

We had turned toward home after five days in the prairies and as my eyes scanned the backs of fields, the small hilly areas between housing developments, a wet swale here and there, my mind inserted the appropriate species: “Hmm...those pale purple coneflowers would like it there...” or “What? No sedges? There should be at least two or three varieties here!” That was how I knew I had gotten the bug. I don’t mean ticks, although we would discover some crawling around in the back seat later, or chiggers, which I would develop a definite respect for in the week ahead. I mean the bug that all of the “Prairie Dawgs” have, which makes them not only envision, but actually plant, cultivate, weed, and protect prairie habitat wherever they can find or re-create it. However, I am getting ahead of the story.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

Dawgs Reveal
Prairie Treasures
OR
“and You Thought
Illinois was Flat?”

June 13–20, 2009 Prairie Notes

by Maggie Harlan • edited by Hal Gardner and Debra Grim

2009 Annual Meeting *at Shaver's Creek Environmental Center*

by Debra Grim

The 2009 annual meeting was held at Shaver's Creek Environmental Center October 11. It was a fine autumn day and we had outstanding speakers.

Bob Gruver, Diane Albright and Sarah Miller were re-elected as Vice President, Corresponding Secretary, and Recording Secretary, respectively. Jean Najjar will be our new Treasurer.

Natalie Walsh of Frostburg State University discussed her research on raising black cohosh (*Actaea racemosa*) from seed under greenhouse conditions. (She noted emphatically that growing outdoors yields superior results.) Natalie inherited a family tradition involving use of medicinal herbs such as black cohosh. I myself prefer to get my medicine from a drugstore, but after listening to this talk, I began to wonder how much of my attitude towards folk remedies is a result of brainwashing courtesy of the modern medical establishment.

Natalie's bibliography included a text I find especially fascinating, *Native American Ethnobotany* by anthropologist Daniel E. Moerman. Moerman spent most of his career amassing the plant wisdom of Native tribes that fills this enormous volume. During the plant walk that followed the presentations, Eric Burkhart also recommended this book, noting that Europeans nearly eradicated the plant knowledge that Native Americans gathered for thousands of years, along with the rest of their culture, and if we do not act to preserve them, the plants themselves may soon disappear as well.

Natalie encourages responsible collecting of seeds as a way to ensure biodiversity of commercially grown herbs. However, collection of black cohosh is not always a simple matter. Black cohosh is virtually identical to other *Actaea* species and can be reliably distinguished only by its fruit. In particular, it is often confused with mountain bugbane, *Actaea podacarpa*; collection of the wrong plant in this case is a double tragedy, for not only is the mountain bugbane

not effective for the same uses and can even be toxic, it is also rare in Pennsylvania.

Penn State University student Nelson DeBarros presented his research on providing habitat for pollinators, specifically bees. Besides imported honeybees, there are more than 300 species of wild bees in Pennsylvania. For example, large furry bumblebees of the genus *Bombus* pollinate ericaceous and solanaceous plants. Unlike honeybees, bumblebees tolerate greenhouse conditions where they are employed for tomato production. Leafcutter bees (*Megachile* spp) carry pollen in hairs on their abdomens and are managed in Canada for alfalfa crops. I was delighted to learn about squash bees (*Peponapis* spp) which are active in the early morning hours when other bees are not, so can pollinate cucurbit blossoms. These bees are natives of Central America but moved north as the cultivation of squashes reached North America.

