



KANSAS NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

VOLUME 42, NUMBER 2

NEWSLETTER OF THE KANSAS NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

APRIL 2020

MARK NEUBRAND



NATIVE PLANTS IN URBAN SETTINGS

Salina's Big Ideas

— MARK NEUBRAND

Salina was born out of the intersection of forgotten trails along the Smoky Hill River with adventurous names such as the Fremont trail, the Bourgmont trail, and the Smoky River trail. Modern Salina, lying at the intersection of two interstates, is at the confluence of multiple modern development projects rooted to the native plants enjoyed by travelers of old.

Today's travelers will find themselves admiring a gathering of butterfly milkweed, groups of false indigo, demonstrations of Missouri primrose, and swells of little bluestem, while dining outdoors in a newly renovated downtown corridor. Some cities invest in prairie pocket gardens and designated "native" areas in public parks. Salina jumped into the deep end with both feet.

Salina chose not to compliment, enhance, or beautify its downtown area. It removed the entire streetscape. Gone were the Bradford pear trees and corner flower boxes filled with annuals so often found in city landscaping. In place, the existing four lanes of Santa Fe Avenue were removed. The underground coal chutes and hidden transportation tunnels were filled. The streets narrowed, the sidewalks widened, and large planter boxes wrapped intersections and spread up and down Santa Fe Avenue for four city blocks.

Seven thousand perennial plants with names like prairie dropseed, Jacob's ladder, black eyed Susan, and side-oats grama spilled all through the downtown. — CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

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OUR MISSION

The mission of the Kansas Native Plant Society is to encourage awareness and appreciation of the native plants of Kansas in their habitats and in our landscapes by promoting education, stewardship, and scientific knowledge.

The Kansas Native Plant Society Newsletter is published quarterly: Winter (January), Spring (April), Summer (July), Fall (October). Readers tell us how much they enjoy the newsletter in paper format. Contributions help us continue to produce a publication of this length in this form.

You may send your gift to KNPS at:

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ANTHONY ZUKOFF PHOTOS

Garden City Mini-AWW | MAY 29-30

— ANTHONY ZUKOFF

Late May and early June can be quite colorful in western Kansas. Join Kansas Native Plant Society members May 29 through May 30 in Garden City for a couple of days of botanizing on the High Plains! We will be visiting native plant communities that are typical of the region.

On Friday, May 29, attendees can experience the flora of the sandsage prairie of southwestern Kansas. Sandsage prairie in Kansas is primarily found along the Arkansas and Cimarron River corridors; we will be visiting the Sandsage Bison Range and Wildlife Area located along the Arkansas River south of Garden City. The rolling sandhills will be full of gray-green sagebrush, and a variety of spring-blooming species should make for a scenic walk out on the sandy prairie.

On Saturday, we will explore shortgrass prairie, the predominant vegetative community of the high plains. Attendees will meet at Horsethief Reservoir in Hodgeman County to botanize in upland, gravelly prairie and a variety of other natural and managed habitats found at the park. This reservoir is located in the 1.5 million acre Pawnee Watershed District, the largest watershed district in the country. Rolling hills, scenic prairie and rocky bluffs characterize this area of southwestern Kansas.

If you have not experienced western Kansas prairie, this is the perfect opportunity!

Please check the KNPS website prior to attending to verify that an event is still happening and has not been cancelled, rescheduled, or is being held virtually.



TOP Sandsage prairie; ABOVE Botanizing at Horsethief Reservoir.

President's Message | BRAD GUHR

FINDING WHAT IS IMPORTANT

As I write this, COVID-19 concerns are just beginning to significantly alter our typical routines. I am initially bummed that this coming critical period of social distancing (#flattenthecurve) has led to the cancelling of many anticipated calendar events and rituals. But after a bit of reflection, I now also look forward to more time to myself and with family and more time to think about what is really important.

Of great importance to KNPS folk are the native plants around us. Thankfully, getting outside, breathing fresh air, and enjoying the natural world will not be problematic in the coming months. Seeing the first tiny flowers of vernal witch hazel in late February always brings me great joy. The early sprouting March vegetation of rose verbenas, columbine, golden ragwort, and golden Alexander are enticing signs to me and pollinators alike that spring blooms soon will come.

Among other important things to me was an early March trip with friends to the new Little Jerusalem State Park along with a stay at nearby Lake Scott State Park. These parks feature fascinating glimpses of an ocean bottom geology from 85 million years ago, unique bird and reptile fauna, excellent examples of short and mixed grass prairie (including the endemic species Great Plains wild buckwheat), and interesting cultural stories of people. The stunningly-beautiful, flat, treeless vistas of this landscape are breathtaking. As our KNPS membership looks forward to the May 29-30 Spring Mini-AWW in Western Kansas, I would highly recommend planning a visit to, and a hike in these two state park gems.

Regarding big picture importance, you will find stories in this issue of long-time KNPS members who inspire us with the legacies they have left. The June Kliesen Memorial Fund established last year is allowing KNPS to launch a new Plant-A-Prairie Initiative to connect school children with native plants for years to come. Recent Lorraine Kaufman memorial contributions remind us of the legacy she left in her decades of poetry contributions to KNPS Newsletters that shared her love of the Kansas prairies. Be safe in the coming months, and take this unique opportunity to focus on what is important to you.



BRAD GUHR PHOTOS



TOP Vernal witch hazel
ABOVE Rose verbenas
BELOW Little Jerusalem State Park



Salina's Big Ideas

— CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

They complemented outdoor stages, lined side plazas, and snuggled up to conversational gathering spots. The native plants splashed color along the new sidewalks now enhanced with decorative brickwork, iron benches, and outdoor sculptures.

This was the result of design work by HDR, Inc., a massive design firm out of Nebraska. Part of HDR's mission is to ask the question, "What is our impact on the world?" HDR works together with clients and communities by following the suggestions of local downtown renovation boards. Expecting a dozen citizens at the first local meeting, HDR was surprised to find nearly forty Salinans wanting to voice their ideas. Many long evenings of planning were spent by the volunteers working with HDR to create a plan. Jane Anderson, director of Friends of the Smoky Hill River, a sister project to the downtown renovation said, "We worked surprisingly well together. Every chance we could in those meetings we pushed

for native plants... HDR listened." And listen they did. Seventy containers and 100 planters, all built from scratch by Smoky Hill Construction, took over three years to complete. Every opportunity for a burst of color, texture, or intrigue was taken, and every opportunity for native was chosen.

