



Kansas Native Plant Society

Autumn Newsletter



Volume 34 Number 4
October 2012

Yet Another Awesome Annual Wildflower Weekend!

Text by June Kliesen, photo by Phyllis Luedke

The term “Annual Meeting” may sometimes bring up visions of stuffy old men in far away Board Rooms going over boring (although necessary) business matters— certainly not something that most of our members would enjoy. KNPS folks love the out-of-doors and learning about the world around them. It’s more than just looking at flowers and admiring their beauty. It is also seeing how they fit together in the environment and how essential they are to all of us. Our members also enjoy getting together with others who appreciate the wonders of the natural world, but most of all, we enjoy sharing our world with others.



AWW Hikers enjoy the day and share information about the local flora.

This year we had the biggest participation ever, which was fortunate since we also had more different things to see. However, it doesn’t matter if we see the same flowers in our travels. They are like old friends. You don’t just cross them off your list because you’ve seen them before. And, they often appear different in different locations and in their different stages of life, just as we do. So why was it so “Awesome”? Part of the success was due to the location. Winfield is a lovely place: lovely old buildings down town; equally lovely big old houses lining 9th Street; even lovely weather. Part of it, too, was due to a number of new members who bring with them new ideas and new energy.

There were the usual have-to things to handle during the board meeting that preceded the AWW on Saturday afternoon: assigning jobs, looking at the calendar for planning the year’s meetings, thanking board members for the years they have served (Frank Norman, Dave Welfelt and Craig Hensley) and welcoming new ones (Nadine Champlin, Sabetha; Lenora Larson, Paola; and

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IS THIS YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER? Check the first line of your address on the back page. If the date is 12/31/2012 your membership is about to expire. Renew your membership now to continue receiving the KNPS newsletter. You can renew online at ksnps.org and click “membership”.

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.



President's Message by Mickey Delfelter

The 34th Annual Wildflower Weekend has come and gone. Although I missed the activities this year, it sounds as if the weekend was a rousing success. I want to thank our planning committee, plus the organizers of the photo contest, raffle and silent auction for all of their outstanding work. Thank you also to Marjorie Snyder for opening up her properties for several outings, the folks at Southwestern College for providing the meeting spaces, the Tallgrass Express String Band for their musical inspiration and the city of Winfield for its hospitality. I'm already looking forward to next year's AWW—no matter where we hold it!

As 2012 comes to a close, let's take a look back at the year and what we have in store for 2013. The past two years have seen a total of 135 KNPS-sponsored outings. That is up 50% over the previous two years. Kudos to the membership region leaders for organizing new local-level events and keeping the membership involved. Additionally, our website posts an additional 60 events per year for other organizations such as Grassland Heritage Foundation and Dyck Arboretum.

The past two years have also continued to see an increase in membership, which I think is a testament that we are doing something right. Our members like our outings, the membership regions, our newsletter and our big special activities dealing with Little Bluestem and AWW. Plus, we are just a fun group to be around!

Overall, the organization's budget continues to be in good shape, despite the economic difficulties we see across the state and nation. Our biggest sources of income continue to be membership

dues, followed by your generous donations into both our Legacy and general funds. We also bring in around \$1000 per year with merchandise sales through the website and at AWW.

As for outlays, maintaining our fantastic website and printing/mailling the newsletter account for approximately 65% of our expenses. We also have other mailing expenses, such as the annual brochure and renewal letters. And of course we support several scholarships and have general office expenses. But no matter what the expense, we are always careful and frugal with our budget, not to mention we have a great group of volunteers.

Like any other organization, we have turnover in our leadership. Two of our board members resigned earlier this year and another completed his term, but chose not to renew it. Although we will miss those fine folks, we are excited to have Lenora, Nadine and Matthew come on board. You can read more about the newcomers in their interviews elsewhere in this edition.

Looking ahead to next year, it looks to be the year of Little Bluestem! Not only will Little Blue be the 2013 Wildflower of the Year, but KNPS is gearing up to promote it all year long. Those of you who have been members for a few years know that our Little Bluestem committee was instrumental in getting *Schizachyrium scoparium* named the official state grass of Kansas in 2010. Our hardworking committee is back with several new and exciting initiatives that you can read about in this and future newsletters.

I have no doubt that KNPS is on solid footing as we head into a new year, not only financially, but also from leadership and membership perspectives. Thank you for making 2012 one of the most productive years we have ever have and here's hoping that 2013 will be even better!



Awesome Wildflower Weekend!

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Mathew Richter, McPherson), handling the budget requests, and dealing with the minutiae that are just a part of any organization. It almost sounds as if we slip a bit into the stuffy old Board Room with the old guys in suits, but we know that this business allows us to spread the word about Native Plants, see and learn what is happening in our state, and soon we will be out the door to see our beloved plants, both old and new.

After the Board Meeting, we joined with our other KNPS folks and headed off to our first outing to Marjorie Snyder's private Flint Hills pasture. It was a treat to be outside with our members and new plants to admire and identify.

