

Erythronium

IOWA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
SUMMER 2025



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Membership Information

Iowa Native Plant Society

Executive Committee

President

Sarah Nizzi | Boone, IA
iowanativeplantsociety@gmail.com

Vice President

Tom Scherer | Des Moines, IA
thomas.scherer1@outlook.com

Secretary

Dianne Blankenship | Sioux City, IA
bennaid@hotmail.com

Treasurer

Lael Neal | Urbandale, IA
membership.inps@gmail.com

Board Members

Bill Blankenship | Sioux City, IA
billblankenship2@gmail.com

Pauline Drobney | Prairie City, IA
prairiepauline@me.com

Carl Kurtz | St. Anthony, IA
cpkurtz@netins.net

Deb Lewis | Ames, IA
dlewis@iastate.edu

Loren Lown | Pleasant Hill, IA
henslow49@gmail.com

Molly McNicoll | Decorah, IA
Grants Manager
mcnimo01@luther.edu

Connie Mutel | Solon, IA
connie-mutel@uiowa.edu

Sydney Kaizer | Ames, IA
Newsletter Editor
sydkaizer@gmail.com

Contact Us

iowanativeplantsociety@gmail.com
www.iowanativeplants.org

Erythronium is the official publication of the Iowa Native Plant Society. It is published twice per year in the winter and summer. If you are interested in writing for *Erythronium* newsletter, please contact us at iowanativeplantsociety@gmail.com. Include your idea, photos, relevant experience, and any other information to support your idea.

Volume 30 | No. 2

Leaves From the President's Notebook

Greetings Iowa Native Plant Society (INPS) members and friends! I hope the spring and summer thus far have been full of family, friends, the outdoors, and native flora and fauna.

The bumble bees are foraging on my pale purple coneflower in bloom now, and solitary female mining bees took great pleasure in my golden alexanders this past spring. Despite having little availability for native plants on my property, the small spaces occupied by native plants like little bluestem, butterfly milkweed, rattlesnake master, and more are a refuge for important insects. On June 10, I saw my first monarch butterfly glide across my driveway. These natural observations are a highlight each day. My hope is many of you have relatable stories of joy to reflect upon whether at home or elsewhere.



As I reflect on the last five months with the INPS, I am constantly amazed at what we can accomplish. Since January, we have updated our logo, created a Facebook page that has already grown to 200 followers, organized and hosted several field trip opportunities, and celebrated 30 years of INPS at our event in northeast Iowa in May.

Some very special shout outs go to Dianne Blankenship for organizing our 30 year celebration, Upper Iowa University for all their celebration offerings and planning support, Tom Scherer who continues to help behind the scenes with field trip organizing, Heather Hansen, our graphic designer who created our new logo and several other graphics, and Sydney Kaizer who manages our Facebook page (be sure to follow us!). I oftentimes feel like a broken record, but I will never stop saying thank you and acknowledging the great team of the INPS. Important work is never done in isolation. I appreciate all our board members, our members, and other supporters. It is your interest, enthusiasm, and passion that keeps us moving forward.

I am very proud of the progress we continue to make as an organization. I look forward to cultivating more ideas with our team and finding more creative ways to make native flora and fauna accessible and fun to all. ■

Sarah Nizzi, President
Iowa Native Plant Society



A Closer Look at the Prairie Style Gardens of Brucemore

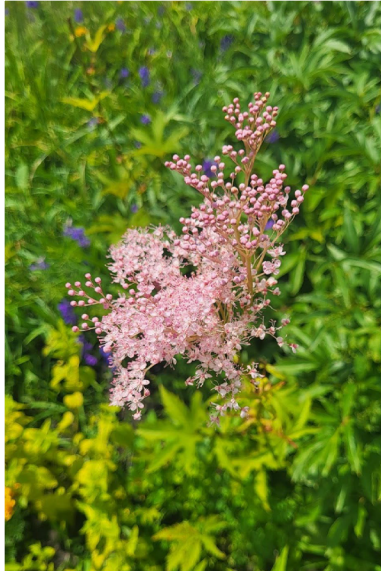
A photo essay by Kara Grady, Member, Iowa Native Plant Society

This article was intended to be a deep dive into the restorations taking place at Brucemore Mansion since the 2020 derecho.

But with my time and attention solely devoted to writing my first book over the last four months and an increasingly closer deadline, I realized I had to switch my focus to something more brief and also something that I could still be proud of. I've been wanting to write about the prairie style landscape of Brucemore Mansion for a long time, and so here we are.

First, some history, which I did research on. The gardens and landscape at Brucemore Mansion were designed by O.C. Simonds, one of the founding fathers of the Prairie School of Landscape Design, whose hallmarks include using natural landforms and common native plants, creating outdoor "rooms," repeating horizontal lines, creating frames and walls with natural shapes, and enticing curiosity and love of subtle beauty. What surprised me was he also designed Lake LaVerne at Iowa State University. Perhaps that's why I was so drawn to photographing the lake during my undergraduate years there.