But Salina is not just known for an intersection of trails, Salina is the intersection of big ideas and involved citizens. The Smoky Hill River courses through the city for

LEFT Indian Rock before planting.
BELOW Indian Rock new trail.

6.8 miles. Throughout the town's history the river raged and flooded on many memorable occasions. "Black Friday" on June 6, 1951 saw Salina turned into a virtual lake and citizens had enough! The Army Corp of Engineers dusted off plans created in 1939 to reroute the river. By 1961, engineering had redirected the river through a deep channel to the east of the city and the town was saved, but the river was left to die. Deprived of flowing water the channel filled with sludge, trash, and the detritus of the city and became a memory.

A new opportunity arose. Those same spirited citizens that pushed for a revived downtown had earlier pushed for a river revival project. A combination of sales tax revenues, federal monies and city dollars created a plan for hiking trails, kayaking opportunities, and gathering places along the connecting corridors. At every public meeting, through every public survey, the suggestion of native plants bubbled to the surface.

But why? Why such a strong influence? Salina has a history of strong individuals, landscapers and park designers who had influenced the citizens to appreciate good planning. By 1992, the city had developed a natural park called Indian Rock that was left native and remains a showcase of native grasses and flowers. Complimented by Lakewood Park with its grasslands and riparian areas lining the old river channel, Salina had achieved national recognition for both parks in the form of a Distinguished Conservation Citation from The National Institute for Urban Wildlife. Citizens were encouraged to appreciate native by action.

The massive flood control project of the 50's and 60's had created a continuous dike surrounding most of the city, and Salinans will be found walking, running, and biking along the fourteen miles of trails. Lakewood Park director, Brian Underwood explained, "The city is committed to native plants at every opportunity, both along the trails and in the parks that border them."

As the work progresses along the river, new areas will be created that will feature native plants at multiple focal points. The river redesign is under the direction of HDR's sister company in Kansas City that does river restoration throughout the Midwest. The old river channel, where it crosses under Ohio Street, is currently buried fifteen feet below the surface like a lost Roman artifact buried by thousands of years of time, but here it was below only seventy years of sediment. Some young people visiting Jane Anderson's Friends of the River booth at the annual Smoky Hill River festival questioned, "Where is the river? We didn't know Salina had a River!"

As the planning moved further from talk to action, groups of over a hundred volunteers have gathered on weekends in rubber boots with branch loppers and trash bags to work the river banks. Citizens can be found removing trash, cutting invasives, and identifying natives in preparation for the trails to come. The resulting trail system winding through town will connect major recreational areas, convention facilities, and the county Ag halls to the renovated downtown.

Salina is home to an exemplary "leadership Salina" group. Divided into different teams, Megan Robl applied her skills in grant writing to help focus "team orange" on improvements in the historic

Indian Rock Park. Leading off a long list of improvements that are planned for the park was a plan to remove badly eroded straight line trails with meandering crushed stone paths that would wind through native flowers. Not wanting to be left out of the action and longing to tackle a project with long term repercussions, fellow team member, Matt Scott, enlisted corporate assistance. Scott, employed by Great Plains Manufacturing which is now owned by Kubota, met with Salina Parks and Recreation's Brian Underwood and offered corporate labor assistance for the native plant project. Underwood watches over all of the primarily native Lakewood Park and Indian Rock Park complexes.

The Greater Salina Community Foundation locally provides funds to worthy projects throughout town. With the foundation's assistance, a Kubota tractor, and a Land Pride tiller, what was once an eroded trail in Indian Rock blossomed into a new native area. With the six members of Team Orange working social media magic, thirty-plus volunteers showed up for action. Underwood recommended the K12 Mixture from Star Seed and the community did the planting. T&R Dirt Construction provided the rock for the trail, and the project was a success.

BRIAN UNDERWOOD



Indian Rock planting by the public.

As Salinans dine outdoors in the new downtown, gather on benches in secluded plazas, or are entertained at outdoor stages, they will always be accompanied by bee balm and tickseed, yarrow and nodding onions, milkweeds, *Veronica spicata*, and *Echinacea purpurea*; still connected to the distant past of crossing trails by the same wildflowers that lined the ancient Indian trails of old.

SEPTEMBER 25-27 IN PITTSBURG

42nd Annual Wildflower Weekend (AWW)

— BRAD GUHR AND CINDY FORD

The highlight of the KNPS calendar year continues to be the AWW or Annual Wildflower Weekend, which will be held in and around Pittsburg this year. The theme will center around two unique features in this southeast Kansas area. These features are: 1) the intersection of two biomes (eastern deciduous forest and grasslands) which can result in savanna ecosystems, and 2) a strong presence of disturbed habitats where mining has occurred. Many of these areas are in various stages of restoration, and there will be opportunities for participants to choose field trips to natural areas or to restored land to observe the vegetation that occurs on these sites.

Following is a tentative itinerary outline which is subject to change.

FRIDAY

Board Meeting: Pittsburg State University (PSU) Natural History Reserve which is approximately five miles west of Pittsburg.

Field Trip: Ford Farm (two physiographic regions and restoration projects) which is approximately twelve miles west of Pittsburg.

Dinner: Catered at PSU Natural History Reserve or Chicken Annie's Group Room.

SATURDAY

General Member Meeting: Bicknell Performing Arts Center (PSU campus).

Brunch and Lunch: Catered by campus.

Field trip: Spring River Wildlife Area for savanna exploration. Sperry house (Ted Sperry — Father of prairie restoration).

Mined land tour for restoration.

Dinner: On own or catered by campus.

SUNDAY

Field trip: Crawford State Park for woodland/savanna.

Max and Eweleen Good Farm for restoration.

Leaders will be provided for all field trips, and the excursions will involve car pooling. Lodging and restaurant options will be provided in the July Newsletter and AWW Registration form. Costs will be determined at that time. Come and join us for a full, fun-filled weekend in southeast Kansas later this year.



TOP Lake formed from coal mined area.
ABOVE Meadow ablaze with fall color.

