



Kansas Native Plant Society

Summer Newsletter



Volume 31 Number 3
July 2009

Annual Meeting is Getting Close: TIME TO GET EXCITED!!

text by Nancy Goulden, photo by Mike Haddock

Have you been to one of our KNPS wildflower outings this summer and had a wonderful time because of the beauty of the individual and collective plants, the camaraderie that builds when you find a special plant, the shared knowledge of experts and everyday fans? The Annual Wildflower Weekend (AWW) has the same elements multiplied by ten. The gathering this year will be in **Pittsburg, Kansas, September 18-20**. These annual “meetings” are part “family reunion” (anyone who is passionate about native plants is instantly family); part business meeting (not very long and not really boring), but mostly great outings exploring a new part of the state and its special flora, including Sweet Joe Pye.



Sweet Joe Pye

But that’s not all. AWW is also a time to learn about “natives” from a new perspective, guided by our theme for the meeting. This year the focus is on the special and useful qualities of Kansas native plants. I like to think of it as “Plants and People— a Productive Partnership.” During the weekend, you will have the opportunity to hear a presentation by Cyndi Cogbill from the Missouri Department of Conservation titled “Wild Edibles from the Native Landscape” highlighting the **use of “natives” as food**. Also scheduled is a spinning and dyeing workshop (**the use of fiber and dyes from plants**) by

Cindy Ford from Pittsburg State University.

If your personal interest in native plants is fueled by **using “natives” in your home garden or yard**, you are bound to be introduced to new plants to use in landscaping when you visit the diverse natural settings selected for our field trips: prairie, woodland, and a chert glade.

Don’t let this “use” thing distract you, the annual weekend is just plain fun. We laugh; we make new friends; we have the excitement of finding species we didn’t even know existed and add them to our “life lists;” we spend two-plus days with a group of unusually “nice” people, who are just a little obsessed with plants.

You **MUST** come to the AWW in Pittsburg. Go to the KNPS website: www.ksnps.org to find the tentative schedule and a list of Hotels and Restaurants. All members will receive a letter in August by postal mail with detailed information and a reservation form. At the very least, write the date in your calendar now. It will soon be here.

Inside This Issue

President's Message	Page 2
AWW - Bring Your Photos	Page 2
AWW - Silent Auction	Page 3
Landscaping With Wild Indigo	Page 3
Outings - Barber County	Page 4
Outings - Commanche County	Page 4
Outings - Grant County	Page 5
Outings - Snyder Prairie	Page 6
Outings - Cimarron Grassland	Page 6
Upcoming Events List	Page 7
Opportunity - Tallgrass	Page 8
Best Symphony Ever!	Page 9
Pocket Guide - Call for Photos	Page 9
Sweet Everlasting - From Seed	Page 10
Outings - Cowley County	Page 10
Outings - Konza Prairie	Page 12
Book Review - Muir's Legacy	Page 12
Featured Plant - Green Dragon	Page 13
Range School Announcement	Page 13
Membership News	Page 13

The Kansas Native Plant Society Newsletter is printed four times a year: Winter (January), Spring (April), Summer (July), Fall (October). The deadline for submitted material is the 5th of December, March, June and September.



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.



KNPS President's Message by Michael Heffron

Greetings to all wildflower lovers. Wow, the spring display of wildflowers was simply amazing. During my spring wildflower and weed class at Butler Community College, we identified over 60 blooming wildflowers and “weeds” across Butler, Greenwood, and Woodson Counties. Some of my personal favorites included Stargrass (*Hypoxis hirsuta*), Dutchman’s Breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*), Smooth Yellow Violet (*Viola pennsylvanica*), and Wild Strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*). As of the writing of this message, it is not officially summer yet, but don’t tell the wildflowers. They are blooming like mad! Please, don’t hesitate; hurry outside as soon as possible to enjoy the summer bloomers before you miss them. I have the fortune of regularly enjoying their majesty for at least thirty minutes each work day during my commute. So far I have noticed that the Spiderworts (*Tradescantia spp.*), Showy Evening Primrose (*Oenothera speciosa*), Daisy Fleabane (*Erigeron strigosus*), and Wild Hyacinth (*Camassia scilloides*) have been extra prolific this season. Also, I have recently had the additional pleasure of enjoying these special blessings of nature on two separate occasions.

In conjunction with Eureka Days on Saturday May 30th near Eureka Lake, four staff members, two tour guides, and two cooks presented the first ever Eureka Wildflower Walk to sixteen eager guests. Oh yes, in addition to enjoying the wildflowers, all participants were treated to a “free” breakfast prepared by Joy Jensen. The beautiful weather helped everyone present at this historic event for Greenwood County enjoy viewing over 50 flagged wild plants, grasses, and sedges in a hayfield across from the volunteer fire station on the Eureka Lake Road. In addition to the typical wildflowers viewed on prairies during this

time of the year, the participants were provided glimpses at Small Skullcap (*Scutellaria parvula*), Green Milkweed (*Asclepias viridis*), and Lance-leaved Ground Cherry (*Physalis virginiana*). The latter’s ripe fruit was actually used as a food by both pioneer and Native Americans. As of now, there are plans to repeat this event next year at approximately the same date and time. So plan ahead, and don’t miss the “2nd Annual Eureka Wildflower Walk” in the spring of 2010.