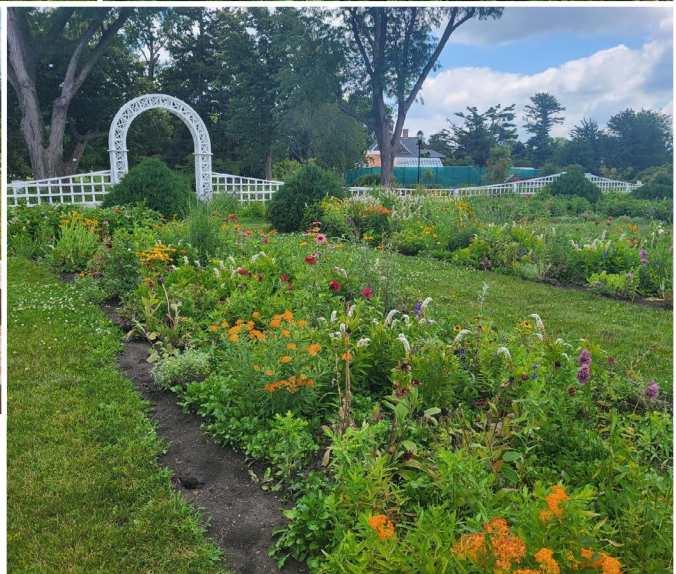
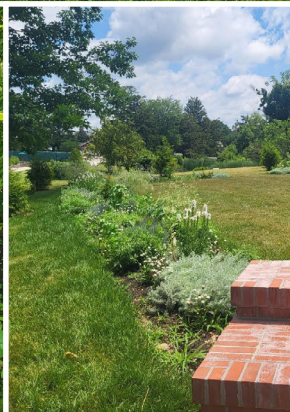
When I visited Brucemore Mansion to take these photos, I found myself thinking of how each place and garden felt like the prairie, or the oak savanna, or one of the many lakes that dot them. What really makes a prairie for me is the rewards you find when you go further and further in, whether a rare plant or a butterfly dancing through the air or a bird eating seeds atop a swaying stalk. Brucemore Mansion gave me that feeling. I hope you vicariously feel it too. ■



Left: Queen-of-the-prairie, a plant I've never found in any Iowa native prairie, though it is thought to be native to our state.



Below Right: Ironically, I find the "Formal Garden" to be the most prairie-like space. Notice the abundance of natives and native cultivars.



Above Right: The moon garden. The silvery plants will glow at night.

Thirty Years Young

By Sarah Nizzi, President, Iowa Native Plant Society



Group photo of native plant enthusiasts at Mossy Glenn State Preserve on April 29, 1995 following the informational meeting and field trip at Backbone State Park. Photo courtesy of Deb Lewis.

Thirty years. Wow. How can I sum up 30 years of work as a 35-year-old? I most certainly can't, but I will do my best.

It goes without saying I do not have a direct, historical reference of the Iowa Native Plant Society (INPS). While a few founders were plotting and strategizing at Backbone State Park 30 years ago, I was probably running around barefoot, playing in the mud, and catching crawdads in Little Walnut Creek in Dallas County, completely unaware and uninterested in what I may be doing with my life. I couldn't imagine my life in one year, let alone 30 years.

My priority was spending as much time outside as possible, plain and simple. I did not foresee being president of a volunteer, nonprofit group. I did not foresee a career

in conservation (construction work was my calling back then). I had no idea I would meet and be influenced by such intelligent, passionate conservationists. I am humbled by the many capable and talented people who have been in this position before me.

Many times I have wondered, how did I get in this position? Am I doing the organization justice? I stumbled upon a well-paved trail and the pressure to uphold and improve upon the existing foundation of INPS can be overwhelming. Being part of the next generation to carry the torch for conservation in Iowa is overwhelming. In order to look into the future, it is critical to reflect on the past.

The birth of the INPS was in 1995. Deb Lewis suggested to Bill Norris, "We should have a native plant society." Bill's response, "Let's

Past Presidents and Year of Election

Christine Kirpes, 1995

Fred Crane, 1997

Ed Freese, 1998

Tom Rosburg, 2000

Sibylla Brown, 2002

Larissa Mottl, 2003

Brian Hazlett, 2006

Linda Scarth, 2012

Lloyd Crimm, 2014

Sarah Nizzi, 2021



do it!” The first informational meeting to brainstorm about a native plant society took place on April 29, 1995 at Backbone State Park. Additional field trips and informational meetings took place throughout the growing season across the state. The society was officially chartered in Fort Dodge on October 21, 1995, following a field trip to Dolliver State Park, led by Don Farrar, of course. Business was taken care of over dinner. Christine Kirpes was elected as the first president of INPS (see list above for a list of past presidents and list on the right for the original executive board members). It is amazing what can be accomplished over a good meal.

