



THE PRAIRIE PROMOTER

VOL 11, NO.3

FALL 1998

Celebrating eleven years of prairie conservation in the Upper Midwest

Summer Time and the Livin' Was Easy!

A report on the TPE Summer Picnic by Reynold Zeller

About forty people attended the annual picnic and meeting of The Prairie Enthusiasts on Saturday, July 25, at N5242 Rat Hollow Road in Green County. Dave and Kristen Wisnfske volunteered to host the event at their Savannah Springs site in the town of Adams. The Wisnfske's are very involved in the Pheasants Forever Program, local Boy Scout and Girl Scout activities, and have donated many auction items to TPE. The Prairie Bluff Chapter was a co-host of the event.

The agenda/itinerary included the annual meeting of the parent group, a second meeting for the current board of directors, a picnic, and plenty of time to hike the hills of this southwest part of Green County. There is a trout pond named Braezel Springs. Once the site of a trading post between French and Indians in the 1740's, it is now home to lunker rainbow, brown, and brook trout. There were three areas where visitors could camp: Lookout, Sleeping Springs, and Rookery campsites. There is a waterfowl pond and numerous small remnants that host a variety of native plants and grasses. There is an indication that lead mining may have occurred in past years, and Dave insists that an apple orchard exists, "that is full of cider apple trees used to make apple jack during prohibition." There are some huge oaks, cottonwood, and one huge dying bitternut, and as Dave says, "there are thistles galore soon to be cut".

We thank the Wisnfskes' for their hospitality. It was a good spot for a picnic, the weather was perfect, and we renewed friendships with other "prairie nuts" from other chapters of TPE.

8TH ANNUAL INVERTEBRATE CONFERENCE

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1998

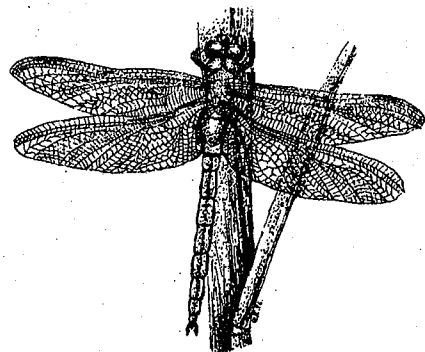
The 8th Annual invertebrate conference will be held at UW Farms Arlington Research Station, located about 5 miles north of DeForest. This event is

sponsored by Riveredge Nature Center and the Southwest Chapter of the Prairie Enthusiasts.

This conference focuses on prairie invertebrates, their taxonomy, relationships to other animal and plant life of prairies, and their response to prairie management and habitat patches. The conference is directed towards scientists, resource managers, and all who seek to better understand the prairie ecosystem.

The conference offers two forums: **Papers Session** that will address information on prairie invertebrates such as examples of obligate relationships in the prairie; colonization of prairie plantings, rehabilitation, and restorations; what taxa are prairie associated or restricted; and, population dynamics. **Workshops** in which participants will receive hands-on instruction with a particular taxonomic group, for example, long-horned beetles of the prairie, jumping spiders, tiger beetles, cicadas, hemiptera, any soil invertebrate, or some aspect of prairie.

Contact Mark or Sue Martin 608-635-4160 for additional information. A registration form will be sent to all TPE members in September.



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The Prairie Enthusiasts is a grass roots organization of volunteers which is solely committed to the protection, management, and restoration of native prairies and savannas in the upper Midwest. To date, The Prairie Enthusiasts has protected over 900 acres that harbor at least 5 state or federally protected species requisitions, easements, and management agreements. The Prairie Enthusiasts has a stewardship program which provides active management to ensure the ongoing health of protected sites.

The Prairie Enthusiasts is actively involved in planting prairie on its properties and on other conservation lands and has assisted both public agencies and private groups in these efforts. Thus far, more than 80 acres has been planted with seeds of prairie plants from local sources.

In addition, The Prairie Enthusiasts develop educational materials and provide presentations on prairie and savanna ecology, conservation, and management for both children and adults.

The Prairie Enthusiasts was incorporated in Wisconsin in 1987 as a private nonprofit, tax exempt corporation under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations are tax-deductible.

TPE Board Of Directors

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West Central Wisconsin Chapter

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The Prairie Promoter is a quarterly publication of The Prairie Enthusiasts. No part of this periodical may be reproduced without permission. We welcome submissions of letters, articles, announcements, art work, and photographs which are relevant to prairie and savanna ecosystems. Material should be typed. Writers who use computers should include a 3.5 inch disk (MS-Word or WordPerfect) as well as paper copies. Articles and letters may be edited for length or style. Computer disks, art, and photographs will be returned. Deadlines for submission of material are: February 25 (Spring Issue); May 25 (Summer Issue); August 25 (Fall Issue); and November 25 (Winter Issue).