On June 6th between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., I had the annual pleasure of leading a group of enthusiastic Butler Community College students to their first exposure to some of the “summer” wildflowers and weeds in Butler County. Much to their amazement, they were blessed with identifying over 40 flowering native plants in their native habitats on a sunny warm day near El Dorado State Lake. Some of the many flowering plants they appreciated the most were Showy Beard Tongue (*Penstemon cobaea*), California Loosestrife (*Lythrum californicum*), Missouri Evening Primrose (*Oenothera macrocarpa*), Black Sampson Echinacea (*Echinacea angustifolia*), and Catclaw Sensitive Briar (*Mimosa nutallii*). The latter is very nutritious for livestock, which seek it out. It is always sheer pleasure to enjoy the amazement that people experience during their initial exposure to these botanical marvels of nature.

Please, look at the schedule of wildflower “events” included in this publication. Choose one or more events to your liking that your busy schedule will allow you to attend. And then take a friend and go enjoy some beautiful wildflowers and “weeds” with other folks who share your same appreciation for the beauty and peacefulness of nature. I do indeed hope that I will see you at one of these outings sometime during the summer! Until then “happy wildflowering”!



BRING YOUR BEST PHOTOS TO THE ANNUAL MEETING

The Photo Contest is a much-awaited event every year at the KNPS Annual Wildflower Weekend (AWW). The entries always give us a diverse and interesting display of native plant and plant-related subjects at our Saturday morning session (this year in Yates 102 on the Pittsburg State University campus). First, second, and third-place ribbons are awarded in each category (**collage, flora, fauna, people, scenery, garden**), plus an overall “Best in Show.” A contestant may enter up to four mounted pictures in each category.

The judges are looking for both technical and aesthetic properties such as **composition, sharpness, exposure, color and presentation**. For complete rules and more explanation, go to the KNPS website www.ksnps.org.

Pick out some of your favorite pictures, mount them (most any firm backing will do) and bring them to share with others at the AWW. It’s nice to get a ribbon, but the real reward is listening to the pleasure the attendees express as they look at our Photography Show. Your shots will help make it better than ever this year.



WHAT WILL YOU BRING FOR THE SILENT AUCTION?

There are always some surprises at the Silent Auction on Saturday morning of the Annual Wildflower Weekend (AWW). Many contributors bring something directly or indirectly related to native plants, but that is NOT a requirement. With our theme this year focusing on the role of native plants in our “domestic” lives, it will be a natural to make and bring a food or drink with native plant ingredients (elderberry jelly/wine comes to mind). Paper made from native plant fibers has been a big hit in the past. All kinds of art and craft works, snacks for the ride home, books (especially those related to plants or the natural world) are welcome. It really doesn't matter what you bring— just find something and bring it along. Someone will want it. We will have fun trying to outbid each other, and our KNPS Treasury will grow.



Landscaping with White Wild Indigo text and photo by Jeff Hansen

White wild indigo (*Baptisia alba*) is one of three species of the *Baptisia* genus found in Kansas. It is generally found in the eastern third of the state. It works best as a specimen plant in landscapes because of its size and spread. Normally it's about 4 to 5 feet tall and about as wide. It's a very sturdy plant that doesn't flop over.



Jeff Hansen with White Wild Indigo

As the name implies, the flowers are white, about an inch in length. Not only are the flowers attractive but so is the foliage. It has leaflets of three that tend to be a blue-green color. After it flowers, white wild indigo produces rounded-beaked fruits that are just as interesting as the flowers. In the fall, the plants and seed pods turn black that adds winter interest in the garden.

White wild indigo should be grown from seed

as they are very deep-rooted plants. The seed should be nicked with a file to speed up germination; otherwise it may take a few years for the seed coat to allow germination. The seedlings should be transplanted after one set of true leaves. If you wait too long, the roots will grow too deep to transplant (a few feet deep the first year).

Transplanting mature plants is NOT an option. If you see a plant in the wild, don't try to transplant it; collect seeds from it instead.

This is one of those plants that takes some patience to enjoy. The plant requires time to become established before it will bloom. It usually takes at least four or five years before you will see it flower. Each year the plants tend to get bigger and may produce more than one stem. My plants are 12 years old, and one of them has five stems this year and is six feet tall. The plants are very long lived, and because of their deep tap root, are resistant to drought.

In the spring, wild indigo is one of the very last plants to send its shoots up. The shoot is a long solid mass of green that slowly unfurls its leaves and flowering buds. When you see it, you will NOT think it's white wild indigo!

