



“Wetlands, Wildflowers, and Wildlife”

32nd AWW in Great Bend September 17-19, 2010

text and photo by Craig Freeman

Native plant enthusiasts from across Kansas will converge on Great Bend, Kansas, September 17-19, for the Kansas Native Plant Society’s 32nd Annual Wildflower Weekend. The theme for this year’s meeting is “Wetlands, Wildflowers, and Wildlife.”

The annual, statewide membership gathering is part "family reunion," as we reunite with old friends, both human and floral. Because we visit different areas of the state each year, it is also about making new acquaintances and adding new plants to our "life lists."

The meeting will be a marvelous opportunity to visit and learn about two of the most significant wetland complexes in all of North America: Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Management Area and Quivira National Wildlife Refuge. Visits to several other prairies of interest also are planned.



Large patches of broom seepweed at Cheyenne Bottoms

Activities begin on Friday, September 17 with a meeting of the Board of Directors from 1-3 pm at the Kansas Wetlands Education Center northeast of Great Bend. From 3:30-5:30 pm there will be a presentation about the mission of the Wetland Education Center, which is dedicated to educating the public about wetlands in Kansas and the Great Plains. Following the presentation, we will tour parts of Cheyenne Bottoms.

On Saturday, September 18, the membership meeting will be held in the basement of the Great Bend Public Library from 9:30-12:30 pm; it will include the annual business meeting, elections, awards, and the always popular silent auction and photo contest.

Continued on Page 11

Inside This Issue

President's Message	Page 2
Landscaping with Wild Rye	Page 2
News Notes	Page 3
Native Plant Appreciation Survey	Page 4
KNPS Outings	Page 4
Tech Corner	Page 8
Photo Contest Rules	Page 8
Growing Ruellia from Seed	Page 10
Westar Energy Green Team	Page 12
NRCS Study: Mead's Milkweed	Page 12
Featured Plant - Prairie Rose	Page 13
Membership News	Page 13

The Kansas Native Plant Society Newsletter is printed four times a year: Winter (January), Spring (April), Summer (July), Fall (October). Readers tell us how much they enjoy the newsletter in color and in the paper format. Contributions help us continue to produce a publication of this length in this form. You may send your gift to KNPS at Kansas Native Plant Society, R.L. McGregor Herbarium, 2045 Constant Avenue, Lawrence, KS 66047-3729.



The mission of the Kansas Native Plant Society is to encourage

awareness and appreciation of the native plants of Kansas in their habitats and in our landscapes by promoting education, stewardship, and scientific knowledge.



KNPS President's Message by Craig Freeman

Each year thousands of plant specimens are sent for identification to the state's major herbaria. They come from natural resource managers, weed agents, and land owners across Kansas. Not surprisingly, many of these plants are recent immigrants to North America, introduced here in the past two centuries. These non-native species (also called alien, introduced, adventive, and escaped species) are among the leading threats to biodiversity worldwide. The economic impacts of non-native plants on human health, agriculture, forestry, tourism, and recreation are well-documented. A 2005 report estimated the cost of non-native plants on the U.S. economy to be \$27 billion annually.

There are some 5,000 non-native plant species that thrive outside of cultivation in the U.S; 517 of those occur in Kansas, representing 24% of the vascular plants documented in the state. Since 1880, we've added 2.6 non-native species/year to the Kansas flora, though introductions have been episodic and linked to land use and land management practices. Many noxious or agriculturally important aliens arrived early in the state's history: 43% by 1900 and 71% by 1940. In recent decades, many of our new non-natives have come from ornamental sources.

People often are shocked to learn that one-quarter of the plants in Kansas are not native here, but non-natives typically make up 20-30% of the floras of most states. Fortunately, not all non-natives pose a serious threat. In Kansas, we have ranked non-native plants by their potential to establish, reproduce, and spread. About 65% of them show no signs of becoming invasive--that is aggressively spreading into disturbed or native plant communities. The remaining 35% often are invasive, including 30 species called "transformers" because of their ability to invade and disrupt the ecology of our prairies, forests, and wetlands. Examples are purple loosestrife,

salt-cedar, and *sericea lespedeza*. (See http://www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org/invasive_plant for a complete list).

