



Kansas Native Plant Society



Autumn Newsletter

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WHAT MADE THE 2009 KNPS ANNUAL MEETING SO SPECIAL?

text by Nancy Goulden, photos by Ken Barnard

KNPS Annual Wildflower Weekend (AWW) was held in Pittsburg and the surrounding area on September 18-20th. One of the factors that made the experience memorable was the opportunity to visit a diverse set of habitats (prairie, woods, glades) and see many of the unique plants that live in this far south-east corner of the state and neighboring Missouri. Of course it isn't **just the place** that makes an event special. This article and this issue of the newsletter focus on the elements that made up the 2009 AWW experience. If you were there, you can reminisce along with us. If you couldn't make it this year, you can have a vicarious experience through the words of the writers.



AWW trekkers search the meadow and share news of their discoveries

AWW was SPECIAL because of the people and the plants. Plant lovers, who come to the annual meeting, already have a special bond with each other because of their passion for finding, identifying, and getting to know native plants. Besides, KNPS members just seem to be friendly, kind, down-to-earth people. When sharing delight and information about a plant, strangers become friends; those who are shy find they are talking; old friends get reacquainted. The same kind of "meeting" experiences happen with the plants. You may find exciting species that are new to you or you may run into old favorites. (See p. 9).

AWW was SPECIAL because of the field trips. (See details about the walks on pp. 8 - 10). If you looked out at a group of KNPS members on one of the three major excursions during the weekend, time after time you saw the same pattern of ever-changing small clusters of wildflower fans, meandering through a prairie or along a woodland trail. They stop and talk; some move on; others join the

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The Kansas Native Plant Society Newsletter is printed four times a year: Winter (January), Spring (April), Summer (July), Fall (October). Readers tell us how much they enjoy the newsletter in color and in the paper format. Contributions help us continue to produce a publication of this length in this form. You may send your gift to KNPS at Kansas Native Plant Society, R.L. McGregor Herbarium, 2045 Constant Avenue, Lawrence, KS 66047-3729.



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.



group. Pretty much the same exchange takes place each time. You spot a small yellow flower and ask the woman near you, "What is this?" She suggests a common name. A passerby disagrees. They discuss it as two more people come into the group. Either consensus is reached OR someone says, "Let's ask Craig or Mike or Jeff or Valerie" or any number of other experienced plant namers. Especially for visitors from outside the region, all three locations of the walks provided new discoveries and increased knowledge about the plant communities.

AWW was SPECIAL because of our featured speaker. Cyndi Cogbill's Saturday morning presentation on "Wild Edibles from the Native Landscape" was exceptional. Cyndi has a gift for connecting with her audience by sharing her personal experiences, along with that of experts, while actively engaging the listeners in the experience. She accomplished the latter by having us all play "Plant Bingo" on specially-prepared bingo cards with plant pictures and key phrases. This was a technique to introduce us to the identification of specific edible plants and information about preparation. When the time was up, the audience was still asking questions and wanting Cyndi to go on and on.

AWW was SPECIAL because of the traditional activities. We ALWAYS have a photo contest, and this year the number and quality of the entries was amazing. (See p. 4). The display covered multiple tables and was arranged by categories. We ALWAYS have a silent auction. But different things appear each year. Again, there were multiple tables that held items such as stunning pressed flower artwork, highly

desirable books, cookies, jellies, and jams made with native plant ingredients, handmade paper and soap, and fresh garden produce. We took in \$710.50 to help support our KNPS activities. We ALWAYS give awards. This year's winner of the Sheldon H. Cohen Service Award is Jeff Hansen, whose contributions to the society epitomize the word "service." Two scholarship winners were also



Craig Freeman and Valerie Wright present Jeff Hansen with the Sheldon Cohen award

named (see p. 11). We ALWAYS get an update on what is happening in the society. Our incoming President Craig Freeman summarized KNPS progress and achievements in a informative presentation on Saturday morning (see p. 10).

AWW was SPECIAL because of new additions. This year attendees had the option of choosing two workshops in addition to the usual forays: a Spinning and Dying Workshop at the Ford Farm and a Prairie Patch Workshop at Mon Shon Prairie. (See p. 3).

The weekend certainly was "special." It's only twelve months until we have another AWW.



KNPS Elections Held

Seven members were elected each to serve three-year terms on the Board of Directors of the Kansas Native Plant Society at the 31th annual meeting on September 19, 2009, in Pittsburg, Kansas. New board members are: Mickey (Mick) Delfelder, Topeka; and David Welfelt, Newton. Past board members continuing their service include Earl Allen, Manhattan; Shirley Braunlich, Lawrence; Cynthia Ford, Pittsburg; Craig Freeman, Lawrence; and Nancy Goulden, Manhattan. Retiring from the board after 5 years of service was Carl Paulie, St. Paul.

Mickey Delfelder is a Topeka native with a long interest in the natural sciences. He earned a bachelors degree in Atmospheric Science from the University of Kansas. He has been a member of KNPS for two years and has volunteered at the

Symphony on the Flint Hills and has started collecting seeds of native plants, which he hopes to use in plantings at his home. He currently works as the Director of Programming for a sports media company based in Fayetteville, North Carolina. Dave Welfelt is a life-long Kansas resident. Born in Winfield, he earned a bachelors degree in Horticulture from Kansas State University. He joined KNPS in 2008 and is an avid nature photographer. He has worked in the turf equipment industry and more recently in the commercial parking lot and municipal sweeping industry.