The other two species of indigo are blue wild indigo (*Baptisia australis*) and Cream wild indigo (*Baptisia bracteata*). Both are found roughly in the eastern half of the state. I've only had experience growing cream wild indigo in my garden. I planted it in 1997, and it just flowered for the first time this year. It may have taken this long because of competition from other taller plants. I like it for its hairy foliage and low growth (only about 1 foot tall). Have any of our members ever grown the blue wild indigo from seed collected in the wild? I'd love to hear your experience with it.

There is a variety of blue indigo that is sold in the nursery trade that is much bushier and multi-stemmed compared to the variety we have in Kansas (variety minor), which tends to only have one flowering stem.

I do sell the white indigo from my website: ksplants.com if you are interested in trying it or you can try collecting seeds from the wild.



KNPS Outings

submitted by KNPS members

BARBER COUNTY WILDFLOWER TOUR MAY 9 - text and photos submitted by Phyllis Scherich.

Evelyn Reed and I were among the 90 wildflower enthusiasts who attended the Barber County Wildflower Tour May 9. We exhibited the KNPS display board featuring the organization, the Wildflower of the Year, and Comanche County wildflowers, and distributed brochures. One of the stops on the tour showed the results of a wildfire in August 2008 that burned over 20,000 acres in Barber County. It was a hot, windy day, and the fire burned extremely complete and hot. It was beneficial in that it destroyed many eastern cedar trees, which are invading the area. The downside is that it killed some cattle and consumed a lot of miles of fencing. Fortunately no homes were destroyed.



Retired range manager Glen Snell explains how fire has historically been one of the forces that has created the ecosystem in this area, and how it is beneficial.



Spring rains have encouraged regrowth of plant life on the burned prairie. Note the burned tree "skeletons".

COMMACHE COUNTY NATURE TOUR MAY 23 - text by June Kliesen, photos by Phyllis Scherich.



Photographer aims carefully for a closeup on the Comanche County nature tour

Oh, how I love this time of year!! We couldn't have asked for a better day for the Comanche County Nature Tour! Clear and sunny— not too hot – and oh my, those amazing native plants, many of them in full bloom. There were about 45 nature lovers out to see what Comanche County had to show. After a continental breakfast at the high school, we headed for Coldwater Lake to start our tour. There were 31 species flagged, and many more found as our curious participants bombarded our leaders, Stan Roth and Tom Flowers, with questions about other plants they saw.

After admiring the lake, we headed out to the country for an afternoon at the Merrill Ranch. We made a couple of stops along the way to see a wetlands area, where we observed a turtle who had

Continued on page 5

COMMANCHE COUNTY NATURE TOUR

Continued from page 4

just finished laying her eggs and a beaver dam, and an abandoned farmstead that was purported to have a population of indigo buntings. The buntings did not make an appearance, but we enjoyed the brief shady stop and were awed by a hedge tree in full bloom. One of the things that I really like about the native plants is that they don't hide from us, as the birds sometimes do. Twenty-seven miles from Coldwater into the Red Hills, we came to the Merrill Ranch. Now, that is out in the country!

We enjoyed a great lunch in a shady grove of trees and listened to Dee Scherich talk a bit about the history of the Merrill Ranch. Phyllis Scherich answered questions about the Comanche Pool, and Stan Roth talked about the geology of the Red Hills. After a group picture, by Kyle Gerstner, we headed up to the Scherich's new home to admire and identify the plants that were growing there. (By the way, if you want a copy of this photo, contact Phyllis Scherich at email@ksnps.org). Amazingly, 51 species were flagged in their yard, showing how quickly native plants move into a disturbed area. It was a gorgeous display!

Right at the end of their driveway was a

lovely display of Plains Larkspur, the KNPS Flower of the Year. The rest of the afternoon was spent admiring the sweeping vistas on the ranch and the overall displays of wildflowers. We saw Cobaea and White Penstemon, Ratany, Breadroot Scurfpea, and Toadflax among

many others. We also saw an artistic arrangement of Scarlet Globe Mallow and Dakota Verbena alongside a bridge where we stopped to admire a colony of Cliff Swallows. Isn't Mother Nature just amazing?



KNPS Flower of the Year
Plains Larkspur

GRANT COUNTY TOUR MAY 30 - text and photos submitted by Phyllis Scherich

The prairie was alive with Indian blanket and fine-leaf thelesperma for the approximately 30 enthusiastic participants in the Grant County Wildflower Tour, May 30, 2009. Marion McGlohon and Sam Guy had pre-identified 79 plants they had seen in an area north of Ulysses, and participants viewed most of them. Wright's baccharis (*Baccharis wrightii*) was the "special find" of the day. Some of the favorites were: purple poppy mallow, Nuttall's evolvulus, rush skeleton plant, tansy aster, white beardtongue, scarlet gaura, yucca, blackfoot daisy, baby white aster, old plainsman, plains larkspur, Berlandier's



Berlandier's flax
Linum rigidum var. *Berlandieri*



Blackfoot Daisy

flax, western wallflower, Engelmann's daisy, yellow hymenopappus, goat's beard, and scarlet globe mallow, in addition to masses of Indian blanket and fine-leaf thelesperma.



