Woolly verbena – Verbena Stricta

— BRAD GUHR

Woolly verbena (Verbena stricta) is the Kansas Native Plant Society 2019 Wildflower of the Year (WOY). It is also known by the common name hoary vervain.

Found throughout Kansas, this two to five foot tall, stout and erect perennial, with dense hairs on stems and leaves, thrives in dry prairies, pastures, and disturbed areas. With up to twelve foot deep roots, this species is very drought tolerant. In a natural prairie setting, woolly verbena is not aggressive. However, cattle do not like the bitter taste of this species, so when competing species are eaten, woolly verbena will spread in a grazed pasture.

Even though this species has a square stem and opposite leaves like all plants in the mint family, woolly verbena is in the closely related Verbenaceae or vervain family.

The flowers are five-petaled and fused at the base to form a tube. Purple one-half inch flowers bloom in pencil-like terminal clusters during late summer: July to September. Seeds form as four nutlets per flower and are eaten by small birds and mammals. Leaves are larval host food for common buckeye butterflies.

Woolly verbena is a popular species to have in a native plant garden due to its erect form and showy late-season color. It can bloom for four to six weeks, attracts a variety of pollinators, and spreads easily by seed when competition is low. Seeds germinate readily with two months of cold, wet stratification.

To see these photos by Michael Haddock and a detailed description of Verbena stricta, visit kswildflower.org. — CONTINUED ON PAGE 2
President’s Message

I am excited to start my two-year term as president, and I will begin my first newsletter address with a short statement of what I love about KNPS. This organization facilitates exploration of the diverse array of plant communities found throughout the state and we do so with a variety of knowledgeable, friendly, and caring people. The rich experiences we share as people exploring our Kansas native prairies, wetlands, savannas, and forests are genuine, meaningful, and long-lasting.

For me, the root of what makes this KNPS experience so enjoyable is diversity. When the diversity of the plant communities and the people exploring them is high, the more I can enjoy our gatherings. It is, therefore, fitting that I get to help introduce the new KNPS Statement of Diversity, Inclusion, and Non-Discrimination Policy. The full text is featured in this newsletter and I encourage you to read it.

It is pretty well understood that when a native plant community has more biological diversity, it has a better array of ecosystem functions and greater resiliency in recovering from disturbance. Similarly, I believe that human communities work better when they represent diversity. As our Kansas human population grows more diverse with every generation, KNPS will increase the chances of maintaining relevance and growing our membership well into the future. We did not have to create this statement, but I am glad we did. Thank you to Shirley Braunlich and Michael Kaye for the time they put into crafting this policy.

Also in this issue is the announcement of our 2019 Wildflower of the Year, woolly verbena (Verbena stricta). This stately, dry-prairie species adds splashes of purple to the late summer grasslands that are showing off to a backdrop of blue and green hues of extending warm season grasses. When blooming, woolly verbena is a fine place to look for butterflies in search of nectar. Get familiar with this species if you do not know it already, and I challenge you to find it in bloom and make its acquaintance this summer on a prairie near you.

Plan to revisit woolly verbena again a month later to collect some seed and bring it back to your garden for more enjoyment in the future.

Finally, even though we find ourselves now approaching the depths of winter and a time that is furthest away from the growing season of the flowers of our native flora, let us still enjoy its dormant benefits. Appreciate what these native plants are doing for us with their organic, matter-rich root structures still providing important cover and food for a host of wildlife species. Tomorrow is the 70th Annual Bird Count and I will be searching woodland thickets, brushy marshes, and upland prairies with other bird watchers and appreciating what variety of birds can be found utilizing our Kansas native vegetation.

I can enjoy our gatherings. It is, therefore, fitting that I get to make its acquaintance this summer on a prairie near you.

Thank you for your interest in our Kansas native flora and for your support of the Kansas Native Plant Society.

BRAD GUHR
Describing his work as Weed Director Stan says, “It is a job that requires us to know our plants, chemicals and laws. Knowing the plants in our area prevents us from spraying out our good plants and knowing our chemicals allows us to reduce the impact to our environment and use them in a safer manner.” Then he adds, “One part of the job I really love is identifying plants.”

