

*Kansas Wildflower Society*  
NEWSLETTER

**Volume 25 Number 2 Summer 2003**



**Silver Anniversary  
Meeting of KWS  
Sept. 12 and 13  
Topeka, Kansas**

## Board of Directors 2002-2003

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George Lippert Chanute	Gary Weisenberger Toronto
Marion McGlohon Ulysey	

#### Cover Illustration:

Silver-leaf Scurf-pea

*Psoralea argophylla*

Drawn by Lorna Harder

Jane Freeman

KWS Administrative Assistant

Editor Sheldon Cohen

# Kansas Wildflower Society NEWSLETTER

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*From the President's Desk . . .*  
*Ramblings of your President . . .*

Public interest in the North American flora and its conservation has been slow in developing. The first organization concerned with the conservation of North American plants was founded in 1900: the Society for the Protection of Native Plants. This has now become the New England Wildflower Society with 6000 members. However, for much of its history, other concerns, like bird conservation, and interest in gardens with cultivars of European plants and other exotics overshadowed interest in common native plants. One of the first state plant conservation societies was the North Carolina Wild Flower Preservation Society founded in 1951. Since then there has been a growing interest in our native flora and now there is a native plant society in almost every state, including our own Kansas Wildflower Society organized in 1978.

Although many state societies are much larger than KWS (California Native Plant Society has 10,000 members), we have been blessed with many good volunteers and can be proud of the many things we have accomplished with limited resources. However, at our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we should seriously consider our programs and our resources and determine our priorities for the future. At the Annual Meeting in the Fall, we want to do some brainstorming. In the last hour on Saturday morning, all attendees will be in one of the following four discussion groups to generate ideas for future planning:

- 1) Field trips – Our plant forays are popular and our recent van trips have been much appreciated. Are there ways to make these events even more useful and enjoyable for our members? Are there ideas for other field activities?

- 2) Education – We have many educational programs for our members: Newsletter, workshops, speakers, books, Patch Program, etc. Which are most appreciated? How can they be made more useful and educational? Would classes be appreciated?
- 3) Outreach – To accomplish some of our goals, we need more people with an interest in native plants. How can we create this interest: displays at garden shows, speakers bureau, better publicity on programs, work with schools, etc.? Should we encourage increased conversation and alliances with organizations in Kansas with similar interests and/or with native plant organizations in neighboring states?
- 4) Native plant conservation – What types of projects should we encourage: habitat preservation, plant rescue projects, monitoring and control of invasive exotics, “plant native” programs, etc. Stanwyn Shetler, Curator of Botany Emeritus at the Smithsonian, wrote, in the Spring issue of **Wildflower**, “The plant native trend . . . has the worrisome consequences of greatly increasing the commercialization of the native flora and of putting too much accent on planting as a means of preserving native species. . . . As our native plant societies face the future, surely we should give priority to the fundamentals of conserving species in the wild, spending more time studying and preserving them and less time planting and manipulating them.” There are issues here that will be a continuing source of discussion.

Come to the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Annual Meeting (details in this Newsletter) to enjoy the many activities but also to contribute your ideas to planning for the future of KWS.

Dwight R. Platt



## Welcome New Members

The Kansas Wildflower Society would like to welcome the following new members

Adam Achey - Wichita

Tricia Ball - Augusta

Bob Broyles - Towanda

Robert & Marsha Carrell & Family - Wellington

Sara Kay Carrel - Hays

Marcia Craig - Wichita

Bob Feyh - Topeka

Mary Gilstrap - Wichita

Tonya A. Kerschner - El Dorado

Jennifer Landers - Derby

Stephen J. Lewandowski II - El Dorado

Celia Luevano - Wichita

Joseph & Joyce Miller - Coffeyville

Paul N. Oliver - Augusta

Kristal Olson - Wichita

Laura Smotherman - Pittsburg

Carolyn Sylvester - Wichita

Tim & Leah Tindle - Freedonia

Amy Tucker - Rose Hill

Wilson's Creek National Battlefield - Republic Mo.

.....

## Report of the Passing of Paul R. Roberts

The Kansas Wildflower Society is sorry to report the passing of longtime Society member Paul R. Roberts. He died after a lengthy battle with kidney cancer on May 17, 2003. Paul, who was from Lincoln Kansas, also served a number of years on our Board of Directors. He will be greatly missed.