CINDY FORD PHOTOS

MEGAN ROBL

MARK NEUBRAND

Lorraine Kaufman (1930-2020) – A Prairie Poet

BRAD GUHR

Long-time KNPS member and Kansas prairie wildflower advocate, Lorraine Kaufman, died in January. You will likely recognize her name as a frequent writing contributor to KNPS Newsletters. Lorraine's stories and poetry were often accompanied by her friend Lorna Harder's line drawings.

I grew up knowing Lorraine and her family in Moundridge. Lorraine helped me as a teenager to begin to appreciate the value of wildflowers and roadside prairies. I enjoyed reconnecting with Lorraine in later years as she frequently helped me collect seed for Dyck Arboretum reconstructed prairies.

Lorraine's warm smile and prairie spirit will be missed.

I will leave you with one of Lorraine's KNPS Newsletter entries from January, 2010 that her granddaughters read at her funeral.

"Exploring jaunts for wildflowers is always exciting, and sometimes one is rewarded by a never to be forgotten experience. So it was one October day many years ago when I wandered onto a long abandoned country "mud" road, by then not much more than two furrowed tracks that struggled up and down the hills. It seemed to come from nowhere of importance and likewise led to no place of significance. But there on the trail's rocky embankment bloomed one lone exquisitely beautiful, rose-purple wildflower. Defying the desolation of the area, it seemed incongruous that such beauty should be blooming, yet



hidden, in this forsaken place. But there it was — my introduction to Button blazing star, (*Liatris aspera* Michx.) And so began my friendship with and my knowledge of this lovely flower that grows in the rocky prairie soil in the east one-third of Kansas.

The plant that had so intrigued me was about 24 inches tall, erect, with alternate simple leaves. Clinging to the stem in orderly fashion was a number of flower heads covered by fluffy disk flowers in a delicate rose-purple hue! I was immediately struck by the beauty and charm of this unusual plant which seemed to be sporting little "thimbles" along its stem to the very top. With that first glimpse firmly embedded in my memory, the button blazing star remains one of my very favorite Kansas wildflowers.

All types of livestock relish all species of *Liatris* and these special plants will decline and even disappear under heavy grazing. To my delight, I notice some have escaped to more protected roadsides where they only have to elude the over-zealous mowers!

Of all the species of the genus *Liatris*, button blazing star blooms latest — but is well worth waiting for. When cut and hung up-side-down until dry, one to a few stems will make a stunning bouquet that will remind you all winter of an invigorating day on the prairie."



— LORNA HABEGGER HARDER ILLUSTRATION

New KNPS Board Member

PAM TENNISON-RINDT

A little about myself; I am employed by Evergy as an Environmental Consultant, but more accurately, I am a Biologist with quite a bit of stream and plant identification/taxonomy coursework. I have identified wetlands a lot with my careers at Evergy and previously at KDOT, thus have a professional wetland scientist certification. So I am really more of botanist, stream, and wetland specialist. More recently I have been working with the company's pollinator goals and am very excited about that, as I enjoy the beauty of upland forbs and the pollinators that rely on them.

Besides my obvious love of native plants, I am an avid genealogist, researching my family history for years. I have had many Historic/Cultural consultations with the Kansas Historical Society in my career, so am also the company's Historic and Cultural Resource Specialist. In support of the preservation of

WICHERS PHOTOGRAPHY



an old elementary school, I am a member of another board, the Dover Community Center Board. This school was converted to a community center in 2004. I am a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, a lineage-based group, promoting historic preservation, education, and patriotism.

I have three grown daughters and seven grandchildren. I am married to Ron, who works for the Kansas Air

National Guard 190th Air Refueling Wing; together we have a son Nicholas and live near Dover in Wabaunsee County. There we have a tract of tallgrass native prairie and brome hayfield where we raise SimAngus cow/calf cattle and Australian Shepherds. In our spare time, we like to camp, fish, hike, and kayaking. I am very excited to serve on the Kansas Native Plant Society Board and look forward to meeting everyone!

"Plant A Prairie" Offers Free Garden Kits to Kansas Teachers

— PAUL SHOWALTER

Kansas students will have the opportunity to study native plants while building a mini-prairie in a project to be launched by the Kansas Native Plant Society. The pilot effort, called Plant A Prairie, will distribute twenty prairie garden kits for mid-September planting. Students should see the first blooms of their labor the following spring.

Kansas teachers K-12, as well as leaders of youth groups, such as 4-H, scouts, and others, are eligible to apply. Successful applications will have (1) a clearly-stated educational plan with (2) strong youth involvement. Interested teachers and youth leaders must submit an application by July 1. An application and project details can be found on the KNPS website www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org.

The idea for Plant A Prairie began with a bequest from the Kliesen family to establish the Gary and June Kliesen Memorial Fund. Gary and June of Dodge City and Coldwater were active KNPS members and advocates for native plants. The Kliesen children created the fund to engage Kansas youth in restoring native habitat by starting prairie gardens at schools and in the community.

The Plant A Prairie garden kit features thirty-two individually potted plants that are hand selected at the nursery to match local growing conditions. The emphasis is on easy-to-grow perennials that support bees, butterflies, and birds, including one or more milkweeds for Monarch butterflies. Completed gardens will measure about 8 feet by 12 feet.

The mix of grasses (25%) and wildflowers (75%) is heavily weighted with plants that bloom in the spring and fall seasons when school is in session. Average plant height is a manageable 24 inches and 36 inches, with the tallest plants reaching about 48 inches.

In addition to the assortment of native plants, the garden kit includes a KNPS wildflower poster, an official Plant A Prairie sign for the garden, teaching links to lesson plans, and other resources, along with helpful planting and care instructions.

One novel ingredient in the Plant A Prairie project: participants have access to on-line technical assistance as the project unfolds. A KNPS plant expert will offer practical advice to email inquiries about garden layout, soil preparation, planting, care, and other issues.

Plant A Prairie hopes to inspire one hundred classroom gardens in five years and to enrich the lives of 2,500 young people with a unique learning experience.



KEY PLANT A PRAIRIE DATES TO REMEMBER

July 1, 2020—Deadline for Plant A Prairie application
July 20, 2020—Applicant receives notification of grant award
Sept. 16, 2020—Plants arrive on or about this date
Spring 2021—Submit a garden photo and complete survey



PATTI RAGSDALE PHOTOS



TOP A prairie garden just planted.
ABOVE The same garden at three years.