Yellow Hymenopappus

KNPS- and GHF-SPONSORED WALK AT SNYDER PRAIRIE JUNE 6 -submitted by Frank Norman.

A prairie walk at Snyder Prairie located near Mayetta, Kansas, was led by Frank Norman, local botanist and plant ecologist and member of the GHF (Grassland Heritage Foundation) and KNPS, on June 6. Snyder Prairie is a 140-acre tract of land composed of native prairie, riparian woods, and restored prairie in varying degrees of recovery. The walk was attended by eight GHF and KNPS members and one guest, including Don Hrenchir, Mary (his sister from Arizona), Steve and Sue Holcomb, Fred and Nancy Coombs, Mickey Delfeder, and Frank.

It was a beautiful, sunny day with plenty of wind. Flowering plants included *Echinacea pallida*, *Phlox pilosa*, and *Melilotus officinalis*. Attendees were also attracted to *Stipa spartea*, butterfly milkweed, Sullivant's milkweed, and

Sporobolus heterolepis. It appears phenology of prairie species is a bit behind this year.



Snyder Prairie Outing

CIMARRON NATIONAL GRASSLANDS JUNE 13 -text and photos submitted by Jeff Hansen.

The Cimarron National Grasslands are found in the very southwest corner of Kansas in Morton County. They are comprised of 108,175 acres of shortgrass and sandsage prairie managed by the US Forest Service.

The Morton County Historical Society Museum sponsors a bus tour through the grasslands each spring. Guides are provided by the

Forest Service. One of our stops was Point of Rocks (incredible scenery). At this stop, a theatre group did solo performances of various historical figures. Around the stop were many wildflowers. I saw some familiar flowers such as prickly poppy and yucca, but most I had never seen before. Later I found out the common names of some of the wildflowers such as: blackfoot daisy and rocky mountain zinnia. Both were blooming in masses and produced mounds of yellow and white. Another very showy flower was the trailing ratany with its fuschia-red colored flowers.



Rocky Mountain Zinnia



Trailing Ratany

At Point of Rocks, I spoke about native plants of Kansas and the Society. A number of people showed interest in all of the various plants we saw blooming. Afterwards some of us discussed doing a wildflower tour of the grasslands next spring. With the variety of wildflowers and the help of the museum and KNPS, it should be a worthwhile tour to attend.

More Outings. Go to page 10.

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 these fabulous happenings!

 **July 18:** 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).

 **August 4:** 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.

August 8: Missouri Prairie Foundation Fall Board Meeting will be held at Schwartz Prairie in St. Clair County, near Collins. For more information call Justin Johnson at (888) 843-6739.

 **August 15:** Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs prairie maintenance and preservation projects. See July 18 notice.

August 18: 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.

August 22: Overland Park Arboretum & Botanical Gardens prairie experts will take small groups on guided tours of the Prairie Restoration Project from 11am to 2pm. The event is FREE; reservations required (call 913-685-3604 to reserve a time). Volunteers have been working since 2002 to restore 160 acres of existing Arboretum land into a native prairie. The Arboretum is located just west off Highway 69 at 179th and Antioch. Follow signs at gate entrance to Prairie Old Home Site Entrance Gate for parking.

September 3: Prairie Seed Harvesting at the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve in Strong City, Kansas. Help staff harvest prairie seeds from 9am - noon. The seeds will be used to restore bottomland prairie areas at the preserve. [tapr_interpretation@nps.gov] (620) 273-8494.

September 5: Fall 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.

September 9: Field Trip to Jerry Smith Park in Kansas City, MO at 9am. Take advantage of this opportunity to tour one of Kansas City's most diverse and interesting natural areas with knowledgeable native plant guides! 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 ¾ mile on the left. Contact: Lance Jessee, (816) 444-4933.

 **September 12-13:** 3rd Prairie Wildflower Weekend at the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve in Chase County, KS. Bring the family; the weekend will be educational and enjoyable for all ages, 10am-4pm. Members of the Kansas Native Plant Society will be on hand to lead wildflower hikes. [www.nps.gov/tapr] [tapr_interpretation@nps.gov] (620) 273-8494.

 **September 19:** Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs prairie maintenance and preservation projects. See notice for July 18.

Kansas Area Native Plant Wildflower Events - Continued

 **September 18-20:** Kansas Native Plant Society's 31st Annual Wildflower Weekend will be in Pittsburg, KS. We will visit woodlands and prairies in and around Crawford County. Come enjoy native plants with us in the Cherokee Lowlands and the Ozark Plateau of southeast Kansas! The weekend is filled with outings, programs, a silent auction, photo contest, dinner, and socializing. Please contact KNPS for more information. [email@KSNPS.org] (785) 864-3453.

