



Erythronium

Newsletter of the Iowa Native Plant Society vol. 18 no. 1 April 2012

In Celebration of Wildflowers

For the fourth year, INPS is celebrating wildflowers in a special week in May. Iowa Wildflower Week was created by and is coordinated by INPS. Flowers are an ideal attraction to help introduce people to native plants and natural areas. Let's look at wildflowers per se and the history of the celebrations.

Defining "wildflower" is not straightforward. I immediately think of flowers growing in an undisturbed natural area – not seeded or planted – naturally growing there. We all know the delight of finding wildflowers and admiring them. They are native plants in bloom.

Increasingly, we treasure wildflowers that are blooming in a restoration or reconstruction as we seek to heal land that had been neglected, abused, or converted to other uses. We are encouraged by success of these native plants in their role of ecosystem repair.

Wildflowers can also be native plants, not cultivars or hybrids, that have been seeded or planted into gardens. This is quite different from the wildflower seed mixtures that are sold to grow anywhere. These packets often include species that are not native to or appropriate for the area where they are to be planted. They frequently include naturalized exotic species that some now treat as natives.

Iowa Wildflower Week (IWW) celebrates native wildflowers in their natural surroundings. It celebrates those that have been sown or planted in restorations, reconstructions, and gardens. Indeed, the use of wildflowers and other native plants in landscaping is important to reduce or eliminate the need for mowing, fertilizing, and watering; to provide wildlife habitat for birds, butterflies, and other fauna; and to prevent soil erosion.

Celebrate IWW by organizing or attending a field trip, visiting a native garden, planning a garden or addition to your landscaping. Another option is to help others to learn more about native plants and our natural areas.

The American Wildflower Society initiated the first National Wildflower Week in 1988. The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center took on organizing this annual event in 2003. NWW overlaps this year with IWW.

The US Department of Agriculture has declared National "Wildflowers" Week to celebrate the "management of native wildflowers and other plants as well as the enduring benefits provided to society by native plant resources in America's national forests and grasslands."

Celebrating Wildflowers (<http://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/>) is a website with public areas listed that have great wildflowers, stating "...your local flora is now appearing on the public lands near you!" This is a collaborative effort by the Forest, Fish and Wildlife, and National Park Services, and the BLM. It includes national forests, parks, wildlife refuges, grasslands, and millions of acres of public lands. It emphasizes the importance of conservation and management of native plants and plant habitats and highlights the aesthetic, recreational, biological, medicinal, and economic values of wildflowers. Millions of acres of public lands have been declared "America's Wildflower Gardens." When you travel, you can find wildflower hotspots by doing a little research at Celebrating Wildflowers and by visiting the websites of native plant societies.

IWW was initiated by the INPS after board members noticed similar spring celebrations in Kansas and Nebraska. Iowa Prairie Heritage Week (IPHW) had existed in the 1980s, had disappeared in 1992, and was revived recently. IPHW addresses late season prairies,

continued on page 3...

Table of Contents

Leaves from the President's Notebook	page 2
2012 Field Trips	page 4
INPS Conservation Award	page 8
Grant Reports and Updates	page 8
2012 Grant Descriptions	page 10
Dorothy Baringer Tribute.....	page 11
Membership Form.....	back page 1

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Leaves of the President's Notebook

Continuing Ed

Midway through my undergraduate experience at Houghton College, one of my biology professors recommended (to those of us considering graduate school) picking a research organism which we would still love after five years of study. I contend, however, that finding a graduate committee chair with whom one can develop and maintain a cordial relationship is even more important. Two years ago in this column (Station Identification, Jan. 2010), I shared my reflections on ways in which my career was guided by my connection with UMBS and my dissertation chair, Edward G. Voss. With Ed's passing in mid-February (a very complete obituary was distributed on the Iowa Native Plant Listserv), it is appropriate that I revisit that subject.

As I noted in my 2010 column, our friendship began at the Station in 1980. My motivation for enrolling in Ed's Boreal Flora course was to learn more about him and demonstrate that I was worthy of becoming a graduate student under his direction at Michigan. Early on I read much of what he had authored and then noticed how many of the thoughts expressed in those papers were interspersed throughout his lectures and field trips. Ed had a special interest in island floras and intentionally displayed several Great Lakes islands as distinct units within the county dot maps in *Michigan Flora*. He reveled in language and especially enjoyed word origins from classical Greek and Latin. During a collecting trip to Round Island (the focus of my summer's independent study), after he learned that I'd taken a year of Greek at Houghton, he proceeded to quote (in Greek) the beginning of the Gospel of John. Fortunately, by the time he'd reached "προς τον θεον", I recognized the quotation. By the end of the summer we agreed on a dissertation topic were I ever accepted at U-M. Filled with energy, youthful enthusiasm, and purpose, I entered my doctoral program three years later.