TECH NOTES

— KRISTA DAHLINGER

KNPS was instrumental in having little bluestem named as Kansas state grass. For several years, school children wrote letters to members of the Kansas legislature before House Bill 2649 - State Grass Bill was passed. KNPS has created online resources for young people to learn about little bluestem. Check out the activities and reading material at: <https://www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org/stategrass.php>

Gardening for Monarch Butterflies #8 – Got Milk?

– LENORA LARSON

Nature-lovers celebrate the spectacular monarch fall migration as millions of butterflies fly south to their wintering site near Mexico City. Did you know that an equally impressive generational migration happens every spring and summer? Three generations of monarchs work their way north to Canada, fueled by milkweeds, the ONLY plant that monarch caterpillars can eat.

THE THREATS TO MONARCH MIGRATION

Obviously, if northbound monarchs cannot find sufficient spring and summer milkweeds to feed the next generation’s caterpillars, there will be no southward fall migration. Milkweeds across the nation are being rapidly eradicated as prairies and farm land are converted to neighborhoods and shopping centers. Monarch Watch™ estimates that 2.2 million acres of wildlife habitat are lost to development every year. Another threat: farmers can now grow glyphosate-resistant GMO corn and soybeans. Milkweeds were a primary invader of croplands, but are now killed by the spraying of glyphosates such as Round-up™. And monarchs are the unintended victims.

THE SOLUTION: MONARCH WAYSTATIONS™

However, we home gardeners can make a difference. By including milkweeds in our gardens, we can sustain the spring and summer migration and ensure the monarch’s survival. We can even establish a Monarch Waystation™ and be certified by Monarch Watch™, an educational outreach program based on the Lawrence campus of University of Kansas. They sell milkweed seeds for the establishment of new gardens and certify habitats as Monarch Waystations™. The guidelines and application form are on their website, www.monarchwatch.org. You can also purchase a sign to proudly announce your Waystation™ certification.

DESIGNING YOUR WAYSTATION™

My gardening friends wail, “I don’t have space or time for another garden.” Me either! However, philosophically, entomologically, horticulturally and esthetically, the ideal “Butterfly Garden” is not a separate entity. Your garden likely already contains the necessary nectar-rich flowers. All that is needed to convert an ornamental garden to a butterfly garden is the addition of caterpillar food plants. For the monarch, that means milkweeds scattered throughout the entire garden. Remember, the fiercely

territorial butterflies should not be forced to compete for egg-laying plants in a small area, especially monarchs whose caterpillars deal with overpopulation by eating their siblings’ eggs. Milkweeds should be artfully placed to showcase their beauty and disguise their

flaws—just as we do for all our other garden perennials. You could even add milkweed plant labels shaped like caterpillars to delight the children!

CHOOSING YOUR MILKWEEDS

Kansas boasts eighteen species of milkweed, many supremely garden-worthy in full sun and well-drained soil. The unique horned flowers are massed in umbels for a brilliant show of white, pink, or purple to red, orange, and yellow. Plant growth ranges from ground covers to vines to eight foot perennials. One caveat: be cautious of planting the common milkweed, (*Asclepias syriaca*). Yes, the pink flowers are beautiful and fragrant, but the plant is coarse-looking and aggressively spreads by rhizome and seed. However, DNA testing of over-wintering monarchs in Mexico has demonstrated that forty percent of the monarchs have eaten common milkweed, so it is obviously a preferred food source. Vigilance and persistence can manage this potential thug in order to please both the butterfly and the gardener. Start by yanking most suckers as they emerge (checking first to be sure that there are no eggs or caterpillars). This stimulates the plant to continually produce new succulent growth. A few plants should be allowed to bloom because the flowers are a valued nectar source for many pollinators, but unless you want more milkweeds, remove the seedpods when they are about an inch long.

What are some other native choices? Many consider the pink flowering swamp milkweed, (*Asclepias incarnate*), to be our most attractive milkweed, but my favorite is spider milkweed, (*Asclepias viridis*). Huge cream and purple flowers dominate this diminutive ten inch plant, perfect for edgings. If you have space for a beautiful but rampant vine, (*Cynanchium leave*) remains vigorous even in fall when the other native milkweeds have gone dormant. And unlike the others, it does not wilt when cut and placed in water, so it is ideal for indoor caterpillar raising. Gardeners celebrate the vivid orange flowers of the butterfly weed, (*Asclepias tuberosa*), but Midwestern monarch caterpillars do not share our human enthusiasm and will eat the leathery leaves only as a last resort. Plant it as a nectar source, but you need other more palatable milkweeds for the persnickety cats.



LENORA LARSON PHOTOS



TOP Monarch cat dining on swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnate*). ABOVE Gardeners and pollinators agree on the beauty and fragrance of the common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*).



Spider milkweed (*Asclepias viridis*) is beautiful and well-behaved.

WHAT ABOUT TROPICAL MILKWEEDS?

Monarchs are a tropical butterfly with many tropical, non-migrating relatives who dine on several tropical milkweed species, especially (*Asclepias curassivaca*), which is sold under many names such as tropical milkweed, silky red milkweed, Mexican milkweed, etc. There are still unanswered questions about the safety of this plant and several studies indicate that monarchs that dine on regional natives are hardier and better able to survive the perilous migration. Yes, monarchs love it; however, the national butterfly organizations such as NABA (North American Butterfly Association), Monarch Watch, and Xerces Society strongly recommend that the gardener choose regional natives instead.

PRESERVING THE FALL MIGRATION

Milkweeds should be integrated into your sunny flower garden following the maxim “right plant, right place.” With the addition of nectar-rich flowers, especially in fall as fuel for the migrating butterflies, we gardeners can help the monarchs without sacrificing garden beauty.

Kansas Monarch Conservation Plan KDWPT Contact

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Hello! I am an Environmental Associate in the Ecological Services Section with Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism (KDWPT). I live in Hays with my husband and two adorable children (4 and 2 years old). I earned my Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees from Fort Hays State University. During my school years, I got many opportunities to work for graduate students assisting with their thesis research projects. The projects ranged from herpetofaunal response to prescribed burning, grassland nesting birds in CRP, to prairie chicken lek surveys.

