)
- Kentucky Bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*)
- Leafy Spurge (*Euphorbia esula*)
- Quackgrass (*Agropyron repens*)
- Queen Anne's Lace (*Daucus carota*)
- Redtop (*Agrosstis gigantea*)
- Russian Ohve (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*)
- Smooth Brome (*Bromus inermis*)
- Teasel (*Dipsacus sylvestris*)
- Yellow Sweetclover (*Melilotus officinalis*)

If you have other candidates for the **Wanted, Dead!** list, let me know. —Rickie Fullmer

1996 burn school

The Guardian Burn School will be held on April 20 at 8:00 a.m. at Rickie Fullmer's farm in rural Hanover. The purpose of this all-day session is to organize and train the 1996 burn teams. Jim Rachuy will lead a discussion on designing and implementing prescribed burns. He is looking for a volunteer or two to help organize squads and lead them through a series of demonstration burns. Call Jim if you are willing to take on such a role.

Please come dressed to participate: cotton clothing, leather gloves and shoes, head covering and safety goggles. Bring your burn manual (if you have one), your personal calendar (so burn dates can be set) and any burn plans that you have for your property. Bring a lunch and a hot drink if you like—water is available on site. We will meet no matter what the weather. If conditions permit, we will conduct several practice burns and should finish up around 4:00 p.m.

If you are interested in having a burn on your property, you will need to come to the burn school. The burn schedule for 1996 will be finalized on this day. We hope to accommodate everyone, but it may not work out that way. Your chances of getting on the burn schedule will be much greater if you volunteer to help others burn. Call Rickie for further information. —Rickie Fullmer

Support for Friends of the Depot

A new organization has recently been formed that should be of interest to all prairie enthusiasts. It's called the Friends of the Depot. Its goal is to support the thoughtful redevelopment of the former Savanna Army Depot here in JoDaviess County. This includes, according to the group, the promotion of economic development (to help replace the 500 jobs lost by the base closure) and the preservation of the base's natural and cultural resources (including a 6,500 acre sand prairie/savanna).

Friends of the Depot is most certainly not against economic development. To the contrary, they say that efficient reuse of the developed portions of the base will increase the possibility of preserving its more natural areas. Importantly, they contend that the reverse is also true—that the preservation of the base's natural resources will increase the possibility of economic growth.

Balancing the needs of people and nature is, as you know, a difficult and sometimes controversial undertaking. Friends of the Depot says it will work in cooperation with the Local Redevelopment Authority (the agency which is writing the development plan) to help build consensus and promote public involvement in the process.

Interested organizations and individuals are encouraged to join. There are no dues. The Friends ask only that you approve of their goals and their non-confrontational approach. Many local and regional organizations have joined, including the Illinois Nature Conservancy, several Natural Area Guardians groups, the JoDaviess Conservation Foundation, Natural Land Institute, Openlands Project, The Sierra Club, Northwest Illinois Audubon Society and (as of the February board meeting) The Prairie Enthusiasts.

If you would like more information about Friends of the Depot, or have some ideas on how they should proceed, call Jack Morehead at 815-777-6753 (fax/phone) or write to P.O. Box 261, Galena, Illinois 61036. —Jim Rachuy

SOUTH CENTRAL CHAPTER

Work party progress report

The South Central Chapter made great progress on both the Koch and Koltes Prairies during 1995. Thanks to all those who came out to help. The June, 1995 Koltes work party, involving 12 volunteers was truly a highlight of my summer. It's great to see people take some of their extra time after a long day of work to help preserve a beautiful place. Maybe one day turnouts like that one will become the rule and not the exception.

We encourage people to come out again this year, or join us for the first time. Most people at the work parties have been to the site several times and would be happy to show off some of its highlights, either after or before the work party.

And thanks to all those who we did not see out on our sites, but are contributing to prairie conservation in other ways, such as giving tours, helping other organizations, or working on their properties. For more information about volunteering for management activities, call Paul West (233-5807), or call John Mecikalski (849-8358) for information about any other volunteer activities. —Paul West

Recycling reminder

If you recycle paper, cans, bottles or other materials at the Madison Recycling Center (2200 Fish Hatchery Road), you can earmark the cash you earn for a donation to the Prairie Enthusiasts. Our thanks go out to the anonymous recyclers whose donations brought in $25 this fall.