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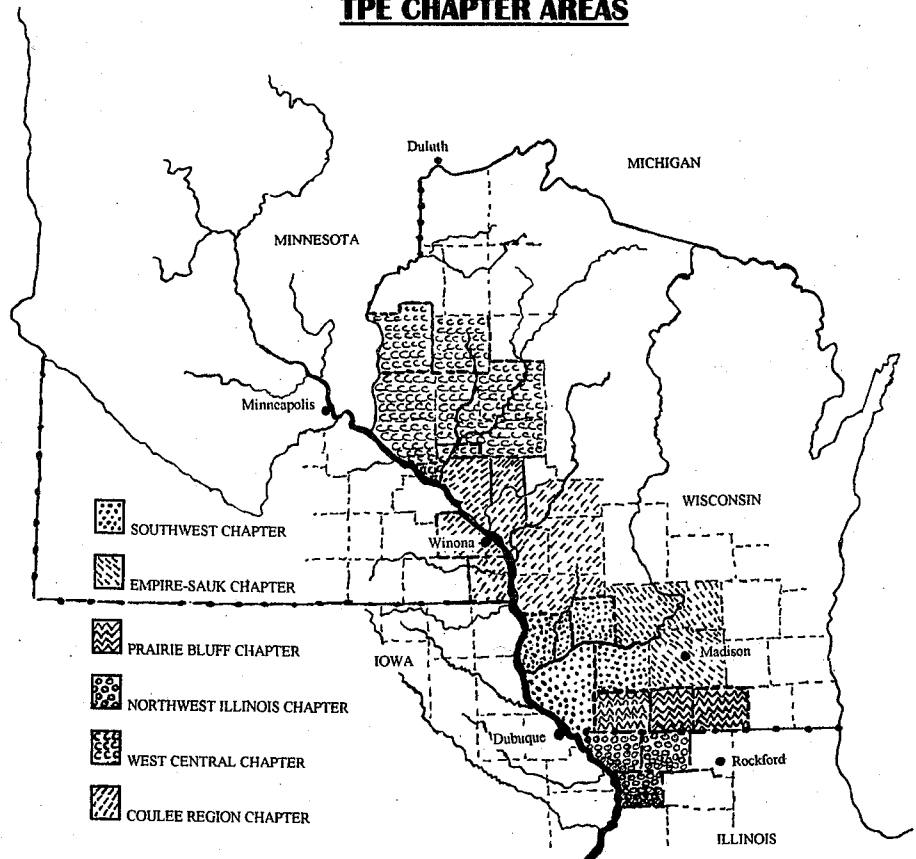
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TPE CHAPTER AREAS



President's Message

By any standard, this year's picnic was a great success. The weather was perfect and it seemed as if the prairie spirits had blessed the whole day for us. Dave and Kristen Wisnefske hosted the day and what gracious hosts they were. The rainbow trout, served fresh from the pond, were great, and the long tables of palate pleasing dishes left one contented and lethargic after the feast.

Prairie enthusiasts from all of the chapter areas joined us for the get together, and many were treated to field trips to Dave's prairie restorations, led by Gary Felder. It was easy to see Dave's enthusiasm and folks commented on how much they enjoyed it. Later in the afternoon, we had our annual election of officers and then our regular bimonthly meeting. Each chapter gave a brief report on its activities and I will admit I was truly impressed by the creativity and commitment to prairie conservation which is reflected in the chapters' activities. Education about prairies is a big priority and a couple of chapters are doing an outstanding job with their membership as well as partnering with state and federal agencies. Other chapters have developed very high levels of skills at fund raising and grant writing. This is going to lead to big opportunities for TPE.

Still other chapters have developed close ties with landowners, educating them (with success) about the value of the prairie remnants they own. I get a very real sense that prairie conservation and appreciation continue to be on the rise. While it's deeply gratifying for me to be a part of the movement to help save what little is left of our prairie heritage in the upper Midwest, I am also aware of some potential problems we are facing (part of my dark Lutheran background Garrison Kiellor talks about I guess!) We are in need of people to give some of their time to their chapters. Several chapters need officers and directors to help keep the chapters healthy and growing. As busy as most people are, I do believe it's possible to give two or three hours a month to sit on a chapter board and help with its conservation efforts.

Another area where help with prairie conservation is falling way behind the growth of TPE is lack of volunteers to do work on the prairies we own or are managing for private landowners. As I've said before, if just one half of our 700 members gave four hours a year, we would have all the help we need to bring these botanical jewels back to good health! TPE successes at prairie conservation are a shining example and a tribute to what a non-profit organization can do, so please don't let this admirable effort lose its energy and momentum. Give a tiny bit of your time to the cause. I promise the effort will be worth it. Thank you!

Prairie Jubilee -

The third annual Prairie Jubilee will be held at the UW Research Station and Madison Audubon Society's Goose Pond Sanctuary on Saturday, October 10, 1998, from 1-5pm. Tours will visit Goose Pond Sanctuary and also the UW Integrated Cropping Systems Trial. Visitors will be able to help collect prairie seeds and watch birds. Exhibitors and vendors will be located at the Research Station. Vendors will also give talks.

Everyone is invited to attend this free event, co-sponsored by the UW-Madison Arlington Agricultural Research Station, Wisconsin Integrated Cropping Systems Trial, The Prairie Enthusiasts, and UW-Madison Arboretum.

One-hour tours will depart from the Research Station's Public Events Building at 1:00, 2:30, and 4:00 p.m. Continuous bird watching and prairie seed collecting will take place at Goose Pond. To prevent disturbance to waterfowl, all parking will be at the Research Station. Visitors will be transported by bus or mobile bleachers (a covered farm wagon pulled by a tractor).

Goose Pond Events

Tours: See Madison Audubon's 334-acre wildlife sanctuary. Visit two newly-acquired parcels and the 40-acre Sue Ames Prairie, where prairie and wetland restoration are nearly complete. Identical tours will be offered at all three departure times.

Continuous events: View migrating waterfowl through spotting scopes; knowledgeable bird watchers will be available to help. Collect prairie plant seeds, the vital ingredient for future prairie restorations. If you plan to collect seeds, bring gloves and wear smooth-fabric shirt and pants. For all Goose Pond activities, be prepared to hike over rough ground.

Research Station Events

Tours: 1:00 p.m.-- learn how nitrogen and phosphorous impact soil fertility and water quality; hear about new crops such as kura clover and cup plant. 2:30 p.m.-- see disease-resistant elm trees and hybrid poplars bred for energy and pulp; tour the new swine research facility. 4:00 p.m.-- visit the dairy research barn at milking time, especially interesting for youngsters.

