



Kansas Native Plant Society

Autumn Newsletter

Volume 37 Number 4
October 2015

Highlights of the 2015 AWW and Status of KNPS

By Mike Haddock, Retiring President

This fall, KNPS held our 37th Annual Wildflower Weekend. It was the first time in 31 years that we met in Manhattan, which is hard to believe! Though it rained during our Friday board of directors meeting and the presentation by John Briggs, the director of the Konza Prairie Biological Station, the precipitation stopped when it was time to botanize on Butterfly Hill. The weather on Saturday and Sunday was fantastic, and we had a large turnout-- more than 90 for Saturday's events and 60 on Sunday. If you have never been to one of our KNPS Annual Wildflower Weekends, please consider attending. You will find a variety of opportunities to botanize at various sites, hear excellent speakers, and most of all, enjoy the camaraderie of many other native plant enthusiasts. At Friday's board meeting, it was decided that the 2016 Annual Wildflower Weekend will be held in Ft. Scott. The dates are yet to be finalized, but will likely be in mid-September.



KPBS Director John Briggs addresses KNPS board and guests in the Konza Historic Barn after the KNPS Board Meeting. Photo by Mike Haddock

Special thanks go to the Manhattan board members who planned the AWW and to Dr. Briggs and the Konza Prairie Biological Station for hosting us on Friday. Much appreciation also goes to Jane Freeman who handled registration, Krista Dahlinger who coordinated our silent auction, and Jeff Hansen for his assistance with AWW publicity. Thank you is also given to Valerie Wright who coordinated the photo contest and Fred Coombs who chaired the awards committee.

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Have you renewed your membership in KNPS? Check the first line in your address for your membership expiration date. If the date is past, your membership has expired. To continue receiving the newsletter, please renew now.

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 Phyllis Scherich

As I write, I suddenly realize that autumn has arrived with cooler temperatures. I recognize this means the blooming period for most plants is at or near the end; however, that doesn't mean the enjoyment of them is over for this year. I see the grasses, shrubs, and trees turning their beautiful fall colors. Some of this color will last through the winter, and soon it will be spring again, and I will anxiously await the early blooms of the Easter daisy.

Michael Haddock, who has served so admirably as President of KNPS for the past two years deserves a big "Thank You." He is an excellent example of someone who has many "irons in the fire," but finds the time to add one more responsibility.

I am honored and humbled as I begin serving as President for the coming year. I feel I do not have the academic credentials for this position, but my appreciation for and interest in native plants has led me to learn about them. (Actually, another long-time KNPS member and contributor, Lorraine Kaufman, initially kindled my interest in learning the wildflowers—thank you, Lorraine). My husband Dee and I live on, manage, and operate a large cattle ranch in Comanche County, Kansas. Because we are surrounded by the wildflowers and grasses, we wanted to become familiar with them. We have used what we have learned about them to manage our grazing plan more effectively. As we travel, we take advantage of the oppor-

tunities to observe how the forbs and grasses are alike and different in various areas of our state and elsewhere.

I view Kansas Native Plant Society as a vibrant (full of energy and enthusiasm) and dynamic organization. Each member has something special to contribute to its success. When something needs to be done, there is someone who steps up to fill the need. If this were not the case, I might have been reluctant to accept the presidency. There are many examples.

Nancy Goulden and Karen Hummel have created and served as volunteer co-editors of our newsletter in its current form since the spring issue of 2004. When they tendered their resignation as of this issue, I wondered how we could possibly fill this essential role. Almost as soon as the information was sent to the membership, Brian Martin and Cynthia Rhodes applied. With their experience and dedication, we are assured that the newsletter will continue to be one that elevates KNPS.

This year's AWW, in my view, was another outstanding success—even the weather cooperated. The opportunity to access areas otherwise not available to the public and learn about them is special. Being able to interact and share with so many knowledgeable members elevates my understanding of the plants. We were honored to have several out-of-state attendees—from Oklahoma, Iowa, and even Hawaii. We learned of some of the activities of their native plant organizations. Another special thanks to Michael Haddock and his committee for making all the arrangements.



AWW and KNPS Status

Continued from Page 1

Our photo contest had more than 100 high-caliber entries, and the judges definitely had their work cut out in determining the top of each category. At the annual member meeting, Krista Dahlinger was recognized for her dedication to our organization by receiving the Sheldon H. Cohen Award for Outstanding Service to KNPS, and Craig Freeman was honored with the Stephen L. Timme Excellence in Botany Award for his many contributions to botany both inside and outside Kansas. Both awards were surprises, which always makes for fun presentations.