After communing with nature, we headed back to town for a quick dinner before a free concert at the Richardson Performing Arts Center at Southwestern College. Even though this was an indoor event and no wildflowers were present, it was a major highpoint for the weekend. The performers were the Tallgrass Express String Band, and they put on a "foot-stompin' / hand clapping performance"! All of them were terrific, but we were all very impressed by the lead singer Annie Wilson who had written nearly all the songs they did. All of her songs were about the wildflowers of the tallgrass prairie and growing up and living on the Tallgrass prairie. They even sang the praises for the Dung Beetle! How can you not love folks who love dung beetles! Apparently there were lots of dung beetle and wildflower lovers as

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Awesome Wildflower Weekend!

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evidenced by all the people who swarmed up to the back after the concert to buy CD's of the Tallgrass Express String Band. It was a memorable event!

The General Meeting was held Saturday morning at Wroten Hall on the Southwestern College Campus. The meeting was called to order by Mike Haddock, President Elect, who introduced Dave Welfelt, KNPS member and native of the area. Dave welcomed us to Winfield and gave us some information about the area and its history. Notable business in the general meeting included recognizing our own "Dynamic Duo" Fred and Nancy Coombs with the Sheldon H. Cohen Award for the many ways they have served the organization and the work they have done to restore Fred's eighty-acre family farm to native prairie. Nancy Goulden and Valerie Wright gave us a little quiz about what we have done to promote Little Bluestem, our State Grass, both to the general public and in schools in an attempt to get school children outside and learning about Little Blue and the prairie. Valerie's committee judging the photo contest presented this year's winning pictures, which you can admire elsewhere in the newsletter. The photos were simply spectacular!

Jim Mason, the Butterfly Guy from the Great Plains Nature Center, was our featured speaker who told us about the "Flying Flowers," the butterflies, which are so closely tied to the flowers they feed on and pollinate. We also learned about their amazing migrations, which may cover thousands of miles. Jim also shared the Pocket Guide of Kansas Butterflies with us.

The general meeting ended, and after a brief break with a terrific catered lunch, the rest the weekend consisted of three more outings which will be discussed in other articles. We encourage those of you who have never attended an AWW to come to the next one. You will be welcomed by other KNPS members, some of whom are just beginners, others whose knowledge is simply encyclopedic, and yet others of every level in between. We also promise you that you won't have to spend any time with stuffy old men in dusty Board Rooms.



Valerie Wright presents the Cohen Award to the Coombs

Photo by Phyllis Scherich



Wildflower Reunion Annie Wilson, Sept. 2011

From the first day of the spring when they reach for the sky
These prairie wildflowers add grace to our lives
We welcome their faces just like a lost friend
When they leave, we can't wait til they come back again

Why Hello, **White-eyed Grass**, you're the first to arrive
Your tiny white flowers bring the pastures to life
Then, Hey, **Wildindigo**— handsome and tall
A lot of folks say you're their favorite of all

Well, **Wild Alfalfa**, just how have you been
Keepin' clear out of trouble, I'm hopin' old friend
Why, there's **Lead-plant** and **Bee Balm** so pretty we whistle
Their purples look nice next to **Wavy Leaf Thistle**

CHORUS: It's the sweetest reunion to see them again
These prairie wildflowers are just like old friends

Catclaw Sensitive Brier - she's shy to the touch
We try not to crowd in around her too much
Say **Milk Vetch** brought plums they call buffalo beans
We can have 'em for snacks with our **New Jersey Tea**

Hello **Butterfly Milkweed**, You're sure lookin' fine
That outfit you're wearin' just dazzles my eyes
There's **Sweet Rose Verbena** and her bouquets of blue
And **Spiderwort's** leaves we can add to our stew

The **Prairie Wild Rose** she loves tales of romance
Her flowers belong on a dress at a dance
The **Primrose** in white looks about to be wed
She folds out her gown in the night before bed **CHORUS**

Hello pretty **Penstemon**, you're lookin' well
We're happy to see that you're wearing your bells
There's the **Coneflower** sisters in yellow and pink
That fresh **Prairie Clover** just gave them a wink

Then down in the woods we see **Cardinal Flower**
Her bright red dress glows in those dark shady bowers
And there's **Snow-on-the-Mountain** with leaves white and green
Some call her a weed but she looks like a queen

Fin'ly **Gayfeather** blooms in a bright purple haze
Along with the tall showy blue **Pitcher Sage**
Soon the countryside's shining with golden **Sunflowers**
And last the sweet **Aster** in fall's final hour **CHORUS**



The "Flying Flowers" of Kansas

Text and photo by Chelsea Juricek

The featured speaker at this year's KNPS annual meeting was Jim Mason, major author and photo contributor to the brand-new pocket guide book *Butterflies of Kansas*. The shocking fact is that there are about 190 species of butterflies found in Kansas, and ten times that number of moth species! The AWW attendees were enthralled by Jim's amazing photos and information about the "flying flowers" of Kansas.

Butterflies and moths belong to the scientific order *Lepidoptera*, which means, "scaled wing." Under magnification, the wings have overlapping scales like shingles on a roof. The quickest way to separate butterflies and moths is to observe the antennae. Butterflies have "clubbed" antennae that are larger at the tip; whereas moths' antennae taper to a point. Jim did a great job of walking the crowd through the life cycle of butterflies. It was interesting to learn that a caterpillar increases 3000 times in size during its growth cycle! No wonder caterpillars have such a voracious appetite.