Ed believed that the best graduate students often were the happiest. While based in Ann Arbor, I stayed at my best. I eagerly used early page proofs of *Michigan Flora Part II* while keying unknowns from my research areas. Ed personified persistence and precision. Words mattered. Just the right word mattered more. Under his direction I became more disciplined and my writing more accurate. I now expect the same from my students. Ed stressed the necessity of prepping field trips. I strictly maintain the practice.

There's yet another way I honor Ed. During one class field trip to the Upper Peninsula, we fixed dinner over Coleman stoves at a roadside rest area. That night's meal was a hamburger-based creation inspired at the conclusion of a collecting trip to North Manitou Island in the 1950's. (The main dish and the field trip during which it was conceived grew in significance after North and South Manitou became two of the islands covered in my dissertation.) I pirated the recipe for "Manitou Mystery" while assisting in its preparation and, on nearly all my extended student field trips, the tradition of serving Manitou

Mystery endures. Typically at those times the circumstances behind the meal's genesis are recounted. Lately, the narrative includes a few noteworthy events surrounding occasions when I've prepared it. Perhaps, from now on, I'll add a few words about the person who invented the meal and who also inspired me.

Edward G. Voss (1929-2012) "Whether his students were undergraduate, graduate students, or dedicated amateurs, he shared his passion for botany with them with an equanimity of zeal."

Brian Hazlett

Support INPS's New Restoration Grant

This year, for the first time, INPS is offering grants to help restore native Iowa plant communities, while simultaneously introducing young Iowans to ecological restoration concepts and techniques. We are hoping that this new grant, "Restore Iowa!", will generate "win-win" projects that generate creative approaches to involving youth on the land while bringing health back to native plant communities.

"Restore Iowa!" grants have been funded for the first two years by an anonymous donor. However, we are hoping to start an endowment that will fund the program for many years to come. If you would like to contribute to this effort, please send donations to the following address; specify their deposit in the "Restore Iowa!" account.

Peter Hoehnle (INPS treasurer)
Iowa Valley RC&D
920 48th Avenue
Amana, IA 52203

Note that we will continue to offer our INPS Small Grants, which fund research, restoration/management of specific sites, and education/training about native plants; these grants have been funded by membership dues and also by special donations, which continue to be accepted. More information on both grants is available on the INPS website.

Connie Mutel

A combine that is excellent for harvesting prairie seed is available. If you are looking for such equipment, contact Steve Beaumont at 563 255 1080 or steveb@alpinecom.net for further description and to discuss the terms of sale.

Wildflowers

continued from page 1...

but not woodlands or early season prairies. People are especially eager to get outdoors in the spring when woodland wildflowers are at their best.

Kansas dedicates the month of June to Kansas Native Plant Appreciation Month with a focus on their heritage and the aesthetic, economic, and ecological contributions of native plants. The Kansas Native Plant Society sponsors a weekend in September that is very similar to Iowa's Loess Hills Prairie Seminar, which INPS helps to sponsor.

See the list of field trips in this newsletter for information about the two INPS-sponsored field trips during IWW. Other organizations and conservation boards have events scheduled. Some of these can be found on the INPS website calendar. Keep checking the calendar for new listings and updates, and encourage new people to attend! Emphasize the opportunity to see wildflowers!

Submit new IWW events or field trips any time this season by emailing the information to Dianne Blankenship bennaid@hotmail.com.

Promoting Oak Woodland Burns

Ecological restoration efforts have the dual benefits of healing the land and simultaneously educating the public. The more we talk to others and show off our restoration projects, the more education we accomplish.

Connie Mutel burned 5 acres of her oak woodland in November. The woodland runs along a well-used rural road north of Iowa City. Connie hopes that this land will become a showcase promoting woodland restoration to the large number of bicyclists and drivers passing by each day. To this end, a local video producer made an excellent 4-minute tape of the fire, with Connie and the Burn Boss explaining what was being done and why. This video is easily found by searching "Mutel woodland burn" on the web. There are also some photographs and a written description of the fire on the web. All are available for classroom use at no charge.