In the newsletter article (Vol. 1, Issue 2) leading up to the organizational meeting, Deb Lewis and Bill Norris stated: “We would like to reemphasize our desire that both amateur and professional botanists take active roles in the leadership of INPS. We do not want to see this organization become ‘top-heavy’ with professionals. Our number one objective for the Society is to provide a forum for communication between all plant enthusiasts,

Original Executive Board Members

Christine Kirpes, President

Bill Thomas, Vice President

Deb Lewis, Secretary

Mary Brown, Treasurer

amateur and professional alike.” Indeed, that has been true and much of our strength, from our first volunteers to the present. Bill Thomas

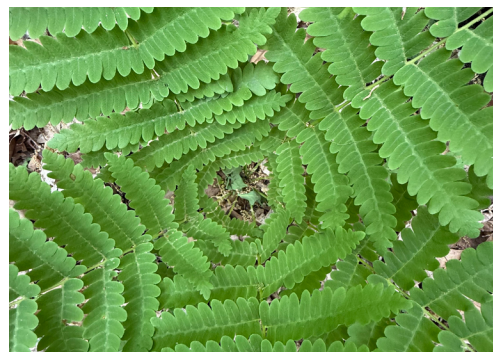
drafted a set of bylaws, and these provided the framework for organizing the INPS.

What is even more surprising and a total blessing is one of the founders of the organization continues to play a role to this day: Deb Lewis. Deb has been monumental in shaping INPS by providing decades worth of newsletters, leading field trips, presenting at education events, and likely more. No matter the role, or the amount of time, every individual who has participated within the heart of INPS has made a difference in our success.

Fast forward 30 years later in the heart of the spring season, over 25 individuals helped the INPS celebrate 30 years as an organization. The first day provided multiple hikes at Backbone State Park, a dinner and presentation at the Upper Iowa University (UIU) campus, and a tour of the UIU museum and herbarium wrapped up the day. The second day consisted of two field trips. We visited the iconic Becky's Fen outside of Fayette and the Fairfield Natural Resource Area owned and managed by Fayette County Conservation Board.

It was great to meet new, young native plant enthusiasts and to connect with old friends. The excitement and wealth of knowledge was a recipe for valuable memories. Many wildflowers, ferns, sedges, and grasses were examined, photographed, and admired. Several invertebrates were also spotted. Significant highlights include herbaceous plants such as, yellow lady's slipper, hoary puccoon, bishop's cap, and cottongrass. Male mining bees resting on wild geranium flowers were another fan favorite for participants.

I am happy we can continue to bring budding plant enthusiasts, conservation professionals, and everyone in between together to appreciate the special plants we have in Iowa and the wildlife they support across the state. The conservation of all living things calling Iowa home, whether a flower, tree, bird, or



butterfly, is critical. We can all play a role, no matter how big or small. It begins with going outdoors. It begins with curiosity. It begins by thinking like a plant or an insect or a bird. We are all in this together. The INPS will continue to build on our solid foundation and adapt and grow as the needs of the ecological space and human spirit evolve over time. ■

Two Species, Too Easy

By MJ Hatfield, Member, Iowa Native Plant Society

Native plant enthusiasts know plants, flowers, leaves, seeds, and habitat, but do we know the insects that require these plants? Would we recognize their “sign?”

Herbivorous insect larvae/nymphs require host plants, often specific host plants. Well-known examples are monarchs (*Danaus plexippus*) and their larval host milkweeds (*Asclepias* spp.) and the goldenrod gall fly (*Eurosta solidaginis*), and their larval hosts, tall goldenrod (*Solidago altissima*) and giant goldenrod, (*S. gigantea*).

‘Sign’ of insects on native plants are easy to see if we’re looking and if we’re curious as to what we see. Monarch ‘sign’ is chomped leaves, a ‘sign’ shared with a good number of other insects, whereas the round stem gall of the goldenrod gall fly is distinctive. And with the fly,

the distinctive ‘sign’ is much easier to find and identify than the adult insect. This is true for a good many insects.

Other sorts of ‘sign’ are weavings/silkings, frass (poo), drooping plant parts, pattern of feeding such as leaf mines (serpentine and blotch), galls (stem, leaf, flower, root), and often hollowed out, non-viable seed. Sometimes, without being able to recognize the insect at any life stage (not the egg, larva, pupa or adult), if you know the plant and the ‘sign’ of herbivory, you are able to know the insect. Cool beans.

Below are two examples of ‘sign’, each one a trail of darkened, dying flowers in host plant flower heads. Both are the result of *Gelechiidae*, twirler moth larvae, each feeding on its own host plant.

Larvae of *Chionodes pseudofondella* feed on



Mountain Mint, *Pycnanthemum* sp.



Rattlesnake Master, *Eryngium yuccifolium*

flowers of mountain mint, (*Pycnanthemum* spp.), and larvae of *Coleotechnites eryngiella*, feed on flowers of rattlesnake master (*Eryngium* spp.).

If the larvae or pupae are still within the flowers, you can tease open the heads to see them. Careful, the larvae will invariably wiggle themselves right out of the flowers, right out of your hand; with no adult wings it's a good means of escape.