In order to encourage pollinators for crop production, it is necessary to provide them with a place to nest and feed. Nelson investigated what types of plants in field margins would be best. He wanted to find a mix of perennials that are sun tolerant, not aggressive, native to the

TOP TEN Recommended Perennials FOR BEES

Ohio spiderwort *Tradescantia ohiensis*

Wild bergamot *Monarda fistulosa*

Culver's root *Veronicastrum virginicum*
Common boneset *Eupatorium perfoliatum*

Purple coneflower *Echinacea purpurea*

Sweetscented joe-pye weed
Eupatorium purpureum

Narrowleaf mountain mint
Pycnanthemum tenuifolium

Wrinkleleaf goldenrod *Solidago rugosa*

New England aster
Symphotrichum novae-angliae
(*Aster novae-angliae*)

Butterfly milkweed *Asclepias tuberosa*

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area, and readily available with a variety of bloom times to cover the entire growing season. This type of habitat is far more attractive for bees than the usual weedy invasive plants such as garlic mustard and tartarian honeysuckle. The study resulted in a handy publication that can be downloaded from Ag Extension (see below). The document also recommends 12 pollinator plants which are also listed in the sidebar on page two.

Time to
RENEW NOW
for 2010!

References

Moerman, Daniel E., *Native American Ethnobotany*, 1998, Timber Press.

Gareau, DeBarros, Barbercheck, and Mortensen, *Conserving Wild Bees in Pennsylvania*, 2009, The Pennsylvania State University. (Free. Download from <http://pubs.cas.psu.edu/FreePubs/pdfs/uf023.pdf> or write Publications Distribution Center, The Pennsylvania State University, 112 Agricultural Administration Building, University Park, PA 16802.)

Websites about insect conservation

The Xerxes Society for Invertebrate Conservation,
<http://www.xerxes.org/>

Discover Life, <http://www.discoverlife.org/>

Identification, <http://bugguide.net/node/view/15740>

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Prairie Notes

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

In Pennsylvania the only sizeable prairie relict we know of is the Jennings Blazing Star Prairie, part of Moraine State Park in Butler County. Eventually, through succession, forests replaced all but a few prairie sites in Pennsylvania. The Jennings prairie remains due to a thick layer of impermeable clay that prevents most tree species from becoming established. In the East plants and animals that do live on the prairie must tolerate shallow soils, fluctuating periods of drought and saturation, and fire. Even under these harsh conditions, this ecosystem teems with life. In the Midwest the topsoil, including subsoil, is incredibly deep and often a friable black color. Midwestern prairies were totally dependent on periodic fires, a lack of which caused the prairie to be overrun with brush and trees after settlement.

The Pennsylvania Native Plant Society has visited Jennings several times and has always been charmed by the Monument Plant, Columbo (*Swertia Caroliniensis*), and eluded by the peak bloom of the Blazing Star (*Liatris spicata*). On our most recent visit we were joined by Hal Gardner, an inveterate prairie advocate who, after a full career and decades of working prairie sites in Illinois, returned to his family farm near Carlisle, Pa., and, guess what, began planting a prairie there.

Hal began lobbying in the parking lot at Jennings for a PNPS trip to the Illinois prairie sites he knows so well. We weren't sure how legal that would be. I mean, we are a state organization and (depending on how you drive) Illinois is three or four states away.... We had several other reservations, but did I mention that Hal is relentless? Eventually

Debra Grim, your fearless President, and Maggie Harlan your intrepid editor, joined Hal and trekked 750 miles west to Peoria to see what we could see.

Our first stop was the Prairie Dawg Headquarters near Peoria, where Hal's old gang has the use of a ramshackle house in Jubilee State Park (sometimes shared



by raccoons) and a large acreage of hilly park land that is slowly being restored to prairie. At this site and a nearby abandoned railroad right-of-way, we were introduced to many of the plants we would meet again over the coming days: gromwell, American feverfew, rattlesnake master, prairie and Arkansas roses, horse gentian, cup plant, prairie dock, red bulrush, many *Carex* sedge species, sideoats grama, needlegrass, queen of the prairie, compass plant, Ohio spiderwort, western four-o'clock, partridge pea, strawberry, Scribner's panic grass, dogbane, Canada anemone, stiff sunflower, inflated sedge, lead plant, prairie clover species, wild indigo species, southern blue flag,



oxeye sunflower, northern dropseed, Seneca snakeroot, and hoary puccoon, amid the calls of red-winged blackbirds and bobwhites.