This year, KNPS awarded a \$1000 Mary A. Bancroft Memorial Scholarship to Courtney Masterson, a M.S. student at the University of Kansas researching the impact of deer browsing on prairie plants. Also this year, the organization helped co-sponsor three Old World bluestem workshops around the state, to

educate about this increasing threat to our native rangelands.



Fred & Nancy Coombes with Sheldon Cohen Award winner Krista Dahlinger. Photo by Phyllis Scherich

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AWW and KNPS Status

Continued from Page 2

Our Saturday morning presentations were particularly special because both speakers were previous KNPS Bancroft Scholarship recipients. Kathy Denning, doctoral aspirant in ecology and evolutionary biology at the University of Kansas, presented on plant-pollinator interactions in tallgrass prairie restorations, and Shelly Wiggam, doctoral aspirant in entomology at Kansas State University, described how patch-burn grazing benefits pollinator diversity in Flint Hills rangelands. Both of these young scholars gave excellent and highly informative talks.

As of mid-September, KNPS had 665 regular and 79 reciprocal memberships (non-profit organizations that share a partnership with KNPS). There are 608 members in Kansas (91%) and 57 members (9%) outside the state. Kansas members reside in 68 counties with the five counties represented by the most members being Sedgwick, Johnson, Douglas, Shawnee, and Butler. Our membership breakdown includes 51% individual, 24% family, 13% student, 4% organization, 3% contributing, and 5% lifetime.

In 2010, we established our Legacy Fund to help fund special projects, and as of September, the balance had grown to \$7,166. This spring, the board voted to set up a second fund specifically dedicated to the support of the Mary A. Bancroft Memorial Scholarship, and it already has a balance of over \$1,500. We value the contributions made to these long-term funds and hope you will keep them in mind as future donation opportunities.

The organization will now transition to the very capable hands of our newly-elected president, Phyllis

Scherich of Wilmore, who will have a good sounding board in her husband and fellow board member Dee Mickey Delfelder of Topeka and Krista Dahlinger of Mulvane will be continuing in their respective roles of as secretary and treasurer, and Craig Freeman is our new vice-president. Nancy Goulden and Karen Hummel will be stepping down as newsletter co-editors following this issue, and we are going to miss their high quality efforts. We are confident that our new co-editors, Cynthia Rhodes and Brian Martin, will carry-on the same level of excellence. Due to new job responsibilities, Jeff Hansen will be cutting back on the web work that he has been so superb at, but we will still be able to enjoy his extraordinary plant expertise and wonderful sense of humor at our board meetings and field outings.

It has been an honor to have served as your KNPS president the past 2 years (and it has been fun too!). I look forward to continuing active service with the board and hope that we may meet at a future KNPS event.



Outgoing President Mike Haddock with Craig Freeman, recipient of Stephen Timme Excellence in Botany award.
Photo by Mark Neubrand



2015 AWW participants enjoyed a Sunday morning outing at the Wright Restored Prairie and Land Conservation Easement.
Photo by Mike Haddock



Photo Contest Winners

This year 101 photos were entered by 17 photographers. It was the best year yet. There were so many outstanding photos the judging was difficult. The eight winning photographers had beautiful images but so did many others. “Best in Show” is not always awarded. Phyllis Scherich’s Monarch Caterpillar on Asclepias could not be denied.

FLORA



First Place
Spiderwort at First Light
Brian Martin



Second Place
Prairie Onion Emergence
Brian Martin



Third Place
Michigan Lily
Emmet Sullivan Jr.