My position with KDWPT involves many different tasks and is always evolving, from data analysis, GIS work, database management, etc. I conduct and assist many wildlife surveys. I am currently working on a survey in western Kansas, looking for the eastern spotted skunk using trail cameras. This summer I will be continuing a bat survey using acoustic detectors, which we started last year as a part of nation-wide survey directed by the North American Bat Monitoring Program (NABat). I also co-coordinate and edit our Kansas State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). And just last year I was brought on to help finish up the Kansas Monarch Conservation Plan as editor and sort of front contact person to help direct questions and comments to the necessary personnel, organizations, or working groups. So, if I cannot answer your questions, I will be happy to help you find someone who can.



SARAH BOSE PHOTOGRAPHY

WEBSITE NEWS

– MATTHEW RICHTER

Kansas Monarch Conservation Plan Released to KNPS

If you are a Monarch fan, researcher, educator, conservationist, or all of the above, KNPS has two vital and interesting documents available for download on the KNPS website.

Under the heading “INSECTS” on the resources page <http://www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org/resources.php> you will find the Kansas Monarch Conservation Plan. Developed by seventy-three private and public entities cooperating as the Kansas Monarch Taskforce Working Group, and international in scope, it presents a remarkably concise description and recommended conservation practices for the Monarch and its biome. Obviously benefiting more species than the Monarch butterfly, it is an excellent educational resource, best practices handbook, and a fascinating read. The pdf document can be directly downloaded here: <http://www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org/documents/2019KansasMonarchConservationPlan.pdf>



Nationwide Candidate Conservation Agreement for Monarch Butterfly on Energy and Transportation Lands

A remarkable cooperative effort is outlined in the recommendations of the Monarch CCAA/CCA Development Advisory Team. Responding to the knowledge that public rights of way and easements inside the purview of energy transportation and other candidate acreages cover a significant percent of the land mass on the migration path of the Monarch butterfly, this document outlines the reasons and the means for increasing Monarch populations. The link can be found on the KNPS website under the heading “INSECTS” on the resources page <http://www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org/resources.php> or the document can be directly downloaded here: http://www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org/documents/CandidateConservationAgreementAssurances_CCAA_Monarch.pdf



Information provided by Kansas Native Plant Society, see more events on our website: www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org
Please share this information and contact us about additional events to note. Thank you! email@KSNPS.org
Sturdy shoes, long pants, a hat, insect repellent, sunscreen, and water are recommended for outdoor events.
Mark your calendar now and plan to attend some fabulous happenings!

Before you travel, use the contact information to confirm an event is still happening and not cancelled or rescheduled.

APRIL | 18-22

CELEBRATE THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF EARTH DAY!
Watch for information locally or make your own plans and share the news!

APRIL WEEKDAYS

HONEYSUCKLE WARRIORS at Hidden Valley Girl Scout Camp in Lawrence. Tap your inner warrior and know that you are doing your part to help native plants and wildlife thrive! We will be cutting and hauling large pieces of brush through the woods to a campfire to burn it down to biochar (take home some free samples!). Come prepared for outdoor labor in the woods, wear durable, layered warm clothing that you can remove as you heat up. Tie up long hair, and wear a cap. Wear durable, totally enclosed, stable footwear. Some gloves will be provided, but you will probably want to bring your own; leather is best around the fire. Bring your own filled water bottle. Sponsor: Friends of Hidden Valley, 3420 Bob Billings Pkwy, Lawrence. If you would like to join the Honeysuckle Warriors Volunteer Crew, **contact Durand Reiber, Hidden Valley Camp Manager and Volunteer Coordinator, durandi@sunflower.com, 785-865-4657**

MAY | 3

OPEN TRAIL DAY AT PRAIRIEWOOD RETREAT AND PRESERVE, 1pm-dusk. Bring family or friends and come out on the first Sunday of each month for free access to our trails! Visitors should check in at the Blue Sage Gallery, 1484 Wildcat Creek Rd., Manhattan, for hiker log, trail maps, and other info. Campfire at sunset, weather permitting. Please leave pets at home!
info@prairiewood.com, 785-537-9999

MAY | 9

BARBER COUNTY WILDFLOWER TOUR, Medicine Lodge, 8:30am-2pm. Pre-paid \$20 (reservations due May 4) cover tour transportation, food, etc.
More info: www.barbercountyconservationdistrict.com, 620-886-5311 ext. 3

MAY | 10

CELEBRATE A VERY SPECIAL MOTHER — MOTHER EARTH! Bring your mom, your children, your grandma, or just bring yourself to this volunteer work day at Lawrence Nature Park. We will plant some trees and wildflowers to celebrate our favorite moms. Bring a shovel! We recommend long pants and sleeves, closed toe shoes, hat, sunblock, bug spray, and bringing your own water bottle to reduce waste. We provide instructions, a team leader, work gloves, and tools and water (to refill your bottle). Ecologist Courtney Masterson (Native Lands LLC) will start with an educational talk about the work, why it is important, and what is happening in the woods for wildlife that day.
More info: www.klt.org/event/nature6, email Courtney with questions: For.the.prairie@gmail.com, 785-749-3297

MAY | 29-30

KANSAS NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY SPRING BOARD MEETING AND OUTINGS in the Garden City area in western Kansas. The Board meets Friday afternoon, followed by an exploration of the flora of the Sandsage Prairie. Saturday's botanizing tours will feature more unique plant communities and geologic features.
For more information, contact Anthony Zukoff azukoff@gmail.com, 620-290-2411

JUNE | 13

AKIN PRAIRIE WILDFLOWER WALK with Kelly Kindscher, 10am, Douglas County. This sixteen acre native prairie has been protected as a memorial to Tom Akin's wife, Dorothy, and her love of colorful prairie wildflowers. Kelly Kindscher, author of *Edible Wild Plants of the Prairie* and *Medicinal Plants of the Prairie*, will lead the walk, provide identification and interesting plant lore.
RSVP required, contact Kansas Land Trust, jjost@klt.org, 785-749-3297

JUNE | 17

NATURE BOOK CLUB in Lawrence. Join us to talk about fiction and nonfiction connected to the natural world. New book recommendations from co-leaders Jake Vail and Shirley Braunlich and other book club members. Meet 6:30-8 pm at

Lawrence Public Library, 707 Vermont St. Lawrence. **RSVP is helpful. Contact: sbraunlich@lplks.org, 785-843-3833**