A non-native plant species must overcome several barriers to become successful at a new site. The first barrier is geography--it has to be transported to a new location where it doesn't already occur. We've brought hundreds of non-native species to Kansas accidentally, but others -- ornamentals and crop plants -- have been introduced intentionally. The second barrier is reproduction. After reaching a new habitat, if the species can reproduce successfully, it may spread beyond the site of original introduction, colonizing new areas temporarily or permanently. If well adapted to local conditions, these naturalized plants may become invasive and may spread into disturbed habitats. In the worst cases, invasive species may spread into undisturbed natural communities, disrupting their ecology.

Our flora is adjusting constantly to changes in the environment, and non-native species are an inextricable part of our ecosystems. So, what can we as members of the Kansas Native Plant Society do about non-natives? First, we must continue to emphasize the use of native species in our gardens, plantings, roadsides, and landscapes. Besides being better adapted to local conditions, natives generally "play well" with their neighbors. Second, we must remain watchful for new non-native species, especially those with a demonstrated history of invasiveness. Keep alert for plants that you don't recognize or haven't seen before in the places where you live, work, and play. Early detection and eradication of non-natives is critical. Once established, eradication is virtually impossible and our efforts shift to controlling and managing populations at tolerable levels.

For additional information on invasive plants, consult the resources on the Kansas Native Plant Society website or any of the other numerous websites dedicated to non-native and invasive plants.



Landscaping with Native Plants: Hairy Wild-rye (*Elymus villosus*) text and photos by Jeff Hansen



Hairy Wild Rye
(*E. villosus*)

One of my favorite grasses native to Kansas is Hairy Wild-rye. It gets its name from the fact that the leaves are covered with silky, soft, minute hairs. Run your fingers on the top surface of the leaf blades to feel their soft velvety texture. I really like the feel of the leaves, but what makes it a nice landscaping plant are the soft drooping heads (inflorescences) that look like rye. They tend to have a greenish white color, which I find

Continued on Page 3



particularly attractive. The heads of grass remain attractive into fall. The grass grows to a height between 2 and 3 feet, and is a bunch grass. It's a cool season grass, and you will find it blooming in June. It is found primarily in the eastern third of Kansas, normally in open woods or at the edge of woods. It grows well in both moist woods and dry woods. It can be grown in full sun as well.

Personally, I like growing it in my shade gardens, because there are so few plants to choose from for shade or part-sun areas. The flowers are inconspicuous and form along the tips of the branches. The fruits form clusters and often turn purple in the fall, as do the leaves. Each plant is capable of producing tens of thousands of seeds.

Kansas is home to a number of relatively common wild-ryes (Genus *Elymus*). In dry sandy areas of the western third of the state, squirrel tail wild-rye (*E. elymoides*), with its soft hairy seed heads, grows. On the prairie, usually in moist places, you will find the giant drooping heads of Canada wild-rye (*E. canadensis*).



Virginia Wild Rye
(*E. virginiana*)

In the woodlands, are the upright heads of Virginia wild-rye (*E. virginiana*). There is even an almost awnless species, short awn wild-rye (*E. submuticus*) that is also found in woodland edges and open woods. Its seed head is upright. A less common species is bottle-brush wild-rye (*Elymus hystrix*). It has a very open seed head. All can be used in the garden, but I like Hairy wild-rye best. I sell seed and plants of Hairy wild-rye at kansasnativeplants.com.



News Notes

New Wildflower Guide Now Available: Eighth in the pocket guide series, *The Pocket Guide to Kansas Flint Hills Wildflowers and Grasses* covers 52 kinds of native wildflowers and six prairie grasses found in the Flint Hills.

The pocket guide allows readers to gain a greater appreciation for prairie plant diversity and the uniqueness of each wildflower and grass. Detailed are the plants' ecological relationships to livestock grazing, wildlife and basic human uses. The wildflowers are arranged by flower color and enhanced by beautiful color images.