Opening the darkened flower trail, it's hard to miss the larvae, striped raspberry and cream.



With insects, there are always exceptions. I think I know at what I'm looking, I think I know what insect is associated with the host plant and 'sign', which was my habit for the above two moths. Once, at Indian Grass Hills in Iowa County, I collected a different looking larva in the flowers of rattlesnake master. Luckily, I was able to rear it. Better luck it was male, and best luck someone was willing to dissect it for a positive identification.

Paralobesia rhoifructana has multiple host plants, mostly woody plants, but here it was on rattlesnake master.



were included (Four species, too easy?). One cannot have two herbivorous insect species without including their host plant species. ■

Next time you're out and about, whether walking through the woods or the prairie, know the plant, see the sign, then be curious about the possible connection. Who's making that sign?

An apology from the author:

The title is misleading, but it would not have worked as well if all species involved



Iowa Native Plant Society

Photo Contest

Are you a nature photographer? Are you an active Iowa Native Plant Society (INPS) member looking for a way you can contribute to the INPS?

We are currently accepting photo submissions to update our INPS cards!

Photos of all types of flora will be accepted. Three photos per photographer will be considered. Only active INPS members can participate. The deadline to submit photos is **Saturday, October 4, 2025.**

Winners will be announced at the INPS Annual Meeting on October 11, 2025 at 2:30 pm at Drake University.

If you're not already an INPS member, please join us! Membership information can be found on page 20.

Cards are 3.5 inch by 4.9 inch in size. Cards are for purchase at INPS exhibitor tables at events and given to new members. Cards start at \$1.00 each for members and \$1.50 for non-members. Individual and bulk orders are

available. Special rates may be considered for bulk orders.

Our current card inventory is in limited supply. Please consider purchasing some of these beautiful INPS cards while supplies last!

Photo submissions and INPS card inquiries can be directed to Sarah Nizzi at iowanativeplantsociety@gmail.com. ■



Bloodroot
*Sanguinaria
canadensis*



Cardinal Flower
*Lobelia
cardinalis*



Bottle Gentian
*Gentiana
andrewsii*



Hepatica
*Hepatica
nobilis*



Indian Paintbrush
*Castilleja
coccinea*



Leadplant
*Amorpha
canescens*



Prairie Smoke
Geum triflorum
Golden Alexanders
Zizia aurea



Fringed Gentian
*Gentianopsis
crinita*

Searching for Savanna

VENTURES INTO A RARE ECOSYSTEM

By Leland M. Searles, PhD, Consulting Ecologist

An oak savanna often is understood to be a prairie with scattered trees. It is not woods or woodland with a closed or mostly closed canopy. Instead, plenty of sunlight reaches the herbaceous and shrubby growth under the trees and in the treeless interstices between the trees.

The plant community of oak savanna occurs along a spectrum of medium or tallgrass prairie to mixed woodland vegetation, depending on several factors. However, a defining feature of many savannas is the plant community is not of a woodland, nor is it exactly of a prairie.

In fact, the abundance and micro-population density of several species can differ widely from those other two ecosystems because of the unique features of savannas. These features include variables such as hillslope, degree of shading from medium to tall species and the occasional trees, aspect or facing direction of the slope, water table height and groundwater, topographic position on level upland, or riparian terrace versus sloped land. Undoubtedly, other factors weigh in as well, such as overland flow from precipitation, percolation of water into topsoil and subsoil, proportion of inhibiting stone versus finer soil particles near the surface, and others.

There is a debate, unsettled as far as I know, as to whether an oak savanna is a truly distinct ecosystem from the others: aquatic (lakes and streams), prairie (several subtypes), wetlands (numerous distinct kinds), and woodlands (again, several subtypes). One side

argues a savanna is merely a transition from prairie to woods, an ecotone.

The other argument marshals evidence for a separate ecosystem based on plant community differences and such conditions as soils, a few possibly unique plant species, and other qualifiers. My bias is toward the second, the status of a separate ecosystem.



A grove of bur oaks on private land with pasture understory. This few acres has potential for restoration of the herbaceous layer. The trees vary from “true” savanna form, with horizontal lower branches or branch scars, to somewhat taller trees that grew with woodland competition. Photo taken in 2024 in Jasper County.

However, in the end, these arguments lead to one conclusion: oak savanna was once far more common in the prairie province than it is now, and most remaining savanna or savanna-like oaks either lack the rest of their remnant plant community due to competition from exotic grasses and shrubs, or they exist only as regrowth over the last 100 or more

years after cutting of the largest trees or clearcutting for cropping, pasture, and urban spread.

A key question has been if savannas have any important association with identified soil series, soil texture groups, or broader taxonomic classifications. If patterns of association do exist, these may help answer further questions about the extent of presettlement savannas and the potential success of restoration attempts using the same oak species. In the prairie region, two species are especially prominent: bur or mossycup oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*) and white oak (*Quercus alba*). At the extreme southern end of the Missouri River loess deposits, the author has observed the smaller chinkapin oak (*Quercus muhlenbergii*) with the features of savanna oaks along the sunny edges between upland prairie (formerly row crop) and slope woodlands.