Jim's presentation included a variety of photos explaining the various markings on butterflies; including eyespots, fake antennae, and bright coloration, which serve to protect the insects from predators. One amazing fact was that butterflies are able to see in the ultraviolet range of the spectrum, beyond what is visible to humans. A flower petal might look simple to a human, but it's



Jim Mason is featured speaker at the AWW

a glowing landing strip to a butterfly!

There are 61 species of butterflies chosen for the new pocket guide and Jim highlighted some of the standout examples. For example, the Tiger Swallowtail is the biggest species with a 4 1/2 inch wingspan! One of the smallest species in the guide is the Eastern Tailed-Blue, the size of a dime! Jim also described the common Cloudless Sulphur butterfly as a "flying lemon drop." The crowd learned that the most numerous butterfly group in the world is the Brushfoots, which are also considered the prettiest! Those include the well known Monarchs, Fritillaries, Ladies (American and Painted), as well as Buckeyes and Red Admirals. However, the biggest family of butterflies in Kansas is the Skippers with 63 species alone. The Skippers are considered the sports cars of the butterfly world— fast fliers!



Photo Contest

By Cindy Ford

The 2012 photo contest was once again a success with so many beautiful photos that the judges had difficulty in determining the rankings. Thanks to all who brought entries for the contest. This event is very popular with the fall meeting attendees.

New this year was the category featuring the Wildflower of the Year. This year's species was leadplant with Phyllis Luedke submitting the first and second place winners and Susan Reimer contributing to the third place position.

In the Flora category, Mark Metcalf provided views of a rose and prickly pear cactus in first and second places with Phyllis Luedke giving us a black-eyed Susan for third place.

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Photo Contest Best of Show
Garden Visitor on *Liatris*
Mark Neubrand



Photo Contest *Continued from Page 4*



People First
Finding Floral Treasure
Rondi Anderson

Most entries in the Fauna category highlighted insects interacting with flowers. Cynthia Pederson took first place with second and third places going to Rondi Anderson. Rondi Anderson also took first place in the People category with Matthew Richter bringing in second place.

Rondi Anderson contributed first and third winner slots in the Scenery Category. Mark Neubrand got second place in Scenery, but also took Best of Show with his photography entitled, "Garden Visitor on Liatris".



People Second
People Watchers
Matthew Richter

Next year, consider entering a photo of your own. Watch for changes in the Photo Contest rules. We will be asking for digital photos sent to the committee before the Annual Wildflower Weekend (AWW) as well as matted photos that can be brought to the meeting. Details for next year's photo contest will be available in the newsletter and on the KNPS website.



Flora First
Prairie Wild Rose
Mark Metcalf



Flora Second
Prickly Pear Cactus
Mark Metcalf



Flora Third
Black-eyed Susan
Phyllis Luedke

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Photo Contest *Continued from Page 5*



Fauna First
Green Pollinator
Cynthia Pederson



Fauna Second
Great Spangled Day
Rondi Anderson



Fauna Third
Yucca Blends
Rondi Anderson



Wildflower of the Year First
Leadplant Up Close
Phyllis Luedke



Wildflower of the Year Second
Leadplant in the Meadow
Phyllis Luedke



Scenery First
Goodnight Sun
Rondi Anderson



Scenery Second
Verbena at Mushroom Rock
Mark Neubrand



Scenery Third
Hello Students
Rondi Anderson

2012 Kansas Area Native Plant & Wildflower Events

Information provided by [Kansas Native Plant Society](http://www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org), see more events on our website: www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org. Please share this information and contact us about additional events to note. Thank you! [email@KSNPS.org]

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

Mark your calendar now and plan to attend some fabulous happenings!

 **October 14:** Prairie Seed Collecting at Grant Bradbury Prairie Park in Topeka, 1-3pm. Volunteers are needed to help collect prairie wildflower and grass seed for a wildlife restoration area at Warren Nature Area. We will be working with the city to restore an old brome/fescue field to a diverse planting of native wildflowers and grasses. Wear sturdy footwear and long pants. Bring a plastic pail or paper sack for collecting seeds. No experience is necessary. All ages can help. Sponsor: Kansas Native Plant Society. Please contact Jeff if you plan to attend, [hanjd@cox.net] (785) 806-6917.

October 15: Butterflies and Climate: A year like no other? Grassland Heritage Foundation will host a presentation by Dr. Chip Taylor on the 2012 butterfly season and the status of native butterfly populations in Kansas. 2012 has been a particularly challenging year for all Kansas butterfly populations. The annual spring monarch migration started very early this year, 3 weeks in some places, due to the warm winter. The ensuing drought has significantly impacted all butterfly populations including monarchs. Dr. Taylor will talk about the consequences of these weather events and how our native butterflies are fairing. The presentation will start at 7pm and will be held in the Jayhawk Community Room at the Douglas Co. Fire and Medical Administration Bldg. (Fire Station #5), 1911 Stewart, Lawrence, KS. Please RSVP to Kim Bellemere [grasslandheritage@gmail.com] (785) 840-8104.