Inventory work

See the calendar for three inventory forays. Additional inventories may be scheduled for Thursday evenings beginning May 30. Contact John Harrington at 608-263-4587 for updates.

SOUTHWEST CHAPTER

Southwest chapter schedules unique field trip series

Over the years, the Southwest Chapter of The Prairie Enthusiasts has developed a very unique relationship with Dan Neuroth, a family man and farmer near Fennimore, Wisconsin. In 1988, some of the few green plants to be seen on Dan's farm were hundreds of cream baptisia, defying the drought with 10-foot deep roots! With Dan's permission, prairie enthusiasts have been crisscrossing his pastures looking for prairie plants ever since. He had one small pasture area (about 12 acres) that was particularly interesting. Although grazed heavily, rare prairie plants like Hill's thistle, wild quinine and even woolly milkweed call this unusual pasture home.

After several years of taking Dan and his family on hikes and helping with his kids' 4-H wildflower collections, Dan started easing back on the grazing to see what would happen. I cannot describe in words what happened, other than to say it produced the most startling transformation to prairie that I've ever seen.

With support from Dan and his wife Laurie, the SW Chapter has planned a unique series of three field trips on the prairie this year. The first will take place in late spring, after several small one or two acre burns are completed. At that time, two experts will speak to two groups of attendees. One speaker will talk about prairie folklore and history, and the other will present information about soils and their composition. At noon, the groups will change speakers and repeat the process.

In late July, attendees will return to the site for a second field trip and hear speakers address prairie wildlife and rotational grazing and its effects. In late summer we will assemble one last time to view the fall prairie, the effects of the spring burns and listen to speakers talk about endangered species laws and how they affect private landowners, and hear about state and federal programs to help replant prairies on private property.

A $15 registration fee covers all three field trips, six speakers, food and refreshments. A generous grant from Wisconsin Power and Light will cover about three-fourths the cost of this venture, and Dick's Supermarket of Lancaster, Wisconsin has kindly offered to underwrite part of the cost of the food. All monies collected above and beyond the cost will be given to the Neuroths.

Registration will be limited to 40 persons and we hope to draw interested parties from nearby communities and from southwest Wisconsin, northwest Illinois and northeast Iowa.

BANQUET (Continued from front page)

by the featured speaker, Dr. Robert Betz. His presentation, which focused on milkweeds, illustrated the incredible beauty and complexity of the Asclepias genus, and by extension, the natural communities in which they occur. When Gary Eldred suggested that Dr. Betz be asked to return to speak about his prairie restoration at Ferrnilab, the audience response suggested they were quite eager to hear much more from him. Thank you, Dr. Betz, for enhancing our appreciation of the diversity we are trying to save. We hope to have the opportunity to have you in our midst again.

Rob Baller (top) and John Ochsner

Browsing auction items

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
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BOSCOBEL, WI 53805

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THE PRAIRIE ENTHUSIASTS - MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name_____ County _____ Phone _____

Address_____

City _____ State_____ Zip _____

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

☐ **Southwest Chapter**
Serving Grant, Crawford, Richland & Iowa Counties

☐ **South Central Chapter**
ServingSauk, Columbia & Dane Counties

☐ **Northwest Illinois Chapter**
Serving JoDaviess, Carroll & Stephenson Counties

☐ **Prairie Bluff**
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

Can we provide your name and address to:

	YES	NO
Other environmental organizations	_____	_____
Other prairie enthusiasts in your area	_____	_____

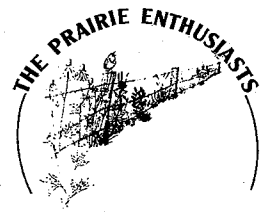
MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:
The Prairie Enthusiasts
c/o Alice Mirk
10052 County Hwy. C
Woodman, WI 53827
608-988-4760

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
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Boscobel, WI 53805