Continuous events: Exhibitors and vendors will be located at the Research Station. Some vendors will give brief talks, beginning at 1:00 p.m. Snacks and beverages will be available. The Goose Pond Sanctuary benefit raffle drawing will be held at 5:00 p.m. at the Research Station.

Goose Pond is located about 20 miles north of Madison, near Arlington. For detailed instructions, call the Madison Audubon office at 608/255-2473.

Coneflower rush may wipe out N.D. plant



Recently, the *Bismarck Tribune* in North Dakota published an article written by Ron Wilson, in which he describes the decimation of the coneflower (*Echinacea angustifolia*) by people seeking to sell its roots for the production of herbal remedies. Coneflower root is said to be a tonic for the common cold and flu and the raw root sells to dealers for anywhere from \$12.50 to \$21 a pound. Last year, in advertisements in some of the state newspapers and shoppers guides in North Dakota, people were being urged to "grab a shovel and start digging". Environmentalists in North Dakota are very worried about the future of *E. angustifolia* as the market demand increases. It is an attractive source of income in rural North Dakota for the unemployed and the under-employed. Kerry Hartman, an educator and environmentalist at Fort Berthold Community College in New Town, North Dakota, is quoted as saying "there are places you can go where there used to be a lot of coneflowers and now you can't find any".

There is always a potential danger in popularizing prairies and prairie sites: by making so many people aware of the beauty and benefits of prairie plants and prairie remnants, they may be dug up or destroyed in misguided attempts to possess them or their products. The predicament of

E. angustifolia in North Dakota should spur us on in efforts to determine how to protect prairie plants and communities, while trying to ensure that people can visit and appreciate them.

In and Out (Siders)

by Mary Blackmore

We live in an extremely mobile society. People, lots of people, move from place to place for all sorts of reasons. Employment, health, relationships and aesthetics are a few major motives for relocating.

Generally speaking, mobility can be tough on societies and even tougher on the environment. Caring about and becoming part of a community contribute greatly to the stability of a society and the natural resources upon which that society depends. Some would argue that mobility simply by its process erodes those two vital components of a stable society. It's just plain harder to care with the speed, complications, and lack of history that moving involves.

If this assumption is true, a positive action on the part of everyone in all communities would be to welcome newcomers, share with them both the human and natural histories of the place, and present as many opportunities as possible for their involvement. This shared caring is the glue that holds communities together. Discouraging this caring is surely counterproductive.

However, this is exactly what has been happening since the Savanna Army Depot base closure process began, dramatically accelerating in the past few months when a prison was proposed for site #3 on the Depot. Local press has cried out from both news articles and the editorial pages that people who opposed the prison on site #3 were outsiders and transplanted urban (read Chicago) folks, implying that

the views of those people should be considered irrelevant since they had not resided in either Carroll or JoDavies counties since birth. Some writers went so far as to state that there was a conspiracy among the newcomers, like some sort of Rootless Plague that was sweeping the countryside. Huh?

If you follow the concept of Not Born Here/No Voice Here down the road very far, you realize it's a very strange trip indeed. When does one get the right to involve themselves in a new community? After 10 years? After 20 Years? 30 years? If you still live where you were born, do you expect that all of your friends and relatives who don't should be silent in their new communities? Should those who should not speak also get a break in their local tax burden since they can't even represent themselves? Each scenario becomes more ridiculous than the last. Clearly, the concept is so flawed that it should be seen in the same light as numerous other spluttering remarks made when one has exhausted all logical arguments and is angrily clutching at straws.

Many of you remember Fred Kirschermann, the North Dakota farmer who spoke to Audubon several years ago about sustainable agriculture. At one point Fred was discussing sustainability as it relates to the global economy and he stated that, "the global economy doesn't give a damn about local ecosystems." He was right. It's up to the people that are here, -all of them-no matter where they came from or how long they've been here, to care. And I mean "here" in the broadest sense of the word-where there is a caring person.

I'm glad there is caring among the mobile of our society. I wish there was more. In the long run that's what will save our democracy, and our environment. reprinted from the *Northwest Illinois Audubon Society Newsletter*, September-October 1998.

BOOK SALE

An Introduction to the Tallgrass Prairies of the Upper Midwest, the 80 page booklet published by TPE in cooperation with Wisconsin Power and Light, has been reduced in price. You can now purchase the booklet for \$5.00 from your local chapter, or, you can obtain a copy for \$5.00 (plus \$1.44 for shipping) from TPE, PO Box 112, Boscobel WI 53805

Experience Exchange

Chris Matson

Dominance of Reed Canary greatly reduced through burn on last day in May.

Boy, what a hot fire will do to green plants! We burned a patch of reed canary grass on May 30, 1998. The unburned heights of reed canary grass are normal, while the burned heights are under knee high throughout the patch. In the burned areas one can see sandy soil, sedges, joe pyes, boneset, vervains and other species, whereas in the unburned areas, the grass is only accompanied by sedges (in minor proportions compared to the burned areas). Also, the overall structure is different than in an unburned landscape, as there is a mosaic of burned and unburned grassland of varied height density, as opposed to the unburned standard of uniform height density. While it is likely this technique is a short term fix, after one burn, the effect is noteworthy.

Hmm, are we on to something here? If you have a reed canary problem, give later fire a try (but seek assistance, and plan well beforehand).

Editor's Note: Are there other stories out there of attempts to reduce dominance by reed canary grass?

Prairie still exists after dark

by Chris Matson

On Saturday, July 25, we had our TPE annual picnic. A good crowd showed up at the picnic, choosing fishing, motorized tours of restorations, and some botanizing as a pastime. The food was top notch (ooh, that wild rice stuff and the broccoli salad!!!!) and the nighttime accommodations were exquisite! Wait, how would anyone know?