Stan has designed a roadmap of Mitchell County displaying the locations of the wildflower plantings. Photos of the types of wildflowers he has planted border the map. During the drought of 2017, Stan sometimes had discouraged, though he still hoped to see wildflowers along and near county roads. That fall, he filled a thirty-gallon drum with mixed wildflower seeds and set out to replenish his earlier plantings. To his surprise, he found wildflowers already emerging at many of his planting sites. Mitchell County is proud of its limestone courthouse and church in Beloit, of Beloit’s designation as a USA Tree City, and of a history of tree planting on the prairie dating back to the post-civil war era. Mitchell County can be proud of festivals like the Twine-a-Thon. People can drive, bicycle, and walk the county roads of Mitchell County and enjoy wildflowers, but remain unaware that someone has been planting wildflowers at chosen sites throughout the area—for them. No public signs identify the Mitchell County Wildflower Project.

Stan Deneke, who learned from his father to “leave the land and water better than we found it,” has run a garden center, planted scores of trees across a college campus, and of a history of tree planting on the prairie dating back to the post-civil war era. Mitchell County can be proud of festivals like the Twine-a-Thon. People can drive, bicycle, and walk the county roads of Mitchell County and enjoy wildflowers, but remain unaware that someone has been planting wildflowers at chosen sites throughout the area—for them. No public signs identify the Mitchell County Wildflower Project.

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I have learned much in the four years since I established my native garden in Topeka. (Read the Winter 2016 newsletter for the background on this garden where I converted my 800 square foot garden of vinca and bermudagrass into a native plant landscape with nearly 100 species.) Many of the plants are now reaching maturity and spreading their wings (and seeds!), moving around the garden to find niche where they can thrive for years to come. I found a few plants that I would not recommend for a small-to-medium home garden like mine, but a few plants that were new to me that I now eagerly await each spring. I make a concerted effort to deadhead each fall, but I always miss a few and, of course, that is no guarded against plants that propagate underground. There is a saying “right plant, right place.” Sometimes I just want that place to be somewhere else. Here is my naughty list:

- **Clematis pitcheri** — I was warned and I did not listen. Despite the handsomeness of the foliage and bright yellow flowers, this is a prolific seed producer with an excellent germination rate. I moved my large specimen to a nearby prairie restoration this fall, but I will be dealing with seedlings for years to come. If you have a woodland restoration area, this is the plant for you.

- **Sunflowers (Helianthus sp.)** — All of them! I planted Willowsleaf sunflower (*H. xalticola*), Asy sunflower (*H. molon*) and Hairy sunflower (*H. hirsuta*). They all love to spread by root, so even deadheading will not keep you ahead of these. Jerusalem artichoke (*H. tuberosus*) is tolerated only because it is surrounded by concrete on three sides and easily mowed off on the fourth. If I had a wooded area, I would not hesitate including Hairy sunflower because of its bright yellow flowers in July.

- **Honorable mention: Common and Showy milkweed (Asclepias syriaca and A. speciosa)** — It is tough to say “don’t plant these” because of the critical role they play in Monarch conservation. So I will just say “plant these but know what you are doing!” They spread rhizomously but are easily trimmed back if they start spreading too far. Plus, they are some of the most aromatic plants around when in full bloom. Other milkweed like Butterfly milkweed (*A. tuberosa*) and Purple milkweed (*A. purpurascens*) are well behaved. I have lost a few species in the past few years, but that is not surprising given the survival of the fittest mentality that I started with. In their place, there have been a few really good surprises from plants that I never would have thought to include, if not with a recommendation from a good friend.

- **Prairie petunia (Resea humila)** — Is it possible to be both dainty and hardy at the same time? This low grower is one of the first to appear in my garden each spring. Each flower lasts for just a single day, but there is always more tomorrow. Once it gets going, it can bloom for four months in full sun or part shade. It is easy to transplant and I have spread seed of this all over my garden to fill in along the edges and between larger plants.