 **October 20:** Flint Hills Tallgrass Prairie Walk in Chase County, KS, 8-10am. Meet at the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve Bottomland Trailhead. Take the dirt road at the cemetery on the east side of hwy 177 about 2 miles south of the Preserve HQ buildings. Enjoy the wonders of the prairie and identify native flora on a leisurely informal walk. Glenn Fell will be the official "guide" but everyone's knowledge will be called upon for an informal and fun experience. This is a Kansas Native Plant Society Emporia Region event. Please RSVP [glennfell13@gmail.com] (620) 794-8478.

October 20: Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs. Snyder Prairie Workday: *Sericea lespedeza* Control. Volunteer prairie maintenance and preservation projects 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 [fjnorman@sunflower.com] (785) 887-6775 (home) or (785) 691-9748 (cell).

October 20: Burnett's Mound - Fall Skyline Park Workday, 9am-noon. Westar Energy is continuing a project to remove trees and restore the native prairie on Burnett's Mound. The hilltop has been exposed, and we are working our way down with chainsaws, loppers, and handsaws. We have work for everyone, from kids to adults. Bring gloves and any tools that you have, and we will provide safety glasses, drinks and lunch for all. We will emphasize safety and will have a great time, while exposing Topeka's most prominent landmark. [Brad.Loveless@weststarenergy.com] (785) 633-2118.

November 3: Kansas City Wildlands Annual Honeysuckle Battle, 9am-noon. To Battle! Join Kansas City Wildlands for our 11th annual Honeysuckle Battle. We'll be cutting down, treating and removing invasive, exotic shrub honeysuckle that threatens the region's incredible, fragile wild places. Contact Linda Lehrbaum [linda@bridgingthegap] (816) 561-1061, ext. 116.

November 10: Kansas Land Trust will be on hand this day at the Nelson-Atkins Museum in KC, as part of its exhibit "Heartland: The Photographs of Terry Evans." Listen to the prairie sounds as you stroll through the exhibit—they came from KLT! [information@klt.org] (785) 749-3297.

 **November 10:** Clear Bush Honeysuckle along Shunga Creek in Felker Park, 10am-noon. Help Kansas Native Plant Society clear an area of the woods of honeysuckle and other invasive plants to allow the native species to flourish. The natives are barely hanging on because of the honeysuckle. The area we will be working is adjacent to the bridge at Gage & Shunga Creek. Park at the Tennis Courts near 26th & Gage Blvd. Wear boots, leather gloves, long sleeves and pants. You may choose to bring a lopper, pruning saw, or pull seedlings. Pulling seedlings is easy and prevents re-infestation. The City of Topeka will supply herbicide to treat the cut stumps to ensure the honeysuckle doesn't re-grow. Please contact Jeff Hansen if you plan to attend, [hanjd@cox.net] (785) 806-6917.

🌸 Kansas Area Native Plant Wildflower Events— Continued 🌸

November 10: Sierra Club Perry Lake Hiking Trail Maintenance, Perry KS. Join us as we celebrate our 21st year of keeping the Perry Lake Trail clear for hikers and backpackers! Bring a lunch, water, and bow saws or loppers if you have them (we do have extra). Steve Hassler [hassler@planetkc.com] (913) 707-3296.

November 17: Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs. Snyder Prairie Workday: Tree/Brush Cutting. See Oct. 20 info.

November 17: Kansas Land Trust Board member Kelly Kindscher speaks about prairie plants and animals at the Nelson-Atkins Museum in KC, in conjunction with an exhibit featuring photographer Terry Evans. [information@klt.org] (785) 749-3297.

🌸 **December 2:** Spread Prairie Seed with Kansas Native Plant Society at Warren Nature Area, 11am-12pm. Spread the seed we collected at Grant Bradbury prairie. Meet at the east end of the Felker Park parking lot near the Bocce Ball courts in Topeka. Please contact Jeff Hansen if you plan to attend, [hanjd@cox.net] (785) 806-6917.

🌸 2013 Kansas Area Native Plant & Wildflower Events 🌸

January 19: Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs. Volunteer prairie maintenance and preservation projects, 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 [fjnorman@sunflower.com] (785) 887-6775 (home) or (785) 691-9748 (cell).

🌸 **January 26:** Kansas Native Plant Society Winter Board Meeting and Outing at location to be announced. The meeting begins at noon. After the meeting (approximately 2:30pm) explore native plants along the trails surrounding the area. Bring your lunch. Backup date: February 2. [email@KSNPS.org] (785) 864-3453.



AWW Field Trips— Friday, Saturday and Sunday

Friday Afternoon: Marjorie Snyder Prairie by Chelsea Juricek

The afternoon wildflower walk was well attended. I counted at least 25 vehicles lining the Snyder driveway and gravel road ditches. I think the neighbors drove by a couple times just to see what was all the commotion was about! I was so eager to explore the new area that I hiked down the gravel road, over the creek, up the hill... and turned around to see I was all alone! Everyone was still milling about only 30 feet from the vehicles. Below are some wildflowers I came across and fun facts I learned in my research after I got home.