Kansas Wildflower Society  
Annual Meeting  
Yates Center, KS  
September 13, 2002

Lorna called meeting to order.

### Secretary's Report

The minutes from last year were approved.

### President's Report

Lorna introduced the new members joining the board.

She reported that the brochure will likely be ready by November 1st.

KWS has sponsored the FloraKansas event for past two years where attendance was good.

Lorna conveyed the board's interest in promoting native plants, working with local greenhouses, and collaborating with Grow Native! in Missouri, all of which supports the goal of getting people to become familiar with native plants.

Lorna will become Trip Coordinator for a Nebraska Sandhills Van Trip next summer, which will center around Valentine, NE. The tentative dates are the first weeks in June.

KWS is looking for new members.

Lorna gave a special thanks to Shirley Braunlich who researched wildflower-oriented events around the state, thanks to Anita Smith for arranging facilities and refreshments, and thanks to P.J. Brewer for news coverage for this meeting.

Lorna recognized Ruth Steinke who will retire from the board after 24 years of service.

### Membership -- Jane Freeman

Jane reported 273 members with numbers dwindling. She suggested promoting KWS in organizations to get new members. She reminded members that KWS posters available for events.

### Outings -- Jane Freeman

If there is an outing, send the information to Jane to put in newsletter. The outings are the most popular KWS events.

### Newsletter -- Craig Freeman

Craig expressed thanks from Shel for articles and illustrations and encouraged members to submit articles to Shel.

### Education -- Valerie Wright

The committee met in June about the patch program and adopted a different format and a new name: Prairie Patch.

**Nominations** -- Craig Freeman

The board endorsed the slate of Roger Boyd; Carroll Morgenson; Valerie Wright; Sondra Tholen; Anita Smith; and the officers: Dwight Platt, President; Valerie Wright, President Elect; Sister Patricia Stanley, Treasurer; and Cindy Ford, Secretary.

**Book Sales** -- Lorna Harder

Lorna reported for Carroll Morgenson who totaled \$1500 in sales this year, mostly through the Baldwin School District.

**Rachel Snyder Wayside Award** -- Steve Timme

Steve presented the award to Nancy McClannathan, Eisenhower School. Valerie accepted the award for Nancy. Nancy teaches about "sense of place" and learned about the prairie so that students would learn about their area.

**Photo Contest** -- Steve Timme

Steve encouraged members to send in photos and to look at the winners on the display table.

**Mary Bancroft Memorial Scholarship** -- Steve Timme

Steve awarded M. Alison Hamm, Friends University, Wichita, for her graduate study on plant restoration. Steve will send the scholarship to her.

**Seed Exchange** -- Lorna Harder

Lorna stated that KWS cannot accommodate requests for large acres but can provide seeds for gardens or landscaping. A committee will be formed to consider a policy on guidelines for sending seed based on genetics and particular species.

**Growing Native Wildflowers** -- Dwight Platt

Dwight pointed out that there is a book at displayed on the table for those who would like to see the manual.

**Kansas Wildflower of Year** -- Lorna Harder

The Kansas Wildflower of 2003 is *Penstemon grandiflorus*. Some greenhouses carry this one already. It prefers sandy soils but will tolerate clay soils. KWS will be promoting this wildflower this year with culture information, a state proclamation, and buttons to wear.

**KS Association for Conservation & Environ. Educ. (KACEE)** -- Cindy Ford

Cindy nounced conference which will be held in Atchison, KS starting October 31 through November 2.

**Other Business**

Valerie invited members to attend Konza Prairie Day, September 28.

After a drawing, the meeting was adjourned.

**KANSAS WILDFLOWER SOCIETY**

Hesston, KS

April 5, 2003

*Board Meeting*

Members in attendance: Dwight Platt, Roger Boyd, Valerie Wright, Carroll Morgenson, George Lippert, Brad Guhr, Gary Weisenberger, Jane Freeman, Craig Freeman, Marion McGlohon, Jon Piper, Lorrie Parrish, Steve Timme, Shirley Braunlich, Julie Torseth, Shel Cohen, Sister Patricia Stanley, Anita Smith, Lorna Harder, & Cindy Ford

Dwight Platt called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

*Secretary's Minutes* -- Cindy Ford

Cindy agreed to switch the minutes to Word in order to send by e-mail. Steve Timme moved to approve the minutes, Carroll Morgenson seconded, and the minutes were approved.