We then set up camp at Jubilee State Park, where our brightly colored one-person tents looked like so many M&M Peanuts scattered in the field. As evening fell we found ourselves covered by a thickly woven quilt of lightening bugs; we hoped they would magically protect us from the howling coyotes. Barred owls negotiated in the darkness.

Attached to the 3,300-acre State Park is the 100-acre Jubilee College State Historic Site. The college was established in 1839 by Episcopal Bishop Philander Chase, who is probably more well known for founding Oberlin College in Ohio. We toured the well-maintained historical building that contained dormitories, classrooms, and a chapel and were impressed by the quality of the restoration and the generosity of the Friends who worked on the facility. The grounds of the larger Jubilee State Park are managed by Superintendent Tom Hintz, who is another enthusiastic prairie supporter. He has replaced open mowed fields with prairie plants started in one-gallon pots and interspersed with native grass seed and has achieved remarkable results and a prairie-like atmosphere in two short years.

An old strip of railroad right-of-way, purchased by Hal Gardner and Cheryl Pauli some years ago and now known as the Brimfield Railroad Nature Preserve was our next destination. Hal and the Prairie Dawgs have worked on the site ever since and it is now restored to Illinois Nature Preserve standards. We drove for a long time through cultivated fields with no sight of wildness or natural areas and then we parked at the end of a narrow strip — 100 feet wide and a half mile long. It was an amazing contrast to the plowed fields surrounding it. A thick stand of *Filipendula rubra* and plenty of butterflies, including question marks (*Polygonia interrogationis*) were the first things we



noticed. Some of the sites we visited had one species which seemed to be dominant. Hal's railroad track prairie is sometimes called the compass plant prairie, although it contained many other species. Leadplant (*Amorpha Canescens*) and northern dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*) found here are indicators of a longtime stable and established prairie. A red-winged blackbird nesting near the ground knew it had found its proper home. The

maintenance of this site will be taken over by the Prairie Dawgs and Peoria Audubon. A visit to another railroad track, the Rock Island Trail Nature Preserve, which has been maintained mainly as a bike path, showed us how disturbance can degrade a site, particularly trail-side mowing with weed seed contaminated mowers.

We visited a plot of land at the Caterpillar Technology Center that has been converted into a beautiful prairie garden, proving that where there is a will — and a lot of work by a dedicated volunteer, in this case Doug Franks — a prairie may appear almost anywhere. Doug Franks also turns out to be the head of the Prairie Dawgs group. Tall, gangly Ohio spiderwort (*Tradescantia ohiensis*) seemed to be in full bloom. Coreopsis was just beginning. Pale Purple Coneflower was also beginning to bloom and was especially lovely. Many other species promised color and texture later in the season, while a few already sported interesting seed pods. Dickcissels sang around us as we admired the lovely metal signs made by the Cat Center's machine shop — the dots on the i's in the word "prairie" are cut in the shape of prairie violet flowers.

In a subdivision, two plots too steep to build upon have been rescued prairie sites by Maury Brucker, a real estate professional but more importantly a prairie preservation fanatic. Hopewell Estates and the Oak Bluff Savannah

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

site are both now official Illinois Nature Preserves. Maury saved a magical hillside covered in pale purple coneflowers and dotted with purple milkweed from development! Plant lists for these sites, as well as others mentioned in this article can be found on www.pawildflower.org. Remember that only the plants which were in bloom at the time of our visit in early June are listed; there are many more species growing at every site!

At the Manito Sand Prairie Nature Preserve — another photogenic hillside draped in pale purple coneflowers and unusual species such as Tennessee milk-vetch, *Astragalus tennesseensis*, endangered in Illinois—Hal and Doug had their hands full of aggressive alien sweet clover (which they can't seem to walk past without pulling) and they were “apprehended” here by state officials — who turned out to be old friends Michelle Simone, Natural Areas District Preservationist, IL DCNR, and Mike Ingram, possibly contracting for or employed by IL DCNR. Before we knew it, tales of prairie (un)controlled burns began to fly.