Officers elected by the KNPS board each to serve 1-year terms were: Nancy Coombs, Secretary-Holton; Krista Dahlinger, Treasurer-Mulvane; Nancy Goulden, President Elect-Manhattan; Craig Freeman, President-Lawrence. Retiring officers were Phyllis Scherich, Secretary-Wilmore (3 yrs); and Michael Heffron, President-Eureka (2 yrs).

Native Plants to Dye For Text by Cindy Ford, Photo by Ken Barnard

The 2009 Annual Wildflower Weekend Workshop featured natural dyeing with native plants. The workshop, conducted by Cindy Ford at her farm west of Pittsburg, involved participants in searching and identifying native plants on-site, preparing the plants for the dyeing process, and showing how to spin raw fibers into yarn.

Plants selected for dyeing during the workshop were tickseed sunflower, common ragweed, pin oak root, and boneset. Yarns and fleece were first mordanted (heated with alum [potassium aluminum sulfate] and water) to develop an attraction on the yarn for the dye and to produce a bright color once in the dyepot. Plants are placed in a small amount of water and boiled until the pigment releases into the water. Then the yarn or fleece is added to the liquid until the desired color is absorbed. After the yarn is rinsed in water, most natural dyes will remain fairly colorfast. All of the collected native plants (except the boneset) yielded shades of yellow with the tickseed sunflower nearly orange in color. The boneset flowers did not produce any color.

With several spinning wheels present, anyone who wanted to learn how to spin fleece had an excellent opportunity to learn from the experts. Thanks to Rondi Anderson and Mary Limpus for bringing spinning materials and equipment.



Gathering floral pigment sources

Earning the KNPS Prairie Patch Text by Krista Dalinger, Photo by Ken Barnard

This year at the Annual Wildflower Weekend (AWW) one of the many activities offered was the opportunity to go through the step-by-step process for earning the Prairie Patch. I have suggested the Prairie Patch to several groups as an educational activity but had not actually completed the steps myself.



Nancy Calhoun works on a Prairie Patch project

The Prairie Patch guide can be downloaded from the KNPS website. The first step is to choose two plants to measure, describe and illustrate in color. Additional questions require investigation, such as "Is the plant native or introduced?" and "Name two organizations that help protect native plants." The entire plant, leaves, flower and seed structures are to be illustrated in color, requiring close observation.

A successful project relies on good preparation, including reviewing the guide in advance, studying wildflower books to locate the glossary for terminology and line drawings for the naming of leaf shapes, and having rulers on hand to measure specific plant dimensions. After both plants have been identified, illustrated and described, the completed application is submitted to KNPS for review. Successful applicants receive the Prairie Patch and will be recognized at the next AWW.

Completing the Prairie Patch requirements may take several field sessions. Questions include: "What is the function of a flower?" and is the plant "Common, rare, threatened or endangered". The Prairie Patch is truly earned and makes one a more informed and thoughtful observer.

Friday Field Trip to Mon Shon Text and photo by Sr. Patricia Stanley

Several members of KNPS gathered at Mon Shon Prairie on a sunny September 18th. The prairie is located east of Pittsburg, Kansas, close to the Missouri border. The predominant color was the bright yellow of tickseed, also known as coreopsis beggar ticks, flowers. White flowers were represented by tall joe-pye weed, frost flowers, rough white lettuce, and a variety of asters, a couple being heath aster and hairy aster. In the blue and purple range, were downy gentian, wild petunia, Baldwin ironweed, and bog aster. Frequently a pink foxglove (rough purple *agalinis* is another of its common names) would be found and, if disturbed, immediately drop the flower.

When we were about to leave, someone pointed out the passion flower vine growing along the roadside. Many knew the legend related to the crucifixion that accompanies the passion flower;

the five wounds, three nails, the crown of thorns and the whips, the ten commandments. There is also passion fruit. A question was: "Is the passion fruit edible?" We learned the next day in the General Sessions that it is.



Passion Fruit at Mon Shon Prairie. Note the photo of a Passion Flower in the Photo Contest, page 5, to the right.