FAUNA



First Place
Digger Bee Visits Corydalis
Anthony Zukoff



Second Place
Bee on Golden Waxweed
Brian Martin



Third Place
Bee on Coneflower
Carma Wilson

GARDEN



First Place
Kaufman Museum Wildflowers
David Welfelt



Second Place
Meditation Zone
Mark Neubrand

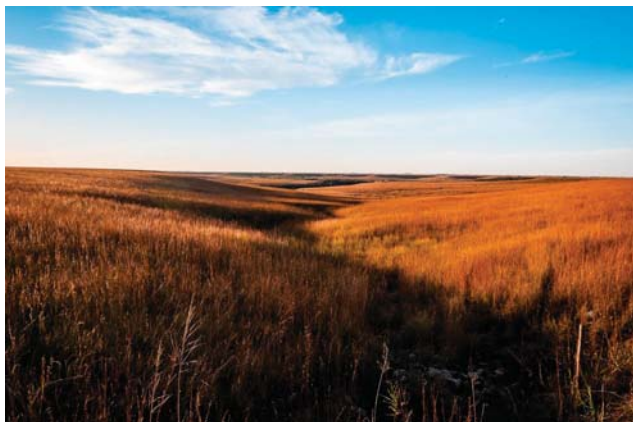


Third Place
Monarda in the Garden
Kris Holms



Photo Contest Winners

SCENERY



First Place
Cowley County
David Welfelt



Second Place
Osage Trail
David Welfelt



Third Place
Sand Sage Prairie
Anthony Zukoff

PEOPLE



First Place
Climbing to Get a Closer Look
Phyllis Scherich



Second Place
AWW Red Hills Tour
Brian Martin



Third Place
Young Botanist
Phyllis Scherich

WILDFLOWER OF THE YEAR



First Place—Upper Left
Spider Milkweed in Bloom & Near Bloom
Krista Dahlinger



Second Place—Upper Right
Spider Milkweed
Janet Krack



Third Place—Lower Right
Spider Milkweed Closeup
Andrew Mitchell



Photo Contest Winners



BEST IN SHOW

Monarch Caterpillar on Milkweed

Phyllis Scherich

Once again, we would like to thank the photographers who took the time, skill, and energy necessary to submit photos to the 2015 AWW Photo Contest. We also appreciate those photographers who contribute their excellent work to issues of the KNPS Newsletter and to the website. We look forward to another spectacular group of candidate entries for the 2016 AWW Photo Contest.



Silent Auction Outstanding Success

By Krista Dahlinger

The Silent Auction that took place at the 2015 AWW was another terrific success. Books (new and old) about plants and botany were one of the most common donations. Other donations included: grass seed and live plants, home-made dill pickles, handmade pottery, cookies and home-made lemon pumpkin bread. Cynthia DeJong Abbott donated most of her Kansas plant identification books to KNPS, and the collection included some unusual and out-of-print books. Mathew Richter brought several giclee prints of his Kansas plants and landscape paintings. Sarah Cornett donated jellies she makes from wild-crafted berries. Rollie Henkes from Iowa brought complete sets of his Wildflowers and Prairies magazines to the auction.

The auction sales raised just over \$1,000. The \$1 raffle book, Kansas Wildflowers and Weeds brought in just over \$100, and Trish Remley was able to take it home. This year's Silent Auction fundraising event raised more than any year so far. KNPS is thankful to all who donated items and also for all who purchased something interesting to take home.



AWW participants peruse the many items at the Silent Auction tables. Photo by Phyllis Scherich

KNPS Election Results

By Craig Freeman

Ten members were elected each to serve three-year terms on the Board of Directors of the Kansas Native Plant Society at the 37th annual meeting on September 26, 2015, in Manhattan, Kansas. New board members are Rondi Anderson– Fort Scott; Brian Martin– Hesston; and Mark Neubrand– Salina. Past board members continuing their service include Earl Allen– Manhattan; Shirley Braunlich– Lawrence; Nadine Champlin– Sabetha; Mickey Delfelder

– Topeka; Craig Freeman– Lawrence; Nancy Goulden– Manhattan; and Matthew Richter– McPherson. Retiring from the board were Jocelyn Baker– Manhattan (8 years of service) and Cindy Ford– Pittsburg (23 years of service, including 8 years as Secretary).

Officers elected by the KNPS board each to serve 1-year terms were: Mickey Delfelder, Secretary– Topeka; Krista Dahlinger, Treasurer– Mulvane; Craig Freeman, Vice President– Lawrence; and Phyllis Scherich, President– Wilmore. Retiring after two years of service as President was Mike Haddock– Manhattan.



2015—2016 Kansas Area Native Plant & Wildflower Events



Information provided by Kansas Native Plant Society, see more events on our website: www.ksnps.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 13: Effects of Fall Burning, a Workshop. Learn the effects of fall fire on the natural resources on your land. Meet us for a field tour, presentations, and panel discussion at the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve in Strong City, KS from 9am-4pm. Co-sponsors: Kansas Prescribed Fire Council and **Kansas Native Plant Society**. To reserve a spot or more information, contact Shelly Wiggam at: <wiggie@ksu.edu> or (785) 477-6592.