In a woodland with competition from the same or other species for nutrients and sunlight, bur and white oaks typically grow quite tall and relatively straight, although mature white oaks can adopt an arched upper trunk and with or without some lean downwind. In my observations, the direction of the arch and any lean is generally downwind based on typical winter wind directions from the northeast. Some may arch about due east. However, summer winds from the southern quadrant seem uninfluential, perhaps because the foliage of all tree species buffers the wind pressure during most of the growing season.

In contrast, true savanna oaks have a different structure that results from growing in an open area. The trunk of a mature tree often is about half the height of the same species in woods, with a greater diameter at breast height (DBH). Circumference is sometimes measured in place or along with DBH. One undoubtedly old tree in Dallas County has a measurement of 14 feet in circumference or about 54 inches DBH, and numerous trees in several locations have a DBH of 38 to 45 inches. The crowns feature several to numerous main branches

that form a rough hemispheric shape, with one or more bottom branches spreading horizontally to the surface or even descending to touch the ground. Savanna oaks that have lost their lower limbs to crowding from competing brush and trees or to human removal still retain the limb scars on the trunk that reveal their original ecological setting.



This bur oak approaches the size of a “wolf oak.” It has the classic savanna oak shape - rounded, sprawling crown with horizontal lower branches. Several nearby trees are choked with woody undergrowth, but the location on private land has restoration potential. Photo taken in 2025.

A “wolf oak” is a very mature open-grown oak of either species, physically massive compared to the trees around it and possibly showing damage from lightning strikes, wind-thrown main branches, and death and loss of the lower branches. It is speculation or, better, a hypothesis that such an oak is the parent tree of much of the surrounding population of younger trees of the species. Where a wolf oak is not apparent, it may have died some time ago and decayed, leaving a population

of mature trees of similar age, with or without a regenerating understory of saplings and/or seedlings.

Fire's Role in Savanna Maintenance

A major feature of oak savannas is they are fire tolerant and sustain a higher frequency of natural and/or human-caused fire than woodlands. Except for woods with a high density of oaks and mostly closed oak canopy, fire usually does not travel well through the dry herbaceous plants or the leaf litter. Oak leaves are unlike most other leaves from herbaceous and woody species in that they decay slowly, tend to be thick, and retain their three-dimensional shape even after repeated rains and dry periods. This last feature—the retention of three-dimensional structure—means the leaves on the woodland floor or under a savanna tree protect micro-pockets of air that intensify the heat of the burning leaves from the stored oxygen.

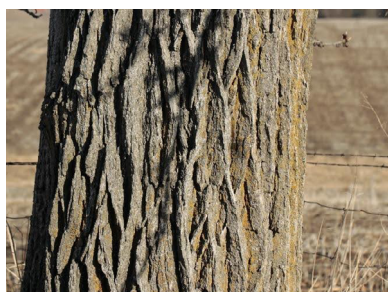
It is easy to demonstrate this and compare it to other tree species. In the autumn, gather fallen dry leaves from bur and white oaks (include red oak, if you want), hackberry, hard maple, soft maple, walnut, and other naturally occurring woodland species. Soak them in water for about 24 hours to simulate a long, misty or light to moderate rain, then place the leaves individually in a sunny location. Observe each leaf as it dries for its shape, and pick up once dry to determine if it holds together. Generally, the oak leaves move back



Prescribed fire may be used to manage savannas, with good responses for mature trees, regeneration of seedling oaks, reduced invasive and native woody “clutter,” and encouragement for herbaceous plants. This young savanna is at Whiterock Conservancy in Guthrie County.

into their starting shape, as if loaded with a very slow spring, while the others tend to conform to the surface. The non-oak leaves can't trap oxygen-containing air as well, and in an actual woodland, they might freeze to the ground and provide no fuel to a fire whatsoever. I have photos and video of a prescribed burn under oak woodland in which the length of the flames reaches about 15 feet in oak leaf litter, something some experienced prairie burn people think is impossible.

The fire tolerance of bur and white oaks comes from their thick, furrowed bark. Bur oak bark has wide, flat-topped ridges and narrow, V-shaped furrows between; the thickness



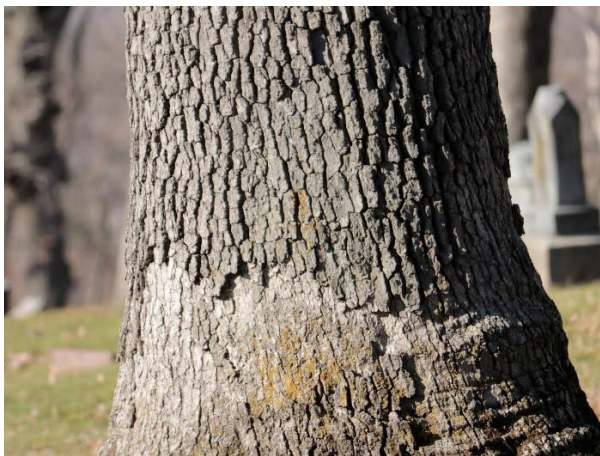
Typical bark of mature bur oaks, with deep furrows and flat ridges. With practice, it can be identified in winter from almost any other trees, although black walnut and eastern cottonwood have similar bark.