September 25-27: The Land Institute's 31st Annual Prairie Festival is in Salina, KS. The festival features speakers, artists, music, drama, dancing, guided prairie walks, bird watching, children's activities, and food. Confirmed speakers: George M. Woodwell, Maude Barlow, Verlyn Klinkenborg, John Todd and Wes Jackson! [www.landinstitute.org] (785) 823-5376.

September 25-27: Missouri Native Plant Society Fall Field Trip and 30th Anniversary Celebration in Fulton, MO. Return, with us, to the place where the Missouri Native Plant Society was founded, 30 years ago. Our plans include special presentations, visits with past presidents, founding and current members, a banquet, and field trips to surrounding areas of botanical interest at Graham Cave State Park, Tucker Prairie, Danville Glades, and Whetstone Creek. Contact for questions about schedule or arrangements: [www.missourinativeplantsociety.org], Rex Hill at (314) 849-1464.

 **September 26:** National Public Lands Day! Join Bridging the Gap's affiliates Kansas City WildLands, Heartland Tree Alliance and Keep Kansas City Beautiful as we take down honeysuckle, plant trees and clean up a public park in the region, 9am to noon. Contact for more information: [http://www.kcwildlands.org/], Linda Lehrbaum [Linda@bridgingthegap.org] (816) 561-1061 x116.

October 1: Prairie Seed Harvesting at the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve in Strong City, Kansas. Help staff harvest prairie seeds from 9am - noon. The seeds will be used to restore bottomland prairie areas at the preserve. [tapr_interpretation@nps.gov] (620) 273-8494.

October 1-3: The 3rd Annual Kansas Trail Conference will be in Topeka. Indoor conference sessions will be held at the Capital Plaza Hotel and convention facilities on October 1 and 2. Then, on Saturday, October 3, a trail building workshop will be presented at the Kansas Wildlife & Parks, Region 2 office on Wanamaker Rd. Saturday morning classroom sessions will discuss basic trail building design concepts and construction methods. Afternoon sessions will be held outdoors in the nearby Kaw River State Park. Outdoor sessions will include trail construction demonstrations and trail assessment hikes. For detailed program and registration information contact Lyle Reidy, Kansas Trails Council President, [lriedy@usd345.com] (785) 286-4103.

 **October 17:** Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs prairie maintenance and preservation projects. See July 18.

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.

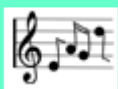
 **Nov. 21:** Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs prairie maintenance and preservation projects. See July 18.

OPPORTUNITY FOR VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

Here is an opportunity for those of you who felt withdrawal symptoms after your county wildflower outing or the symphony event were over. Just because the spring and early summer plants are finished, it doesn't mean it's all over. Many people insist the third act, August through early October, is the best show of the year.

Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve (in Chase County) honors our glorious asters, goldenrods, sunflowers and a wonderful array of other autumn-blooming plants by sponsoring Prairie Wildflower Weekend September 12 and 13. Just as with the Symphony in the Flint Hills, KNPS provides the wildflower-information-givers and asks for members from various locations across the state to join in as volunteers. A number of KNPS members provide displays, plant-related workshops, or presentations. We have a booth featuring KNPS and native plants, and of course, we lead wildflower hikes.

You will want to be part of this celebration, as a visitor or a volunteer or both; so put it on your calendar now. It is a great family outing with plenty to interest children, from 10 am to 4 pm each day. You can volunteer for either day or both. Contact Nancy Goulden (nag@ksu.edu) to volunteer or get more information about KNPS involvement.



THE BEST SYMPHONY EVER!

text by Nancy Goulden, photos by Phyllis Scherich

There was one thing every KNPS Volunteer agreed on— “This was the BEST Wildflower-sharing Event we have ever had during our four years at the Symphony in the Flint Hills.” The afternoon of June 13, 2009, had ideal weather— no rain, no storms, no mud, no excessive heat or humidity— just lovely sunshine and the prairie breeze.

KNPS was given 22 volunteer slots, the most ever. We had several first-time volunteers along with several who had been to multiple symphony events in the past. This year we focused our visitor contacts on the trail going up from the parking lot to the symphony site by adding a second volunteer to most stops.



These two young men were anxious to point out the nipple cactus nestled in the rocks. Can you see it? It is right in the center at the bottom behind the rocks. It wasn't blooming.

For the most part, we were kept constantly busy telling visitors about the wild alfalfa, serrate-leaf evening-primrose, and butterfly milkweed (which decided to bloom at the last minute the day before). Wildflower of the Year, plains larkspur was also very common. It must have heard this was its year.