October 17: Wyandotte County Lake Park Fall Trees Walk, 1-3pm. Learn more about trees on our woodland walk at Wyandotte County Lake Park. See fall foliage and nuts from oak and hickory species along the Missouri River bluffs by the dam. Some trails may be steep and muddy if it has rained recently; so good boots and jeans recommended. Park location: 91st St. and Leavenworth Rd., KC, KS. Meet up in the main parking lot by the Park Office; take the left fork when you come in the 91st entrance at the South end of the Park. Rain date is Oct 24. Sponsor: **Kansas Native Plant Society**. Contact: Elizabeth Petroske <epetroske@hotmail.com> .

October 17: Seed collecting for Baker Wetlands Restorations, Baldwin City, KS. Prairie seed is needed for new restorations at Baker Wetlands. Seed will be hand gathered starting at 1 pm. Bring gloves and sturdy clothes (optional: hand clippers and plastic buckets). Kids welcome. Location: Meet at Busby prairie at 640 E 1950 Road (The Google map points to the neighbor's property. The site is on the west side of 1950 Rd). Directions. From Vinland: 2.5 mi E on pavement, and 0.6 mi S on 1950 Rd (gravel). From Lawrence: K10 east to 1900 E exit. S on 1900 Rd-- 7 miles to stop sign at 700 N, 0.5 mi E on 700 N, then 0.6 mi S on 1950 Rd. Sponsor: Kansas Biological Survey. Contact: Bill Busby <wbusby@ku.edu> (785) 766-7844 .

October 17: Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs. Volunteer prairie maintenance and preservation projects, third Saturday each month except Dec. [www.grasslandheritage.org]. Wear appropriate clothing. No special skills or tools needed. For details, please contact Frank Norman <fjnorman@sunflower.com> (785) 691-9748 (cell).



October 21: The Colors of Autumn at Hillsdale State Park, Paola, KS. Ken O'Dell will lead our walk. We will meet at the Visitor Center parking lot (26001 West 255 St.) at 1pm and hike approximately 3 miles on the nature trail to see the glorious fall foliage. The terrain is steep in places; however, it is well graded with steps for easy walking. The Visitor Center has an excellent small museum; so allow time before or after our hike to enjoy the educational displays. Miami County Extension Master Gardener Ken O'Dell is a master plantsman and Regional Director of the **Kansas Native Plant Society**. He is a frequent, favorite presenter to gardening groups throughout the area. Sponsor: Marais des Cygnes Extension Master Gardeners. Contact: Lenora Larson <lenora.longlips@gmail.com> (913) 284-3360 .

October 25: Native Tree Walk at Forest Hills Cemetery in Kansas City, MO. Forest Hills dates back to 1888 and is known for its beautiful sugar maples, which should be nearing peak fall color. At one time, this cemetery had the finest collection of Missouri native trees and was nationally renowned for its tree collection. It contains the area champion black gum, and large cucumber tree magnolia, a classic vase-shaped American elm that defies Dutch elm disease, white ash, and chestnut oak. No facilities, although Soil Service Garden Center and Nursery is nearby to the south. Alan Branham, Director of Horticulture at Powell Gardens, will be your guide to this Forest Hills tree walk (1-3 pm) at 6901 Troost Avenue, Kansas City, MO 64131. Meet at the main entrance. Free to members of Powell Gardens, Missouri Prairie Foundation, and Grow Native! \$5 fee to Powell Gardens for non-members. Sponsor: Grow Native! In addition, Powell Gardens. To RSVP for this tree walk contact: Alan Branham (816) 697-2600 ext. 209.



October 31: Wyandotte County Lake Park Fall Trees Walk, 1-3pm. Learn more about trees on our woodland walk at Wyandotte County Lake Park. See fall foliage and nuts from oak and hickory species along the Missouri River bluffs by the dam. Some trails may be steep and muddy if it has rained recently; so good boots and jeans recommended. Park location: 91st St. and Leavenworth Rd., KC, KS. Meet up in the main parking lot by the Park office; take the left fork when you come in the 91st entrance at the South end of the Park. Rain date is Nov 7. Sponsor: **Kansas Native Plant Society**. Contact: Elizabeth Petroske <epetroske@hotmail.com>



2015—2016 Kansas Area Native Plant & Wildflower Events, Continued



November 21: Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs. Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs. Volunteer prairie maintenance and preservation projects, third Saturday each month except Dec. [www.grasslandheritage.org]. Wear appropriate clothing. No special skills or tools needed. For details, please contact Frank Norman <fjnorman@sunflower.com> (785) 691-9748 (cell).