The reason for another name for bur oak, the mossycup oak, is evident here in the curved bristles along the rim of the acorn cup. These are always present, but they vary in length.



Typical leaves of a bur oak are “heavy” or filled out in the distal or upper half and with a few deep lobes and sinuses in the lower half.



Top: A typical leaf of the white oak, *Quercus alba*, in autumn.

Bottom: Typical bark of White Oaks, with vertical furrows and a roughly rectangular “scaly” appearance. The lower part of the trunk displays “smooth bark syndrome,” which is caused by a fungus, oak/hornbeam disk (*Aleurodiscus oakesii*) that lives mostly harmlessly in the dead outer bark. It grows on bur oaks and eastern hophornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*) in Iowa.

of the bark and the shape of the furrows on a living tree may burn if the fire lingers, but the inner, growing bark will not be harmed. Most other mature trees have thinner bark with shallower furrow-and-ridge depths, and they may be damaged or killed as fire passes, depending on flame height and the speed of travel of the flame front. Many introduced shrubs, some native shrubs, and some understory trees are badly damaged by fire, including the overabundant gray dogwood (*Cornus foemina*), Amur honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackii*), and others. Honeysuckle can regrow from its root crown, and the various brambles

(genus *Rubus*) and Missouri gooseberry (*Ribes missouriense*) do likewise.

If the situation is flipped around, an oak savanna with other trees growing through its branches and with stiff competition from honeysuckles, multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*), European buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*), or Osage-Orange or hedgeapple (*Maclura pomifera*) likely has had no fire at least several years. Restoring these savannas usually requires labor with mechanical tools, and many will use herbicides, albeit carefully, to reduce or eliminate the competing species. I have seen huge wolf oaks whose presence was unknown until I arrived at the dripline, the outer edge of the branches, because the obstructing woody growth was so dense. In many cases, competition probably has been responsible for the death of the lower horizontal branches.



A beautiful example of an open-grown savanna bur oak in Poweshiek County. It has a rounded crown, the crown is wider than the tree is tall, and most of its horizontal or even drooping branches are intact.

Ideally, all these would receive restoration work in two forms: one, to clear away the competition for a diameter greater than that of the crown and dripline, because the roots grow to an even greater diameter; and two, to harvest the acorns for growth to preserve the genetics of those trees. Of course, once the existing trees have been released from

their competition, a maintenance routine that includes the use of fire is needed.

Defining Oak Savanna: Is a Definition Possible?

How does one define an oak savanna in a way others can recognize it and gather data that compares apples to apples? I am aware of two definitions, other than using a subjective evaluation of spacing along with the structural identifiers discussed above. One is based on the number of mature trees per unit of land, and the usual one is one tree per acre. If one assumes a roughly 60-foot-diameter crown (smaller and larger are possible), the area under the crown is about 2,800 square feet. An acre is 43,560 square feet. The area taken up under the tree is a little over 6% of the acre, leaving plenty of space for prairie plants.

A second measure is based on an estimate of the shaded ground per unit of land. The very high number of less than 60% occurs in the literature, like an open woodland, perhaps also with some shagbark hickory (*Carya ovata*) or the very similar shellbark hickory (*Carya laciniosa*) in northern Missouri and extreme southern Iowa. Both hickories are somewhat fire resistant because of their bark, unlike

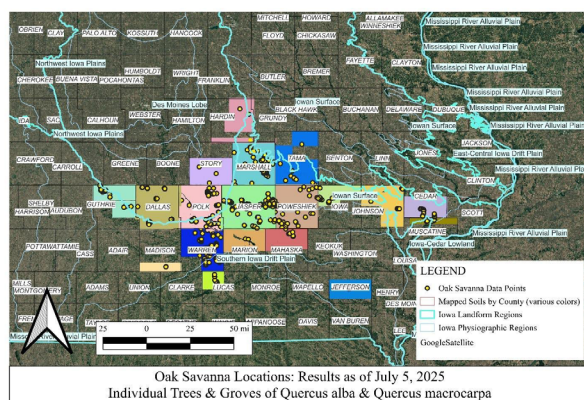
other hickories like bitternut hickory (*Carya cordiformis*). This second method seems too generous, while the first seems too stringent. Many open-grown oaks I've identified as savanna data points fall somewhere between. A Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) information sheet suggests a range of 10% to 30% canopy cover. Another source gives 25% to 50%, but rarely more than 70%.