- **Small skullcap (Scutellaria parvula)** — Perhaps my biggest surprise is this little guy that you would normally find in rock outcroppings or woodland edges. Only two to three inches high when it blooms, it has formed a large colony on one side of my garden. It is dense enough to keep out most weed seedlings, but readily fills in under established natives. Sadly it only blooms for a few weeks in the spring, but the bluish seeds are interesting and a food source for little critters. I am introducing it to other parts of my garden and it is also spreading by seed and root as it sees fit.

- **Pussytoes (Antennaria neglecta)** — Often considered a “trash weed,” this native plant has done well in my garden, but is now getting shaded out. Their soft, velvety leaves come from some of spring’s earliest growth and their Q-tip-like flowers are a great pollinator source for early spring bees. In 2018, I began moving clumps from my garden beds to other areas of my yard with full sun. With adequate rain, the foliage will stay silky and smooth until after the first freeze.

In winter, while not actively gardening, there is time to reflect on what we will do differently in our gardens in the coming year. Shall we add more native plants for color and beauty? Perhaps we would like to choose specific host plants to attract insects or benefit pollinators in our gardens. A couple of handy plant identification guides are available online: **Kansas Flint Hills, Wildflowers and Grasses**, and **Kansas Red Hills, Wildflowers.** These guides are available to download as PDf’s to your computer or smartphone. Plants are listed by common name and Latin name, and include descriptions of leaf shape, plant height, habitat, characteristics, and bloom time. There are colorful photos of each plant in bloom to help you identify plants throughout the year. Links to pocket guides can be found at: [www.kansasnativelandscape.org/pocket_guide.php](http://www.kansasnativelandscape.org/pocket_guide.php)

—— KRISTA DAHLINGER

**2019 AWW to be “A Walk in the Woods”**

— ANDREW MITCHELL

Join us September 14, 15, and 16 in Atchison and Brown Counties for the 2019 Annual Wildflower Weekend (AWW). This year’s theme is “A Walk in the Woodlands,” where we will learn about and discover flora in the beautiful woodland remnants of eastern Kansas. On Friday, September 14th, the annual fall board meeting will take place in Horton, followed by a tour of the natural area around Mission Lake. This lake sits on the edge of an oak-hickory remnant forest in south-central Brown County. Members will be able to observe wetlands and a small-scale forest remnant on this afternoon hike.

The main event, the KNPS business meeting, will be held on Saturday at a location yet to be determined in Atchison. The guest speaker and possible topics such as Champion Trees of Kansas or spring ephemerals of the woods are still under consideration at this time.

Wildflower walks will focus in on the native flora of the woodland remnants in eastern Kansas. Walks on both Saturday and Sunday will be in native woodland remnants near the bluffs of the Missouri River.

Atchison is an old city with many interesting, historical sites, so is well worth a visit. The main event, the KNPS business meeting, will be held on Saturday at a location yet to be determined in Atchison. The guest speaker and possible topics such as Champion Trees of Kansas or spring ephemerals of the woods are still under consideration at this time.

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BUTTERFLIES IN OUR WORLD

Moths in your Butterfly Garden | LENORA LARSON

Pity the drab moths as they fly in the gloom of night. Do they wish to be beautiful butterflies, dancing in the sun and sipping the flowers’ sweet ambrosia? Indeed, butterflies evolved from moths about sixty million years ago. However, some moths also fly during the day and nectar on flowers, so why are they not classified as butterflies? Let us review the differences between these two suborders of the Lepidoptera.

Differentiating Moths and Butterflies
The beauty of the Clouded Crimson Moth rivals any butterfly. In general, moths and butterflies differ in size, color, body shape, wing position, and behaviors for mating and feeding. Unfortunately for the amateur lepidopterist, exceptions abound. For instance, moths typically have heavier, furrier bodies with proportionally smaller wings. However, Skipper butterflies break this rule with their stout furry bodies and small wings resting at half-mast. Moths rest with their wings outspread, while resting butterflies hold their wings perpendicularly to hide the brilliant colors. But feeding butterflies may also sit with wings spread flat like a moth. Are size or bright wing color reliable clues? No, some moths, like the Luna and Cecropia, are large and brilliantly colored, while some butterflies, like the Dainty Sulfur, are very drab and diminutive. Butterflies have tongues and sip from flowers, rotten fruit, or moist scat. Conversely, most adult moths have no tongue. But there are many exceptions such as some species of Loopers, Webworms, and Sphinx (Hummingbird) Moths. In addition, all the Flower Moths have tongues and nectar on flowers.