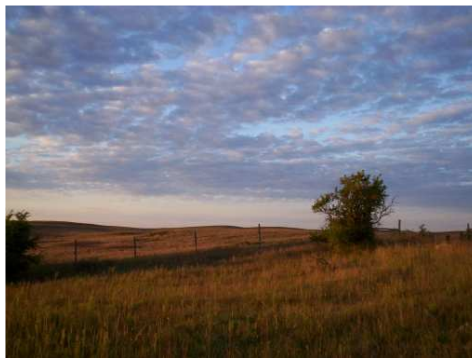


PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

Scenery



First: "Wintergrass"
Nancy Goulden



Second: "Prairie Evening"
Susan Reimer



Third: "Point of Rocks"
Jeff Hansen

Fauna



First: "Monarch on Blue Sage"
David Welfelt



Second: "Grasshopper on Illinois
Bundleflower"
Krista Dahlinger

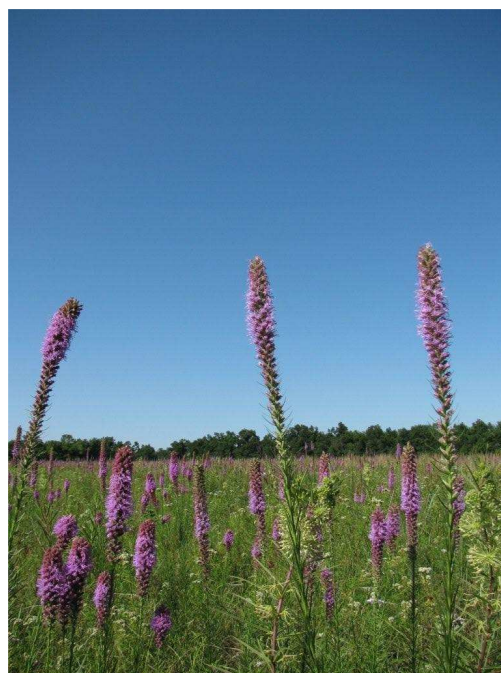


Third: "Red-tailed Hawks in Shawnee County"
Jeff Hansen

Flora



First: "Passion Flower, Maypop"
Emmett Sullivan



Second: "Kansas Gayfeather"
Emmett Sullivan



Second: "Prickly Poppy"
David Welfelt



Third: "Common Sunflower"
David Welfelt



Third: "American Lotus"
David Welfelt

Garden



First: "*Silphium* With Monarch"
Cynthia Pederson



Second: "*Silphium Perfoliatum* After a Rain"
Cynthia Pederson



Third: "Rosin Weed With Bug"
Cynthia Pederson



KNPS President's Message by Michael Heffron

"Life is either a daring adventure or nothing," said Helen Keller. I was exposed to Helen's quote during my youth and have been very fortunate to face most days of my life since then with her brave attitude. One definition of adventure is a remarkable occurrence or noteworthy event. If you dare to take the plunge and seek out wildflowers in their natural habitats, you will experience many remarkable and noteworthy plants.

Each "wildflower season" seems to be uniquely different, and this fall has definitely lived up to that claim. Butler and Greenwood Counties have been full of uniquely remarkable and noteworthy wildflowers and weeds. My Butler Community College students and I especially enjoyed the Blue Sage, which were more abundant and brilliantly blue than I ever remember them. Also, we were blessed by being introduced to a species of native prairie plant that I had never seen or identified before. The Ladies Tresses have been one of my favorite groups of native plants for years. On September 26th, in a Greenwood County ditch juxtaposed to old Highway 54, we found several stands of Prairie Ladies Tresses (*Spiranthes magnicamporum*). If you also want to enjoy this adventure and seek out Prairie Ladies Tresses, remember that one of its identifying characters is its pleasant scent similar to lilac (at least to me).

In prairies the grasses surround and greatly outnumber the wildflowers, also known as forbs in the prairie. Of the dozens of different species of grasses we witnessed this year, Indian grass stood out to us as the most prolific and handsome with its gold tinted "flags" accenting the other grasses. Unfortunately, as all experienced adventurers know, each adventure has some disappointments. This year's disappointment was the Blazing Stars or Gay Feathers to some (*Liatris spp.*). Their numbers as well as their sizes were down drastically. But all was not lost since their brilliant color was as spectacular as usual.

Another disappointment that I must face at this time is the realization that this will be my last message to you as the KNPS President. Serving as the KNPS President during the last two years has indeed been an adventure for me, full of many remarkable occurrences and noteworthy events. But as they say, "all good things must come to an end." Although my current presidency has ended, the most exciting aspect about KNPS will not. I will still be a member of the Kansas Native Plant Society with all its many sanctioned wildflower adventures scheduled throughout Kansas during "the wildflower season." As I turn over the society's presidency to the honorable Craig Freeman, I want to thank every society member and board trustee for their support over the last two years. Without our members, there would be no society. And in closing, please, dare to face each day as a unique adventure never to occur again!



My First AWW

Mickey Delfelter. I joined the KNPS two years ago after attending a prairie walk north of Topeka. I was hooked and immediately became a member. I attended my first AWW this year in Pittsburg, and it was my favorite event so far!

There were so many highlights of the weekend for me; it's difficult to know where to begin.

The visits to Mon-Shon Prairie, Schermerhorn Park and Spring River certainly presented me with the opportunity to view plants that I won't find in the Topeka and Manhattan areas. I was especially excited to find a little slice of the Ozarks within the state borders and look forward to going back.

A big plus for me is that on the wildflower walks, the knowledge level runs the gamut from newbie to expert. But, everyone is welcome, encouraging and equally enthused. I enjoyed listening to Craig and Frank, but it was nice to know that if they were talking above my expertise (or lack there of), they or someone else would be happy to chime in and translate.

I was not disappointed in the business meeting, the wonderful photography in the photo contest or the interesting speaker on Wild Edibles. I'm already looking forward to next year's AWW and possibly even entering a photo or two in the photo contest.

But, in the end, the most enjoyable part of the weekend was the people. I'm very much an introvert, but I felt very at home with the entire group. Everyone's enthusiasm is palpable and contagious, and it was enjoyable interacting with a group that cares so much about observing and preserving the natural world.

Karen Hummel. I'm sitting in my living room, enjoying the strains of Theloneous Monk jazz in the background, and reflecting on my first KNPS Annual Wildflower Weekend. My primary purpose for attending was to meet some of the people I have read about in the KNPS newsletters. But I came away with so much more!