Well, as last guests, Amy, Savanna, and I feasted on fried trout fillets and assorted other goodies, while the wood thrush called taps for the daylight. Then, the grasshopper sparrows and the Henslow sparrows buzzed and called here and there throughout the night. I was very surprised at the Henslow's sparrow calls near our tent on less than optimal grass height. As we were all alone, the sky was filled with wonderful stars, as the coyotes yipped and the grasshoppers scratched around (only one "state bird" bit me during the night).

Soon, as our daughter began to sleep, the barred owls began to usher my wife and me to the realm of Morpheus. But, as we woke, the sparrows and wood thrush began the morning chorus. Soon, more trout filled the frypan. As the last guests left, we found a living side to this hospitable landscape. It is truly peaceful to camp alone, but the songs and stories fall short of a crowded campfire ring.

It is truly peaceful to cut brush, collect seed, or clean seed alone, but the same limitations occur in that realm of activities also. Folks, a way of life can be had from the prairie. It is not just a picture book. It is a place to be, a home if you will allow. Each of us gravitates toward human constructs easiest in the day to day humdrum. That means that most of us went home or to hotels. I was personally looking forward to a night of stories and other exchanges between prairie persons. The prairie does not end at the sunset, nor should our enthusiasm for its goodness. Maybe in future years, we will see more support for an overnight excursion at the annual picnic. It sure broadened my horizons; why not yours, too?

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

EMPIRE-SAUK CHAPTER EVENTS

Mon.,	Sep. 21	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 5pm to dark.
Tues.,	Sep. 22	Help Kathie & Tom Brock at Pleasant Valley Conservancy collect seed, tour afterwards, 5pm to dark. Call Kathie or Tom at 608-238-5050
Tues.,	Sep. 22	Seed collecting, Koltes, 5pm to dark.
Wed.,	Sep. 23	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 5pm to dark.
Fri.,	Sep. 25	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 5pm to dark.
Sat.,	Sep. 26	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 10am to 1pm.
Mon.,	Sep. 28	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 5pm to dark.
Tues.,	Sep. 29	Seed collecting, Koltes, 5pm to dark.
Wed.,	Sep. 30	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 5pm to dark.
Fri.,	Oct. 2	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 5pm to dark.
Sat.,	Oct. 3	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 10am to 1pm.
Sun.,	Oct. 4	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 10:30am to 1pm.
Mon.,	Oct. 5	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 5pm to dark.
Tues.,	Oct. 6	Seed collecting, Koltes, 5pm to dark.
Wed.,	Oct. 7	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 5pm to dark.
Fri.,	Oct. 9	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 5pm to dark.
Sat.,	Oct. 10	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 10am to 1pm.
Mon.,	Oct. 12	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 5pm to dark.
Tues.,	Oct. 13	Seed collecting, Koltes, 5pm to dark.
Wed.,	Oct. 14	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 5pm to dark.
Wed.,	Oct. 14	Seed cleaning with Kathie and Tom Brock at Pleasant Valley Conservancy, 5pm to 8pm. Call Kathie or Tom at 608-238-5050
Fri.,	Oct. 16	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 5pm to dark.
Sat.,	Oct. 17	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 10am to 1pm.
Sun.,	Oct. 18	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 10:30am to 1pm.
Mon.,	Oct. 19	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 5pm to dark.

Tues.,	Oct. 20	Seed collecting, Koltes, 5pm to dark.
Wed.,	Oct. 21	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 5pm to dark.
Fri.,	Oct. 23	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 5pm to dark.
Sat.,	Oct. 24	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 10am to 1pm.
Mon.,	Oct. 26	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 5pm to dark.
Tues.,	Oct. 27	Seed collecting, Koltes, 5pm to dark.
Wed.,	Oct. 28	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 5pm to dark.
Fri.,	Oct. 30	Seed collecting, Gov. Nelson, 5pm to dark.
Sat.,	Oct. 31	Work with Verona High School students to remove trees from savanna remnant. Halloween treats and cider to follow. 9am to noon, rain date of Nov. 1. Leader, Jerry Dahlen, 608-527-5807
Sat.,	Oct. 31	Seed collecting at Gov. Nelson, 10am to 1pm.
Mon.,	Nov. 2	Seed cleaning at Gov. Nelson, 10am to 8pm.
Tues.,	Nov. 3	Seed cleaning at Gov. Nelson, 10am to 8pm.
Wed.,	Nov. 4	Seed cleaning at Gov. Nelson, 10am to 8pm.
Thur.,	Nov. 5	Seed cleaning at Gov. Nelson, 10am to 8pm.
Fri.,	Nov. 6	Seed cleaning at Gov. Nelson, 10am to 8pm.
Sat.,	Nov. 7	Prairie Seeding at Gov. Nelson, 9:30am to 3pm.
Sat.,	Dec. 12	Brush cutting at Koltes prairie, 9:30am to noon. Bring hand tools, chainsaws and safety equipment. Leader: Paul West, 608-271-0504

NOTE: for details on directions and special equipment needed for work parties, see Empire-Sauk Chapter news.

MEETINGS

Tues.,	Nov. 3	Chapter meeting, 7pm., location to be announced. Contact Rich Henderson for details at 608-845-7065.
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PRAIRIE BLUFF CHAPTER EVENTS

Sat.,	Sep. 26	Seed collection at Honey Creek Park Monroe, 10am to noon. Contact Kay and Geo. Barry at 608-325-6147
Sun.,	Oct. 4	Dane County champion tree tour.

Meet at the Nevin Fish Hatchery, Fitchburg at 9am for the bus tour. Reservations are required, contact John Ochsner at 608-862-3816.