The Henry Allan Gleason Nature Preserve (named for the taxonomist) offered huge clumps of fragrant sumac (*Rhus aromatica*), cheerful prickly pear blossoms (*Opuntia humifusa*), and acres of Goat's Rue (*Tephrosia virginica*) in bloom in a sand prairie that includes a large stabilized sand dune topped by a blowout. The Goat's Rue was just coming into bloom. Lizards ran under shrubby plants and over the crunchy reindeer lichen and British Soldiers, and the general feel of the place reminded us of a reclaimed surface mine site in Pennsylvania. That night we were visited by a nasty thunderstorm, and it would have been interesting to see the difference in the sandy site after a good drenching.



All prairie photos courtesy of Debra Grim

PLANT LIST *Illinois Prairie Trip*

Brimfield RR Preserve Plants

Common name	Latin name
big bluestem	<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>
cream gentian	<i>Gentiana alba</i>
downy gentian	<i>Gentiana puberulenta</i>
lead plant	<i>Amorpha canescens</i>
dogbane	<i>Apocynum cannabinum</i>
prairie milkweed	<i>Asclepias sullivantii</i>
inflated sedge	<i>Carex vesicaria</i> v. <i>monile</i>
partridge pea	<i>Chamaecrista fasciculata</i>
Scribner's panic grass	<i>Dicanthelium oligosanthes scribnerianum</i>
rattlesnake master	<i>Eryngium yuccifolium</i>
queen-of-the-prairie	<i>Filipendula rubra</i>
strawberry	<i>Fragaria virginiana</i> grayana
stiff/rigid sunflower	<i>Helianthus pauciflorus</i> ssp. <i>pauciflorus</i>
porcupine grass	
or needlegrass	<i>Hesperostipa spartea</i>
prairie alumroot	<i>Heuchera richardsonii</i>
hoary puccoon	<i>Lithospermum canescens</i>
western four o'clock	<i>Mirabilis nyctaginea</i>
Seneca snakeroot	<i>Polygala senega</i>
Arkansas rose	<i>Rosa arkansana</i>
compass plant	<i>Silphium laciniatum</i>
northern dropseed	<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>
prairie spiderwort	<i>Tradescantia bracteata</i>
Ohio spiderwort	<i>Tradescantia ohiensis</i>
golden alexanders	<i>Zizia aurea</i>

Gleason Nature Preserve Plants

yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>
heavy sedge	<i>Carex grvida</i>
golden aster	<i>Chrysopsis camporum</i>
British soldiers	<i>Cladonia cristatella</i>
deer lichen/moss	<i>Cladonia</i> sp
Illinois tick trefoil	<i>Desmodium illinoensis</i>
fleabane	<i>Erigeron philadelphicus</i>
june grass	<i>Koeleria macrantha</i>
	synonym: <i>Koeleria cristata</i>
rough blazingstar	<i>Liatrias aspera</i>
grooved flax	<i>Linum sulcatum</i>
sand or hairy puccoon	<i>Lithospermum caroliniense</i> croceum
prickly pear cactus	<i>Opuntia humifusa</i>
grass of parnassus	<i>Parnassia glauca</i>
plantain with spikes	<i>Plantago maybe virginica</i>
blackjack oak	<i>Quercus marilandica</i>
fragrant sumac	<i>Rhus aromatica</i>
goat's rue	<i>Tephrosia virginiana</i>
Ohio spiderwort	<i>Tradescantia ohiensis</i>
Venus looking glass	<i>Triodanis perfoliata</i> (aka <i>Specularia perfoliata</i>)

Note: At other seasons you would see other species.