Stenosiphon *Stenosiphon linifolius*.
Evening Primrose family.

Stenosiphon drops its leaves during periods of drought and conducts photosynthesis in the stem.



Stenosiphon linifolius
Photo by Chelsea Juricek

Willow-leaf sunflower *Helianthus salicifolius*.
Principally east 1/3 of KS, nutritious for livestock and seeds consumed by quail and prairie chickens.



Helianthus salicifolius
Photo by Matthew Richter

Aromatic aster *Symphyotrichum oblongifolium*.
Throughout KS except SW corner. Rises from creeping rhizomes (underground stem that sends out roots from nodes).

Violet wood sorrel *Oxalis violacea*. The flowers close at night or on very overcast days. Leaves and stem contain oxalic acid, which can cause poisoning if too much uncooked foliage is consumed.



AWW Field Trips— Friday, Saturday and Sunday

NOTE: Unusual plants identified by Jeff Hansen on the Marjorie Snyder Prairie were: Heliotrope (*Heliotropium tennelum*), Wild mercury silverbush (*Argythamnia mercurialina*), and Wooly jungle plum (*Sideroxylon lanuginosum*), previously known as *Bumelia lanuginosa*.

Saturday Afternoon Outing: Chaplin Nature Center

By ShirleyBraunlich

Approximately 70 people visited Chaplin Nature Center Saturday afternoon. This preserve, owned by the Wichita Audubon Society, offers over 200 acres of diverse native habitat adjacent to the Arkansas River.

We investigated trails through woodland, prairie as well as a major sandbar on the Ark River. One of my most memorable moments was watching meditative river walkers, wandering barefoot into the River. Another highlight was being part of a small group who meandered in the woodlands. Others thought we may have gotten lost, but a member of my group noted, "you're not lost if you don't have a destination."



AWW members on the river bank, while others ford the river barefoot. Photo by Nadine Champlin

We enjoyed too many different plant species to name them all, but the most interesting were downy hawthorn, blackjack oak, hackberry w/ patterned fungus-infected bark, wooly buckthorn (*Sideroxylon languinosum*), and frostweed (*Verbesina virginica*).

We also enjoyed watching a morning cloak butterfly glide overhead— new for my life list! Someone mentioned seeing red flowering royal catchfly (*Silene regia*), but I missed it. Jeff Hansen noted seeing a few remarkable plants, two introduced species: balloon vine (*Cardiospermum halicacabum*); a shrub— hardy or trifoliate orange (*Poncirus trifoliata*), and a native annual grass— found on the sandbars: sprangletop (*Leptochloa panicea*).

Chaplin Nature Center now ranks at the top of my favorite Kansas locations to enjoy native plants and geology, right up there with Wilson Lake in Russell County.



AWW trekkers explore flora in a Chaplin Center wooded area

Photo by Chelsea Juricek



AWW Field Trips— Friday, Saturday and Sunday

Sunday Morning Outing: Slate Creek Wetlands By Phyllis Scherich

Sunday morning about 60 KNPS members visited the 927 acre Slate Creek Wetlands. Gene Young of Northern Oklahoma College, who has been involved with the wetlands since the 1980's, gave us a short history of the area— labeling it the “Pearl of the Prairie.”



Gene Young (in white shirt) addresses AWW hikers at Slate Creek Wetlands
Photo by Michael Haddock

The original purchase was in 1989, and several tracts have been purchased since then. Slate Creek was one of the 12 marsh areas that were given to the State of Kansas by the United States Congress upon statehood. These marshes were intended to start salt production in the state; however the state

sold these areas to private interests soon after statehood and used the money to fund what is now Emporia State University. Slate Creek Wetlands was purchased jointly by Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks and Ducks Unlimited. This inland salt marsh has both fresh and salt water.

Gene added that at one time the St. Louis railroad shipped birds hunted at the Wetlands to the East. The Wetlands is listed on the Western Shorebird Migration list. Curt Grimm is the land manager for KDW&P.

The group broke into two parts with some going to a 20 acre prairie site that had been burned this spring, and the others venturing to a marsh area. Unique plants viewed were woolly cotton flower (*Gossypianthus lanuginosus*) and tawny widgeon grass (*Ruppia cirrhosa*).



Woolly Cotton Flower
Gossypianthus lanuginosus
Photo by Jeff Hansen

Sunday Afternoon: Snyder Ranch Tour By Mary Jo Kearns

The Snyder Ranch, our last weekend destination on a perfect sunny Sunday afternoon, was worth the wait. Below the entire horizon, this Flint Hills prairie ranch was greener and more lush than the pastures we passed as we drove 16 miles east from Winfield. Yellow broom weed (a sign of overgrazing and drought) covers much pasture in the area, and was found on the Snyder ranch site, but did not dominate it.

This was the weekend for sky-blue patches of pitcher sage in bloom. A few white “blue sage” blossoms further delighted me. (It’s hard to decide which are more exquisite— the clear blue or rare white.) As thirty-some people wandered the rocky pasture, bluff, and draw for two hours or more,

they examined plant species, stumbled on to interesting geological formations, and enjoyed the bountiful vistas north to southeast.