The first thing that impressed me was the kindness and friendliness of the folks I met. I missed the first day due to family responsibilities. On Saturday morning I ventured into the

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2009 Kansas Area Native Plant and Wildflower Events

Information provided by Kansas Native Plant Society Email: [email@KSNPS.org]. Website: www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org. Visit our website for more events. Please share this information and contact us about additional events to note. Thank you!

Sturdy shoes, long pants, insect repellent, sunscreen, hat and water recommended for outdoor events.

2009 Events - Mark your calendar now and plan to attend more fabulous happenings!

 **October 27:** Explore South Central Kansas Prairies in Harvey County, KS. This event will be led by Brad Guhr, Education Coordinator at Dyck Arboretum and Board Member of Kansas Native Plant Society. Join us in gathering seed, observing birds and insects, and identifying prairie plants on high quality prairie remnants. All ages are welcome. Leave the Dyck Arboretum in Hesston at 4pm and return by twilight. Fee: \$5, children under 13 are free. Transportation provided, call the telephone number below to reserve a spot. Directions can be given to late-comers. Bring a sandwich and enjoy the sun setting over the prairie. (620) 327-8127.

November 7: To Battle! Volunteer with Kansas City Wildlands, 9am to noon. This is our seventh annual honeysuckle battle. We'll be cutting down, treating and removing invasive, exotic shrub honeysuckle that threatens the region's incredible, fragile wild places. During the past six years, amazing progress has been made by Kansas City Wildlands volunteers in removing shrub honeysuckle from these natural communities. This is a great community workday for our wildlands and a really great group workday!!! Five Wildlands sites across the region will be targeted. Contact for more information: [http://www.kcwildlands.org/], Linda Lehrbaum [Linda@bridgingthegap.org] (816) 561-1061 x116.

November 14: Join the Northeast Chapter of the Oklahoma Native Plant Society on a Field Trip to Chandler Park in Tulsa, OK. Contact Sue Amstutz, d-s-amstutz@cox.net or (918) 742-8374.

November 15: Missouri Prairie Foundation Workday at Jerry Smith Park Prairie in Kansas City. We will improve this original remnant prairie by removing invasive shrubs and trees. Meet at the Jerry Smith Park entrance at 1:15pm. Wear protective clothing and bring work gloves, loppers and hand saws if you have them; extra gloves and tools will be available. Directions: Take I-435 to Holmes Road. Proceed south on Holmes to 139th Street (immediately south of the Blue River bridge). Turn left (east) on 139th Street. The Jerry Smith Park entrance is 0.75 mile on the left. To see a map and more information about Jerry Smith Park, visit [http://www.kcwildlands.org/] Contact MPF board member Doris Sherrick at [bjdjsheer@fairpoint.net] or (816) 779-6708.

 **November 21:** Volunteers are needed for prairie maintenance and preservation projects. The Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs meet on the third Saturday of every month except December. [www.grasslandheritage.org]. Wear appropriate clothing. No special skills or tools needed. For details, please contact Frank Norman, Kansas Native Plant Society Board Member [fjnorman@sunflower.com] (785) 887-6775 (home) or (785) 691-9748 (cell).

2010 Kansas Area Native Plant & Wildflower Events

 **January 16:** Volunteers are needed for prairie maintenance and preservation projects. For details, see Nov. 21.

February 9: Seasons Along the Kaw Presentation by Ken Lassman. This free program is sponsored by the Topeka Audubon Society. Location: Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library. [tas@topekaaudubonsociety.org] (785) 580-4400.

 **February 20:** Volunteers are needed for prairie maintenance and preservation projects. For details, see Nov. 21.

 **March 20:** Volunteers are needed for prairie maintenance and preservation projects. For details, see Nov. 21.

April 17-25: Celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Earth Day! Contact us about special events you're planning and we may share them with fellow native plant enthusiasts.

 **April 17:** Volunteers are needed for prairie maintenance and preservation projects. For details, see Nov. 21.

 **May 8:** Barber County Wildflower Tour. Meet at the Medicine Lodge High School, 8:30am. Enjoy continental breakfast and slides of flowers we expect to see. Buses will provide transportation. Morning participants will return to the school at noon. Full-day participants will enjoy a delicious lunch and entertainment at a tree-shaded country park. Ride through the beautiful gyp hills to a second site. Refreshments will be served before we return to the school around 3:30pm. Barber Co. Conservation District and Kansas Native Plant Society are co-sponsors. Pre-paid reservations should be sent before May 4th, \$8 half-day, \$15 full-day. Barber Co. Conservation, 800 W. 3rd Ave. Medicine Lodge, KS 67104-8002, phone (620) 886-3721, ext. 3.

 **May 7-10:** FloraKansas: Great Plains Plant Bazaar at Dyck Arboretum of the Plains, Hesston, KS. This plant sale features hard-to-find native perennials plus classes and tours. Kansas Native Plant Society co-sponsors Dyck Arboretum events. Ask about member's only sale dates; 10% members discount on all days. Admission charge is by donation. [arboretum@Hesston.edu] (620) 327-8127.

Kansas Area Native Plant Wildflower Events - Continued

 **May 15:** Volunteers are needed for prairie maintenance and preservation projects. For details, see Nov. 21.

 **June is Kansas Native Plant Appreciation Month!** Each year Kansas Native Plant Society makes contact with the Kansas Governor to request that June be proclaimed as Kansas Native Plant Appreciation Month. This is a great opportunity to promote greater appreciation for the diversity, value, and beauty of Kansas native plants and their habitats. [www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org]

June 5: Spring Wildflower Tour at Maxwell Wildlife Refuge, McPherson County, KS. Board the tram for a tour of the prairie with wildflowers and buffalo, 10am. There is also a self-guided walking tour with flowers flagged. The Refuge is located 6 miles north of Canton, KS. [http://www.cyberkraft.com/maxwell/] (620)-628-4455.