Connie Mutel

2012 Field Trips and Activities

Iowa Native Plant Society sponsors the following events in 2012 (others will be added as they are scheduled):

INPS Field Trip to an Oak Hickory Woodland in Crawford County

Newcom Rigglesman Natural Resource Area

Date: April 14, 2012

Time: 10am-1pm

Location: Newcom Rigglesman Natural Resource Area is near Deloit at the intersection of Crawford County F Ave (also called M27) and M40 (also called Boyer Blvd). Take Highway 39 north 3 miles from Deloit, to F Ave/M27 and then east 2.25 miles to Boyer Blvd, or take Boyer Blvd/Hwy M40 northeast from Deloit 3.5 miles to F Ave. From the intersection of F Ave and Boyer Blvd travel about 200 feet north and park in the lot (on west side of Boyer).

Snow trilliums should be abundantly in bloom.

The official Iowa map shows the roads to the site.

Contact: Glenn Pollock pollockg@cox.net

Iowa Wildflower Week – May 6-12, 2012

INPS coordinates this. You are encouraged to schedule events. See a separate article about this week – In Celebration of Wildflowers. Use the “wildflower hook” to encourage more people to care about our native plants and natural areas. Your events will be added to the INPS website calendar and will be announced in special articles about IWW. Contact: Dianne Blankenship bennaid@hotmail.com

INPS Field Trip to Ledges State Park in Boone County

Date: May 11, 2012

Time: 6pm

INPS is sponsoring this Iowa Wildflower Week field trip to Ledges State Park, south of Boone.

Don Farrar and John Pearson will lead this field trip to observe lichens along the Lichen Interpretive Trail. Then we will enjoy the spring woodland flora along the trails in the upper part of the canyon. They may also point out interesting mosses. It will be a great opportunity to explore the diverse flora of a beautiful state park with two of Iowa's most knowledgeable

woodland botanists.

Meet at 6pm at/near the Oak Woods picnic shelter near the east entrance to the park (just before the road goes down into the canyon). A park map is available as a pdf from the Ledges State Park webpage at: <http://www.iowadnr.gov/Destinations/StateParksRecAreas/IowasStateParks/ParkDetails.aspx?ParkID=610148&iAdminBoundary=196>

Contact: Deb Lewis dlewis@iastate.edu 515-294-9499

If you are interested in doing some homework about lichens along the trail before attending, visit: <http://www.iowadnr.gov/portals/idnr/uploads/parks/Ledges-Lichen-Trail-guide.pdf>.

Lichen photos are posted in a power point at: http://www.iowadnr.gov/Portals/idnr/uploads/parks/ledges_trail_ppt.pdf.

INPS Field Trip to Hamilton and Tapken Prairie Preserve during Iowa Wildflower Week

INPS and IPN invited to this dedication in Jones County

Date: May 12, 2012

Time: 1-4pm

Location: Hamilton and Tapken Prairie Preserve, 16639 60th Ave., Onslow, IA 52321

The Jones County Conservation Board is having an open house at their new prairie preserve on May 12th. INPS and IPN and anyone interested in prairie is invited. This coincides with Iowa Wildflower Week and also the blooming of many wildflowers at this site.

The itinerary for the day would include a meeting, talk and introductions at the old house site and then a walk north to the North Bluff Hill Prairie, newly renamed as Hamilton and Tapken Prairie Preserve. Total round trip distance we will be walking will be a minimum of 1/2 mile and could end up being 1 mile by the time you venture around small areas looking for plants. This tour is not advised for those with disabilities.

A few of the plants that should be flowering include yellow star grass, maybe blue eyed grass, a ton of eastern shooting stars (maybe jeweled) and wood betony, hoary puccoon, valerian and many violets, possibly including prairie violets, early blue violets and birds foot violets. There is an opportunity for people who have

expertise in variation within groups of sister-species, including the yellow star grass, blue-eyed grass and shooting stars, to help with the identification within these groups.

The north bluff hill prairie is a feature of the entire preserve. Native plants can be found in many areas throughout the 80 acres, but north bluff hill prairie is the highest quality, intact remnant.

Ray Hamilton and Jones County Conservation Board staff, Larry Gullett, Director, and Michele Olson, Naturalist, will be the leaders.

The address of the site is: 16639 60th Ave., Onslow, IA 52321

Contact: Jones County Conservation Board conservation@co.jones.ia.us or 563-487-3541

INPS contact: Dianne Blankenship bennaid@hotmail.com

INPS Field Trip to Daubendiek Prairie in Chickasaw County and a remnant prairie and savanna in Howard County.

Date: May 19, 2012

Time: 10am-2pm

Meeting location: the parking lot of the McDonald's near the exit off of highway 63, at 729 W Milwaukee St., New Hampton, or meet us at the site which is 10 miles north of there: from Hwy 63 turn east on 110th St. (west takes you to Alta Vista); go 0.75 mi and park on the side of the road; the entrance is a farm lane on the right, or contact the leader, Laura Jackson, for directions.