Flowers abounded: Dotted gayfeather (*Liatris punctata*) and button gayfeather (*Liatris aspera*) showed off here (and throughout the county). Louisiana sagewort (*Artemisia ludoviciana*) seemed ever-present on our weekend walks, including this ranch. Although common, this sagewort blooms only briefly. We found only one plant with tell-tale small rust-brown spots on the undersides of hanging green heads of tiny flowers. Like other wormwoods, this *Artemisia* declares itself by its gray-green color and resinous scented leaves. Another common weekend sight was here, too— noseburn (*Tragia ramosa*), a small-leaved plant that leaves a nettle-like burn on the skin.



AWW Field Trips— Friday, Saturday and Sunday

Snyder Ranch, Continued:



AWW hikers share an aromatic moment
Photo by Michael Haddock

Many other flowers were also blooming or fruiting, including downy goldenrod, stiff-leaved goldenrod, aromatic aster, silky aster, heath aster, hairy sunflower, hogwart (*Croton capitatus*), snow-on-the-mountain, and violet lespedeza. False gromwell ("marble fruit," *Onosmodium bejariense*) looks like a small version of a wooly Solomon's seal, with tiny white fruits along the leaf-stem attachments. One "find of the day" was the surprising appearance of wild quinine (*Parthenium integrifolium*). Its large, rough, elliptic bottom leaves feel like sandpaper. We found one dried-up seedpod to help determine its identity. This discovery left some members wanting to dance in delight because it is rare in Kansas, showing up in only a few isolated places in the southeast corner of the state. Woody species that we noted ranged from shrubs like dewberry, skunk bush (*Rhus trilobata*), and false indigo-bush (*Amorpha fruticosa*) to a variety of oak trees, including the post oak and the dwarf chinquapin oak (*Quercus prinoides*).

The grasses we observed included little bluestem, silver bluestem, and sideoats grama. Grass was short because cows had been grazing recently. In fact, mother cows were plodding and calves were gamboling up a nearby hill as we surveyed the landscape of variegated hues— green, chartreuse, and muted blue. Striped bluffs and tree-lined ravines separated areas of color. I saw some folks just sitting and absorbing the aura of the Southern Flint Hills.

Marjorie Snyder and the ranch manager briefly described the 9000-acre ranch. The Snyder Ranch has maintained its natural integrity and preserved the many native species not only by prudent burning and managed grazing, but also by excluding oil drilling and even, to date, wind harvesting. We KNPS tourists are grateful for their long-sighted choice to protect rare native prairie species and the awe-inspiring vista. Marjorie even provided refreshments for our visits to her places. We deeply appreciate Marjorie's hospitality and the family's generosity in allowing us to see this gem of a place.



AWW participants learn about Snyder pasture history
Photo by Michael Haddock



Meet the Board

Nadine Champlin

Where are you from? Where do you live? What do you do for a living?

I grew up on a farm 7 1/2 miles southwest of Jewell, Kansas. Jewell is situated between Beloit and Mankato and not far from Glen Elder Lake, or what I called it growing up "Waconda Lake" from the Indian legend of the salt-water springs that was called Waconda Springs. I grew up hearing about the Indians in the area and could still see the remains of Buffalo wallows in the pasture near the feedlot.

I now live in Sabetha, Kansas, and work out of my home as a Landscape Designer. My business is called Prairie Place Designs LLC (<http://webmail.k-state.edu/service/extension/convert/convert/61/www.prairieplacedesigns.com>).



Meet the Board

Nadine Champlin, Continued:



Nadine Champlin

I have a degree in Horticulture Science with emphasis in Landscape Design. I do design plans for farmsteads, residential homes as well as commercial property. My favorite designs are ones that include native plants with native limestone and glacial boulders. It is fun to incorporate items that the customer has such as wagon wheels or antique farm machinery.

How did you become interested in wildflowers and other native plants?

I was my Dad's helper, coming from a family of three girls. I loved being outdoors and wandered the Brown's Creek that meandered through our farmstead. Dad raised Polled Hereford cattle; so we had several

pastures, and I was always intrigued by the flowers blooming different times of the year.

What are some of your favorite native plants and why?

I love the Blue Pitcher Sage along with Sunflowers that bloom together. Just a nice combination!

What is your favorite natural area of the state and why?

I love the Flint Hills and enjoy driving through them to attend K-State football games in the fall! But I think my most favorite is the prairie land I grew up on that was flat and I could see for miles. My favorite image of home is a wheat field with a bright blue sunny sky.

How did you learn about KNPS?

I stumbled across the website about 4 years ago while looking for identification of a plant. I didn't know such an organization existed, and I was excited to find it and become a part of it.

What do you like best about KNPS?

I love learning about the plants I was always curious about! The Wildflower Weekends are so much fun because you get to meet people that enjoy discovering plants as much as you do. Plant people are great fun!

Lenora Larson



Lenora Larson

Where are you from? Where do you live? What do you do for a living?

I was raised in the mountains of Asheville, NC; then remained in Michigan after graduating from MSU with a degree in Microbiology. I now live on a farm in rural Miami County that is certified as a Backyard Wildlife Habitat, A Butterfly Garden, a Pollinator Garden and Monarch Waystation #875. I retired from New Directions Behavioral Health April 1, 2012. (HOORAY!)