- Sat., Oct. 10 Seed collection at Honey Creek Park Monroe, 10am to noon. Contact Kay and Geo. Barry at 608-325-6147
- Sat., Oct. 24 Seed collection at Honey Creek Park Monroe, 10am to noon. Contact Kay and Geo. Barry at 608-325-6147

MEETINGS

- Tues., Oct. 6 Prairie Bluff Chapter meeting, Turner Hall, Monroe, at 7:00pm.
- Tues., Dec. 1 Chapter Christmas Potluck, 7pm. at the Marshall Bluff Club House, Montello.

Seed collection: there will be various opportunities for seed collecting as species ripen and as weather permits. Anyone interested, contact John Bauman at 608-862-1515.

NORTHWEST ILLINOIS CHAPTER

EVENTS

- Sun., Sep. 20 Seed collecting at Tapley woods, 1:30 pm to 5:30pm.
- Sat., Sep. 26 Seed collecting at Blackjack Prairie, 12:30pm to 4:30pm.
- Sun., Sep. 27 Seed collecting at Lone Tree Farm, from 1:30 pm to 5:30 pm.
- Sat., Oct. 3 Seed collecting at Elmoville Prairie from 12:30pm to 4:30pm.
- Sat., Oct. 10 Seed collecting at Blackjack Prairie from 12:30pm to 4:30pm.
- Sun., Oct. 11 Seed collecting at Lone Tree Farm from 1:30pm to 5:30 pm.
- Sat., Oct. 17 Seed collecting at Twin Bridges from 12:30pm to 4:30pm.
- Sat., Oct 24 Seed collection at Blackjack Prairie from 12:30pm to 4:30pm.
- Sun., Oct 25 Seed collection at Lone Tree Farm from 1:30pm to 5:30pm.
- Sun., Nov. 1 Seed collection at Lone Tree Farm from 8:30am to 5:30pm.

For directions to the collection sites above, please call Jim Rachuy at 947-2287. Please bring the following for seed collecting: a 5 gallon bucket, (with handles) to collect seed; belt or strap to carry bucket while you pick; pair of gloves to protect the hands; boots or high shoes to ward off the chiggers; garden shears to clip seed from tough stalks; bottle of water for refreshment, and; enough energy to walk about a mile.

SOUTHWEST CHAPTER

EVENTS

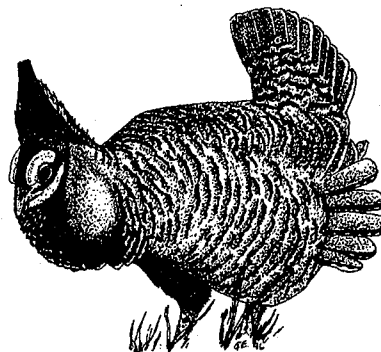
- Sat., Oct. 10 Brush cutting and seed collecting at Vale Prairie, 10am.
- Sat., Oct. 17 Brush cutting and seed collecting at Kalscheurs' Savanna, 10am.
- Sat., Nov. 7 Tree removal at Heather's Prairie, 10am.
- Sat., Nov. 14 Brush cutting and seed collecting at Vale Prairie, 10am.
- Sat., Dec. 5 Tree removal at Bush Clover Prairie, 10a
- note:** For directions or further information regarding any of the work parties listed above, call Gary at 608/375-5271.

MEETINGS

- Sat., Oct. 17 TPE board meeting at 10am at the La Crosse Public Library, 800 Main St. LaCrosse.
- Sun., Oct. 18 Chapter meeting at the home of Sue Linder, 505, Airport Rd., Boscobel.
- Sun., Nov. 15 Chapter meeting at home of Sue Linder, 505, Airport Rd., Boscobel.
- Sun., Dec. 20 Chapter meeting at the home of Sue Linder, 505, Airport Rd., Boscobel.

GENERAL CALENDAR

- Sat., Oct. 10 Prairie Jubilee (see story on page 3 for details).
- Thur., Oct. 29 Landscaping for Birds, by the Madison chapter of The Wild Ones. Contact Joe Powelka for details at 608-837-6308.
- Tue., Nov. 3 8th Annual Invertebrate Conference. See story on front page for more information.
- Thur., Nov. 19 Annual Seed Exchange and Fun Night, by the Madison chapter of The Wild Ones. Contact Joe Powelka for details at 608-837-6308.



COULEE REGION CHAPTER

The Coulee region Chapter would like to thank the following for donations toward land acquisition in the Spring and Summer of 1998: Peg Backup, Barbara and Ed Christie, MaryLee and Lloyd Croatt, Helen Davis, and Anna Motivans. To find out how you can help with building finances for land acquisition in the Coulee Region, contact George Johnston, Coulee Region Chapter treasurer at (608) 788-1417 or Alice Mirk at 608-988-4760. The organization is a private non-profit and all your donations are tax deductible.

Thanks also to Sue Slapnick for the generous donation of 7.5 minute quadrangle topographic maps, which we have desperately needed to initiate site documentation in the mapping committee.

Coulee Region "pilgrims" rough it overnight in Illinois.