Expectations: Have you ever wondered about prairie's ability to recover after cultivation or grazing? We will visit Daubendiek Prairie, a lovely black soil remnant with huge numbers of shooting stars and other wildflowers in northern Chickasaw County. Next to it lies an old field, last farmed sometime in the 1970s. Which conservative native species turn out to be aggressively re-colonizing the old field? You might be surprised. The second stop, in southern Howard County, was a permanent pasture up until about 15 years ago. Remnant prairie and wetland plants can be found among the pasture species, plus some magnificent spreading oaks with herbaceous understory. This oak savanna is not overgrown, but has never been managed with fire --how has it survived?

Contact: Laura Jackson jacksonl@uni.edu 319-273-2705 (work) 319-266-5468 (evening)

INPS sponsors Doolittle Prairie State Preserve Walk in Story County

Date: May 24, 2012

Time: 7-8:30pm

Enjoy a leisurely walk in this outstanding prairie with a leader who knows this prairie very well. Lloyd Crim has been leading walks at Doolittle for two decades. The walks occur four times during the season with 2012 dates being May 24, June 28, July 26, and August 23. INPS, IPN, and Story County Conservation all help to promote attendance.

Contact: Lloyd Crim lloydcrim@gmail.com 515-432-5026

INPS supports the Loess Hills Prairie Seminar

Dates: June 1 evening – June 3 noon, 2012

Location: evening programs at West-Monona High School in Onawa.

Outdoor programs at the Loess Hills Wildlife Management Area, 178th St. and Oak Ave., rural Castana

New and traditional sessions for all ages. Hikes, walks, camp talks, auto tours. Special programs for children.

2012 theme: Prairie Ecology This is the 36th annual seminar.

Speakers include: MJ Hatfield and Chris Helzer

Presenters: new and repeating presenters including INPS board members Brian Hazlett and Deb Lewis

Entertainer: Douglas Wood in concert, at campfire, a session with children, and a writing workshop

Seminar details and registration materials will be on the NWAEA website in April.

Contact: Gloria Kistner gkistner@nwaea.org 800-352-9040ext6080 or 712-222-6080 to have registration form mailed

Contact: Dianne Blankenship bennaid@hotmail.com

http://www.nwaea.k12.ia.us/en/programs_and_services/loess_hills_prairie_seminar/

<http://www.lizblankenship.com/shareloess/content/home>

INPS Field Trip to Hayden Prairie State Preserve in Howard County

Date: June 9, 2012

Time: 10am-1pm

Hayden Prairie State Preserve is on the Iowan Surface and 4 miles due south of the Iowa/Minnesota state line. It consists of 240 acres of mesic to wet tallgrass prairie, the largest native prairie in the eastern half of Iowa. Hayden Prairie has about 100 species of vascular plants. The carpets of white, lavender and pink shooting stars (*Dodecatheon meadia*, the largest population in Iowa) are spectacular. The shooting star display generally peaks around late May. The prairie is large enough to attract nesting northern harriers as well as other prairie birds like bobolinks, dickcissels, Henslow's sparrows, meadow larks and sedge wrens. Prairie butterflies such as the regal fritillary and the silvery blue call the prairie home, along with smooth green snakes.

Hayden Prairie is named after Dr. Ada Hayden, a former professor of botany at Iowa State University in Ames. In the mid-1940's she received a modest grant from the Iowa Academy of Science to conduct an inventory of native prairie worthy of preservation. Hayden Prairie was "Howard County No. 1" in Dr. Hayden's report. The Iowa Conservation Commission (now known as the Iowa Department of Natural Resources) purchased the prairie in 1945. Dr. Hayden died in 1950. Hayden Prairie became a National Natural Landmark in 1966 and a state preserve in 1968. It is named after Dr. Ada Hayden in tribute to her efforts to protect prairie in Iowa.

DIRECTIONS: From Riceville on the Mitchell County/Howard County line travel east on State Highway 9 to County Highway V26 (Jade Avenue, a paved road). Turn left (north) and travel 5 miles to County Highway A23 (50th Street. As you drive the last 0.5 mile to 50th Street you will see the 200 acre unit of Hayden Prairie on your left). Turn left (west) onto 50th Street and travel 0.5 mile to Ivy Avenue (a gravel road). Turn left (south) and travel 0.5 mile to a small grass parking area on the west side of Ivy Avenue (the 40 acre unit of the prairie). This lot is small so you may have to park along Ivy Avenue.