Our 30-minute prairie hikes were also very, very popular. Both the variety of species and the total number of blooming plants were unusually high this year; so there was plenty for our KNPS experts to share with the guests. That's another reason it was the best.

In addition, our KNPS booth display, with Phyllis Scherich's presentation of Wildflower of the Year, the Governor's proclamation of Native Plant Month, and a stunning collection of wildflower pictures, drew many people. Once there, a number of interactive exhibits gave them the opportunity to learn more about native plants. These included a crush-and-sniff display of aromatic plants (Joc Baker); huge variety of yarns dyed with native plant dyes (Iralee Barnard); and touch-and-observe samples of paper made from native plant fibers (Jeff Hansen).



This is one of the bouquets used on the tables in the Patrons' tent. Can you name the flowers?

We also had a large bouquet of species found on the site (brought by Valerie Wright) that was used to challenge visitors to see how many they could name. The top four contestants are receiving a membership and a poster. These four remarkable people were able to name almost all the plants, and some even gave the Latin names. They belong in KNPS.

Based on the hike sign-in sheet, our estimates of trail visits and the number of visitors who came to the booth, we believe the KNPS volunteers had around 1,250 direct contacts focused on sharing native plants and KNPS information with the visitors. This is the highest number we have ever had.

That's the formula for a great day in Flint Hills pasture land: perfect weather, an abundance of beautiful and diverse plants, interested visitors, and enthusiastic KNPS volunteers who consistently went above and beyond.

Wanted: Photos of Kansas Plants for the Kansas Pocket Guide Series

A series of 70-page, full color, natural history booklets have been produced by the Great Plains Nature Center in Wichita. Currently underway is a new booklet on Kansas Flint Hills Wildflowers and Grasses. The Kansas Native Plant Society is invited to supply photographs for this publication. The booklet will be illustrated by professional-quality photographs, taken by Kansas Native Plant Society members. All photos must be digital. If you are interested, check out the photo guidelines at the KNPS web page (www.ksnps.org).

GROWING PLANTS FROM SEED: SWEET EVERLASTING

text and photo by Ken O'Dell

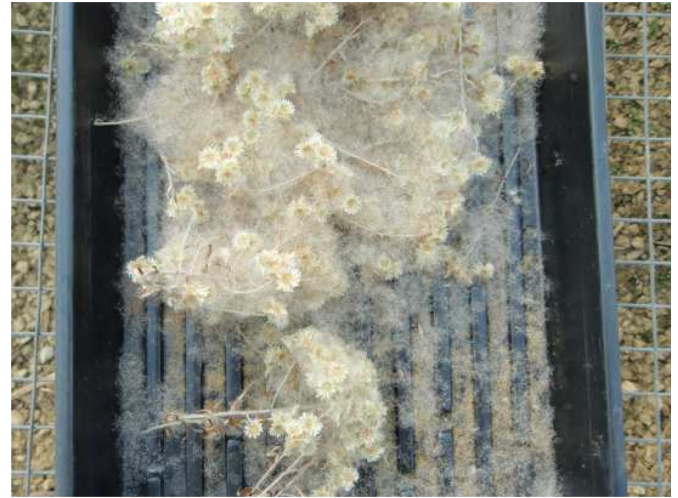
Growing wild and naturally over the eastern 2/3 of Kansas, Sweet Everlasting gets its name from the sweet fragrance it gives off when the leaves are crushed or bruised. It does not matter if the foliage is still green or dried, the fragrance is there. Take a small piece of foliage; rub it gently between your hands and several hours later you still have the sweet smell of maple syrup on your hands.

During the covered-wagon-days when the huge wagon trains would leave Westport (which is today Kansas City) going west, the settlers on the wagon trains would pick Sweet Everlasting, put it in their wagons, put it in their grips (baggage), and in general let the kids play with it so when they went for a long time without any method of washing or cleaning their bodies, they would at least smell like something sweet.

The scientific name for Sweet Everlasting is *Pseudognaphalium obtusifolium* and was recently changed from *Gnaphalium obtusifolium*. You will still find reference to the latter name. Sweet Everlasting is a reseeding annual, growing upright with one or two stems. The leaves in early spring are a light green color; change to a silvery-green during the summer and then to a more silvery coloring as they mature. The seed heads are about the same color as the foliage, and one can spot these unusual plants mixed in the prairie and hay fields as they usually grow to 18 to 24 inches tall, and the silver leaf colors are very distinctive.

I live in Miami County, Kansas, where we have these excellent “natives” growing in our hay fields, prairie and road sides. I pick the seed in early winter when the wind is not blowing since even a light wind will blow them to the next county. Put the seed in a tray or bowl indoors so it does not blow away. This stuff is light and fluffy and was designed by Mother Nature to blow in the wind. In early March, I will take a handful of the fluffy white seed material and spread it quite thick

over the top of a flat that I have filled with potting soil. Within a few days to a couple of weeks, you will have many seedlings coming up in the tray. I plant several of these to 4 inch pots and grow in a cool greenhouse. Alternatively, you can put them in a bright window indoors out of frost and freeze. Transplant them to a flower bed after freeze is over in the spring. You can also gather the seed heads in the fall and winter and spread them directly over a field where you want them to grow.