*President's Report* -- Dwight Platt

Dwight showed KDOT's new poster co-sponsored by KWS. Craig Freeman reported that he requested about 700 copies of the poster to give to members. KWS approved KDOT roadside plan. In conjunction with the 25th anniversary coming up in the fall, Dwight conveyed his concerns about the KWS membership decline where the society has less than half of membership of original organization 25 years ago. Current membership, however, is holding steady. He asked how to increase membership. Board members suggested highlighting membership benefits (journals, newsletters, field trips, and meetings), classes or workshops, conservation projects (monitoring rare plants, invasives, restoration), extending the society to organizations in neighboring states. Dwight asked if we are trying to do too many programs?

*Treasurer's Report* -- Sister Patricia Stanley

Sister Patricia reported that total expenses were approximately \$8,000 with an overall balance of \$31,201.11. Sister Patricia did not receive the scholarship information until late, so the recipient received the scholarship late. The scholarships are usually paid from interest from the account, but this year she had to take the funds from another account. She asked if she should reimburse that account? Steve moved to transfer money to reimburse the account, Lorna seconded, and the motion passed. Shel Cohen moved to approve the treasurer's report, Carroll seconded, and the motion passed.

*Membership* -- Jane Freeman

Jane reiterated Dwight's concern that we want new members. Steve wanted to pursue workshop ideas to gain new members. Anita Smith proposed better public relations, Valerie Wright proposed a membership drive, and Steve thought that information should be more available at some of the large wildflower outings -- like the

Wilson County Wildflower Tour. A website form may help and Shirley will work on web links to our site.

*Outings -- Jane Freeman*

Outings are developing nicely, particularly in the western part of the state. Jane will get the information in the newsletter soon. Shirley sent outing information to various sources, including the Kansas Sierra Club who posted the whole list of outings.

*Newsletter -- Shel Cohen*

Shel said that members should receive the newsletter by early May. He thanked all those who contributed articles.

*Education -- Lorna Harder*

Lorna reported that the Prairie Patch program brochure is ready for printing.

*Book Sales -- Carroll Morgenson*

Carroll said that he sold one book. Lorna suggested that we adopt a broader scope of topics in the books that are available through society sales. Members are encouraged to suggest new titles and give to Carroll.

*Wayside Award -- Steve Timme*

Steve sent e-mail information to Shel to include in newsletter.

*Photo Contest -- Steve Timme*

There were not many entries this year. Steve will send info to Shel to include in the newsletter. Sister Patricia suggested advertising in newspaper and on the website. Steve proposed opening the contest to the public and offer a one-year KWS membership. The photos become the property of KWS and may be used for promotional purposes. Carroll moved, Lorna seconded, and the motion passed. Steve will write up a description of the photo contest with a policy statement for the photo contest and will send to members through the newsletter. Craig suggested contacting the Associated Newspapers organization to distribute information. Julie wondered whether people could get the photos published (e.g. KANSAS Magazine). Dyck Arboretum could publish the winners on their website.

*Mary Bancroft Memorial Scholarship -- Steve Timme*

There have not been many applications, even though the information was sent to all universities.

*Seed Exchange -- Lorna Harder*

All seeds have been given away. For requests for large quantities, Lorna gives information on where to get quantities.

*Growing Native Wildflowers -- Dwight Platt*

Dyck Arboretum sells a few copies.

*Kansas Wildflower of Year -- Carroll Morgenson*

This year the species is *Penstemon grandiflorus*. The committee will meet soon to determine future flowers of the year. Cindy suggested that Kansas woodland species would be appealing to gardeners struggling with shade species in their gardens.

*Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education -- Cindy Ford*

Thanks to Anita Smith for hosting the booth at KACEE Conference held in Atchison in the fall. Cindy suggested selling books or cups at the next conference. She told the members to contact her for proposals for presentatios at the fall 2004 KACEE Conference which will be held in Manhattan. There is an upcoming meeting in Garden City next weekend.

*Non-game Wildlife Advisory Council -- Gary Weisenberger*

Gary was unable to attend so Craig summarized the meeting. There is a moratorium on mussel harvesting, members admonished KS Wildlife & Parks for their lack of leadership on regulations for prairie dog extermination, they discussed public land initiatives which would open up opportunities for recreation.