The wonders of a large preserve were revealed to CRC members Helen Davis, Kirsten Kiesel, Susan Slapnick, and the Matson family on August 8 and 9, when they toured Nachusa Grasslands, a TNC preserve near Oregon, IL. Over 1,100 acres of restoration and remnant combine to bring sanctuary to Henslow's sparrows, badgers, dickcissels, sedge wrens and a host of endangered/threatened plants. Oak savannas, dry prairie knobs, tallgrass plantings, and unique sand seep and fen wetlands were explored on Saturday. Sunday, botanizing rang out full force as we discovered Hill's thistles in various stages of growth and senescence. In the savannas, wingstem and biennial gaura were in flower. A final examination of several species of goldenrod and Helianthus sunflowers wrapped up this fine outing. We learned about taxonomic differences between showy, woodland, western, and sawtooth sunflower, and discovered a naturally occurring hybrid between showy and western sunflower. Our first encounter with swamp goldenrod and a comparison with grey (old field), showy, and stiff goldenrods on site provided some of us a clearer observation of methods we can use to distinguish these species. Overall, the botanizing could have lasted days more. A thousand acres is a lot to explore. Throw in Italian restauranting and Chris Matson's campfire curry noodles and voila! We need more of these outings.

CRC members visit Goose Pond

Goose Pond Sanctuary, in Columbia County (WI), is a haven near Madison. There is a kettle pond and surrounding wetlands. Surrounding this bird attracting feature are various plantings and a few patches of remnant prairie. The preserve is managed by Mark Martin and his wife, Sue, who were very generous and allowed us to explore their residence acres. My impression of the place was that it is a finch heaven, with the incredible populations of field thistles, cupplant,

sunflowers, and other composites. We witnessed mating monarchs and the swarming redwing blackbirds (already!) along the trails. If you are ever in the area near Madison, get permission to walk this interesting collage of trails.

EMPIRE-SAUK CHAPTER

The Blufflands Restoration Project

The Empire-Sauk Chapter of The Prairie Enthusiasts is active in Sauk, Columbia, and Dane Counties, all located in south central Wisconsin. In this area, prairie and oak savanna comprised 46% of the land cover around the time of settlement in 1845. As you're aware, less than 100 years later this landscape component had been virtually eliminated by agricultural settlement and only a few scattered remnants remained on the steep and rocky ground deemed unsuitable for farming. Despite this tragedy, a wonderful opportunity exists in southern Sauk and northern Dane counties where the south and southwest facing bluffs and hills harbor scattered but frequent remnants of the once dominant communities. These remnants, most no larger than 2 acres, provide a tenuous link to the communities that thrived in this area for 6,500 years before European settlement.

In 1989, a few Empire-Sauk Chapter volunteers began working with private landowners to protect and strengthen this "tenuous link". The project has grown to include 14 landowners with management occurring on 258 acres. Since most of the project sites lie among the unglaciated bluffs and hills of the Lower Wisconsin River Valley, the work of these volunteers became known as The Blufflands Restoration Project.

During the past nine years of effort, management has consisted primarily of prescribed burning conducted by teams of volunteers each spring on the most valuable remnants. Some shrub and exotic species control occurred during other periods of the year and a dedicated group of volunteer botanists has been inventorying vegetation on sites when possible. Management plans and agreements with landowners are currently verbal and sealed with a handshake.

Much has been accomplished but it has become clear that volunteer effort alone can not keep up with the potential for restoration on these remnants. While we had reached many landowners and assisted them in managing several remnants, we were unable to keep up with new requests for management and information, nor were we able to expand efforts onto the lands of interested neighbors. Meanwhile, we watched as shrubs and non-native species continued to encroach on these remnants and remnants continued to vanish. It seemed

likely that without management, the remnants would disappear in the next 10-20 years. From our previous ten years of experience, a reversal of the trend would take time as would developing trust with additional landowners.

After several years of brainstorming and generous donations from TPE members and project landowners, The Blufflands Restoration Project was able to contract with me as a full-time project manager in May of this year. Over the next several months, I will work closely with landowners to create management plans for at least three of the management areas, adding 115 acres to our managed acreage. The management plans will list the activities to be performed by The Prairie Enthusiasts, a joint vision for the future of the property, and a commitment from the landowner providing some level of assurance that the remnant would remain protected.

I will also work to design a coordinated research program to explore methods by which private landowners may make income from their land while protecting and restoring prairie and savanna. Management tools such as sustainable timber production, rotational grazing, and native seed nurseries will be evaluated and one tool will be chosen to begin testing in 2000. The results of this research will serve as a basis for educational outreach to other private landowners with an interest in prairie and savanna conservation and restoration.

In addition to the prerequisite pulling of sweet clover and Queen Ann's lace, I'll also be writing grant proposals to obtain funding to make the project sustainable. We're waiting to hear on several grant requests and the US Fish and Wildlife Service has already funded a prairie planting and committed funds toward restoration of several remnants. If we're able to keep the project alive through next spring, we feel we'll be in excellent position to secure long-term funding and preserve the long-term health of the remnants.

Volunteer Opportunity. With our planting day scheduled for late October, I need all the hands I can get for seed collecting and cleaning. If you have questions about the project or would like to help, please contact Michael Strigel at 608/544-5901 or email at blufflnd@chorus.net.

References

- Lange, K.I., 1990. *A Postglacial Vegetational History of Sauk County and Caledonia Township, Columbia County, South Central Wisconsin*. Technical Bulletin No. 168. Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Madison, WI.
- Winkler, M.G., 1985. *Late Glacial and Holocene Environmental History of South-Central Wisconsin: A Study of Upland and Wetland Ecosystems*. Institute for Environmental Studies, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI.

Directions for Empire-Sauk Work parties

Pleasant Valley Conservancy: From Black Earth, go six miles south on CTH F. Turn east onto Pleasant Valley Road and meet one-quarter mile up the road.

Mount 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 on CTH A until the junction with CTH U (one mile). Go south on CTH U and turn on to Bower's Road in an eighth of a mile. The site is 1/4 mile down Bower's Road on the east side.

SEED COLLECTORS NEEDED NOW!