January 16: Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs. See November 21 info.

February 20: Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs. See November 21 info.

March 19: Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs. See November 21 info.

April 16: Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs. See November 21 info.

April 23 & 30: Missouri Prairie Foundation Spring Plant Sales at the City Market, KCMO. The Missouri Prairie Foundation will hold its Annual Native Plant Sales, 8am to 1pm, at the City Market, 5th & Walnut, Kansas City, MO. A variety of native plants will be available. This is a great opportunity to buy native plants to provide habitat for native pollinators and birds. A generous portion of proceeds is donated by vendors to benefit MPF's prairie conservation work. Sponsor: Missouri Prairie Foundation. Questions? Contact: Doris Sherrick <djshe@fairpoint.net> (816) 716-9159.

May 21: Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs. See November 21 info.



June 1-30: June is Kansas Native Plant Appreciation Month! Each year **Kansas Native Plant Society** makes a formal appeal to the Governor for this proclamation. This opportunity promotes greater appreciation for the diversity, value, and beauty of Kansas native plants and their habitats. <www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org>.

June 18 & 19: Prairie Pollinators: Wildflowers and Butterflies Celebration at Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve, Cottonwood Falls, KS. The National Park Service will be celebrating its 100th Anniversary and the 20th Anniversary of Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve. The annual Marvin Schilling Butterfly Count will be held on Saturday. Some excellent presentations on both plants and insects are planned. **Kansas Native Plant Society** volunteers will be helping with displays, presentations, and plant tours. For general information, contact the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve (620) 273-8494 or (620) 273-6034.

June 18: Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs. See November 21 info.

July 16: Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs. See November 21 info.

August 20: Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs. See November 21 info.

September 17: Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs. See November 21 info.

October 15: Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs. See November 21 info.

November 19: Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs. See November 21 info. Join the KNPS email list to receive the latest event announcements: www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org/email_list.php.



Tallgrass Prairie Special Event—Prairie Pollinators: Wildflowers and Butterflies

By Iralee Barnard

Next year our National Park Service will be celebrating its 100th Anniversary. That year will also be the 20th Anniversary of Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve in Chase County, Kansas. A very special event is being planned to celebrate these two occasions and KNPS is involved.

On June 18 and 19, 2016, "Prairie Pollinators: Wildflowers and Butterflies" will be held at Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve. KNPS is helping with displays, presentations, and plant walks. The annual Marvin Schilling butterfly count will be held on Saturday. Some excellent presentations on both plants

and insects are planned; so mark your calendar now. KNPS will have children's activities, and it is a great place to take Dad for Father's Day; so bring the whole family.

The KNPS "pollinator" committee wants to thank the people who have already volunteered to do some fantastic presentations. Maybe others have an interesting topic to share or would enjoy helping at the children's table. Flower walk leaders are always welcome. Please let Nancy Goulden (nag@ksu.edu) know as soon as possible if you want to help with KNPS event.



BUTTERFLY HILL—By Michael Heffron

Around 50 members and guests enjoyed our first field trip of the 2015 AWW on Konza Prairie's Butterfly Hill. Our botanizing group was blessed in two distinct ways from the outset of the walk. First, the rain, which had persisted for most of the afternoon, had subsided. And second, since this hill is usually not open to the public, our permitted visit was a real privilege. Even though we did not encounter any butterflies, we did come across some other interesting insects such as the gorgeous, splendid dung beetle (*Phanaeus vindex*) that was found and correctly identified by several KSU students who were on the outing with us.

As far as native plants go, we did indeed experience a vast array of prairie species—some expected; some not. Predictably, we saw the big four grasses common in Kansas prairies—Big Bluestem, Little Bluestem, Indian grass, and Switchgrass. We also saw some of the short grasses such as: Side-oats Grama, Hairy Grama, Blue Grama, and Buffalograss. Common fall prairie forbs such as Maximillian sunflower, Dotted gayfeather, Round-headed bush clover, Snow-on-the-Mountain, Tall Boneset, Blue sage, and Stiff goldenrod were found along the trail.

We were also blessed with some less expected species such as Fire-on-the-mountain (*Euphorbia cyathophora*) and Osage false-foxglove (*Agalinis densiflora*). But the wildflowers that seemed to cause the most excitement were the Nodding ladies' tresses (*Spiranthes cernua*). Most who witnessed these darlings were "AWWed" by their petite spiraling white flowers and perfume-like fragrance—an undeniably pleasant visual and olfactory experience.