JUNE | 20

MARVIN SCHWILLING MEMORIAL BUTTERFLY COUNT at the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve, Strong City. Experts will accompany each group, so beginners are welcome to volunteer and hike. Full and half day sessions are available. **Call the visitor center to register at 620-273-8494**

JULY | 11

ARKANSAS CITY BUTTERFLY COUNT at Chaplin Nature Center, 9am-3pm. This is a citizen scientist survey of the Arkansas City area and all data collected is sent to the North American Butterfly Association. During the survey, we hike the trails of the Nature Center identifying and counting all butterflies we encounter. Close focus binoculars are used to aid in identification. You can join us for the full day or just a half day, \$3.
If planning to attend, please contact Shawn Silliman, cnc@wichitaudubon.org, 620-442-4133

JULY | 24

CELEBRATE THE KANSAS LAND TRUST'S 30 YEARS IN CONSERVING KANSAS. Enjoy drinks, a delicious meal prepared by Merchant's Pub & Plate, and the company of friends who are committed to saving special places in Kansas! Join us from 6-9pm, Cider Gallery 810 Pennsylvania St., Lawrence. Buy tickets: \$60 per individual, \$400 per table (seats 8).
Find out more: www.klt.org/event/friends. Contact Executive Director Jerry Jost: jjost@klt.org, 785-749-3297

SEPTEMBER | 25-27

KANSAS NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY'S 42ND ANNUAL WILDFLOWER WEEKEND (AWW) is in Pittsburg. Enjoy a full weekend of outings, board meeting, membership meeting, programs, a silent auction, photo contest, lunch, and socializing—join us! Watch for updates coming soon!

Join the KNPS email list to receive the latest event announcements:
www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org/email_list.php

NEW MEMBERS FROM 12/15/19 TO 3/14/20

Cheryl Burkhead – Berryton
David Chacko – Wichita
Caroline Coleman – Fredericksburg, VA
Nora Dibben – Lawrence
Patricia Fischer – Stilwell

Betsy Hasselquist – Paola
Mary Jo Hobbs – Topeka
Queren King-Orozco – Burlingame
Aubrey Streit Krug – Salina
Mark Lee – Lawrence
Jonathan Lucas – Towanda

Cindy McWilliams – Wichita
Marietta Schreiber – Annapolis, MD
Janice Sroufe – Wichita
Kim Stanley – McPherson
Teresa Whelan – Manhattan
Linda Vidosh Zempel – Topeka

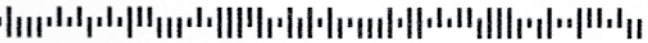
CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL

Want to know the status of your KNPS membership? Check the mailing label on the back of each issue for your membership expiration date.

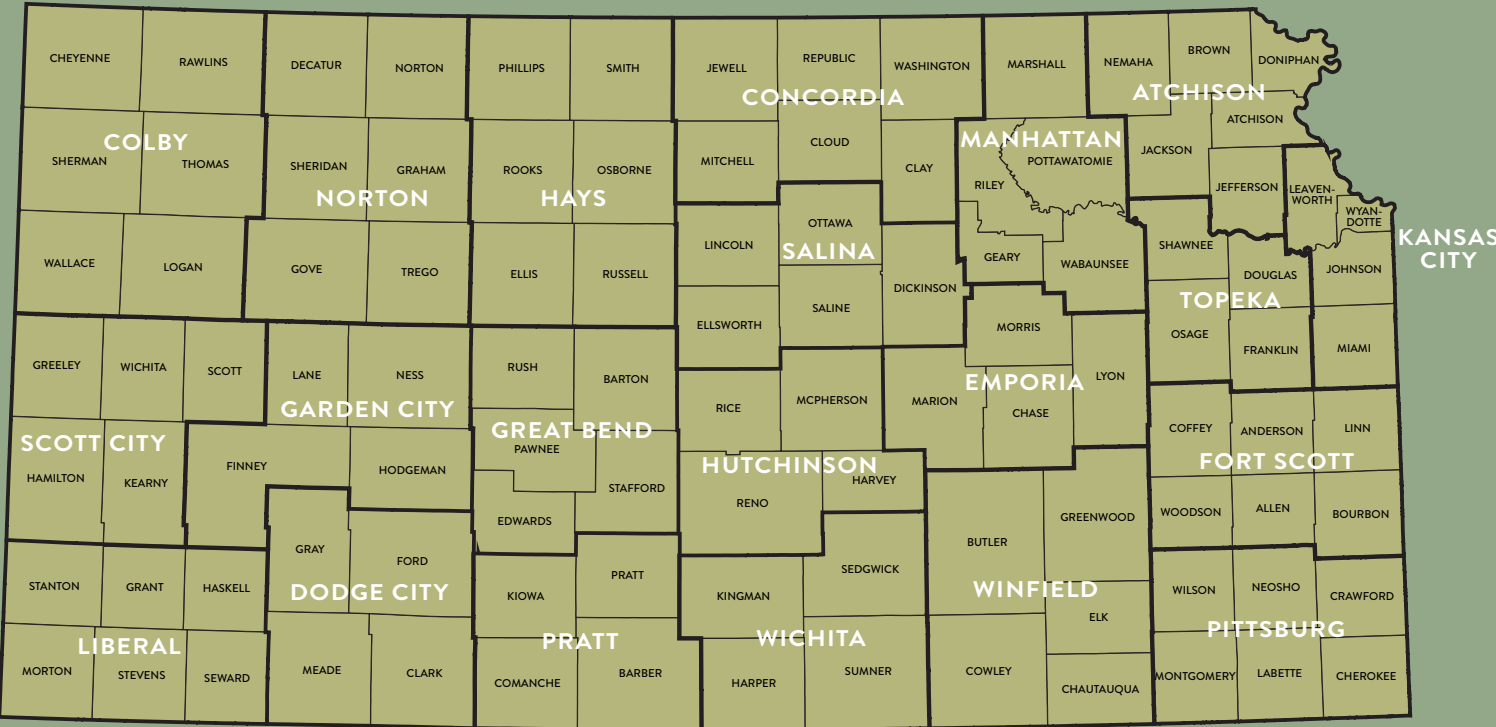
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WHITEWATER KS 67154-8843



MEMBERSHIP REGIONS



Noxious Weeds in Kansas

— JOAN MANOR

When I first joined Kansas Native Plant Society years ago, one of the first things I learned was not to call unidentified plants “weeds.” Then, I learned that there are, in fact, a few “weeds” in the native landscape; weeds being defined as a plant that is not valued where it is growing, particularly if it overgrows and chokes out desirables. Next, I learned of “noxious weeds,” which are those weeds harmful to the environment or animals as defined by an agricultural or governing authority. When I was introduced to Johnsongrass (*Sorghum halepense* (L.) Pers.) many years ago, I knew it had to be a noxious weed. Aside from the fact that “noxious” is a pleasurable word to say as it rolls around your mouth, it comes from the Latin “nocere,” which means “to harm.”