How did you become interested in wildflowers and other native plants?

My interest in native flora and fauna is genetic: my parents were naturalists, and we spent weekends hiking and camping. My father gave me a copy of Gray's Manual for my 14th birthday so I would stop borrowing his. My interest in native plants continued in Michigan with classes and field trips in edible wild plants and mycology. I am also an Extension Master Gardener, but remain loyal to native plants in a world of imports and hybrids.



Meet the Board

Lenora Larson, Continued:

What are some of your favorite native plants and why?

The native plants that have co-evolved with butterflies as caterpillar food plants are my special interest and many are planted in my four-acre NABA-certified butterfly garden, including six species of *Asclepias*, *Asimina trifoliata* and *Amorpha fruticosa*.

What is your favorite natural area of the state and why?

The Flint Hills remain my favorite for their sense of majesty and importance as a tall grass prairie remnant.

How did you learn about KNPS

Ken O'Dell's articles in the Kansas City Gardener magazine.

What do you like best about KNPS?

That's easy: the people! And the opportunities to go on field trips with these wonderful experts, so willing to share their knowledge and enthusiasm for native plants.

Matthew Richter



Matthew Richter

Where are you from? Where do you live? What do you do for a living?

I grew up in Topeka and spent my college years, which was most of the 1970's, in Lawrence. I was an unusual art student painting in the Fine Art Department at Kansas University in those days dominated by abstract art. I eventually discovered I preferred painting representational images of native landscape and plants while working onsite out of doors. My wife, Allison, son Zane and I now live in McPherson County adjacent to the McPherson Valley Wetlands. I'm still an artist and split my time between Canyon Light & Prairie Skies, my landscape oil painting business, and Prairie Art & Sign, my commercial design to build sign and graphic arts related business.

How did you become interested in wildflowers and other native plants?

My mother, Marilyn Richter, was a landscape painter and ceramics sculptor. She held a strong appreciation for native plants and took me on painting and drawing excursions around Shawnee County from the time I was old enough to remember. My parents maintained a relatively undisturbed twelve-acre native plant area near Auburn, KS, for many years. I walked and painted the grasses and plants that marked the seasons there.

What are some of your favorite native plants and why?

Backlit by the setting sun, flowering Indian Grass is one of my favorites. I've painted it several times. I enjoy the poetic sight of Little Bluestem, fluffy with seed; set in solitary bunches of red-orange after frost and clinging to a limestone ledge. Maximilian Sunflower surviving year after year of Brome grass invasions and the gnarly Compass Plant are two plants by which I set my personal calendar. Prickly Poppy is very fun to paint. It seems so large and delicately out of place under the wide-open sand-scraped sky.

What is your favorite natural area of the state and why?

Smoky Hills in the Kanapolis Lake area hold three decades of wonderful memories with my family sailing, camping and walking the trails. Many relaxing visits without pressures-- often time stood still, and we became as much a part of the landscape as people can be.

How did you learn about KNPS?

Some of the artists I knew mentioned activities of the Kansas Wildflower Society; I believe that was the organization name back then. A few years ago my fine art painting interests began to gravitate toward identifying plant species. I wanted to differentiate landscape in biotic communities and better understand their



Meet the Board

Matthew Richter, Continued:

relationships to each other. KNPS activities gradually drew me in by way of the network of people with common interests in plants and places that support native plant appreciation.

What do you like best about KNPS?

The enthusiasm for sharing plant knowledge and the ethic of genuine interest in the unique perspective each member brings. There are some top-drawer botanists, entomologists, medicinal plant and naturalists in KNPS. This is a wonderful opportunity to absorb their perspective and see the botanical world through disciplined, experienced eyes. KNPS also brings access to an impressive network of regional researchers. I feel other members value my perspective as an artist and welcome my contributions. Because of this ethic of mutual respect, we have a continuum of experienced people constantly contributing and helping each other to grow on multiple levels. Wonderful photographers, writers, and visual artists are frequently heard. 2012 Annual Wildflower Weekend brought the Tallgrass Express String Band featuring nostalgic and lively songs of prairie plants.



Silent Auction Results

By Krista Dahlinger

The 2012 Silent Auction and Raffle at the AWW brought in just over \$700 this year. Donated items included fresh pawpaw fruit, raspberry and blackberry jelly, live native plants and seasoned cast-iron cookware. We also saw many new and vintage native plant and butterfly identification guides, a walking stick and butterfly photo collage. Every year members and guests donate an exciting array of items for this fundraising event that are both entertaining to look over and truly beneficial to KNPS. On behalf of KNPS, I am very grateful for the fine selection of items donated and for everyone who bought something special to take home.



Silent Auction Participants
Photo by Chelsea Juricek



Mary Bancroft Memorial Scholarship Winners

Miranda Gray from Manhattan and Kansas State University and **Alexander T. Bittel** from Lawrence and Kansas University are each recipients of \$1,000 KNPS scholarships designed to support graduate research “that enhances our understanding of native plant species or their ecosystems and conservation.”