Once again, it's prairie seed collecting, cleaning, and seeding time! This is the time of year when our organization needs the most help from YOU, our members. We are planning to add another 15 acres to our 70 acres of prairie restoration at Governor Nelson State Park, and another 15 acres to last year's 15 acre planting at St. Benedict Center.

The scheduled dates, times, and locations for seed collecting are listed in the Calendar of Events section. The following directions describe the locations: **Governor Nelson Park:** Meet at the park office on Hwy M and Oncken Rd. (3 miles north of Middleton).

Koltes: Koltes Prairie is a private prairie. Meet along Bong Road one-half mile east of Hwy. 113 between Madison and Waunakee.

Guidelines: Buckets and clippers are provided. Wear "weather appropriate" clothing. If it rains harder than a light sprinkle, collecting and seeding are cancelled (however, seed cleaning is done indoors). Bring others along if you know anyone who would like to help. Seed collecting is great for all ages. Seed cleaning and prairie seeding are better suited for ages 14 and older. Prairie seeding requires a lot of walking. Restrooms are not available near the work sites (so plan accordingly). You can show up after the start time or work as long as you want during the scheduled collecting and cleaning days.

You **MUST** call if:

You have a donation of seed, OR you would like to collect on your own time; OR to sign up for the prairie seeding or seed cleaning; OR, if weather threatens on the seeding date (a confirmation message will be left on my answering machine as of 7am on November 7th). A free lunch will be provided during the prairie seeding (so you **MUST** sign up by October 29th).

I invite every member of The Prairie Enthusiasts to join us this season. These restoration efforts provide a great learning opportunity and are one of the major goals of TPE. We need to have more of you become active participants in these goals. I guarantee you will come away from your efforts with a great sense of accomplishment while you anticipate the prairies to come. Please join us this year.....we need all of you!

Dan Weidert: 608-233-5658H or prairiemn@execpc.com

Annual Meeting Held

At the July chapter annual meeting, Scott Weber was re-elected as Vice-president, Jim Welsh was re-elected as Treasurer, and Muffy Barrett was elected as second chapter representative to the TPE central board. Following the meeting, we went on a hike at the recently cleared sandstone bluff owned by Lisa Hartmann and Mike Mossman of Leland, at the base of the Baraboo Hills in Sauk County.

NORTHWEST ILLINOIS

A Tale of Two Sites

by Jim Rachuy

In 1995, the U.S. Government decided to close the Savanna Army Depot on the Mississippi River in northwest Illinois. In late summer, a panel of ten people was selected to form a Local Redevelopment Authority, or LRA. Their task was to design a future for the base: to plan the reintegration of this twenty square miles back into civilian society.

By law, the first in line to receive excess federal property are the other U.S. Departments. At the Depot, the Army Corps of Engineers wants an island for depositing dredge and an oak woodland to expand its Blanding Landing Recreation Area. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service wants thousands of acres to add to the Upper Mississippi Fish and Wildlife Refuge.

Next in line to receive land is the State of Illinois. On behalf of two local groups, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) has asked for 287 acres. The Prairie Enthusiasts will manage 200 acres of sand prairie (including a 40 acre pothole) as a nature preserve and the Friends of the Depot will manage 87 acres of oak woodland as a nature center. IDNR may request additional lands in the near future.

The remaining property will be conveyed to the LRA to be used for economic development. For example, an early LRA project, with the potential to replace all the lost jobs, was a state prison. In 1996 and in 1997, the LRA applied for a prison, but lost out to other areas.

And then everything changes:

April 2, 1998 Illinois Governor Jim Edgar makes a surprise personal appearance at the Savanna Army Depot to announce that a 1,200 bed, \$98 million maximum security prison will be built on the base at site #3.

Local reaction is mixed. Some meet the announcement with joy, seeing the prison as a source for much needed

jobs. Others react with anger, seeing the prison as a threat to their safety and an assault on their country lifestyle.

Local environmentalists are outraged. Site #3 is part of a 5,800 acre natural area known as Lost Mound Sand Prairie; it's adjacent to Hanover Bluffs Natural Preserve; it's adjacent to the Prairie Enthusiasts' Preserve; there are listed plants there including, *Carex tonsa* (Fern.) Bicknell, shaved sedge, and *Polanisia jamesii* (Torrey and Gray) Iltis, James' clammyweed; and another three dozen listed species are known to inhabit the immediate area.

Site #3 is no place for a prison, - and a small group forms to work on changing this decision.

April 6 LRA board member (and NIPE President) Jim Rachuy suggests that the prison be moved south to a brownfield site on the base. His motion is defeated, 6-3.

April 8 The city council in Hanover and Galena vote against siting the prison at the Depot, on social grounds. In Galena, an angry crowd loudly denounces Governor Edgar and his prison.

April 20 Odie Washington (Director of Corrections) joins the JoDaviess County Board in a public meeting at Elizabeth. Board member (and NIPE Treasurer) John Rutherford moves that the prison be moved to a brownfield site on the base. His motion is defeated for want of a second.

A major setback. Political sentiment now appears to favor the prison and site #3. However, on this very evening, less than ten miles away, it is suggested that the Democratic gubernatorial candidate, Glenn Poshard, could use this issue to paint the Republican as anti-environment in the fall election.

The tactic here is to transform a local issue into a state issue-so others can enter the fray.

May 5 Harry Drucker, spokesman for the group (and President of the Friends), speaks before Illinois Nature Preserves Commission. They vote unanimously to ask the Governor to move the prison off the prairie.

May 11 The group starts a letter writing campaign to lobby the State of Illinois.

In time, this becomes an impressive coalition, including The Prairie Enthusiasts, Friends of the Depot, Ducks Unlimited, The Driftless Area Partnership, The Wetlands Initiative, The Natural Lands Institute, Open Lands Project, Prairie Preservation Society, Save the Prairie Society, The Nature Conservancy, The Sierra Club, The Audubon Society and many of their 75,000 members.