The violent thunderstorm, rated as a tornado warning, soaked our second camp at the Sand Ridge Forest Campsite in the pre-dawn hours and the line of storms chased us all day. An obscure track between fields of soybeans and corn led us to the parking area of the tiny Weston Cemetery. This was one of the richest prairies we saw; old cemeteries, being little disturbed by plows, often harbor vestiges of the original flora, and this was a glowing example, marred only by a clump of daylilies in one corner. A few headstones dating from the late 1800s protruded above the lush growth. (See Weston plant list at right.)

At Goose Lake Prairie, after touring the facility and walking several of the restoration boardwalk paths, we went to one of the more remote areas, away from the trails, and were thrilled to discover the federally listed Prairie White Fringed Orchid (*Platanthera leucophaea*).

We met many Prairie Dawgs and they were all gracious, friendly and eager to show us around. In particular, Doug Franks was most solicitous, driving us here and there in his comfortably appointed van. Other Dawgs who joined us at various points on the trip include: Sharon Joseph, Lisa Sandall, Rick Trumpe, Steve Vaughn, Mark Berhow, and Gary Kuzniar, former President of the Irene Cull Native Plant Society. We thank them all for sharing their enthusiasm and for their tireless work. Pictures from this trip may be found on the new PNPS Facebook page. Lists of plants at other locations may be found on www.pawildflower.org.

Weston Cemetery Plants

Common name	Latin name
meadow garlic	<i>Allium canadense</i>
western ragweed	<i>Ambrosia psilostachya</i>
lead plant	<i>Amorpha canescens</i>
big bluestem	<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>
purple milkweed	<i>Asclepias purpurascens</i>
common milkweed	<i>Asclepias syriaca</i>
green milkweed	<i>Asclepias viridiflora</i>
New Jersey tea	<i>Ceanothus americanus</i>
partridge pea	<i>Chamaechrista fasciculata</i>
pasture thistle	<i>Cirsium discolor</i>
bastard toadflax	<i>Comandra umbellata</i>
prairie coreopsis	<i>Coreopsis palmata</i>
tall coreopsis	<i>Coreopsis tripteris</i>
showy ticktrefoil	<i>Desmodium canadense</i>
Scribner's panic grass	<i>Dichanthelium oligosanthos</i> var. <i>scribnerianum</i> or <i>Panicum scribnerianum</i>
wild yam	<i>Dioscorea villosa</i>
shooting star	<i>Dodecatheon meadia</i>
pale purple coneflower	<i>Echinacea pallida</i>
daisy fleabane	<i>Erigeron strigosus</i>
rattlesnake master	<i>Eryngium yuccifolium</i>
flowering spurge	<i>Euphorbia corollata</i>
strawberry	<i>Fragaria virginiana grayana</i>
Stiff gentian	<i>Gentiana quinquefolia</i>
sawtooth sunflower	<i>Helianthus grosseserratus</i>
rigid sunflower	<i>Helianthus pauciflorus</i> ssp. <i>pauciflorus</i> (aka <i>Helianthus rigidus</i>)
porcupine grass	<i>Hesperostipa spartea</i>
june grass	<i>Koeleria macrantha</i>
wild bergamot	<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>
stiff goldenrod	<i>Oligoneuron rigidum</i>
wild quinine	<i>Parthenium integrifolium</i>
downy phlox	<i>Phlox pilosa</i>
tall cinquefoil	<i>Potentilla arguta</i>
yellow coneflower	<i>Ratibida pinnata</i>
Carolina rose	<i>Rosa carolina</i>
blackberry	<i>Rubus sp.</i>
blackeyed Susan	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>
rosin weed	<i>Silphium integrifolium</i>
compass plant	<i>Silphium laciniatum</i>
prairie dock	<i>Silphium terebinthinaceum</i>
northern dropseed	<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>
white heath aster	<i>Symphyotrichum ericoides</i> (aka <i>Aster ericoides</i>)
smooth aster	<i>Symphyotrichum laevis</i>
American	
or Canada germander	<i>Teucrium canadense</i>
Ohio spiderwort	<i>Tradescantia ohiensis</i>
Culver's root	<i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i>
prairie violet hybrid	<i>Viola pedatifida</i> X one of the common violets
golden zizia	<i>Zizia aurea</i>