Depending on how wet a spring we will have this year it would not hurt to wear boots. Even in a wet year most of the prairie can be walked in gym shoes,

but boots can be handy for looking at lower lying areas if spring happens to be wet.

The Iowa Department of Transportation maps some of the larger state preserves on Iowa highway maps available at Iowa DOT rest stops and welcome centers. The preserves are represented by small blue dots with the name of the preserve in blue letters. Hayden Prairie is located southwest of Chester on the map.

Leader: Mark Leoschke

Contact: Mark Leoschke Mark.Leoschke@DNR.IOWA.GOV 515-281-5918 (work)

INPS Annual Meeting and Field Trips at Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge

Date: June 23, 2012

Time: 10:30am-3pm (Come early to view exhibits.)

The day will be a combination of morning and afternoon field trips, a bring-your-own sack lunch and annual meeting indoors, a program by Pete Eyheralde of ISU about one the IPNS-sponsored research activities regarding bison and seed dispersal. Field trips leaders and our hosts: Pauline Drobney and Karen Viste-Sparkman.

Contacts: Pauline Drobney Pauline_Drobney@FWS.GOV 515-994-3400

Karen Viste-Sparkman Karen_VisteSparkman@fws.gov 515-994-3400

INPS sponsors Doolittle Prairie State Preserve Walk in Story County

Date: June 28, 2012

Time: 7pm

Enjoy a leisurely walk in this outstanding prairie with a leader who knows this prairie very well. Lloyd Crim has been leading walks at Doolittle for two decades. The walks occur four times during the season with 2012 dates being May 24, June 28, July 26, and August 23. INPS, IPN, and Story County Conservation all help to promote attendance.

Contact: Lloyd Crim lloydcrim@gmail.com 515-432-5026

INPS Field Trip to David Gossman's remnants and restorations in Jackson County

Date: July 14, 2012

Time: 10am-3pm

Location: 19502 159th Ave, Zwingle, IA 52079 (See directions below.)

This will be a day of hikes seeing lots of diversity. The total area is 670 acres, so David has selected areas for the hikes. David Gossman will be the leader and host.

Morning hikes will include visiting planted prairies and some goat prairie and oak savanna restoration work.

Following a lunch break (bring your own) and rest-room break, the afternoon hike will head down into the valley where there are lots of bluffs, north facing talus slopes, small caves, and timber.

During lunch there will also be an opportunity for people to visit the lumber drying barn and hardwood production operation.

The address is 19502 159th Ave, Zwingle, IA 52079. Take 208th St west from route 61 then south on 159th. That said, mapquest will not place that address correctly. It places that address at my neighbor to the north. If you use mapquest you have to follow 159th avenue till it dead ends into my farm lane to the south. If you look at the aerial photos of the farm that way, I think I will take the first hike north and west of the farm house. Then the afternoon hike will head south into the timbered valley.

Contact: David Gossman dgossman@gcisolutions.com 563-652-2822

INPS sponsors Doolittle Prairie State Preserve Walk in Story County

Date: July 26, 2012

Time: 7pm

Enjoy a leisurely walk in this outstanding prairie with a leader who knows this prairie very well. Lloyd Crim has been leading walks at Doolittle for two decades. The walks occur four times during the season with 2012 dates being May 24, June 28, July 26, and August 23. INPS, IPN, and Story County Conservation all help to promote attendance.

Contact: Lloyd Crim lloydcrim@gmail.com 515-432-5026

INPS sponsors Doolittle Prairie State Preserve Walk in Story County

Date: August 23, 2012

Time: 7pm

Enjoy a leisurely walk in this outstanding prairie with a leader who knows this prairie very well. Lloyd Crim has been leading walks at Doolittle for two decades. The walks occur four times during the season with 2012 dates being May 24, June 28, July 26, and August 23. INPS, IPN, and Story County Conservation all help to promote attendance.

Contact: Lloyd Crim lloydcrim@gmail.com 515-432-5026

Iowa Prairie Heritage Week – September 9-15, 2012

You are encouraged to schedule events. They will be added to the INPS website calendar and announced in IPHW news articles. Contact: Dianne Blankenship bennaid@hotmail.com

Check the INPS website calendar often for updates about these and additional field trips.

Forest & Shade Trees of Iowa Now Available!