Miranda, a Genetics major in Plant Pathology, is working on a project titled, “Bringing Genomics Outdoors: Drought Implications for Big Bluestem Grassland Conservation and Restoration.” She states, “My research has implications for predicting how big bluestem, a dominant grass of the tall grass ecosystem, will respond to climate change and increased drought predicted for the U.S. Midwest region.” She is going about this by studying the genetic characteristics of “two distinct phenotypic drought variants.” One, a drought-adapted ecotype, is from Hays, KS and the other, representing more easterly ecotypes are from Manhattan, KS and Illinois.

Alexander will research “Influences of Community Assembly in a Long-Term Grassland Experiment.” He is majoring in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology. His focus is on “the process by which ecological communities are formed and change over time after the sowing of the species.” This field experiment will be based on 270 experimental plots where 48 species of plants will be used to establish experimental communities. The goal of the study is to “combine a variety of different analyses to elucidate patterns of community assembly over multiple growing seasons.” Alexander states, “this project has the potential to shed a great deal of light on grassland community dynamics” which should provide helpful knowledge for conservation and restoration efforts.



Featured Plant: Big Blue Lobelia: *Lobelia siphilitica*

Text by Lorraine J. Kaufman, Illustration by Lorna Habegger Harder

On a bright summer day, I squeezed between the sagging wires of the barbed wire fence to cross into our neighbor's rocky hillside pasture. I had walked the adjacent dirt road many times but hadn't explored further than that. As I stood there in the silence, I became aware of a gentle, pleasant tinkling sound like a melody sung by some happy prairie inhabitant. Then I saw the small meandering stream that emerged from a seep in the hillside, fell into a small pool where it entertained an erect twenty-inch stem topped with a number of dazzling blue tubular flowers.

What I'd found was the big blue lobelia, *Lobelia siphilitica*. Its location by the pool was no accident, as it requires moist or wet soil while it blooms in full sun from August to early October. Its flowers are distinctive: the upper two lips of the corolla split into two erect lobes and the lower lip divided into three spreading lobes. These structures form a handy dining arrangement that attracts butterflies and humming birds.

Humans, too, have long been attracted by more than its gorgeous appearance. Native Americans used this plant medicinally, and its name derives from their belief that it was a cure for syphilis. The Iroquois used it as a cough medicine and the Meskwaki ground the roots for an "anti-divorce" potion.

Today we grow it for its striking beauty. It thrives in the eastern 3/5 of Kansas, is hardy in 38 states, and lives about five years. Big blue lobelia is an excellent border plant and can be propagated by seed or division. It is a spectacular garden addition with no negative features. Add one to your plantings next year!



Membership News

NEW MEMBERS

FROM 6/10/12 TO 9/30/12

Hannah Ackley - Haysville
Rain Akbar - Wichita
Shawna Austin - Wichita
Beck Bookman Library - Holton
Erika Bentson - Wichita
Bluestem Bed & Breakfast - Winfield
Christopher Boivin - Rose Hill
Briggs Traditional Turf Farm Inc - Peculiar, MO
Elizabeth Bunker - Rose Hill
Mikalea Bunyan - Fowler
Evelyn Carlos - Wichita
Amanda Church - Derby
Jane Crow - Overland Park
Ron Cunningham - Ellinwood
Heather Darling - Wichita
Pam Davis - Towanda
Tina Elliott - Mulvane
Aaryn Emrie - Andover
Jesse Epperson - Augusta
Jenny Ford - Haysville

Kelli Glover - Wichita
David Grandstaff - Wichita
Bethany Greaves - Wichita
Ashleigh Hazell - Wichita
Adri Johnson - Maize
Mary Johnson - Olathe
Derek Judd - Wichita
Tracie Kuhn - ElDorado
Julie Lang - Park City
Ally Lester - Shawnee
Jan Lister - Wichita
Lolse Maina - Wichita
Izala Martinez - Wichita
Anne Marchin - Manhattan
Jacob May - Leon
Matt McLain - Andover
Mark Metcalf - Independence
Alyssa Neises - Newton
Gregory Nelson - Winfield
Jackson Nyambane - Wichita
Lauren Perdue - Derby
Elna Ponto - Overland Park

Rapdy Pope - Wichita
Tabitha Porter - Wichita
Shirley Robinson - Wichita
Tatianna Sabbah - Wichita
Brandy Shain - Haysville
Nicole Shaw - Wichita
Philip Stark - Olathe
Martha Stoodley - Muskogee, OK
Laura Talboy - Augusta
Priscilla Temaat - Haysville
Kermit Trout - Overland Park
Ione Unruh - Lawrence
Sheryl Vandoren - Wichita
Kerry Wedel - Topeka
Joshua Wigdahl - Wichita
Darrin Wright - Salina
Leticia Yops - Wichita
Samantha Young - Pittsburg

MEMBERS RETURNING AFTER A HIATUS

Janet Krack - Wichita
James Leiker - Hays

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

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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:

Membership Category:

Name:		Student	\$10.00
Address		Individual	\$20.00
City/State:		Family	\$30.00
Zipcode:		Organization	\$35.00
Phone:		Contributing	\$100.00
Email:		Lifetime	\$500.00
County (if KS):			