Dwight asked for a motion to accept committee reports. Sister Patricia moved to accept the committee reports, Steve seconded, and the motion passed.

**Old Business**

*KWS Brochure -- Lorna Harder*

After the semester finishes, the website and brochure will be finished. Lorna will send the brochures to Jane to distribute from Lawrence. Valerie asked about a tear-off for the Patch Program. Lorna will look into placing the Patch information into the brochure.

*Policy for Seeds in Seed Exchange -- Steve Timme, Valerie Wright, Brad Guhr*

This committee will bring information to the fall meeting.

*Kansas Natural Resource Legacy Alliance -- Craig Freeman*

Craig stated that the purpose of this organization to make recommendations to governor and to discuss perceived needs. There are no scheduled hearings. Their website is: [www.kdwp.state.ks.us/alliance/mission](http://www.kdwp.state.ks.us/alliance/mission)

*Grow Native! -- Julie Torseth*

This program was developed in Missouri to bring the use of growing native plants to the attention of the public. Their new website is: [grownative!.org](http://grownative!.org). They are working on a licensing fee and still working on several issues in their state. Dwight asked if we wanted to become a Grow Native! member. KWS may want to develop a public relations program modeled after Grow Native! and franchise it or KWS may want to become a member initially before pursuing a franchise organization. The membership



fee is \$50/year. Steve moved to become member, Marion McGlohon seconded, and the motion carried.

*Prairie Passage* -- Gary Weisenberger

Gary mentioned that the publication of the KDOT brochure/poster was with help from Craig. Progress will slow down on the Prairie Passage with budget cuts since staff has been reduced. Gary suggested lending support to the program by contacting the Secretary of Transportation. KW&P and KDOT have formed a partnership to work on prairie demonstration areas. Carroll is going to set up a meeting with Deb Miller, Secretary of Transportation. Dwight suggested letting KDOT know that we appreciate the work on wildflowers and to promote more work on developing wildflowers along roadsides. Carroll will write an article for the newsletter.

*Nebraska Sandhills Van Tour 2003* -- Lorna Harder

Actual reservations are 19 and maybe over the 20 participant maximum. Logistics are planned for 20 participants. Lorna shared some brochures from a Valentine National Wildlife Refuge in Nebraska.

*Plant Festival* -- Shirley Braunlich

Shirley had nothing to report yet on the festivals.

*Plant ID Course* -- Craig Freeman

Craig talked to Caleb Morse at KU. There is need of a course for faculty, staff, and students. He will offer a one-week course this summer at the KU Ecological Reserve. This program will be used for a pilot to design a workshop for KWS. Steve is considering a series of one-day workshops where a feature plant group is highlighted. Craig and Steve will report on these workshops at the fall meeting.

*KWS Website* -- Lorna Harder

Lorna has been working with students to include membership, bookstore, outings, links, wildflower of year, prairie passage, patch program, and photo contest information. The website is: [cs.hesston.edu/kws](http://cs.hesston.edu/kws). Steve added that a contact and list of natural areas is needed on the site.

*Newsletter Proposal* -- Steve Timme

Has not heard from PSU Quickprint about costs yet.

***New Business***

Dwight reminded members that the 25th Annual KWS Meeting will be held at Washburn University in Topeka in fall 2003. The focus is on history and Shel is already working on early history from newsletters. Dwight suggested a committee to work on format and topics for the meeting. Sister Patricia, Lorna, Carroll, Shel, Jane, Craig will serve on the committee. Jon Piper suggested selling t-shirts or other articles

of clothing for the anniversary. Jeff Hansen has suggested some outings around Topeka for the fall meeting.

*Nominations Committee* -- Lorna Harder

Lorna, Craig and Carroll will work on replacement of board members.

*The Earth Charter* -- Dwight Platt

Dwight explained the principles of the organization. Dwight said that The Earth Charter is endorsed by several wildflower societies and some nature centers. He asked if KWS would want to endorse this philosophy. Shel felt that the principles (e.g. poverty, gender equity, etc as well as environmental issues) of The Earth Charter may be too broad for the mission of KWS. Discussion ensued about whether the organization is compatible with KWS. The consensus was that this matter needs to be brought up with the entire membership. Do we want to broaden our mission? Do we want to change our policy on advocacy?