Forest and Shade Trees of Iowa, 3rd Edition, 2011, by Peter J. van der Linden and Donald R. Farrar (pbk), 446 pages, 555 color photos, 40 drawings, University of Iowa Press (Bur Oak Guides). ISBN: 1-58729-994-1 978-1-58729-994-0 University of Iowa Press: <http://www.uiowapress.org/books/2011-spring/forest-and-shade-trees-iowa.htm>, \$34.95, current sale price \$26.00 + \$5.00 shipping if ordered directly from Press; Amazon.com: http://www.amazon.com/Forest-Shade-Trees-Iowa-Guide/dp/1587299941/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1332876498&sr=1-1, \$23.07 + shipping

Even if you own one of the earlier editions of *Forest and Shade Trees of Iowa*, you'll want to acquire this beautiful, expanded and updated edition! Most pages have at least one color photograph, giving it almost the look of a "coffee-table" book. But it also contains more information than in previous editions and is arranged in a useful format. A detailed review will appear in a future *Erythronium*, but I recommend that you don't wait until then to get your copy – purchase it for use right away!

Deb Lewis

New! -- Iowa Native Plant Society Conservation Award

Starting in 2012, the Iowa Native Plant Society, will annually present the Iowa Native Plant Society Conservation Award to recognize an individual who demonstrates outstanding success in advancing the goals of INPS.

The first recipient of the INPS Conservation Award – in recognition of Outstanding Education and Community Outreach – is Larissa Mottl. Larissa is the manager of Grinnell College's 365-acre Conard Environmental Research Area (CERA) near Kellogg. Larissa earned a BA degree in Biology and Chemistry at the University of Minnesota, Morris. In 2000, she received a MS degree in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from Iowa State University, where she studied techniques to restore native plants to woodland habitats.

Since 2000, Larissa has been actively promoting the goals of INPS through her work at CERA and through serving the INPS as its president for a 2 year term. At CERA, Larissa is focused on the restoration of prairie, savanna and woodland ecosystems, removal of non-native species, conducting prescribed burns, experimenting with goat browsing as a method to control woody growth, and directing research with students. Larissa's dedication to native plants is also exemplified by her organization and leading of many public fieldtrips and workshops. The workshops have helped to bring a new awareness and understanding to dozens of participants on sedges, insects, woodland wildflower restoration, and prescribed burns. Larissa is a very deserving recipient of the 2012 INPS Conservation Award. She was presented the award on February 18, 2012 at CERA. The award included a certificate and a 16x20 photo "Chichaqua Sedge Bouquet".

The award was made possible by donations from Tom Rosburg, Bill Norris, Scott Zager and Russ Kleinman. Over the next few months, the INPS Board will establish the nomination procedure that INPS will use to select future recipients. The presentation of the award will become a feature of the annual meeting starting in 2013.



2011 Grant Projects Reports and Updates

INPS project summary 2011

Elizabeth Bach, Brent Mortensen, Lauren Sullivan

The native flora of Iowa has many enthusiasts, and is relevant to many aspects of our culture and society. However, the preservation and restoration of Iowan plants has largely been relegated to the scientific disciplines. As developing ecologists, Iowa State University graduate students Elizabeth Bach, Brent Mortensen, and Lauren Sullivan have embarked on an ambitious project that is integrating students and professionals in both the humanities and sciences to document the ecological, aesthetic, artistic, and cultural changes in a tallgrass prairie reconstruction. This integration encourages a greater appreciation for native plants as individuals experience a more complex network of personal interpretations of the tallgrass prairie. The

Oakridge Research and Education Prairie will be planted in Ames, IA in March 2012. An experimental design will facilitate the testing of multiple scientific hypotheses. In collaboration with the ISU English Department, graduate and undergraduate students are involved in planting the prairie and writing creative responses to their experiences restoring the prairie. Artists are also documenting the changing landscape through paintings and other creative mediums. In 2011, Iowa Native Plant Society generously awarded this project a grant, which will be used to transport field materials and students to the field during planting this spring. Stay tuned for additional updates as the prairie experiences emerge!

Restoring prairie violet (*Viola pedatifida*) populations in the Grand River Grasslands

By Ray Moranz, Diane Debinski, and John Delaney

We are part of a team of ecologists from Iowa State University, Oklahoma State University, and the University of Illinois that has been studying the effects of prescribed fire and grazing on plants, insects, and birds in the Grand River Grasslands of southern Iowa since 2006. After analyzing vegetation data in 2010, we realized that the prairie violet (*Viola pedatifida*) is rare at or absent from most of our study pastures, even though the Grand River Grasslands is at the approximate center of the species' range. The prairie violet is a conservative, native forb, and we presumed that its rarity at our pastures was a legacy of historic land-uses (row crops and/or high-intensity grazing).