As our rich afternoon foray wound down, I felt a feeling of warm satisfaction from the day's experience of nature and comradery that we always seem to enjoy during our KNPS field trips. I also remembered an old adage that says, "Happiness is like a butterfly—if you chase it, it will elude you. But if you sit quietly—it may come and sit softly on your shoulder." I think possibly that today on Butterfly Hill happiness did come and sit softly on our shoulders.



Nodding Ladies Tresses
Spiranthes cernua
By Mark Neubrand

IMPRESSIONS OF TUTTLE CREEK OUTING—By Matthew Richter

"Go through the white gate up to the top of the hill, where you can park." Our first stop after the annual meeting had clearly written directions. If only my mind could clearly understand some of what I would find. We shoveled our long caravan of autos side by side in alternating patterns. Stepping down I saw the car parking patterns repeated in leaves of a plant I wanted to remember, Curly Cup Gumweed.

Looking around, prairie fragments, remnants divided by the hard geometric shapes of roadway came to my awareness along the Tuttle Creek Spillway Road. The pattern of irregular prairie in triangles was repeated and elongated by wind patterns on the reservoir water in the middle distance. Scratching against my hand I felt stiff sunflower leaves and noticed their long pointed shapes mimicking the wave patterns. So many blooming asters! How do I tell them apart? I struggle every fall to reliably learn another one of them or at least one distinctive feature of one of them. I found the answer in the patterns I associated as unique to this site. The fractured prairie remnants which clasped the hillside between roadways was a good association for recognizing the clasping leaves of the abundantly blooming Smooth Aster. A simple visual association of patterns and site characteristics became a working memory aid for plant identification.



HAINES PASTURE OUTING— By Mickey Delfelder

Saturday afternoon found the AWW contingent at the Bob Haines property west of Tuttle Creek. A friendly herd of happy, bellowing cows welcomed us into the pasture, wondering what all of those people were doing there.



Shelly Wiggam explains patch burn grazing research at Haines Pasture.

One of our speakers in the morning session, Shelly Wiggam, had aroused our interest in the site during her presentation on the benefits of Patch Burn Grazing (PBG). Shelly started the outing with an introduction to the pasture and explained how PBG has transformed the landscape. Over the past several dec-

ades, the landowner had removed many of the Eastern Red Cedars and other woody plants that were eagerly encroaching into the areas of the property that historically would be native prairie.

In 2008, Mr. Haines had become interested in PBG through a series of journal articles. After enrolling in several government programs, he was able to hire Shelly Wiggam and her husband to devise PBG plan for his acreage. The property was split into three regions (patches) along the waterways (serving as natural firebreaks) and other manually managed firebreaks. The first patch was burned in 2010, with a different patch burned in successive years. The burn of 2015 completed the second full rotation of the three patches. The wildlife and forage response on the cattle has been phenomenal.

The section of prairie that we started out on was heavily grazed, and frankly, not that impressive. We were on the patch that had been burned that spring, and by design, the cattle had heavily grazed it all year long. We were advised to head to the sections of the property that had not been burned this spring, and the contrast was astounding. Even though the cattle had access to those areas, they had been very lightly grazed and were filled with forbs.

Among the diversity of species, a few special plants and geological features stand out to me. Nine-anther clover (*Dalea enneadra*) was found in several spots. A Pitcher's clematis (*Clematis pitcheri*) with ripe seeds was found growing amongst Herbaceous greenbriar (*Smilax herbacea*) along a wooded draw. Thousands of Dotted gayfeathers (*Liatris punctata*) were found on top of the ridge to the west, and undoubtedly offered a wonderful display just a few weeks before. Attendees snacked on Prickly pear (*Opuntia macrorniza*) fruit and enjoyed the beautiful vistas.

The geologic highlights included an old root cellar built from limestone, quarried just a dozen feet away. One of the wooded draws included a creek with a high, steep bluff. During the heavy rains, water shoots from a hole in the bluff like a horizontal geyser. We weren't able to experience that, but the creek was enjoyable nonetheless.

One noticeable highlight of this outing was the stark contrast of the burned, maintained prairie to the unburned neighboring property overrun with red cedar and other woody vegetation. I think everyone in attendance hopes Mr. Haines serves as an inspiration to all property owners on the benefits of proper management and Patch Burning, in particular. We appreciate him sharing this special property with us this weekend.