How can you ever know which is which? Must you do a DNA test? No, one differentiator between moths and butterflies needs no caveat antennae. Even the smallest, drabbest butterfly has thread-like antennae with a club-like knob at the end. The thread-like antennae of Skipper butterflies always sport a perky terminal crook that resembles a crocheted hook. Moth antennae may be feathery, comb-like, or thread-like, but they never have a terminal club or hook.

Favorite Nectar-sipping Moths
Many of the diurnal nectar sipping moths have wing spans of an inch or less, but they are far more numerous than the much larger Swallowtails and Monarchs. Often squadrons of them will be found nectaring together on flowers with small blossoms. For example, the Corn Earworm Moth is a green-eyed apricot-colored beauty that nectars in late summer. Looper and Webworm species sport fancy wing patterns, reminiscent of paisley. The colorful “flower moths” in the genus Schinia rival any butterfly’s beauty.

The Ozarks region boasts seventeen species of Sphinx moths, whose caterpillars are all “hornworms” with a jaunty tail on their butts. Those species called ‘Hummingbird Moths’ are large with tubular flowers. Likewise, the Clearwing Bumble Bee Moth fools antennae—you may be admiring a flower moth.

Garlic Mustard Meets the Egg | KAREN HUMMEL

Easter is barely three months away. Thus, it may be fitting to feature an herbal plant for an upcoming spring recipe — Garlic Mustard Deviled Eggs. Garlic mustard smells and tastes like garlic. It can be used in pesto, in salads, or boiled and served as a pot herb with bacon, similar to wilted spinach. The roots have a horseradishy taste. They can be ground and used in a similar manner to the horse radish root.

Garlic mustard (Alliaria petiolata) is a naturalized species introduced from Europe 150 years or so ago. It is a biennial, producing round-leaved rosettes which last through the summer in the first year. The second year plant produces heart-shape ed leaves, and flowering stocks with 4-petaled white blooms. The average seed production is 600 seeds per plant, allowing the plant to crowd out native species, especially invading forest understory areas.

So garlic mustard is a pest. But it is a delicious pest. According to Wikipedia, “Garlic mustard is one of the oldest discovered spices to be used in cooking in Europe. Evidence of its use has been found from archaeological remains found in the Baltic, dating back to 4000-3750 B.C.E.” It contains traces of cyanide, as do other mustard relatives such as broccoli, cabbage, and kale, so it should be used rather sparingly for seasoning or boiled and drained to remove the trace toxin.

The deviled eggs we made, using a chiffonade of leaves from a first-year rosette, were especially beautiful and delicious. The recipe follows. (Instructions are detailed, and could be used by beginning cooks, children or grandchildren.)

Garlic Mustard Deviled Eggs

INGREDIENTS
6 hard boiled eggs (It’s good to use eggs at least a couple of days after purchase or harvesting) 1 cup loosely packed mustard garlic leaves (About half will be used to garnish the serving plate, and half will be used in the egg yolk mixture) 1/4 cup mayonnaise 1 teaspoon vinegar 1 teaspoon yellow mustard (I like Coleman’s mustard powder) 1/8 teaspoon salt A dash of pepper to taste (I prefer white pepper, but fresh ground is fine) Garnish (I used cross-section slices of baby sweet peppers on the eggs, and garlic mustard leaves around the rim of the serving plate)