May 15 Harry Drucker speaks to the Illinois Endangered Species Board, asking them to protect the endangered plants on site #3. They vote unanimously to do so.

June 1 Peter Kendall, Chicago Tribune feature reporter, comes to visit Site #3.

June 9 Initial set of articles hits the news stands. They report the State's plan to build a "prison on the prairie".

June 21 The prison story is picked up by AP wire and the big newspapers. Tribune article quotes Environmental Law and Policy Center Director, Howard

Learner as saying, "....we don't have to trade flora for felons."

June 25 Governor Edgar responds to the media saying he will, "take a look at it and see what the concerns are and what the alternatives might be..."

June 30 Harry Drucker speaks to the IDNR Advisory Council. They agree unanimously that the prison should be moved.

July 1 LRA member Jim Rachuy and Bob Wehrle (both Prairie Enthusiasts) meet with the EDA (Economic Development Administration) Regional Environmental Officer.

EDA regulations clearly state that the EDA will not fund correctional facilities.

July 1 Republican candidate George Ryan, sends a letter to the Governor expressing his opposition to site #3.

July 3 Democratic candidate for governor Glenn Poshard, sends a letter to the Governor expressing his opposition to Site #3.

July 6 LRA Board member Jim Rachuy suggests the prison project is in trouble and the LRA should quickly look for alternative sites. The motion passes 9-1.

July 7 The proponents of Site #3 launch a last minute media blitz to save the project. Their wild accusations further weaken their cause.

July 8 State officials fly into Savanna to announce they, like the LRA, are willing to consider other nearby sites. A

site near Thomson, which is completely off the base, is discussed.

July 9 Governor Edgar announces he will direct the Illinois Department of Corrections to hold a public hearing at Thomson, to collect public input on the new prison site.

July 13 The JoDaviess County Board votes to reject the Thomson site and to continue their support of Site #3.

July 16 The Carroll County Board votes to support Site #3 and the Thomson site.

July 20 IDOC holds a public hearing at Thomson. An angry crowd of 700 lambastes "James Clammyweed" and the environmentalists.

July 30 Governor Edgar announces that the prison will be built at.....the Thompson site.

It's official. We win. The prairie wins. The community wins. Everyone wins.

August 21 A new LRA Board of Directors begins work planning for the future of the Depot.

In the aftermath, the group agreed to withdraw from the LRA if (and only if) the opposition is forced to resign. Hopefully, things can now move forward at the LRA. There's certainly much work still to be done at the Depot.

August 22 Party!

Editor's note: This saga has been abridged. It does not fully reflect the sterling work by NIPE members!

(Chapter news continued on back page...)

THE PRAIRIE ENTHUSIASTS MEMBERSHIP FORM

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Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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LaCrosse, Buffalo, Vernon,
Trempealeau, Monroe, Jackson,
Winona & Huston Counties
- ☐ Empire Sauk Chapter
Sauk, Columbia & Dane Counties.
- ☐ Northwest Illinois Chapter
JoDaviess, Carroll & Stephenson
Counties

☐ General Membership
outside chapter areas

- ☐ Southwest Wisconsin Chapter
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Counties

- ☐ Prairie Bluff Chapter
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MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:

The Prairie Enthusiasts
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Woodman WI 53827

AREAS OF INTEREST

- ☐ SITE INVENTORIES
- ☐ ORGANIZING/LEADING FIELD TRIPS
- ☐ DEVELOPING EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS
- ☐ SEED COLLECTING/PLANTING
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- ☐ FUND RAISING GRANT WRITING
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CUTTING)

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- ☐ \$10 STUDENT
- ☐ \$15 INDIVIDUAL
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- ☐ \$25
- ☐ \$50 SUSTAINING
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Can we provide your name and address to:
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THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

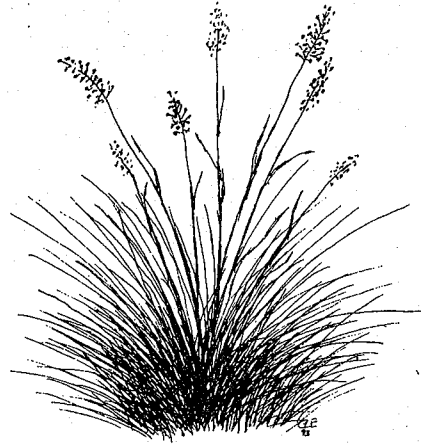
SOUTHWEST CHAPTER

Landowner Linkages

The Southwest Chapter, with greatly appreciated help from Mr. Bill Graham of Madison, hosted a small landowner dinner earlier this summer in Dodgeville. Four landowners were invited, each of whom owns an important prairie remnant. The owners came from Gays Mills, Mineral Point, Darlington, and Fennimore areas. At first there seemed to be a sense of apprehension about what the evening would bring. We have visited the landowners on many separate occasions, but none had been together at any one time.

We started off by introducing each owner and relating a story and description of each remnant. As we finished our meal and everyone became more relaxed, the conversation turned to the prairie each owned, and what kind of interest there is in protecting them. To our surprise, there weren't many questions about the value of the sites or what they were. They already knew how unique each is, and were impressed with the way they perceived their prairies. We have to think our members' outreach efforts were very successful. Many questions

focused on what kinds of needs these sites have, and how does that fit in with present uses. Would they have to stop grazing them? What about taxes? Will the DNR or other government agencies be coming around? What was really satisfying was to sense the pride all landowners were developing in their remnants and there seemed to be little hesitation about the idea of management and protection, there were only questions regarding to what degree it was needed and how it could be done.



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