*FloraKansas Support* -- Julie Torseth

She asked for assistance with the native plant sale in spring in conjunction with FloraKansas held at Dyck Arboretum. Steve moved to continue support with \$1000, Sister Patricia seconded, and Craig and Lorna abstained because of a conflict of interest. The motion passed.

*Other Business*

Steve invited board members to the Kansas Academy of Science which will be held this weekend at Pittsburg State University. Dr. James Duke, ethnobotanist, will be speaking.

*Adjournment*

Steve moved to adjourn the meeting, Carroll seconded, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Ford





**Kansas Wildflower Society  
Silver Anniversary  
25th Annual Meeting  
Washburn University  
Topeka, Kansas  
September 12 and 13, 2003  
Everyone is welcome at this  
gala affair!!**



**REGISTRATION  
KWS 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting**

Please return your registration with payment by Sept. 1, 2003.

Return to: Kansas Wildflower Society  
RL McGregor Herbarium, Univ. of Kansas  
2045 Constant Ave.  
Lawrence, KS 66047-3729

**Friday Evening Program**

\_\_\_\_ (#) interested in attending

**Catered Dinner on Saturday, Sept. 13**

\_\_\_\_ (#) attending the dinner at \$12.00 per person. **PAYMENTS  
MUST BE MADE IN ADVANCE FOR PLANNING PURPOSES.**

There are two choices for entrees. Please mark your choice(s) below.  
Also included in the meal are salad/fruit, bread, dessert and beverage.