In 2011, we received a grant from the Iowa Native Plant Society to plant prairie violets in the Grand River Grasslands and to study the effects of fire and moderate-intensity grazing on prairie violet growth, survival, and flower production. We ordered local ecotype seed from Jon Judson, owner of Diversity Farms in Dedham. Mr. Judson kindly cold-stratified and germinated the seeds for us. In March 2011, we picked up ~500 seedlings and transplanted each one into its own 1.5" x 5.5" Ray Leach cone-tainer at an ISU greenhouse. In May, we transferred the seedlings to our 12 study pastures in Ringgold County. Four pastures are ungrazed, but get burned every 3 years. Four are grazed by cattle, and get burned every three years. The remaining four pastures are also grazed by cattle, but every year roughly 33% of each pasture gets burned. We planted nine prairie violets at each of three randomly selected locations within each pasture, for a total of 27 plants per pasture. We watered the plants in June, and monitored their health in June and early August. In June, approximately 40 plants had flower buds, flowers, or seed pods, giving us hope that these small colonies will self-propagate and expand. In August, at least 95% of the plants appeared to be well-rooted, and we anticipate most will survive the winter. In March 2012, we will burn most of our study pastures, and in May, we will once again assess the condition of the plants. In summer 2012, we will perform statistical analyses that will inform us about the responses of prairie violets to our fire and grazing management. If you have questions, feel free to email us at moranz@iastate.edu.

Bison-mediated Seed Dispersal in a Tallgrass Prairie Reconstruction

Pete Eyheralde, PhD Student, Department of Natural Resource Ecology and Management, Iowa State University

My dissertation research investigates the role of bison in dispersal of native and non-native plant species in tallgrass prairie ecosystems. I'm attempting to quantify the seed dispersal process by recording the abundance and diversity of plant species found in bison hair (epizoochory) and in bison dung (endozoochory). Data is collected monthly along 50 transects in the 303 hectare bison enclosure at the Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge, in Jasper County, Iowa. Funding from the Iowa Native Plant Society helped purchase supplies for establishing transects, collecting field data, and processing samples in the laboratory.

During the annual bison round up at NSNWR each November, I am able to clip hair samples directly from the animals. This reveals the seed species that attach to the bison in autumn and are dispersed throughout the winter, before the hair is shed in spring. Having direct contact with the animals allows me to classify which types of seeds are more likely to be carried by bulls, cows or juveniles.

Ultimately I'm trying to determine which tallgrass prairie plants if any, depend on bison for dispersal, how many of those species get "planted" in bison wallows, and most importantly for managers of tallgrass ecosystems – if we try to reconstruct prairies without bison, if they will be truly functional ecosystems.

Data from 2010-2011 is showing quite a difference in seed assemblages between sex/age classes, most likely due to the different nutritional requirements and foraging behavior of nursing cows in large herds, compared to smaller groups of adult bulls. Grass seeds were most numerous in shed hair collected April-November, while forb seeds made up the bulk of seeds in fall clipped hair. Numbers of non-epizoochory seeds were significantly greater than those seeds with hooks and barbs for external attachment.

In November 2011 I also placed GPS collars on two adult female bison. Data from these collars will be used to create GIS maps of bison habitat selection in

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Restoring prairie violet

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response to vegetation cover, soil type, topography and burn history, as well as proximity to wallows, water sources and fences. The goal of this field research is to produce predictive models of seed dispersal by bison in tallgrass prairies. These models will help create a better understanding of how bison influenced plant dispersal throughout the eastern Great Plains and how bison can be used to help restore tall grass prairies today.



Collecting samples at Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge

Your Membership Fees Support Native Plant Research – Thank You!

A major portion of INPS membership fees goes to grants that foster Iowa’s native plants and plant communities in diverse ways. Thanks much for helping to support the following four recipients of INPS’s Small Grants for 2012! Each grant recipient received \$500:

Philip Bice and Aubrie James, students at ISU, will be assisted by Professors Tom Rosburg and Bill Norris in performing the first thorough plant inventory of the vascular plants of Anderson Prairie State Preserve, near Estherville. A plant inventory is the first step to figuring out how to best manage this 200-acre preserve with a diversity of prairie habitats.

Marlene Ehresman, director of the new Iowa Wildlife Center (IWC) in Boone County, will be performing a series of Bioblitzes (rapid assessments of natural features, performed by multiple researchers and the general public) that describe the IWC land and will feed into a restoration and stewardship plan for these lands.

Jennifer Anderson-Cruz, student at ISU with significant wetland restoration experience, will be evaluating several common prairie restoration planting methods to determine how they affect the development of a diverse sedge meadow community. We know relatively little about how to successfully restore wetlands; research such as this could make a significant difference to our native landscapes.