These two definitions also don't account for the presence of "grub oaks," that is, saplings that have endured prairie fires. The ages of some may be surprising because they are stunted from fire, but not killed. Eventually they may mature into full-sized trees, the branching patterns of which could be determined partly by their fire histories.

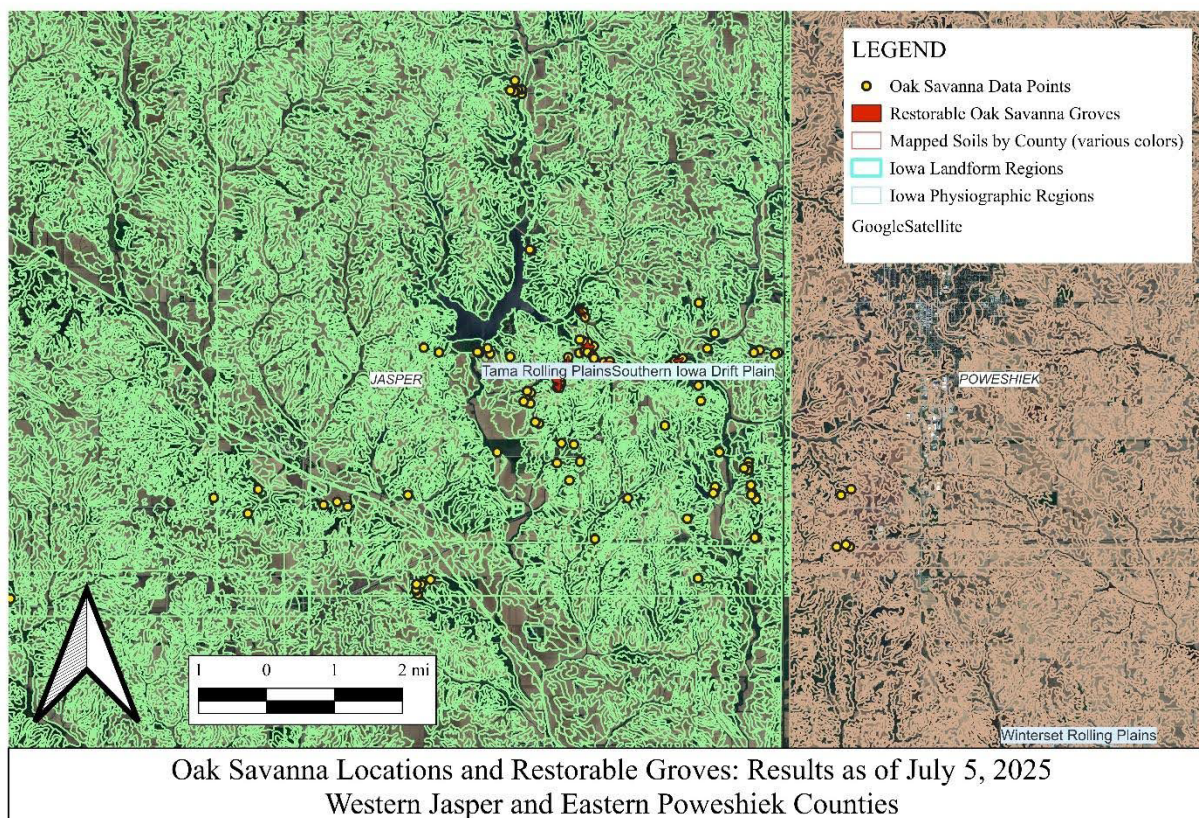
My experience in locating oak savannas does not follow any precise number of trees per acre or hectare, nor does it involve the estimation of canopy cover per unit of land. Trees per acre seems arbitrary, especially if precision is the goal. Arguments will follow over upper and lower limits.

The percentage of canopy cover likewise seems capricious. An example comes from the chinkapin oaks in northeastern Kansas, growing on the ridge shoulders of loess deposits over 100 feet thick, from the recognition of overwhelmed wolf oaks in a woodland, and from the presence of partly characteristic trees along the edge of a woods. These count as savanna oaks in my work. If savanna tree structure occurs on one side of several trees along an edge, shouldn't they count? I think so.

My working definition is simply the existence of the open-grown crown and lower-limb architecture of the tree, even if those trees grow at the edge of an otherwise completely closed mesic woodland, or if the classic structure is present on one tree in ten acres. I realize this methodology includes a wide sweep of plant communities, but I leave it to statisticians to calculate measures of central tendency for the botanical part.



This map shows over a thousand data points where I have located Bur and/or White Oaks that have savanna-like features in their growth and habitat. The colors are the soils for each county, from the USDA Web Soil Survey on the web. Use of the survey data allows for a study of soils associated with today's open-grown oaks, and elevation data show where these oaks grow on uplands, slopes, and even stream terraces.



Leland M. Searles, PhD. From roadside observations and public land traverses.