Single copies of these Pocket Guides are available free of charge at the Great Plains Nature Center. Copies can be mailed for \$3.00 each by sending your check, payable to GPNC, to: Pocket Guides, Great Plains Nature Center, 6232 East 29th Street North, Wichita, KS 67220. KNPS Board Members will also have free copies available at some KNPS events. Contact Board members for more details.

Plan to Participate in Tallgrass Wildflower Weekend: The late summer asters, sunflowers, and goldenrods will be in their full glory during the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve 2010 Wildflower Weekend September 11 and 12. The location near Strong City is easily accessible

for many KNPS members. Make plans now to come to the Wildflower Weekend either as a visitor or a KNPS volunteer. Hikes (of varying length) led by KNPS guides, bus tours (KNPS guides will be aboard also), activities, and workshops will be available both days.

Schedules for KNPS volunteers will be flexible. This is an excellent opportunity to present a slide show or lecture based on your special interests related to wildflowers and native plants. You may also choose to do a demonstration or provide an interactive display. Contact Nancy Goulden by August 15 at nag@ksu.edu with a brief description of what roles or activities you wish to be a part of (e.g. hike leader, guide on bus, educational program/activity, etc.). The flowers will be wonderful; the visitors interested and interesting; seeing your fellow KNPS pals fun.

Nominating Wildflower of the Year: The open nominations for Wildflower of the Year (starting in 2013) by KNPS members continues. You still have time to get your favorite flower on the list. Check the knps website (www.knps.org/woty/htm) for retired plants and those already scheduled so you don't duplicate. Send your suggestions to : ken@springvalleynursery.com or by U.S. mail to Ken O'Dell, 11485 W. 303rd. St., Paola, Kansas 66071 or by fax to (913) 837-5111.

Native Plant Appreciation Survey

By Nancy Goulden

The society gave members an opportunity to share through an electronic survey how they commemorated Kansas Native Plant Appreciation Month in June. Whether their answers were poetic or simply informative, the passion of their love and appreciation of our native plants came through.



Lazy daisies and blanket flower on a native prairie
photo by Phyllis Scherich

In the response to the first question, **“What native plants do you most enjoy in the month of June?”** we received both duplicates and unique replies. Here is a summary: “all of them,” “whole array of plants,” “all of the milkweed family,” shell-leaf beardtongue, blue wild indigo, black sampson, wild roses, pale poppy mallow, wild columbine, beebalm, lead plant, Deptford pinks, (naturalized), compass plant, butterfly milkweed, common milkweed, primroses, showy milkweed, silverleaf nightshade, wild bergamot (mint-leaf beebalm), golden groundsel.

The next question asked about **favorite locations** for enjoying native Kansas plants. Here

are some of the answers.

“The Arkansas River banks and deep farmland ditches while driving to visit friends.” HOYT HILLMAN, WICHITA.

“I love the scenic highway around Cottonwood Falls in the Flint Hills. I go every June. . . . The open rolling landscape becomes dotted with flowers even the children can recognize at interstate speeds: Echinacea, Asclepias, Coreopsis and Yarrow.” MELISSA J. CARLSON, OVERLAND PARK.

The final question focused on **what the members do to share their love and enthusiasm** with others.

“Over the years, I have done programs and tours for all ages. As I have aged (79), I continue to tell others about the plants and other wonders of the prairies and share my meadow with them.” JOYCE FENT, SALINA

“After obtaining permission from city and state agencies, we have organized groups of neighborhoods to naturalize the local riverbanks with Kansas native flowers and grasses.” HOYT HILLMAN, WICHITA

“During our wildflower tour, I also give out books, publications, and wildflower seed packets to the participants so they may start their own gardens and protect what is already there.” WANDA JACKSON, WINFIELD

“Post photos on Facebook of plants I’ve found. Submit photos to KNPS for the newsletter and for the website. Grow native plants in my landscape at home.” KRISTA DAHLINGER, MULVANE

These should give all of us ideas about how we can appreciate Kansas native plants year round.