Kansas Noxious Weed Listing 2018

Subject Name	Scientific Name
Canada thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i> (L.) Scop.
Field bindweed	<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i> L.
Hoary cress	<i>Lepidium draba</i> (L.) Desv
Hogpotato	<i>Hoffmannseggia glauca</i> (Ortega) Eifert
Johnsongrass	<i>Sorghum halepense</i> (L.) Pers.
Kudzu	<i>Pueraria montana</i> var. <i>lobata</i> (Willd.) Maesen & S. Almeida
Leafy spurge	<i>Euphorbia esula</i> L.
Musk thistle	<i>Carduus nutans</i> L.
Quackgrass	<i>Elymus repens</i> (L.) Gould
Russian knapweed	<i>Rhaponticum repens</i> (L.) Hidalgo
Sericea lespedeza	<i>Lespedeza cuneata</i> (Dum.-Cours.) G. Don
Woollyleaf bursage	<i>Ambrosia grayi</i> (A. Nels.) Shinnery

Kansas Department of Agriculture has a noxious weed control program which has a total of twelve plants on the list. The problems associated with those twelve plants are that they displace native plant species, interfere with the production of agricultural crops, increase erosion, destroy wildlife habitat and decrease property values. The authority to control noxious plants is passed from the state to the county, which develops a targeted plan that is carried out by county employees, township employees, individuals, or some combination of all.

I recommend talking with your county’s designated noxious weed director, who will be both helpful and well informed. Counties differ in their planning, in part because of the physical makeup of that county. The Kansas Noxious Weed Survey of 2018 indicates that the areas of the state will differ somewhat in the degree of presence of each noxious weed; therefore, the individual counties may target different weeds as well as different methodology for control. The difference in state regions is exemplified by contrasting Western Region vs. Southeast Region, exhibiting very different plant populations. The County Noxious Weed Director will also be helpful in recommending control measures and resource individuals.



Johnsongrass (*Sorghum halepense*)

Noxious weed control is such a large subject, only summary points can be offered here. These would include the following.

- 1) Kansas has a Noxious Weed Law that clearly specifies the responsibility of control. The landowner is included.
- 2) The many ways of controlling noxious weeds require that one consider more than immediate elimination as cheaply and quickly as possible. Care must also be taken to protect the soil, water and desirable plants on the owner’s property and the neighbor’s property. Your plan should include ways to manage both the plants you want to eliminate and those you want to protect.
- 3) Not all noxious weeds should be controlled with mechanical means. Management may also include chemical measures and alternatives such as grazing and biological control. Before hiring a herd of goats to assist with control, land owners might need to consult a local agent in regard to appropriate timing and advisable methodology.
- 4) Restoration and prevention should be a part of the overall plan. Invasives are considered equally as important in the overall plan.

Helpful websites include:

Kansas Department of Agriculture: <https://agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/plant-protect-weed-control/noxious-weed-control-program>

Kansas Noxious Weeds: <https://www.invasive.org/species/list.cfm?id=36>

Kansas Native Plant Society: https://www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org/invasive_plants.php

Kansas Wildflowers and Weeds by John Haddock, Craig Freeman and Janet Bare

A clear identification chart “Kansas Noxious Weeds” is available at Kansas State Library Site: <https://kgi.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16884coll5/id/525/>

Many counties have excellent websites and should be consulted for local information.

FEATURED PLANT

Yellow Star-grass

HYPOXIS HIRSUTA

— JIM MASON

I became aware of Yellow Star-grass (*Hypoxis hirsuta*) after my wife and I bought our property in Osage County in 1992. It is a quarter section with approximately eighty acres of native tallgrass prairie that had been neglected and abused for many years. We began burning the pastures the following year as part of our efforts to restore their ecological health.

Walking the land in the weeks after a burn has always been a joy as I observe the onset of different wildflower blooms, which more than repays the hard work and stress involved in conducting prescribed burns! One of the early wildflowers to show up is Yellow Star-grass, typically in the first week of May. It appears before the grasses have produced much herbage, so it is quite noticeable in a spring-burned prairie. As low-growing spring forbs with quarter-sized yellow blooms, the only other plants that resemble it are the occasional stray dandelions. It only gets ankle-high, so it can be difficult to see in an unburned prairie. Each plant produces just a few flowers on threadlike stems.

Yellow Star-grass (also known as common goldstar) was formerly placed in the Lily or Amaryllis family, but now resides in its own family, the *Hypoxidaceae*. It is the sole member of its family in Kansas. It grows from a corm, has grasslike foliage, and flower parts in threes. The leaves, flower stems, and back sides of the tepals are hairy, hence its specific name *hirsuta*.

The species is widespread, found across the eastern United States and adjacent provinces of Canada. It prefers full sun and is a facultative wetland species (indicating relatively damp soils), which corresponds to where I find it on our land — lower down on hill slopes and further upland if an underlying limestone layer prevents easy drainage and thus keeps the soil more damp. The seeds are



quite small and difficult to come by, but the parent plant will produce satellite corms, so if you mark the plant’s location and return in the fall after it goes dormant, you can dig it up and separate the new corms to grow elsewhere.

JIM EARNST



Champion Trees in Mid-Winter

— KEN O’DELL

The presentation room at the visitor center of the Overland Park Arboretum was filled to capacity on January 29 when Jim Earnst, KNPS member and tree expert, spoke about native champion trees of the Overland Park Arboretum to a group of ninety people. The weather was icy with snow on the ground, and this may have helped bring out the crowd. In any case, Jim gave a perfect presentation to this highly interested and engaged audience.