Casey Kohrt and Pete Kollasch, experienced prairie enthusiasts in Iowa City, will be arranging a prescribed fire in sections of Rochester Cemetery in Cedar County, a high-quality, well-known savanna remnant with over 400 plant species. They are part of the “Friends of Rochester Cemetery” group that is attempting to reintroduce active ecological management to this precious site.

In addition, in 2012, INPS initiated the new Restore Iowa! grant program (see more information about Restore Iowa! in the article on page 3). This grant was developed to get kids and young adults out on the land and teach them about ecological restoration techniques and goals. We are proud to announce our first recipient. Beverly A. Grindeman-Adams, teacher at Metro High School in Cedar Rapids, received a \$1,000 grant to work with the staff at the nearby Indian Creek Nature Center in a “service-learning” project. Together they will involve high school students in restoring an ancient bog on the Nature Center property, while simultaneously teaching the students about plants and restoration techniques.

Thanks to all INPS members for furthering these important efforts! We look forward to receiving more creative proposals in our 2013 grant cycle; see the INPS website for grant information and application directions.

Connie Mutel, INPS grants coordinator

Dorothy Baringer, 1926-2012: A Tribute

Dorothy Mae Schlensig Baringer passed away on February 15, 2012. She was perhaps best known for her native seed and plant business, Wildflowers from Nature's Way. She also worked as an environmental biology instructor for Upper Iowa University and on numerous native plant projects in central Iowa. Memorial donations may be directed to the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation. In John Pearson's tribute below (which has been edited for space), he provides a brief glimpse of Dorothy's powerful impact on his work and on conservation in general.

Goodbye to Dorothy

I am saddened to relay the news that Dorothy Baringer, pioneer prairie restorationist and early Iowa Preserves Board member, has passed away. Among many prairie preservation activities, she was a long-time member of the State Preserves Advisory Board and a clear voice for saving Iowa's natural heritage. I am honored to have known her professionally and personally. I prepared these comments as a memorial for her... John Pearson

Dorothy was a friend to me in many ways. When I arrived in Iowa in 1985 as the "new guy" hired as the ecologist for the Natural Areas Inventory program of the Iowa DNR, I was initially unfamiliar with the natural places that long-term naturalists in the state had known for many years. Knowing less than the people who regard you as an "expert" is an uncomfortable predicament, but Dorothy helped me get through that awkward stage very quickly. She invited me to visit her many prairie projects, exposing me to many native prairie remnants, many prairie species, and many, many bags of prairie seeds. She showed me the native prairie on her farm, only a minute's walk from her house, brimming with native prairie plants. She drove me around the Clarke County countryside on very rural roads to special spots known only to her. She told me about remnants I should visit around the state, where they were and where she had seen special plants. I was – and still am – very appreciative of the support and friendly guidance that Dorothy freely and enthusiastically offered to me during those first years.

Dorothy's influence on my professional career continued in others ways. She served on the State Preserves Advisory Board between 1976 and 1992, and was chairman of the Board from 1979 to 1982. I became the Preserves Board's ecologist in 1993, the year after she had finished her 4th term, but she stayed on as an official advisor to the Board. She was always a proponent of new preserves, trying to save as many natural areas as possible. In 1983, serving as chair of the Preserves Board, she wrote a letter to Governor Terry Branstad urging his support for the program: *"We firmly believe that the quality of our lives is enriched through our state preserves system. It is through this system that we glimpse the way the prairies looked, how the early people lived, and underlying all, the nature of the land and its forms."*

Dorothy also helped the rare plant program of our Natural Areas Inventory. She once told me that she had seen the rare and beautiful Showy Lady's-slipper Orchid along a river in central Iowa during one of the Governor's Canoe Trips in the 1980s. It was hard to believe: this was a very rare plant known to occur mainly in far northeast Iowa. Dorothy was unable to provide an exact location because she had spied it from a moving canoe on a winding river; she could describe it only as "in the woods, on the right bank of the river, near a railroad bridge, even with a big boulder in the middle of the stream" [landmarks fictionalized here]. I tried to track it down but was never able to pinpoint it. Then in 2002, a botanist excitedly called me with the news that he had discovered Showy Lady's-slipper along the same river. When I accompanied him to the site, I found myself in the woods, near a railroad bridge, and even with a big boulder... I am sure this was the very spot that Dorothy had discovered many years earlier!

I tell these stories not only because they are meaningful to me, but because they are examples of how Dorothy interacted with everyone! Thank you, Dorothy, from all of us.

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