TURNING A NEW LEAF

by Debra Grim

George Washington University, which offers graduate certification in sustainable landscapes, was the location of the 2009 Turning a New Leaf Conference. This event is the brainchild of the Chesapeake Conservation Landscaping Council which is a nonprofit all-volunteer organization formed in 2003 under the auspices of Adkins Arboretum and dedicated to the improvement of water and air quality in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. By disseminating information about the conference on our website and through our email list, PNPS became a partnering sponsor. As your president, I was among the 250 attendees at the conference.

The opening speaker was Anthony Williams, former mayor of Washington DC. In this time when so many of us live in cities, he believes we must fight to retain or regain our “sense of place,” the feeling of belonging and pride that makes us want to take care of our neighborhoods. His approach to restoring the sense of place in the nation’s capital was to plant trees, which among other things is a less expensive way of reducing stormwater runoff than dams. He is especially proud of facilitating an increase of self respect and awareness for citizens in the Anacostia watershed.

Conference goers could attend 3 of 12 breakout sessions. My first was presented by Nancy Somerville, Executive VP and CEO of the American Society of Landscape Architects. ASLA partners with the US Botanic Garden and the Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center to draft the Sustainable Sites Initiative. The SSI is an effort to address missing elements of sustainable landscaping in the LEED, The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Green Building Rating System™ “the third party certification program and the nationally accepted benchmark” for green building design and construction.

The proposed SSI seeks to form a framework for assessing what different natural landscapes offer us in terms of climate control, detoxification, water regulation, erosion control, refuges for wildlife, food, human health and well being, and human aesthetics. It is estimated that the dollar value of undamaged ecosystems in this country would total at least twice the annual GNP. While 97% of American adults attempt to incorporate at least some element of sustainability into their homes, only 58% attempt to do so in their yards. The *Guidelines and Performance Benchmarks* outlines 15 prerequisites for sustainable site

development. For example, site selection includes prerequisites designed to preserve prime farmland, wetlands, and habitats of endangered species and to avoid construction in floodplains. Other prerequisites direct management of invasive exotics, use of appropriate native species, and soil management. Another forbids the use of wood from threatened species for construction materials. A companion document, *The Case for Sustainable Landscapes*, is aimed at laypersons; both publications can be downloaded from the website: <http://sustainablesites.org/>.

The SSI will also provide a track for certification and suggest guidelines that can be used without certification. Incorporation of these guidelines into a building project involves all parties throughout all phases of construction, from selecting a site through building and maintenance by the occupants. Like LEED, on which SSI is modeled, it is a voluntary program. The website highlights case studies and more volunteers are needed to participate in the case study program.

My next session was titled “Lawns, Landscapes and Identity.” Runoff from lawns and agriculture are the major sources of pesticides and excess nutrients in Chesapeake Bay. Detached single family homes constitute about 70% of urban land use. Lawns also detract from biodiversity and are becoming a global problem as more countries are adopting this practice. Dr. David Myers of the University of Maryland was studying ways to convince homeowners to reduce lawn area. He tried various approaches to inform a thousand homeowners of the benefits of lawn reduction including a weekend seminar, a tree planting demonstration, and informational handouts, and then asked all of the homeowners about their lawns. It was found that 75% fertilize their lawns (a third of those three times per year or more). Regardless of the information method used, eighty percent are happy with their lawns as they now maintain them; those who are not think they need to apply more chemicals to improve their lawns. Dr. Myers concluded that a green, weed-free lawn is a status symbol and a way of conforming to a community identity, encouraged by the fertilizer and pesticide industry. Although participants were receptive to the ideas of more sustainable yards, the lawn culture prevents any actual change. Homeowners actually feel that maintaining a lawn is environmentalism.