 **June 12:** 5th Annual Symphony in the Flint Hills will be held deep in the heart of the Flint Hills. Get ready for one of the most beautiful sites on the planet and the adventure of getting there. Enjoy this unique pairing of music and prairie! The vision of this concert is to heighten appreciation and knowledge of the Flint Hills as the last major intact tallgrass prairie on the North American continent and will help focus attention on the Flint Hills of Kansas as a national treasure belonging to all Kansans and as a destination for people beyond our borders. Wildflower tours will be led by Kansas Native Plant Society volunteers. Featured is an outdoor concert performed by the Kansas City Symphony. [www.symphonyintheflinthills.org] (620) 273-8955.

 **June 13:** Friends of Konza Prairie Annual Wildflower Walk, 7pm. The walk will be co-led by Valerie Wright, Kansas Native Plant Society Board Member, and Konza Docents. There is a charge of \$7 for those who are not Friends of Konza Prairie members. Telephone reservations are due June 9, (785) 587-0441.

 **June 19:** Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs prairie maintenance and preservation projects. For details, see Nov. 21.

 **July 17:** Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs prairie maintenance and preservation projects. For details, see Nov. 21.

August 1-5: The North American Prairie Conference will be in Cedar Falls, IA. The University of Northern Iowa will host the 22nd Biennial NAPC. This year's conference is themed Restoring a National Treasure. For more information contact: [http://www.northamericanprairieconference.org/] Ryan Welch [rwelch@uni.edu] (319) 273-7957.



My First AWW

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Lamplighter breakfast room early, in somewhat of a pre-coffee haze. My thanks go to the wonderful KNPS member who showed me how to operate the waffle maker and where to find the eating utensils.

At the annual meeting, Craig Freeman presented a well-constructed overview of KNPS, and was great at allowing everyone to share their information while maintaining an easygoing but structured meeting. The Plant Bingo was fun. I love the idea of making a game of learning. And I was able to meet many KNPS members, and begin to get to know them.

The geology and flora of Schermerhorn park and at the chert glade around the Wildcat Glades Nature Center were amazing. And it was fun to see all of us drift into smaller exploration parties in the open field at the Spring Hill Wildlife Area. My favorite moment in that field was looking back at an area where a dozen of us had just trampled a bit of prairie while identifying several aster varieties. There, untouched and nestled amidst the forbs, in the middle of a circle path we had created, was a delicate little bird nest with a single egg.

The weekend was filled with enjoyable and beautiful experiences, and the company of wonderful people. We live in the midst of such an interesting and diverse environment, if you look closely. There is much to learn. I can't wait to see what's next for KNPS and the next AWW.



Saturday Plant Excursions at Annual Meeting

Text and photo by Frank Norman

On Saturday after the general meeting, KNPS sponsored forays to **Schermerhorn Park** and **Spring River Wildlife Area**. Over 30 wildflower enthusiasts attended both walks. Schermerhorn Park is located just south of Galena, Kansas, in what is called the Kansas Ozarks. This is a 55 square mile area of the Ozark Plateau, representing geological remnants of Mississippian times,

characterized by steep cliffs, glades and savannas with shallow soils underlain by limestone and dolomite, caves and sink holes, and streams with rocky bottoms. Spring River Wildlife Area is located north of Galena and consists of riparian woods, a glade, restored tallgrass prairie, and oak savanna. Neither the Park or wildlife area were

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Saturday Plant Excursionss

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mined in the past, so both areas are fairly representative of the plant communities found in the past.

Schermerhorn Park. Our first stop at the park was the Southeast Kansas Nature Center of Galena, situated on a bluff, overlooking Shoal Creek. The Center is in a stone building built in the 1930s by the WPA, and has great displays of arrowheads, animal skins, and other information on the biota of the area.



KNPS group at Schermerhorn.

The group split up, one taking trails to observe the plants and wildlife in the oak-hickory woods, while the other was checking out the cave and chert glade overlooking the cave. The oak-hickory woods were interesting because of the various oaks and new plants observed as well as the prairie plants found after a recent prescribed burn. The oaks (and hickories) included post, black jack, and red along with bitternut and kingnut hickories.

Other woody species found as shrubs in the understory or trees in the subcanopy included smooth, winged, and aromatic sumacs; flowering and rough-leaved dogwood; red elm, white ash, sassafras, black raspberry, and wild black cherry. The ground cover was a mix of many species including wild oats (in thick stands), tube beard tongue, Canada wild rye, various goldenrods (old field, elm leaf, and downy), and a number of prairie species (big bluestem, broomsedge, yarrow, Indian grass, leadplant, flowering spurge, narrow-leaved *dichanthelium*, and nodding ladies'-tresses. In the periodically maintained areas under the canopy of oaks, there were numerous interesting species including three asters (prairie aster, sky-drop aster, and drummond's), pencil flower, poverty grass, various tick-trefoils, a ladies'-tresses (either *Spiranthes tuberosa* or *S. lacera*) as well as various fungi.