\_\_\_\_ (#) Chicken Fettuccine

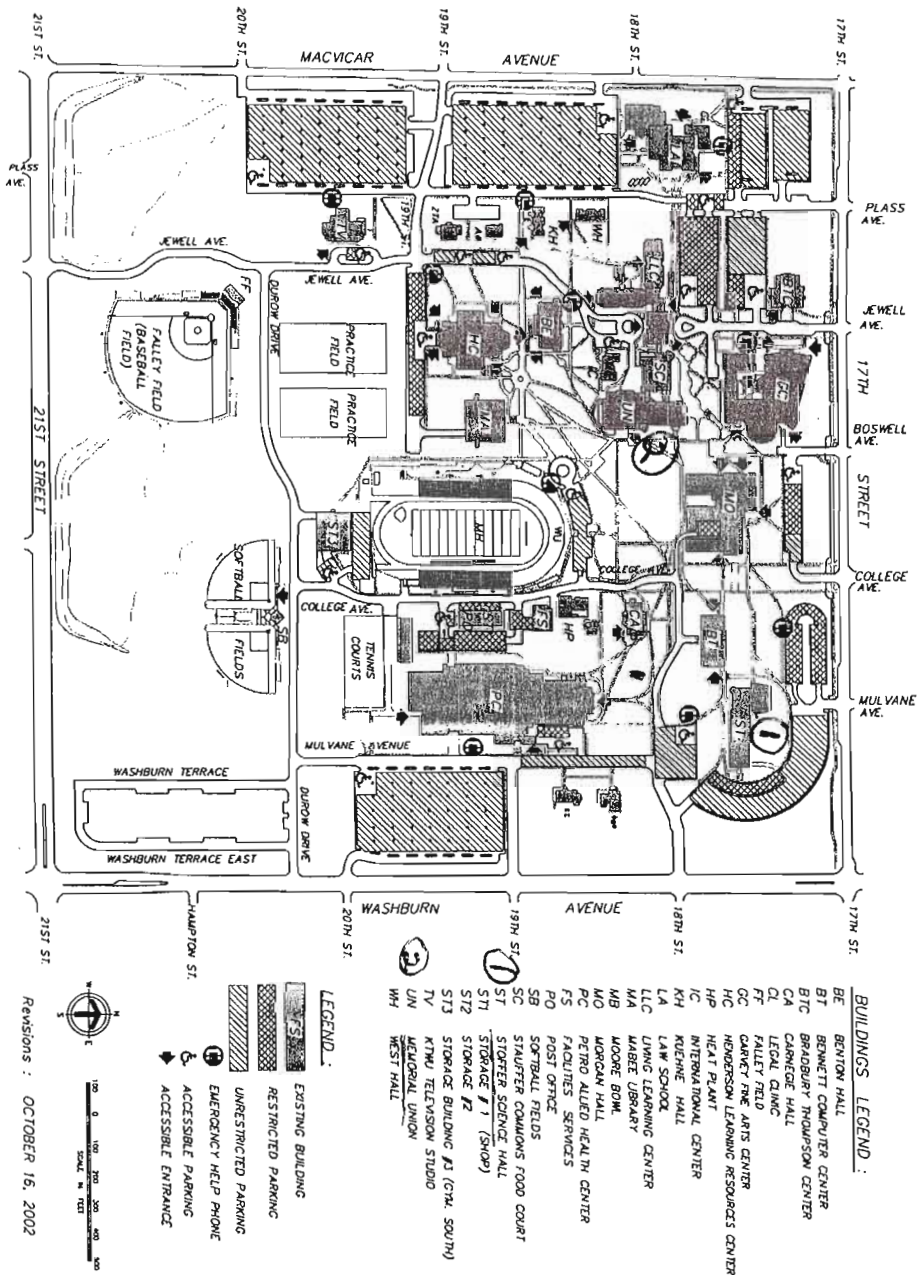
\_\_\_\_ (#) Roast Beef

\$ \_\_\_\_ **Total Amount Enclosed**

About the Program...

**Friday Afternoon Wildflower Tour.** Visit Grant-Bradbury Park with **Jeff Hansen**, KWS board member. Directions to the park: from the east—take the turnpike to the south Topeka exit. Once through the tollbooth, take the Topeka Blvd exit (1<sup>st</sup> exit after turnpike). From the west—take I-70 to I-470 east, then take the Topeka Blvd exit (last exit before turnpike). Take a right at the stoplight on Topeka Blvd (you will be going south) and go about 2 miles until you get to the University Blvd intersection (stoplight), take a right. Take University

# WASHBURN UNIVERSITY CAMPUS MAP



Revisions : OCTOBER 16, 2002

Bld west about 1/2 mile—when road curves south, you are at the driveway to the park gate. There is a small brick utility building at the driveway. Parking is limited so you may want to park on SW 65<sup>th</sup> St (gravel road), which is a couple of blocks past the driveway.

**Friday Evening Program.** Lorna Harder will present “Four Seasons of Color in Your Garden.” Lorna is the current Past President and a long-time board member of KWS. She has been assisting with the research and writing of the KWS manual “Growing Native Wildflowers” for years so has a lot of practical experience to impart to the listener. Lorna is a faculty member of Hesston College.

**Saturday Annual Meeting Program.** “Kansas Native Plants: Beyond the Borders”. Gardening with local and regional native plants is the “hot new concept” in horticulture. We are assaulted on a daily basis by magazine articles and gardening gurus who tout the advantages of “discovering” our indigenous plant life, but what is new about the concept is where we can use them. The diverse Kansas flora boasts numerous species adaptable to the garden. We can capitalize on Great Plains natives for their inherent resiliency, beauty and drought tolerance gained from their prairie heritage. But are we looking far and wide enough when utilizing these plants in the landscape? The water hungry West is vigorously searching for new plant materials. Join **Larry Vickerman**, Horticulturist with the Colorado State University Cooperative Extension as he explores the bounty of the Kansas prairie and the surprising places these natives are thriving. Larry is a former KWS board member and a former director of the Dyck Arboretum, Hesston, KS.

**Saturday Breakout Sessions.** Members will have an opportunity to discuss the future of KWS during breakout sessions.

**Saturday Afternoon Field Trip.** Locations around Topeka where native plants have been used in their landscapes will be toured. **Jeff Hansen** will again be our guide. A handout will be available at the annual meeting with the locations of this afternoon’s sites and directions to those sites.

ty of Washburn University

ions is available in Topeka. You may  
ccesstopeka.com.

831 SW Fairlawn, Topeka, 66614.  
550.

topeka Blvd., Topeka, 66612.

aker Rd., Topeka, 66604.  
365.

- Rd., Topeka, 66604.  
538.

ker Rd., Topeka, 66604.  
069.

Topeka, 66604.

llmore, Topeka, 66604.

Topeka, 66604.

Brantville, 66429.  
419.