DIRECTIONS
1. Cover raw eggs with water in a sauce pan. Bring water to a boil. Turn heat off, cover pan with a lid, let stand for 14 minutes. Drain water.
2. Refrigerate eggs overnight or until cold throughout. (This method ensures the eggshells can be easily peeled and will not adhere to the white.)
3. Fill a bowl with water. For each egg, gently bounce it on the counter all around the shell to crack it. Immense the egg in water, find the loosest spot in the shell, and start there, gently removing the shell from the egg.
4. Using a sharp knife, split each egg in half symmetrically, removing the yolk to a mixing bowl. Arrange the white halves on the serving platter.
5. Mash the yolks till evenly crumbly. (I use a fork.)
6. Thoroughly wash the mustard garlic leaves. Reserve about half (the prettiest leaves) for garnish.
7. Finely chop the remaining leaves.
8. Add the mayonnaise, vinegar, mustard, salt, pepper and finely chopped mustard leaves to the egg yolks and mix well.
9. Fill the egg white cups with the yolk mixture. Garnish as you wish.
10. Enjoy.
2019 KANSAS AREA NATIVE PLANT & WILDFLOWER EVENTS

Information provided by Kansas Native Plant Society, see more events on our website: www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org

January

10 January 2019 Kansas Native Plant Society

FEBRUARY

KAW VALLEY SEED FAIR at Douglas County Fairgrounds, 9 am to 5 pm, Lawrence. You are invited to bring saved seeds or packaged seeds to share at exchange tables. Vendors and organizations, including Grassland Heritage Foundation, will bring information about native plants, vegetable gardening, and seed starting. Contact: GHF@grasslandheritage.org

MAR

GREAT RIVER NATURE CONSERVANCY CENTER in Dike. Join us at the nature center for an original environmental program. Contact: gcrncc@crncc.com

APR

SHELTERBIRD FESTIVAL in Wichita. Participants will be able to get a special look at local birds of the area. Contact: kbnwi@ksbirding.org

MAY

GREEN WILDFLOWER WALK at Daisy Bottoms. Participants will be able to get a special look at local birds of the area. Contact: kbnwi@ksbirding.org

JUNE

WILDFLOWER FESTIVAL in Kansas City. Participants will be able to get a special look at local birds of the area. Contact: kbnwi@ksbirding.org

2019 KANSAS AREA NATIVE PLANT & WILDFLOWER EVENTS

30 March 2019 Kansas Native Plant Society
Recognizing Showy Goldenrod

Joan Manor

One would expect a plant named “showy goldenrod” would exhibit some standout features. This one does not disappoint. It is described in one native plant source as having “very showy clusters of bright yellow flowers on stiff reddish stems with narrow leaves.” It is said to be the easiest of the goldenrods to recognize due to its unbranched stem and the panicle or branching cluster of flowers.

Showy goldenrod grows in a cluster with a rhizomatous root that allows the plant to grow in large clumps. The leaves are lance shaped, with the upper leaves slightly smaller than the lower ones. The plant will grow to a variety of sizes up to 72 inches. The firm root system may send up multiple stems and its rhizomes allow the plant to form a colony and often crowds out other types of plants.

The flower array is a densely branched panicle that may be up to eighteen inches tall, and the firm stem holds it erect, not drooping as with some other goldenrod. The individual flowers have two types of florets. First, there are three to seven outer florets with yellow rays, not all open at the same time, giving the flower an unequal spacing appearance. These surround a five-lobed yellow corolla with flared lobes. The ray florets are one-fifth of an inch long; the disk florets are about one-sixth inch or smaller.

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The goldenrod is connected to an extensive medical lore. Native Americans used it for treating fevers, colds, and for lung problems. A decoction of ground roots was used for hemorhage or bleeding from the mouth, another for difficult childbirth. Dried stalks or roots could be used with bear grease to form an ointment.

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Showy goldenrod is an autumn bloomer, with its deep golden heads swaying above the grasses and other fall blooming plants. Even as the plant turns to seed, the long white fluffy pappus sways in the wind, eventually breaking away to form new plants in the area. Throughout the seasons, it has beauty and is a standout in our native prairie environments.

The Great American Sycamore Tree

Ken O’Dell

The sycamore tree is distinctive and that is an understatement. It would be rare if any adult driving down our highways that saw a sycamore tree growing in a field would not know what it was.