FEATURED NATURAL AREA Klinefelter Farm

— ANDREW MITCHELL

Over the years, we have done several walks at Klinefelter Farm in Northeast Kansas. This place continues to surprise and enlighten me every time I visit. It is a delight in all seasons, but it may be best in spring and early summer when you can find a rich diversity of plants blooming.

My first acquaintance with Klinefelter Farm (KF) was as a member of the Northeast Kansas Beekeepers Group which meets monthly at the barn. The barn is also available for group gatherings and KNPS members enjoyed a Spring/Summer outing there in 2015, the first year of my membership.

Now that I am a board member of KNPS and more knowledgeable about the county I live in, I can talk more descriptively about KF and its habitats. I have walked the trail extensively, mostly while mushroom hunting or before bee meetings. I am working on a comprehensive inventory of native trees, shrubs, perennials, grasses, and annuals on site.

Klinefelter Farm comprises approximately 480 acres of farm ground, woodlands, and wetlands. It is owned and maintained by Highland Community College. The trail system is open from dawn to dusk, seven days a week. However, if you want to talk to a farm manager, hours are 8 to 5, Monday through Friday.

Klinefelter Farm is a member of KNPS, as well as a registered Agro-Tourism site, a member of the Kansas Trails Council, and a Friend of Scouting. It is located two miles east of Hiawatha. Heading east of Hiawatha on US 36 Hwy, take the Mulberry Road exit, turn left, and then turn right onto 230th Road. Go 2/3 mile east to the main entrance to the farm.

In 2018, while I was hunting morel mushrooms, I came across my first showy orchid (*Galearis spectabilis*). This is a great place to hunt spring ephemerals and rare plants. On a spring walk I hosted in 2019, members Jeff, Chad, and I discovered Virginia Mountain Mint (*Pycnanthemum virginianum*) and Spring Cress (*Cardamine bulbosa*), two rare-in-Kansas wildflowers. There are yet-to-be-discovered beauties in this oak-hickory remnant forest land along an unnamed stream.

I love this place and I hope that all of you will get to hike it someday soon and love it as much as I do. Happy plant hunting!

TOP LEFT Streambed in winter at the Klinefelter Farm.
TOP RIGHT Spring cress (*Cardamine bulbosa*)
MIDDLE RIGHT Showy orchid (*Galearis spectabilis*)
BOTTOM RIGHT Virginia Mountain Mint (*Pycnanthemum virginianum*)

ANDREW MITCHELL PHOTOS



Champion Trees of the Overland Park Arboretum

— JIM EARNEST

In 1940, The National Register of Big Trees was established to document the largest living tree of each species in the United States. American Forests, a non-profit conservation organization, continues to maintain and update the registry some eighty years later. Many states (including Kansas), and many cities (including greater Kansas City), have similar programs documenting the largest trees of each species in their domain.

There are a lot of big trees living at the Overland Park Arboretum and Botanical Gardens, particularly in the 160 acres of naturally planted woodlands. Over five million trees, including forty-seven of the eighty-five tree species native to the state of Kansas have been identified along these wooded trails. Under the guidance of the Education Committee of the Arboretum, volunteers have spent countless hours walking these woodlands and gardens measuring hundreds of trees in an attempt to find the largest one of each species — Champion Trees of the Overland Park Arboretum. A total of twenty-four species have been included in the registry.

Trees are measured as follows: the circumference at breast height in inches; the height in feet and the crown spread in feet. The final score for each tree is the sum of one point for each inch in circumference plus one point for every foot in height, plus .25 point for each foot of spread. The largest champions at the Arboretum are the three huge cottonwood trees (*Populus deltoides*) at the foot of Cottonwood Trail just north of East Bridge. The largest of these measures 172 inches around, and is 115 feet tall with a crown spread of forty-five feet, for a point total of 298.25. A close second is a beautiful sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*) on Wolf Creek along West Trail measuring 172 inches in circumference, 100 feet in height with a spread of seventy-five feet, for a point total of 290.75. Species of wonderful oak trees, hickories, linden, and elm, to name only a few, are also among the champions.

All twenty-four champions are tagged with stake markers showing their scientific and common names as well as their native habitat. Five brochures have been published, including maps, for visitors to go on self-guided tours to see these magnificent creations. Guided tours are also offered at the Arboretum during May and early June.

Geographic Information System Mapping Technology (GIS) is in the works as well, and will allow visitors to locate the champions on planet earth using their computers and smart phones.

The champion program is of great value in that it will help us to see the ultimate size of the various tree species, their longevity, rate of growth, and their suitability to our region. Go visit them and you will see why I love big trees. My bet is you will too when you come to see the Champion Trees of the Overland Park Arboretum.

If anyone would like a list of the Arboretum champions, email me at jimearnest@me.com and I will send you the list with their measurements.

TOP Post oak (*Quercus stellata*)
MIDDLE Shagbark Hickory (*Carya ovata*) with 2 trunks
BOTTOM Eastern Cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*)



JIM EARNEST PHOTOS

KANSAS NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND RENEWAL GUIDELINES

Annual dues are for a 12-month period from January 1 through December 31. Dues paid after December 1 are applied to the next year. Note to new members: the first year of annual membership is effective from the date of joining through December 31 of the following year. See upper right of mailing label for expiration date.

Please complete this form or a photocopy.
Send the completed form and a check payable
to the Kansas Native Plant Society:

Kansas Native Plant Society
R. L. McGregor Herbarium
University of Kansas
2045 Constant Ave.
Lawrence, KS 66047-3729

A membership to the Kansas Native Plant Society makes a great gift for friends and family members. Recipients of gift memberships will receive notification of your gift membership within two weeks of receipt of your check. The Kansas Native Plant Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Gifts to KNPS are tax deductible to the extent provided by law.

Kansas Native Plant Society welcomes everyone to join our membership. Read our full Statement of Diversity, Inclusion, and Non-Discrimination Policy on the website, ksnps.org.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM

Member Information

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Address _____
City/State _____
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Phone _____
Email _____
County (if KS) _____

Membership Category

☐ Student \$10.00
☐ Individual \$20.00
☐ Family \$30.00
☐ Organization \$35.00
☐ Contributing \$100.00
☐ Lifetime \$500.00

Additional Donation: Legacy Fund \$ _____ Scholarship Fund \$ _____ General Fund \$ _____