CONFERENCE

The 8 Essential Elements of Conservation Landscaping

The following elements represent the practice of conservation landscaping. By implementing these practices, you can contribute to the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay watershed and improve the region's water and air quality. Incorporate as many of these elements as possible into your landscape, to benefit all life in our watershed. A conservation landscape:

- 1 Is designed to benefit the environment and function efficiently and aesthetically for human use and well-being
- 2 Uses locally native plants that are appropriate for site conditions
- 3 Institutes a management plan for the removal of existing invasive plants and the prevention of future nonnative plant invasions
- 4 Provides habitat for wildlife
- 5 Promotes healthy air quality and minimizes air pollution
- 6 Conserves and cleans water
- 7 Promotes healthy soils
- 8 Is managed to conserve energy, reduce waste, and eliminate or minimize the use of pesticides and fertilizers.

In the third session, Mike Galvin discussed urban tree canopy. Galvin is deputy director of Casey Trees, a non-profit dedicated to restoring Washington DC's tree canopy. The Chesapeake Bay area was about 95% forest when the Europeans arrived. Now Washington is about 100% impervious surfaces. All this pavement, besides increasing the force of stormwater runoff, also creates a heat island that has more effect on increasing local temperatures than global climate change. Citing examples such as

a Sacramento CA tree planting program that replaced a proposed nuclear power plant, Galvin says planting 8600 trees annually to raise the urban tree canopy to 40% by 2035 will provide significant energy savings. Casey employs a GIS package to map existing canopy and plan where additional trees will be most beneficial.

Eric Eckl furnished us with a particularly entertaining closing plenary session: "*What they say about why your work matters.*" His company, Water Words that Work, helps clients with advocacy, and hosts a blog for "regular" people such as farmers and politicians. Eckl collects research, specifically survey results regarding people's attitudes toward environmental issues. These surveys show that clean water is a top concern for us all but when environmentalists talk about solutions to problems the message gets lost when we use terminology that laymen don't comprehend.

As I reflect on what I heard at this conference, it occurs to me that it was all about communication. We are trying to find the right means to inform people of the importance of sustainable development, to convince our leaders and our citizens to adopt sustainable ways of living, and to serve as good examples. As the Honorable Anthony Williams proclaimed, if you really focus on a topic and talk about it incessantly, eventually you will be heard. Eric Eckl would have us discuss the important topic of sustainable development in a language that people can understand. Perhaps in cases where cultural identity has habituated us to sterile green lawns, it is a matter of listening to homeowners, finding out what is most important to them, and finding ways of reframing the information to complement and influence our landscape ideals.

References

CCLC: <http://www.chesapeakelandscape.org/>
LEED: <http://www.usgbc.org/>
SSI: <http://sustainablesites.org/>
Sacramento tree planting: http://actrees.org/site/stories/sacramento_shade_program.php
Washington DC tree planting: <http://www.caseytrees.org/>
Blog on environmental issues for laymen: <http://waterwordsthatwork.com/>

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We need lots of volunteers! If you are interested in selling plants or nature-related art, contact a board member or email info@pawildflower.org.

Calendar of Events

February 4th-6th — Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture invites PNPS members to check out its 19th Annual Farming for the Future Conference at the Penn Stater in State College.

The Sustainable Challenge: Providing for a Livable Tomorrow is the title of this year's conference. One of the largest and most respected gatherings on sustainable agriculture anywhere in the US, this conference hosts around 2000 people. But it isn't just for farmers. There are sessions to interest gardeners, environmentalists, and foodies as well. It covers the whole sustainable food

system. Don't miss attending this premier event on sustainable agriculture in the Eastern U.S.

To register, contact Patty Neiner at patty@pasafarming.org or go online to get more information:

<http://www.pasafarming.org/our-work/farming-for-the-future-conference>

PNPS will be donating a basket of native plant items to the PASA silent auction. If you have any items you could contribute for this basket please contact Debra Grim at 814-355-4102.



Rhoneymeade image courtesy of James Leshner