**Iowa Native Plant Society 30th Anniversary Weekend Celebration**

**May 17 - 18, 2025**

Reservations for May 17 dinner need to be made by **May 7**. Lunch will be on your own. There are several Fayette restaurant options available.

**Reservations for the Anniversary Celebration Dinner:** The cost is $20.00 and can be paid using PayPal [https://www.paypal.com/ncp/payment/7E49LV4KJJVVC](https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.paypal.com%2Fncp%2Fpayment%2F7E49LV4KJJVVC&data=05%7C02%7C%7Cdc43a64f14084f1194b508dd78f59a57%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C638799718443062435%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=u%2BJQICNAMokp%2FqmSn7VGHgcpIc0GzZt%2FbIO3PzrFnT4%3D&reserved=0) or sent via check to **Iowa Native Plant Society, 4486 88th Street, Urbandale, Iowa 50322.**

Information on field trips and celebration dinner can be found below.

**May 17** **– Backbone State Park 9:30 am and 1:00pm**

Our leaders will be Bill Norris and Deb Lewis, co-founders of INPS thirty years ago, who have done extensive studies of the flora at Backbone State Park through the years. Park Ranger, Nate Detrich, and Mark Leoschke of the Iowa DNR will join us.

**9:30am** we will meet at the South Flats Shelter near the lake. We will then carpool/caravan to the Richmond Springs area in the north part of the park where there will be an opportunity to see aquatic/wetland plants at the springs and a nice woodland that should still have late spring wildflowers. As time permits, we may also visit a small prairie area at the west entrance.

We will return to the original gathering area, the South Flats Shelter from **12:00-1:00pm** for your bring-your-own lunch and meet up with others who join us, then caravan at **1:00pm** to the parking lot at the Backbone. We should complete the Backbone walk by 3:30 pm and return to Fayette by 4:30 pm.

**May 17 at 5:00 pm at Upper Iowa University** – The dinner requires reservations by May 7. Parking for the dinner is in Lot A and the ballroom is in the Student Center [([15 on the map](https://www.google.com/url?q=https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fuiu.edu%252Fabout%252Fmaps-directions%252F%26data%3D05%257C02%257C%257Cec9c79fa6d214320d82308dd76b22c03%257C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%257C1%257C0%257C638797230118719578%257CUnknown%257CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%253D%253D%257C0%257C%257C%257C%26sdata%3D5KpDL296tmMdRTxvaoPqJicsZFu7WLQ4oyJZiNJXkkc%253D%26reserved%3D0&sa=D&source=calendar&usd=2&usg=AOvVaw0txrsQkt4Vm4iaC5BNu3us))](https://d.docs.live.net/533A3E853D749936/Documents/%282%20on%20the%20map%29). If you enter the north doors, people will select to either go up the stairs or take the elevator. We’ll be in the ballroom closest to the glass window that says “student life.” Lot A is west of the Student Center.

The program will follow with Bill Norris speaking about the history of studies (including a current one) of the flora of Backbone, with the title "Piecing Together the Flora of Backbone State Park (1918-Present)."

Rebecca Kauten will share recent information about Becky’s Fen, which is the first field trip on the morning of May 18, followed by comments from Heather Gamm about the field trip that follows to the Fairfield Natural Resource Area.

Jennifer Stoffel will invite us to visit the Herbarium at UIU after the dinner and program. It has been recently renovated. Jennifer will be our guide along with a student, Christian Custforth. The Museum and Herbarium are in Edgar Fine Arts ([2 on the map](https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fuiu.edu%2Fabout%2Fmaps-directions%2F&data=05%7C02%7C%7Cec9c79fa6d214320d82308dd76b22c03%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C638797230118719578%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=5KpDL296tmMdRTxvaoPqJicsZFu7WLQ4oyJZiNJXkkc%3D&reserved=0)). It is across campus on the northmost side. Street parking is the closest to the West entrance. Visitors will go up one small flight of stairs or take the elevator to the next level up. You’ll be able to see the Museum and Herbarium area as you enter.

**May 18 at 8:30am - Becky's Fen** is one of the highest-quality remaining wetland communities of its kind in our state. This groundwater-fed prairie remains saturated year-round, and supports more than 200 plant species, including 7 state-listed as threatened or endangered. The site is managed as a partnership between Fayette County Conservation Board and the Kauten family. The field visit will include a general introduction to what fens are and why they exist; background on the multi-year study conducted by John Pearson and Mark Leoschke to identify, locate and assess the quality of remaining Iowa fens, and the significance of not only this site, but the process by which it became a privately-owned protected area in Iowa.

Leaders will be Rebecca Kauten, Mark Leoschke, and Heather Goss who will share information about the nearby Gray-Hart Memorial Fen and Natural Resource Area, also managed by Fayette CCB of which she is Director. **Boots** are recommended to be worn at this site.

Becky’s Fen is approximately 10 minutes (5 miles) south of Fayette. The Gray-Hart Area that is adjacent to Becky's Fen.is at 10375 110th Street. From this address drive towards Kauten's farm (East on 110th) but turn south (right) onto J Avenue to get to Becky's Fen.

Some people will leave at this time for the **Landers Prairie Dedication** near Ames. [https://www.mycountyparks.com/County/Story/Park/Prairie-Valley-Preserve/Events/26219/Landers-Prairie-Dedication](https://www.google.com/url?q=https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fwww.mycountyparks.com%252FCounty%252FStory%252FPark%252FPrairie-Valley-Preserve%252FEvents%252F26219%252FLanders-Prairie-Dedication%26data%3D05%257C02%257C%257C8e0591c47e5846e06bef08dd5b337b78%257C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%257C1%257C0%257C638766998887916947%257CUnknown%257CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%253D%253D%257C0%257C%257C%257C%26sdata%3DOBYuc5BE1NizPISKy4v0N2KgrHgYTtGGfX86IOM3BsU%253D%26reserved%3D0&sa=D&source=calendar&usd=2&usg=AOvVaw3rKAaAFChwzoaITVUVDWcq)

**May 18 at 10:30 am - Fairfield Natural Resource Area** is 15 minutes from Becky’s Fen. Heather Gamm and Mark Leoschke will lead this field trip. The purchase was funded by REAP and Fayette County Pheasants Forever. It has been owned by FCCB since 2022. The first burn was in the spring of 2023. The address is 2356 70th Street, Arlington. John Pearson created a vascular plant list for the site in 2017 and Mark has added to the list.

Remember to make your reservations in good time!

Contact Dianne Blankenship with any questions. Those who register will receive Dianne’s cellphone number to use that weekend.

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