Spring River Wildlife Area. At this area, the group walked through an oak savanna bisected by a small stream and swale and a newly restored tallgrass prairie that is hayed annually. Black jack oaks were observed on the walk along with common and southern ragweeds, Indian grass, yarrow, broomsedge, stiff sunflower, winged and smooth sumacs, wild oats, white crownbeard, white snakeroot, foxglove beardtongue, slender goldenweed, and thick-spike gayfeather. Along the stream and swale, vegetation preferring wetter conditions was found including *boltonia*, blue vervain, boneset, meadow beauty, single-stemmed bog aster, red-top panicum, nodding ladies'-tresses, *coreopsis* beggar-ticks, Missouri ironweed, and willow-leaf aster. The hay meadow had the typical tallgrass prairie grasses and forbs, but also had some interesting ones including rattlesnake master, rattlebox, prairie rose gentian, blue hearts, round buttonweed, sessile-leaf tick trefoil.



Sunday Outing to Wildcat Glades

text and photo by Mike Haddock

On Sunday, September 20th, thirty-four KNPS members visited the Wildcat Glades Conservation and Audubon Center in Joplin, Missouri. This is the first Audubon Center in the Midwest and is a partnership project of Audubon Missouri, the City of Joplin, and the Missouri Department of Conservation.

The center opened in 2007 and incorporates a number of "green" technologies such as a roof consisting of plastic sheeting, fabrics, and soil that decreases water runoff by acting as a sponge, absorbing nearly one million gallons of water each year. Many recycled materials were used in construction of the building, parking area, and trails. A number of fascinating displays can be

viewed in the nature center, including a 1,300-gallon aquarium that is home to a variety of fish and many other aquatic creatures. An eastern collared lizard, speckled king snake, and Texas brown tarantula could also be observed in the center.

Chanda Williams, a teacher and naturalist at the center who holds a master's degree in biology from Emporia State University provided information about the facility before we headed out on the trails. Chert glades are a unique habitat type found primarily in southwest Missouri. Chert, also known as flint, is found here in bedrock form. Glades are very dry places with a thin layer of soil.

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Sunday Outing to Wildcat Glades

Continued from Page 9

There are only approximately 60 high-quality acres of chert glade habitat remaining in the world and 27 of those acres are found at Wildcat Glades. The plants that occur on the glades are primarily native grasses and wildflowers, with sporadic prickly pear cacti and post oak trees. Some of the oaks are more than 150 years old! In the glades, lichens dotted the rocks and trees, and wildflowers such as aromatic aster, New England Aster, Black-eyed Susan, tickseed sunflower, plains coreopsis, and flame flower could be found. It was exciting to



Palafoxia Callosa

stumble upon small palafox (*Palafoxia callosa*), a new find at Wildcat Glades. This member of the Family *Asteraceae* has pink or lavender disk florets and reddish-purple anthers.

Along the Shoal Creek trail, we observed yellow ironweed or wingstem, mist flower, dayflower, white snakeroot, golden glow or cut-leaf coneflower, blue lobelia and the related cardinal flower, white crownbeard or frostweed, and the introduced annual beefsteak plant, all in bloom. We also saw spicebush, flowering dogwood, white oak, bitternut hickory, and hop hornbeam in fruit. It was particularly interesting to



Jewelweed
Impatiens Capensis

encounter spotted touch-me-not (*Impatiens capensis*). This beautiful orange and red flower also goes by the common name jewelweed because dew often accumulates on the plant. Our group leader, Steve Timme, showed how the mature fruit capsules explode when touched, scattering the seeds in all directions. The juice of this plant can be applied to relieve the burning sensation of stinging nettle and the itch of poison ivy.

A visit to the Audubon Center and to Wildcat Glades is highly recommended to anyone visiting southwest Missouri!



A SNAPSHOT OF THE KANSAS NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

By Craig C. Freeman, President

This fall, the Kansas Native Plant Society turns 31 years old. Founded as the Kansas Wildflower Society in 1978, the Society continues to grow and adapt to meet the needs of its members while remaining true to its mission to promote awareness and appreciation of the plants and landscapes of Kansas. Membership benefits go beyond the newsletter, merchandise, and sponsored events. KNPS is about discovering and experiencing the natural history of our place in the world, and sharing those experiences with hundreds of like-minded individuals. Highlighted here are facts and figures that offer a snapshot of who we are and what we are doing.

- KNPS is experiencing steady growth as we promote the organization and obtain increased exposure. We currently have nearly 520 paid memberships and reciprocal memberships with 45 native plant societies, conservation organizations, and outdoor education groups. Dues-paying members reside in 11 states and 68 Kansas counties.

- About 2/3 of our annual income is from dues; 3/4 of members are individuals and families.

- This year, KNPS moved toward establishing a Legacy Fund, an investment account independent of our general operating funds. Interest from the Legacy Fund will be used for projects designated by the Directors.

- The newsletter is one of our three main means of communication and outreach. A typical issue contains articles from 10-15 contributors, and three dedicated and talented volunteers edit, design, and produce each issue. Donations from members help pay for some of the cost to print the newsletter in color.