PRICKLY PEAR EXPERIENCE—By Jeff Hansen



My favorite experience at the AWW was when my impromptu group of hikers came upon a large colony of prickly pear cactus in fruit at the Haines pasture. Andrew Mitchell showed us all how to select a ripe fruit, and suck out the pulp and seeds. I looked around, and everyone was splitting open a fruit, sucking out the pulp and spitting seeds. Some were filling their pockets with fruits to eat later. The fruits had such a unique, delicious flavor. Definitely good times with fellow plant enthusiasts.

Prickly pear photo by Nadine Champlin

SUNDAY MORNING FIELD TRIP TO VALERIE'S PRAIRIES—By Valerie Wright

Sunday morning opened clear and cool. The day before at the AWW many hands were raised in answer to the question "How many people are planning to come out tomorrow?" They came. Fifty-five signed in and a few more made almost 60. I was pleased to see that much interest in an attempted prairie restoration project.

With the increasing knowledge of the tallgrass prairie as an endangered ecosystem, many people are revegetating unused farm land with native and local plant communities. Mine was once a plowed wheat field. It had overgrown with trees and introduced weedy species. Attempts to let it "go back" were getting nowhere. I got serious in 2004 and looked for help. The U.S Fish & Wildlife Service had a program called "Partners for Wildlife." I enrolled and was funded for clearing trees and woodies as long as I did my part, which was to burn annually. I could now hire an experienced team to go after the cedars and other invading trees. Seed collected locally and lots of weeding every year has brought this patch into some semblance of "prairieness." It has been managed for forbs, but the grasses are coming in nicely. There are currently 156 native species and a few more find their way in annually.

The AWW participants walked the 6 acre patch. I wished they could have seen it 2 weeks earlier when it was in full bloom. Then we went on to a piece of native prairie with good species diversity. Patches of aromatic, silky and heath aster were blooming. Evidence of many other species just past bloom was seen.



Valerie provides orientation and plant lists to AWW visitors.

Photo by Nadine Champlin



Hikers in the Wright prairie found treasures such as the common checkered skipper on aster. Prairie photo by Mike Haddock, aster and skipper by James Bresnahan.

Wright Pasture/Conservation Easement History

This tallgrass pasture has a border with Konza Prairie. It became a conservation easement in 2014 with The Nature Conservancy.

- ◆ Burned when Konza Prairie burned, not annually until 2011

- ◆ Cedars cut 2005-2010 Partners for Wildlife contract
- ◆ Spot spraying for Caucasian bluestem (10+ years)
- ◆ Conservation values:
 - ◇ Priority landscape - Flint Hills
 - ◇ Native tallgrass prairie habitat
 - ◇ Considerable plant diversity
 - ◇ High quality wildlife habitat
 - ◇ Management plan required

Our Great Sycamore Trees

Text and photo by Ken O'Dell

Our native sycamore trees are one of the most recognized trees in the state. The large green leaves of summer give the appearance of a tree with thick branches and many smaller twigs, but the sycamore actually has fewer branches than many other trees. This is obvious in the wintertime when the lack of leaves show the bare branches. On a cold sunny day in January, the silvery white bark of the upper branches glisten with pride as this magnificent tree gets ready to unfurl its large maple-shaped leaves in late April.

For the past eight months, we have been inventorying some of the naturally planted trees at the Overland Park Arboretum in Overland Park, Kansas. The arboretum has 150 plus acres of naturally planted woodlands, and in this fantastic wilderness, we have hundreds and hundreds of sycamore trees of all sizes and shapes. Every trip through the woodlands, we see more sycamore that we had not noticed before. On the creek banks, the giant sycamore trees lean over the creek as they reach for more sunlight. In heavy wooded areas where large basswood, oaks, elms, and other large sycamore have reached for the sky, they have perched their smaller branches on top of the large upright, white, flaky branches. I find a few smaller sycamore trees, with a diameter of about nine inches or so that are stretching up and through the older and much larger trees, and some of these small sycamore have a very different bark. In some cases, the bark on these smaller sycamore are like 1½ inch shingles hanging on to the trunk. I attribute this to the

dense shade. Oddly, we have one giant sycamore with a diameter of about five feet growing at the edge of the creek, and the side facing the creek has bark that resembles a sycamore while the trunk on the opposite side that is in deep shade from the other woodland trees has bark that resembles a cottonwood for the first twenty feet and then slowly changes to the typical sycamore bark.