The American sycamore grows native in the eastern half of Kansas and continues to the East Coast. The scientific name, *Platanus occidentalis*, breaks down to mean “flat leaf of the west.” Distinguishing features of the sycamore are the bark, the large leaves, the one inch globe-shaped brown fruit that dangles all winter, and, of course, the large size of the mature tree. The bark of young trees is nearly white. Bark on older trees is nearly white with thin peeling sheets of greenish-brown bark. The large green five to six inch wide leaves usually have three large pointed lobes with coarse teeth between. Older leaves of the season may have five lobes.

The flowers first appear as small balls on the end of a three or four inch long green dangling stem called a peduncle. Male and female flowers are separate on the same tree. Male flowers are a greenish-yellow color, and female flowers are often a bit reddish in color. Pollen in the male flowers matures a couple of weeks before the female flower is ready to receive the pollen. This is Mother Nature’s way of assuring the pollen will be blowing around when it is time for the female flower to be pollinated. When properly pollinated the female flower will grow in size during the summer and by October will be about one to 1-1/4 inches in diameter and be turning a light brown color. This is the familiar dangling seed ball we see in sycamores.

This fruit or seed ball will hang on the tree and by January start breaking apart as the tiny seeds (sometimes as many as fifty in each seed ball) are armed with downy tufts to help the wind carry the seed from the mother tree. The wind also moves the seed a distance from the mother tree so the new seedlings will not be in competition with mother for food and nutrients. Take your hands and tear apart the brown seed ball in the winter time and you will find a much smaller round hard ball attached to and holding the seed together in the center of the fruit ball.

This was used as a button many years ago and hence a common name for the sycamore is button tree.

A cold January day finds the sycamore trees glistening in the sunlight as the young white bark struts itself on the newer branches in the top half of the trees. The champion American sycamore tree in Kansas is in Topeka and is listed at 129 feet tall, 124 foot spread and twenty-five foot circumference. This giant beauty is growing at 4916 NW Button Road in Topeka, Mount Washington Memorial Park in Independence, Missouri has the Greater Kansas City Champion Sycamore listed at 117 feet tall and a circumference of nineteen feet six inches. You will see this champion as you enter the park from Truman Road as it is about 100 feet inside the park.

Bark of the sycamore tree; Fruit (seed balls) of the sycamore tree; The Great American Sycamore Tree

—— Ken O’Dell

Missouri has the Greater Kansas City Champion Sycamore listed at 117 feet tall and a circumference of nineteen feet six inches. You will see this champion as you enter the park from Truman Road as it is about 100 feet inside the park.
Ten Lessons for Urban Native Plant Meadows

Katie Kingery-Page

I heard a great presentation this past September entitled “Ten Lessons for Urban Native Plant Meadows” by Katie Kingery-Page, Kansas State University (KSU) faculty member in the Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional & Community Planning. Ms. Kingery-Page was the keynote speaker at the Kansas Native Plant Society’s Annual Wildflower Weekend and her message fit perfectly with the weekend’s theme of “Native Plants in City Settings.”

I find Katie’s background of fine art, landscape design, and ecology intriguing. When she introduced herself as someone who sees landscape architecture as the design and stewardship of the exterior built environment and that doing so with native plants grounded the experience through a sense of place, I knew that her presentation was going to speak to me.

Katie’s insights in this presentation were based on her experiences with “The Meadow” Project in front of the Beach Museum of Art. From 2013-16, Katie and her team of volunteers converted a half acre of neglected turf into a native plant meadow. Her ten lessons learned from this process were as follows.

1. **Build a Coalition for the Life of the Project**
   It takes all kinds of people to complete a big project, and she showed a diagram of a “volunteer tree” she created.

2. **Know the Place**
   Their planting list started with an extensive Flint Hills species template of the plants found at nearby Konza Prairie and was carved down to the resulting planting mix. Hackberry trees removed from the planting site were milled into everything from benches to mushroom-growing media.

3. **Let the Team Guide the Values**
   Their team developed a mission statement and goals including that the site would integrate art and science and be a living laboratory that would minimize the usage of water and chemicals.