**25<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Kansas Wildflower Society**  
**Stoffer Science Hall, Washburn University, Topeka, Kansas**  
**September 12-13, 2003**

Friday, September 12, 2003 (all activities in the PM)

- 1:00-4:00 Foray to Grant-Bradbury Park, Topeka; tour leader  
will be Jeff Hansen.
- 4:30-7:00 Dinner Meeting for KWS Board – Washburn  
University Union, Vogel Room (2<sup>nd</sup> floor).
- 7:30-9:00 Evening Program – Lorna Harder will present “Four  
Seasons of Color in Your Garden.” – Washburn  
University, Stoffer Science Hall Lecture Room.
- 9:00 Door prizes – Jane Freeman.

Saturday, September 13, 2003 (activities begin in the AM, conclude in  
the PM)

- 8:00-9:00 Registration and Refreshments – Washburn  
University, Stoffer Science Hall Lobby.
- 8:30-9:00 Slide show – Plant identifications – Stoffer Science  
Hall Lecture Room.
- 9:00-9:10 Welcome by Washburn University President Jerry  
Farley – Stoffer Science Hall Lecture Room.
- 9:10-9:45 KWS Business Meeting conducted by KWS  
President Dwight Platt – Stoffer Science Hall Lecture  
Room.
- 9:45-10:00 Break to cut and eat the KWS 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary cake –  
Stoffer Science Hall Lobby.
- 10:00-11:00 Guest Speaker – Larry Vickerman will present  
“Kansas Native Plants: Beyond the Borders” –  
Stoffer Science Hall Lecture Room.
- 11:15-12:15 Breakout Sessions – PLEASE CHOOSE ONE.  
Conservation – Moderator = Dwight Platt, Scribe =  
Carroll Morgenson

Education – Moderator = Lorna Harder, Scribe = Sr. Pat Stanley

Field Trips – Moderator = Craig Freeman, Scribe = Jane Freeman

Outreach – Moderator = Julie Torseth, Scribe = Shel Cohen

12:30-2:30 Banquet – Washburn University Union in the Washburn A Room (on main floor).

12:30-12:45 Introductions and Recognition Ceremony – Shel Cohen.

- 1) KWS Board Members
- 2) Past Presidents
- 3) Charter Members

12:45-1:40 Meal

1:40-1:55 Brief History of the Kansas Wildflower Society – Shel Cohen

1:55-2:25 Reports by Moderators of morning breakout sessions.

2:25-2:30 Address by incoming KWS President Valerie Wright

2:30-4:30 Afternoon Foray – visit sites in Topeka where native plants are being used in landscaping. Jeff Hansen will be the outing leader and the sites will be announced at the meeting.

## Planting Time for Seeds of Inspiration

We need your creative assistance. Articles and art work of interest to our membership is needed for future issues of the KWS Society Newsletter. You are strongly encouraged to submit your efforts to the editor. Please send material to the following address:

Shel Cohen  
1612 SW Mulvane  
Topeka, KS 66604

## About the Cover . . .

In May, while planning the Society's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Board members cast about for a "silvery" wildflower species appropriate for this silver celebration. Among others, silver-leaf scurf-pea was suggested, McGregor Herbarium yielded up a specimen or two, and KWS had its signature anniversary species!

In *The Prairie World*, David Costello writes, "Silver-leaf psoralea... a common legume on well-drained soils, is found in all the upland prairie types, especially in places where little bluestem grows. After the small blue flowers of late spring have vanished it still can be easily recognized by its conspicuous silvery foliage. Late in summer its stems break off squarely at the ground level and the dried plants become tumbleweeds. One unacquainted with the prairie in autumn might believe that psoralea plants never grew there."

I became acquainted with flourishing stands of *Psoralea argophylla* in the prairies surrounding Chase County State Lake nearly a decade ago. Subsequently I have returned to enjoy them, as I did again in late May this year. Gracing the late spring prairie, delicate silvery foliage and just-opening blue flowers of *Psoralea argophylla* danced in the wind. Against the backdrop of blue Kansas skies, waving prairie grasses and masses of blooming penstemons and butterfly milkweed, the scene was transcendent.

Closely related to prairie turnip (*Psoralea esculenta*) and wild alfalfa (*P. tenuiflora*), *P. argophylla* is an 18-36 inch-tall perennial covered with silky hair. Leaves are palmately compound with 3-5 leaflets. Blue pea flowers are arranged in loose, few-flowered clusters at stem tips. This species is typically found in rocky or

sandy prairies in the western half of the tallgrass region. It was commonly used for medicinal purposes by Plains' tribes.