This zoomed-in section of map shows parts of Jasper County (green) and Poweshiek Counties (beige). The yellow dots are data points with at least one savanna oak, and the small red areas enclosed tracts of a few acres on private land of restoreable oak savanna. The green and beige lines are data layers of the soils in each county. The general location in Jasper County is in or near Rock Creek State Park, visible to left of center. The North Skunk River shows as a green line running from upper left to about bottom center.

Now, I am mostly interested in tree structure in association with slope, soils, and topography, in part because the herbaceous layer is comprised of a lot of brome grass, Queen-Anne's-Lace, ragweeds, common and lance-leaved plantain, a few very common woodland or edge sedges such as *Carex grisea* and *Carex blanda*, and so on. One additional topographical point of interest is the growth of savanna oaks on riparian terraces, especially the lowest terrace if more than one is present. These are alluvial soils, rather than soils having glacial till or loess deposits. And yet the tree structures shout "Savanna!"

As long as I can travel across Iowa, I will add more data points to this map. Hopefully those points will cover more of the state's basic landforms, like the lowan Surface and the Driftless Region, where savanna oaks may grow in different soils than in the central part of the state. Stay tuned! ■

Upcoming Events

Codfish Hollow Prairie Walk

Event Details

Do you like native plants? Do you want to explore one of the highest quality prairies around? Join Ray Hamilton, Jackson County Conservation Naturalist Tony Vorwald, and the Iowa Prairie Network to experience the Hamilton (Codfish Hollow) Prairie. This area has been managed as a local biological preserve for 37 years and is home to a unique and diverse set of native plants.

Date:

Saturday, September 20, 2025

Time:

2:00 pm–4:00 pm

Location:

Hamilton (Codfish Hollow)
Prairie
35th Street & 288th Avenue
Maquoketa, IA 52060

Co-Sponsored by:

Jackson County Conservation, Iowa Prairie Network, and
Iowa Native Plant Society

Questions:

Email tvorwald@jacksoncounty.iowa.gov or call the Hurstville
Interpretive Center at (563) 652-3783.

National Public Lands Day

Event Details

Join us at Don Williams Park for a special day celebrating National Public Lands Day. The event will include a remnant prairie hike and open house, hands-on volunteer opportunities in seed harvesting and woody removal, and a presentation by Dr. Tom Rosburg on the unique remnants of the park. Activities will begin at the lodge by the lake.

Date:

Saturday, September 27, 2025

Time:

1:00 pm–4:00 pm

Location:

Don Williams Park
610 H Avenue
Ogden, IA 50212

More Information:

For more information, visit <https://www.iowanativeplants.org/calendar/>.

Iowa's Imperiled Plants Program

Event Details

Dr. Tom Rosburg will share an update on Iowa's endangered, threatened, and species of concern, comparing data from 1994 to 2025 and highlighting key ecological aspects of roughly 25 listed species. He will also provide the latest on the Iowa DNR's revisions to the threatened and endangered flora and fauna administrative rules, with an opportunity for public input. Following his program, INPS will hold its annual meeting, offered both in person at Drake University's Olin Hall and via Zoom.

Date:

Saturday, October 11, 2025

Time:

1:00 pm–2:30 pm

Location:

206 Olin Hall
Drake University

Sponsored by:

Iowa Native Plant Society

More Information:

For more information, visit <https://www.iowanativeplants.org/calendar/>.

Iowa Native Plant Society Annual Meeting

Event Details

This meeting follows the Iowa's Imperiled Plants Program by Dr. Tom Rosburg.

This meeting will also be available on Zoom. Registration info for the Zoom option will be posted when ready.

Date:

Saturday, October 11, 2025

Time:

2:30 pm–4:00 pm

Location:

206 Olin Hall
Drake University
+ virtual/Zoom option

Contact:

Sarah Nizzi
iowanativeplantsociety@gmail.com

Hosted by:

Iowa Native Plant Society

More Information:

For more information, please contact Sarah Nizzi at iowanativeplantsociety@gmail.com.

Join the Iowa Native Plant Society!

Iowa Native Plant Society (INPS) members receive the biannual newsletter, updates on all native plant happenings across the state, and discounts on INPS merchandise.

Dues are payable on a calendar year basis (from January 1 to December 31). Annual contributions beyond the basic membership level are tax deductible (marked with * below).

**Please complete and mail this form along with your dues to:
Iowa Native Plant Society, 4486 88th Street, Urbandale, IA 50322**

Your information is *never* distributed to other organizations or companies.

For questions, please contact membership.inps@gmail.com.

Contact Information

First and Last Name

Street Address

City/State

Zip Code

Phone Number

Email Address

Membership Type

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Basic Membership (\$25) | ☐ One-Time Student Membership (\$5) (school email required) |
| ☐ Anemone (\$40)* | ☐ Botrychium (\$50)* ☐ Calamagrostis (\$100)* |
| ☐ Dodecatheon (\$150)* | ☐ Erythronium (\$200+)* |

Newsletter Sign-Up

I wish to receive the biannual newsletter by: ☐ Email ☐ USPS (\$10 extra)

Iowa Native Plant Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.