This photo shows the tiny seed of the Sweet Everlasting and how I save it in the winter time.

Another added bonus of the Sweet Everlasting plants is they serve as a food source for the caterpillar of a group of butterflies called American Painted Lady. When the eggs are laid on your Sweet Everlasting, you will see a bit of webbing and then a small caterpillar will emerge and start eating some foliage. Out of this process comes a beautiful butterfly. American Painted Lady also uses Pussy-toes (*Antennaria*) for a host plant. This is another plant that grows in abundance in parts of Kansas. I encourage many insects to be at home around our farm. I also plant a few extra tomatoes and potato plants for the big, juicy hornworm to feast on. The more insects, the more birds we have. The more birds we have, the more snakes we have. It is a cycle that is as perennial as the seasons.



KNPS Outings *Continued from page 6*

COWLEY COUNTY WILDFLOWER TOUR JUNE 13 - text and photos submitted by Krista Dahlinger.

The 2009 Cowley County Wildflower Tour took place on the Snyder Ranch on June 13th. Eighty people registered for the tour and filled two school busses on the way to the 9,000 acre ranch. Five tour guides, Barry Barber, Natural Resources and Conservation Service; Denise Noonan, Farm

Service; educators Dr. Charles Hunter and Richard Treadway, and Krista Dahlinger of KNPS escorted small groups along routes where we had pre-flagged plants in bloom. Each guide invoked a different background to describe characteristics of the plants, i.e., nutritional value to cattle, plant family characteristics, invasive species, etc. *Every 15 minutes a school bus horn blew and the groups moved on to the next guide to see a different set of plants.*

Continued on page 11

The sky was overcast so it was not too hot in the morning. A casual poll revealed that most people let Daisy Fleabane grow in the flower beds at home. There were plenty of Butterfly Milkweed, Catsclaw Sensitivebriar, Green Antelopehorn, Wild Alfalfa, Illinois Tick Clover, June Grass, Scribner's Panicum, Tuberous Indian Plantain, Western Yarrow and Yellow Flax in bloom. Compass Plant, Baldwin Ironweed, Pitcher's Sage, Liatris and Lead Plant were present but not yet blooming. Wild Quinine and Western Marbleseed were a couple of rarities we observed. *Lespedeza Sericea* was present and exhibited its obnoxious tendency to overtake an area of pasture.



Purple coneflower, Daisy Fleabane, Butterfly Milkweed and Compass Plant share this patch of prairie

The Snyder Ranch is located in eastern Cowley County covering wide flat pastures edged in limestone with dramatic drop-offs and vistas to the east. After we finished plant observation in the pasture, we boarded the school busses and traveled to an old limestone house on the ranch for lunch in the shade.



Cowley County Tour participants enjoy lunch in the shade. Wanda Jackson and Jenni Carr of the NRCS office catered a make-your-own-sandwich lunch with side dishes and desserts. Hay bales were arranged in the shade for dining and visiting before the tour officially ended.

Many thanks to the NRCS and Farm Service personnel for the time and effort they provided to organize this tour. Also thanks go to Charles Hunter and Richard Treadway for giving their time as professional educators to a large group of people who showed an interest in learning about native plants. And a big thank you goes out to Marjorie Snyder for allowing access to the scenic pasture land and this enjoyable morning of native plant appreciation. One overhead comment that seemed to sum up the morning was "I've never gotten so much for \$5.00 before."



Participants enjoy the Cowley County Wildflower tour

KONZA PRAIRIE WILDFLOWER WALK JUNE 14 - text and photos submitted by Valerie Wright.

There were clouds approaching Konza Prairie on June 7 at 7:00 p.m. for the Annual Friends of Konza Prairie Wildflower Walk. But the storm cells split to the north and south leaving a very pleasant and dry evening to enjoy the lush green prairie.

About 70 visitors did just that. They were guided by our docents trained in the Konza Environmental Education Program, several of whom are also members of KNPS. More than 50 species of wildflowers were in bloom, including Butterfly Milkweed and an impressive showing of



Winecup with bee on Butterfly Hill
Callirhoe involucrata

Plains Larkspur, Wild Alfalfa, Purple Poppy Mallow, Nodding Green Violet and Catclaw Sensitive Brier.

A subspecies of Spider Antelopehorn (*Asclepias asperula* subsp. *capricornu*) that we had not seen in five years appeared on the Butterfly Hill Trail.



Rare Spider Antelopehorn
Asclepias asperula subsp. *capricornu*

Trumpet Vine opened its blooms the day before, and the hummingbirds were enjoying it. Also the first Prickly Poppy opened for this event.