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- The web site (www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org/) received nearly 430,000 hits during the past year, and hundreds of members subscribe to our email list.
- KNPS has nearly two-dozen standing, action, and ad hoc committees that help expedite the Society's business. Non-board members of the Society are encouraged to serve on many committees, especially those involved with planning and outreach.
- During the past five years, KNPS sponsored or co-sponsored public outings in 29 of 105 Kansas counties.
- KNPS has three awards that recognize individuals and organizations for their efforts to promote the use of native plants, for their contributions to research and education in botany in Kansas, and for their service to the Society. These are the Rachel Snyder Memorial Landscape Award, the Excellence in Botany Award, and the Sheldon H. Cohen Service Award, respectively.
- This year, KNPS collaborated with the Grassland Heritage Foundation to award two scholarships to graduate students; one at Ft. Hays State University studying tamarix (*Tamarix*) invasion and the other at the University of Kansas studying the rare plant Mead's milkweed (*Asclepias meadii*). The KNPS portion of the award is the Mary Bancroft Memorial Scholarship.
- KNPS has partnered with the Symphony in the Flint Hills since the event's launch in 2006, with members sharing information about the tallgrass prairie and its plants. In 2009, 22 KNPS volunteers provided information at three separate venues to some 1,350 Symphony attendees.
- KNPS is backing a state initiative to promote adoption of little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) as the state grass. More than just a symbol, little bluestem will serve as a vehicle for introducing people to beauty and diversity of the prairie, and the initiative is exposing thousands of Kansas students to the legislative process.
- Several members are representing KNPS interests and concerns on the Kansas Department of Transportation's Roadside Aesthetic Taskforce. The taskforce was established to examine KDOT's approach to aesthetic treatments along Kansas roadsides, to review current roadside management practices, and to recommend changes that will help showcase native plants, improve wildlife habitat, and provide broader ecological services.

KNPS Participates in Tallgrass Prairie Preserve Wildflower Weekend

Text by Nancy Goulden, Photo by Ken Barnard

Twelve KNPS volunteers returned again this year to Tallgrass Prairie Preserve near Strong City to share their special interests and knowledge related to the native plants of the Flint Hills. The annual Wildflower Weekend was held September 12 and 13 when the sunflowers, goldenrods, tall joe-pye weed and especially blue sage were at their peak. During the two days, almost 250 visitors came to the national park for the event. Special KNPS activities included multiple wildflower walks, very well received presentations by Cindy Ford and Iralee Barnard on the process of wool dyeing from native plants, interactive displays of aromatic plants, edible plants, and hand-made paper (from plant fibers).

Our KNPS display of spectacular Kansas wildflower pictures drew visitors in to talk with KNPS volunteers and ask a variety of questions about native plants and the organization before they moved on to smell the various dried plants, examine the edible foods and search through the large bouquet of prairie flower looking for the specific blue or yellow flower they had just seen. One of the bonuses of an event at a national park is the presence of not only local visitors, but many from out of state. Several of these guests expressed their delight in discovering first hand the vastness and grandeur of the prairie and its native plant treasures.



Jeff Hansen assisting Tallgrass visitors

GROWING PLANTS FROM SEED

Text - Ken O'Dell, Photos - Nancy Goulden

If you were looking at only the beautiful rose-pink flower on this Kansas native, you would not anticipate the briars, thorns, hooks and claws that adorn the stems and seed pods. It is aptly described by common names such as Cat's Claw, Sensitive Briar, and Bashful Briar. This perennial plant is really too prickly to handle; so as kids, we would pinch the compound leaves off to see them immediately fold up. This curiosity was explained to me. Apparently, when we would pick off the leaf, the pressure from the sap inside goes down and the leaves fold up.

Sensitive Briar was at one time called *Schrankia nuttalli* and is now listed as *Mimosa nuttalli*. It is native in most, if not all, counties in Kansas and in much of the Great Plains and Midwest from North Dakota to Texas with Kansas in the middle of its native habitat. Sensitive Briar has been selected as the Kansas Wildflower of the Year for 2010.

The slender branches will often grow to two feet long and usually reach about one foot above the ground. In our hayfields, it is easy to see Sensitive Briar when it has the attractive one inch round, ball-shaped, rose-pink flowers in early summer when the hay is relatively short.



Cat's Claw Sensitive Briar
Mimosa nuttalli

A couple of months later when the hay is two or three feet tall and the flowers have changed to seed heads, it is more difficult to find. The foliage is also very interesting with pinnately compound green leaves, giving a "ferny look" to the plant. Sensitive Briar is rated high for livestock forage and the prickles do not seem to bother the animals eating it. The one-inch to three-inch long seed pods

contain several seeds of a light shiny brown coloring and most are somewhat square in shape.

I gather the seed when the seed pods turn a light golden tan to light brown. When they are ready, clip the seed pods off with some sharp snippers and drop them directly from the plant into a five-gallon bucket with a smooth bottom so you do not have to handle the prickly seed pods again. I take a small solid brick and gently crush the seed pods against the bottom of the bucket. Then shake them up and down, and the seed will settle in the bottom as they fall out of the prickly seed coverings.



Cat's Claw Sensitive Briar Seedpods

If you are planting directly into a wildflower area or pasture where you want the seed to germinate, I would throw the cleaned seed in that area as soon as I gathered it. Mother Nature should take care of it from there. You can also save the seed in a fridge in a paper envelope until April, and then scatter the seed on top of some good potting soil in a container such as a six-inch pot or four-inch deep flat. Place the pot or flat in a bright location in morning sun or filtered sun and germination will take place in a couple of weeks. I tried soaking the seed in warm water over night, but the seed did not germinate well. When I just plant the seed in pots or flats and keep the soil lightly moist, the germination rate is much better. The first year you will get a five-inch long thin spindly stem with stickers, no blooms and usually one branch only. The second year this seedling will grow to its full glory and produce beautiful flowers.