KNPS Outings submitted by KNPS members

TUTTLE CREEK MAY 22 text by Karen Hummel, photos by Nancy Goulden

By ones and twos, the group gathered at the Tuttle Creek Visitors' Center north of Manhattan on May 22 for a nature hike sponsored by the Corps of Engineers and offered through UFM, the K-State/Manhattan community free university. Corps of Engineers Park Ranger, Paul Weidhaas, convened the group, introduced KNPS tour leaders Nancy Goulden, Diane Barker and Karen Hummel. We then caravanned to a native prairie meadow owned by the Corps of Engineers. The view was beautiful; rolling native prairie and gallery forests bounding tributaries of Tuttle Creek Lake. The lake itself was visible along the horizon.



Blue False Indigo at Tuttle Creek

Continued on Page 5

TUTTLE CREEK TOUR

Continued from Page 5

The participants separated into two smaller groups, each of which spent more than an hour hiking and exploring the diverse plant populations. Blooming plants included blue false indigo, the fleabanes, white-eyed grass, Indian turnip, penstemon cobeia (one lovely lone sentinel), Missouri evening primrose, prairie groundsel, prairie rose, and sorrel. There was plenty of evidence of earlier blooming ground plum and prairie parsley. Butterfly milkweed was profuse and budding, but we saw no blooms.

Future tours are planned for July 10 and August 28. Information is available at <http://www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org/events.php>, <http://www.naturalkansas.org/wildflow.htm>, or you can sign up at the UFM website, <https://ufmprograms.org/ShowSchedule.awp?~GROUP~EN~Earth+and+Nature>.

The July and August walks promise to reveal the wildflower progression of the summer season,

with a profusion of goldenrods, milkweeds, asters, sunflowers and gayfeather, as well as lesser-known but equally lovely forbs. This promises to be an excellent summer for blooms, and we hope you will join for one or both of the remaining Corps of Engineers UFM wildflower prairie walks.



Participants share a viewing lens for a closeup look.

GRANT COUNTY TOUR MAY 29 by Marion McGlohon

A record number of wildflowers and plants were identified and recorded by a group at least half the size of our usual group on our annual walk the last Saturday of May 2010. (A “rival” tour of nearby Santa Fe Trail sites no doubt claimed people who would have otherwise joined us). But we were able to cover well the area chosen and checked off over 60 species of plants named on our list of “possibilities” and added several others. Leaders identifying and explaining the plants were: Sam Guy, Kellye Hart, and Marion McGlohon.

Many flowers were nicely blooming in patches along the grassy banks of a gravel road south of

the Cimmaron River near historic Wagonbed Springs. Greenthread (*Thelsperma filifolium*), Engelmann’s daisy (*Engelmannia pinnatifida*), Indian blanket flower (*Gaillardia pulchella*), scarlet gaura (*Gaura coccinea*), and white milkwort (*Polygala alba*) made a colorful background of red, yellow, pink and white along the way. Lots of ground-hugging purple plains Chinese lantern (*Quincula lobata*), and tall-bread scurf-pea (*Psoralea cuspidata*) added to the palette.

While there, we witnessed “the wild” in stark reality. A small rabbit, that had hopped away from us, encountered a bull snake, which promptly caught and encircled the poor thing. We learned more than one nature lesson that day.

GREAT PLAINS NATURE CENTER JUNE 5 text and photo by Krista Dahlinger



GPNC Hike participants pause at the entrance to the park

On June 5, 2010, a wildflower walk took place at the Great Plains Nature Center (GPNC), a City Park located on 282 acres in north Wichita. Chisholm Creek flows through the park, and the chance of flooding has served to prevent extensive urban development of this land. The City of Wichita, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks and the US Fish and Game Service maintain offices in the park.

Prairie restoration has been underway in the park for nearly 20 years by selective seeding and managed burns.

Continued on Page 6

GREAT PLAINS NATURE CENTER

Continued from Page 5

The GPNC Nature Center houses small wildlife for viewing, a prairie flora and fauna diorama, a large vertical fish tank exhibit of native Kansas species, and glass wall room for bird viewing.