The sycamore flowers appear in late April and May. Both male and female flowers appear on the same tree with the male flower being mostly a greenish color and the female frequently a reddish hue. The fruit ripens in October and will hang on the tree well into the spring and early summer. It is not unusual to

see the old fruit from last year still hanging on long stalks and the new flowers and fruit growing beside it.

Break up the old seed ball, and you will find many tiny seeds inside.

The native sycamore trees, *Platanus occidentalis*, are growing naturally in the eastern half of Kansas, and I would imagine the growth habits of this tree in the eastern counties is significantly different

from the growth in the western range of this wonderful tree. If you have any photos of our great sycamore trees, I would like to have them. Mickey D. sent some photos of our state champ from Topeka. I am working on an article about sycamore trees for the Kansas City Gardener magazine and can use any suggestions or photos you want to share. I am retired and have time to read all of your emails so send them to Ken@springvalleynursery.com.



Sycamore tree canopy in winter

Featured Plant: Compass Plant (*Silphium laciniatum*)

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

One early summer day years ago, we were driving along the highway toward our central Kansas home with my eyes glued, as usual, on the roadside ditches looking for something new. Suddenly I saw some unfamiliar plants growing in the mid-grass prairie ditch. They were only about fifteen inches tall and had deeply divided leaves that all inclined in a north-south direction. We couldn't stop in the busy traffic at that time, but I mentally marked the spot. When we returned later, I discovered four of the same plant in that area. Knowing that the highway crews were about to mow the ditches, I decided I needed to save one before the advancing mowers obliterated them all. At home, I carefully transplanted it in a fence row so I could check on it occasionally. Year after year, it flourished with only rain water, and I subsequently learned that it was a compass plant, *Silphium laciniatum*.



Compass Plant

With its conspicuously tall stature and straight and upright stems, the compass plant appears as royalty on the prairie. Its rough-haired stems may reach eight feet in height, while its strong root stalk may extend to a depth of three meters in deep and moist soil. The basal leaves are about 1-1/2 feet long and one foot wide. The ridged, deeply divided leaves align in a north-south plane that can be depended on as accurately as a compass—hence its common name. It blooms in July and August with yellow ray and disc petals in a bell-shaped head that appears almost like a yellow crown on the hairy stem. The many two-to-four-inch-wide ray flowers produce a seed while the whole plant is palatable to livestock. If wounded, the stem oozes a sap that Native American children used as chewing gum.

Now, after thirty years, “my” compass is still blooming with stately stature, standing tall as reigning royalty over the other prairie flowers. I am happy and proud to have rescued it.

Membership News

New Members

6/14/15-10/4/15

Emily Albright - Wichita
Lakyn Anders - El Dorado
Tisha Alvarez - Wichita
Paul Blew - Wichita
Charlotte Brooks - Wichita
Brett Budach - Overland Park
Gaylene Comfort - Westphalia
Beverly Cory - Andover
Brett Courtney - Towanda
Mary Claire Cunningham-Chattanooga, TN
Dawn Denning - Bel Aire
Designs by Dowell - Manhattan
George Dick - Perry
Mark Eilert - Beloit
Katie Fieser - Douglass

John Fulghum - Fredonia
Michael Grau - Topeka
Sandy Graue - Tulsa, OK
Anya Haden - Eudora
Patricia Howerton - Colony
Clay Jarratt - Kansas City
Jeanne Jones - Lake Quivera
Debbie Kitchell - Paola
Jill Klienberglawrence
Joe Krauska - Manhattan
Rayleen Mace - Leavenworth
Jose Martinez - Wichita
Josh Merrill - Wichita
Dale Nimz - Lawrence
Jennifer Parker - Lawrence
Chad Phillips - Soldier
Karla Pierce - Liberty, MO

Cheryl Ringeisen - Overland Park
Bonnie Roark - Augusta
Dan & Gayle Stecklein - Hays
Trevor Schwemmer - Benton
Jene' Smith - Winfield
Carissa Stover - Andover
Melissa Stover - Andover
Ashton Stevens - Andover
Yuen Tran - Wichita
Hope Traville - Augusta
Ashley Veatch - Andover
Mary Ward & Ellie Keppy - Wichita
Stephen Yarbrough - Wheat Ridge, CO

MEMBERS RETURNING AFTER A HIATUS

Christopher Little - Manhattan
Cindy Quinlan - Manhattan

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND RENEWAL GUIDELINES

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

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 KS)	

Membership Category

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

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