If you cannot find any seeds to collect, and since the plants are rarely offered at nurseries or native plant sales, you might contact Jeff Hansen at jeff@kansasnativeplants.com. Jeff offers seed of many wildflowers, and if he does not have Cat's Claw seed at the time, he will direct you to a time or place to find it. If Jeff cannot help you, contact me, and if you are a member of the KNPS, I will send a dozen or so seeds your way.

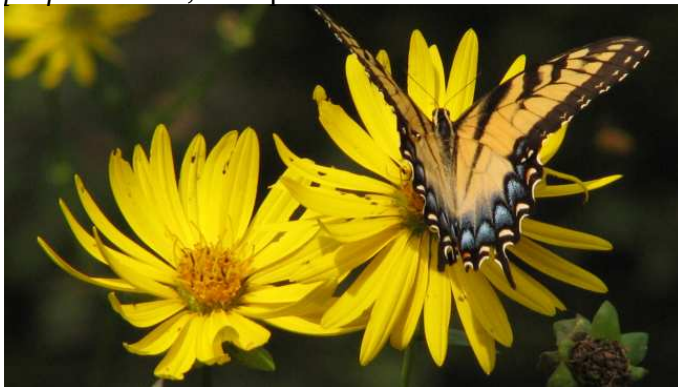


Featured Plant - Cup Rosinweed (*Silphium perfoliatum* L.)

Text by Lorraine J. Kaufman, photo by Dennis Kaufman

“Public Enemy No. 1” is what we called them when we first met them— these tall (up to eight feet) plants with square stems and rough, triangular leaves nearly a foot long. They were threatening to over-shadow and smother the young black walnut trees we had planted in the rich soil of the bottom-land near the small creek that wanders through our farm. So we vigorously attacked them with machetes thinking “good riddance.” This was not to be, however, as we met them again the next year!

Looking more closely we noticed the opposite leaves of these stout plants clasped the stem so tightly at the base that they actually formed a cup that held water. The bright yellow flowers, 2 to 4 inches in diameter were usually on separate branches at the top of the plant and made for quite a handsome sight. We came to recognize our “adversary” as cup rosinweed, *Silphium perfoliatum* L., a frequent native inhabitant of



Rosinweed with Butterfly

moist and shady areas in east-central Kansas.

We became enthusiastic fans, however, when we found them blooming in profusion in mid-August surrounded by a multitude of large beautiful butterflies. Tiger, zebra and spicebush swallowtail and monarchs without number were helping themselves to the sweet nectar available. It truly was an inspiring sight! (We even talked of planting them at home to make our own butterfly garden!)



Rosinweed
Silphium perfoliatum L.

The black walnut trees now overshadow the cup rosinweed, but we see that the cup rosinweed plants still persist in their chosen habitat— a welcome sight for butterflies and wildflower lovers.

Membership News

New Members 6/14-9/27/09

Ronda Anderson - Pittsburg
Phillip Baker - Topeka
Myra K. Barnes - Elkhart
Nancy Bonner - Lawrence
Mike Brookshire - Hoyt
Ruby Bultman - Elkhart
Nadine Champlin - Sabetha
Sara Cornett - Paola
Dottie Crawford - Topeka
Rejane Cytacki - Leavenworth
Velma J. Davis - Wichita
Ellie Dawson - Kansas City
Becky Drager - Auburn
Glenn Fell - Emporia

Margaret Gatewood - Topeka
Tate Gooder - Peru
Joe F. & Lindsley M. Hartman - Elkhart
Sarah Hinman - Lawrence
Graciela Hinshaw - Elk Grove, CA
Jessica Hykel - Wichita
Ananda Jayawardhara - Pittsburg
Ruth Johnson - Shawnee
Dennis Kaufman - Racine, WI
Judith L. Lee - Coats
Carol Leffler - Lawrence
Cathy Lucas - Sublette
Hope Lucas - Lawrence
Phyllis Luedke - Colony
Nancy Luis - Cedar Vale
Ben Mader - Wichita

Clay Marcusen - Kansas City, MO
Lila Martin - Overland Park
Douglas R. May - Lawrence
Carol McDowell - Topeka
Cathy McKinney - Manter
Vernon Montgomery - Scranton
Mrs. Ann Murphy - Manhattan
Keith J. Nilles - Lawrence
Mary Reed - Carlton
Carrie Riordan - Topeka
Terry A. Sinclair - Overland Park
James Slover - Topeka
Dixie Smith - Parsons
Unitarian Fellowship of Lawrence
Fern & Herbert VanGieson - Wichita
Kim Witt - Hutchinson
Susan Wylie - Elkhart

Kansas Native Plant Society
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LEARN MORE ABOUT KNPS

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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 calendar year.

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

Kansas Native Plant Society
R. L. McGregor Herbarium
2045 Constant Avenue
Lawrence KS 66047-3729

A membership in 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.

Membership application/renewal form

Member Information:

Name:	
Address	
City/State:	
Zipcode:	
Phone:	
Email:	
County (if Kansas):	

Membership Category:

☐	Student	\$5.00
☐	Individual	\$15.00
☐	Family	\$25.00
☐	Organization	\$30.00
☐	Contributing	\$100.00
☐	Lifetime	\$500.00