4. **Develop a Thick Skin…Use Your Tricks**
   Volunteer efforts were critical to the success of the project and instead turned to compost smothering and mechanical scraping.

5. **Tell the Project Story**
   Stories of these projects need to be told and can be done so through various media. Photos, drawings, and interactive touch tables at the Beach Museum were all used to tell The Meadow Project story.

6. **Connect to Volunteers’ Joy**
   Volunteer efforts were critical to the success of the project and instead of “work days”, they had “convene with monarch days” where learning experiences were an attractive part of the labor-filled get-togethers.

7. **Put a Price on Labor**
   Weeding is skilled labor amounting to “surgical plant removal” and it should be rewarded. However, if money cannot be given, then at least try to find ways to acknowledge the people helping.

8. **Embrace Imperfection**
   Native landscaping is perfectly imperfect and the inevitable weeds can be seen as beautiful too. Learning strategies that aid perception of such projects include maintaining a moved edge that is critical to the perceived success of otherwise “messy” native landscapes.

9. **Make Your Project for the Message of Conservation**
   Such projects are multi-faceted in their environmental benefits, and assessment measures should broadly include plants, soils, storm water, wildlife, and more. Restoration vs. Conservation – Katie used to use the word “restoration”, but there is a danger in implying that this process can fix all impacts to a diverse remnant plant community. Perhaps “conservativism” is better with a focus on ecosystem functions such as soil structure, storm water infiltration, etc.

10. **Be a Champion...Stay All In**
    Katie learned early on from school gardening projects that such endeavors need project champions to carry the project through. The ten lessons in this presentation were familiar to me in a variety of ways. From 2003 to 2008 at Dyck Arboretum, our staff and an extensive team of volunteers and college student interns collected seed from local prairie remnants and planted the thirteen-acre Prairie Window Project. Distinct examples come to mind of our project that relate to each of these lessons and I have blogged about various interpretations of that project over the years. It would be fun to come up with our own ten lessons as well. I am still in awe of that, similar to The Meadow Project, it included the “design and stewardship of the exterior built environment and that doing so with native plants grounded the experience through a sense of place.”

#### FEATURED NATURAL AREA

Grant-Brady Prairie, Park, Topeka

Andrew Mitchell

Grant-Brady Prairie Park is an eighty acre prairie remnant located on the southern edge of the capitol city of Kansas. According to reports, this prairie has never been plowed, but it is harrowed in late summer in harsher years. The park has a good biological diversity present with large numbers of plants, insects, animals, and birds throughout the year.

When I first learned of Grant-Brady, it was from some of our Topeka resident members who were planning an informal tour of the park, to be led by Jeff Hansen. I had seen many posts on the KNPS website from Jeff and other members regarding the variety of species they had seen there, and I was curious. Though I live an hour from Topeka, I was able to visit Grant-Brady in August before the drenching rains of later fall. And, even though, weather-wise, 2018 was a tough year for the preserve drying up many of the normally late-summer blooming natives, I was able to observe some of the native plant diversity available to residents of Shawnee County, including ashy sunflower (Helianthus mollis), leadplant (Amorpha canescens), and Missouri goldenrod (Solidago missouriensis).

Grant-Brady Prairie Preserve is located in south Topeka, west of the Topeka Regional Airport. From downtown Topeka, go south on Topeka Boulevard to SW University Boulevard, turn right (west) on SW University, and the preserve is the first right turn past Premier Farm and Home. There is a nice sign marking the entrance to the preserve. The park is open from 6:00 am to dusk, seven days a week. There are mowed walking trails around the park edges. When you need a break from the political activities of this capitol city, take a New Year’s stroll through this refreshing, easy to reach prairie park.
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. See upper right of mailing label for expiration date.

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
University of Kansas
2045 Constant Ave.
Lawrence, KS 66047-3729

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM

Member Information

Name ____________________________________________________________

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Membership Category

☐ Student $10.00

☐ Individual $20.00

☐ Family $30.00

☐ Organization $35.00

☐ Contributing $100.00

☐ Lifetime $500.00