Although I have referred to silver-leaf scurf-pea as *Psoralea argophylla*, this species has also been classified as *Pediomelum argophyllum*. Recent research by taxonomists suggests that the latter is a more precise classification.



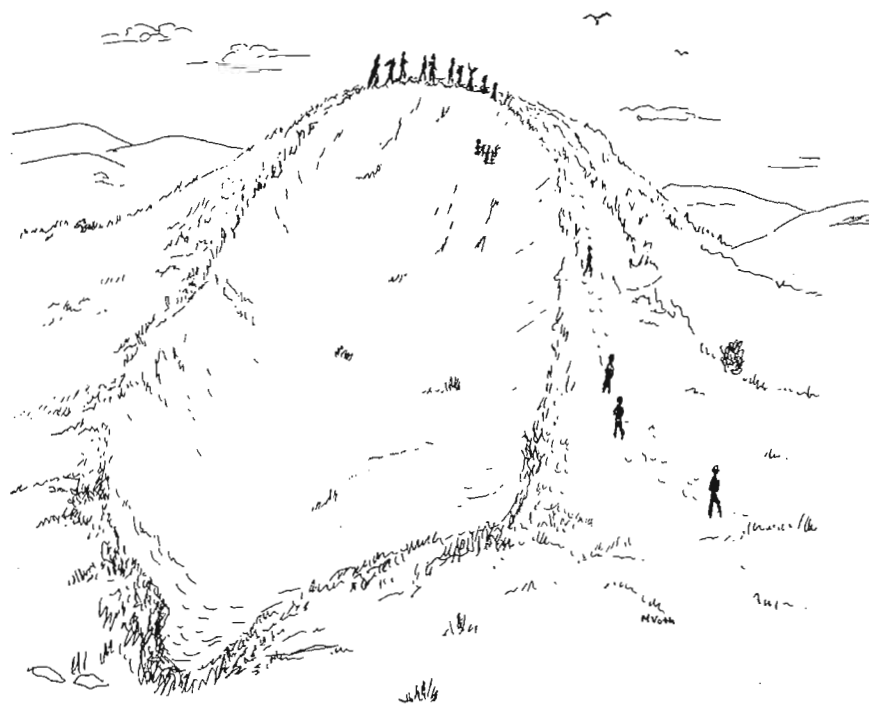
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## Kansas Wildflower Society



## Of Blowouts . . .



Sitting at the foot of the "blowout," I could see the excited wildflower buffs standing at the top, conversations buzzing. The pelicans were flying overhead wondering what the excitement was all about. Yes, we found the very rare Blowout Penstemon near the top of the wind-carved crater. Jessie found her place, slipper sliding down the sand, next to the plant with all her camera gear. The scenery was serene, no noisy traffic. All we could see was miles and miles of beautiful grass- and wildflower-covered hills.

-- Marie and Martha Voth



KANSAS WILDFLOWER SOCIETY  
Book List and Order Form

... and Bison

Sitting at picnic tables strapped to the backs of two pickups, hanging on to nylon webbing fastened the length of the tables, away we bumped over the sand hills of Nature Conservancy's Niobrara Valley Preserve to view the bison herd. The bison scattered as we approached, red calves running close to anxious mothers. From a distance they watched as the commentary by Preserve Staff helped us better understand the relationships that exist between bison and prairie, and the management that helps maintain it.

I am intrigued with bison, perhaps because they represent the essence of the original North American prairie. As a result, I collect books about bison. In February I found a new one, the just-published *American Bison* by Dale Lott. Lott grew up on the National Bison Range in Montana and became a behavioral ecologist. Pulling from both his life experiences and his educational background, Lott writes of bison, their interactions with each other, with other prairie organisms, and with humans. Included are fascinating chapters on associated prairie natives – pronghorn, prairie dogs, grizzly bears, wolves, coyotes, badgers, ferrets, and the plants of the grasslands. A final section looks at conservation, not just of the bison species itself but also of genetic diversity within the species. Lott's writing is well crafted and interesting, making for a good read. In addition its always fun to learn more about this signature prairie species. Interestingly enough, at Ft. Niobrara NWR, we met a behavioral ecologist researching bison dietary habits. When I inquired whether he was familiar with this book he nodded. Dale Lott had been his graduate advisor and some of his work was cited in *American Bison*.

■ L Harder

Lott, Dale. 2002. *American Bison*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.

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