KNPS Board members Nancy Goulden, Earl Allen, Joc Baker, Valerie Wright, and Mike Haddock led groups, while Fred and Nancy Coombs and several additional KNPS members joined groups on the trails.



Book Review by Iralea Barnard

Nature's Beloved Son: Rediscovering John Muir's Botanical Legacy

by Bonnie J. Gisell with images by Stephen J. Joseph, Berkeley, CA: Heyday Books, 2008

John Muir is widely known as a wilderness advocate, but it is less recognized that botany was his first vocation. As a child his earliest experiences of flowering plants were in his family garden in Dunbar, Scotland. As an adult, plants became his passion. Beginning in 1864, Muir spent 24 months walking across the Canadian countryside, through deep forest and tangled swamp, collecting plants as he went. It was on this trip that he found the wild calypso orchid. Muir was so moved by the lovely white flower, which he described as pure and chaste as snow, that he "sat down opposite it and cried for joy."

Later Muir traveled on foot from Kentucky to the Gulf of Mexico, again finding and collecting new and unusual plants as he went. Eventually he settled in California where he came to know the Sierra high country and Yosemite Valley in a way few people have experienced. The first of his seven explorations to Alaska was in 1879. In spite of the often icy terrain, Muir never missed the thinnest blade of grass, the smallest bell of a flower, or the finest wisp of a fern frond.

Gisell has presented an eloquent account of the life of John Muir and the intimacy of his relationship with the plants he studied. The text is supplemented with nearly 100 of the actual plant specimens that Muir collected in Canada, the southern U.S., California, and Alaska during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which are brought to life again in the book by stunning photographic images.

This book is a must for everyone who loves plants and wild places. Gisell says it well that for Muir there was "within the kingdom of plants the science of beauty and the art of discovery."



Featured Plant - Green Dragon (*Arisaema dracontium* (L.) Schott)

Text by Lorraine J. Kaufman, photo by Stan Kaufman

A Dragon in the woods?! In OUR woods??? I had heard of such things but I never expected to see one!

When out tromping with my husband about 20 years ago, we encountered a strange inhabitant that kept itself well hidden in the dense overgrowth near the small stream that meandered through our woods in east central Kansas.

I saw a straight, smooth green stem nearly 20 inches tall with its only leaf at the very top which curved into a semi-circle, then divided into numerous finger-like leaflets. About mid-way on the stem a yellowish-green, fleshy sheath appeared from which protruded a four- to eight-inch spadix. There had to be some explanation. Was this, in fact, the dragon with its tongue thrust out as if ready to strike? And so it was, we discovered with delight the intriguing Green Dragon, *Arisaema dracontium* and more of his kind in several enclaves further down stream.

Through the years I have occasionally returned at the end of May to search for and discover my old friend. This year my son led the way through the dense vegetation, and as we peered again into its depths, we were delighted to find the “dragons” still at home.

The fruit of this unusual plant is a nubbin of strikingly beautiful bright red seed resembling



Green Dragon
Arisaema dracontium

kernels. Eaten by woodland creatures or pushed gently into the soil by the footstep of a casual passer-by, they will be dispersed and create, hopefully, more “dragons” in our woods.

KNPS Involvement in Range School

Kansas Native Plant Society has had a long-time interest in sharing knowledge and insights about native plants with those in the agricultural arena in order to promote ecologically sound land practices. This interest is coming to fruition with KNPS helping to sponsor the Kansas Grasslands Coalition’s Range Schools that will be offered in August. Two three-day schools (one for Tallgrass prairie and one for Mid-/Short-Grass prairie) will

focus on “balancing making a sustainable living with keeping a sustainable environment.”

KNPS board members Jeff Hansen and Iralee Barnard will present information on plant identification and invasive plants. Our society has also given two scholarships for the school. The cost is \$250 per person, and the scholarships will help reduce the cost for ranchers interested in attending. For more information, go to the KGLC website www.kglc.org.

Membership News

New Members 3/16/09 to 6/13/09

Karen Bradburn - Lawrence
Linda J. Broce - Pratt
Lenni & Gordon Coulter - Preston
Gary & Carol Gadbury - Manhattan
Marieta Hauser - Johnson City
Jane Hoskinson & Gwyneth Sigmon - McLouth
Elsie Neumann - Wichita
Overland Park Arboretum & Botanical Garden

Rosella Royer - Sabetha
Kevin Scherich - Emporia
Ruth Scott - Baldwin City
Janet G. Spiegel - Topeka
David & Betty Turner - Bartlesville, OK
Duane & Pat Van Dolah - Garden City
Luci Von Lintel - Manhattan
S E Watts - Kirwin
Jack Westphal - Oskaloosa

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



Address Service Requested

LEARN MORE ABOUT KNPS

Check us out online at www.ksnps.org
Contact us by email at email@ksnps.org
Contact us by phone at 785-864-3453



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