During our walk we saw abundant blooming catchlaw sensitive briar, rough leaf dogwood, sedges, fragrant milkweed, lemon mint (*Monarda citriodora*), *Penstemon* and June grass. Compass plant, wild licorice, big bluestem, *Liatrix*

and goldenrod species will be in bloom later this year. The wetlands area held plenty of turtles and herons, cattails and croaking toads. We started our walk early under an overcast sky, but soon the sun emerged; temperature and humidity increased, and we were thankful for the trails through the shady woodland. Several people on this wildflower walk had extensive experience identifying wildflowers and butterflies and were very helpful to others who had just begun looking at native plants. Everyone is always welcome to attend wildflower walks regardless of experience.

KONZA BUTTERFLY HILL JUNE 6 text and photos by Valerie Wright

On the absolutely gorgeous evening of June 6, 110 visitors walked the Butterfly Hill Trail and



Slimpod Venus Looking Glass

took note of the potential 50 species of wildflowers available to bloom that night. Of particular note were Butterfly Milkweed and Showy Evening Primrose with contrasting orange or white flowers. Catclaw Sensitive Briar and Wild Alfalfa were also eye catchers. And if you were

observant, among the grasses, Venus' Looking Glass was lovely as ever.

The late sun light was perfect for backlit photos and views of the prairie. The bison herd made an appearance and then moved off to graze elsewhere. Wine Cup spilled from the ranch house garden onto the patio where there was a display



We were honored that Sharon Schwartz (in white and black) joined the Konza hike. As a legislator, Sharon aided in the Little Blue State Grass initiative

of paintings by school children, depicting their impressions of the Flint Hills. These murals were created for the ground breaking ceremony of the Flint Hills Discovery Center, coming to Manhattan on July 7. The Butterfly Hill Trail is 1.2 miles. About 10 visitors per group were with Konza Environmental Education Program docents--who know their plants! The average time spent on the trail was about two hours. After the walk, guests lingered on the cool ranch house lawn.

COWLEY COUNTY WILDFLOWER TOUR JUNE 12 text and photos by Krista Dahlinger

The 2010 Cowley County Wildflower Tour took place on June 12 at the Snyder Ranch. It was a wonderful morning to be walking the prairie with horizon-to-horizon views of the Flinthills. Approximately 100 people attended the tour, which had been well organized by the staff at the Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NCRS) and Farm Service offices.

More than 60 different forbs and grasses were flagged in this productive "cattle country" area

Continued on Page 9



A child gazes pensively at a group of Cowley County hikers

2010 Kansas Area Native Plant and Wildflower Events

Information provided by Kansas Native Plant Society, see more events on our website: www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org. Please share this information and contact us about additional events to note. Thank you! [email@KSNPS.org] **Sturdy shoes, long pants, a hat, insect repellent, sunscreen, and water are recommended for outdoor events.**

Mark your calendar now and plan to attend some fabulous happenings!

 **July 17:** Volunteers are needed for prairie maintenance and preservation projects. The Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs meet on the third Saturday of every month except December. [www.grasslandheritage.org]. Wear appropriate clothing. No special skills or tools needed. For details, please contact Frank Norman, Kansas Native Plant Society Board Member [fjnorman@sunflower.com] (785)887-6775 (home) or (785)691-9748 (cell).

July 28: Discover the prairies of South Central Kansas with prairie enthusiast, Brad Guhr, Dyck Arboretum Education Coordinator. Join us in gathering seed, observing birds and insects, and identifying prairie plants on high quality prairie remnants. Leave the Dyck Arboretum at 4pm and return by twilight. All ages are welcome. Fee: \$5, children under 13 are free. Call 620-327-8127 to reserve a spot. Directions can be given to late-comers. Bring a sandwich and enjoy the sun setting over the prairie. Reserve a spot by calling (620) 327-8127

August 1-5: The North American Prairie Conference will be in Cedar Falls, IA. The University of Northern Iowa will host the 22nd Biennial NAPC. Conference theme is Restoring a National Treasure. For information contact: [<http://www.northamericanprairieconference.org/>] Ryan Welch [rwelch@uni.edu] (319) 273-7957.

August 7: Wildflower Hike at Prairie State Park near Lamar Missouri, 10am to 12pm. [prairie.state.park@dnr.mo.gov] (417) 843-6711

August 11: Discover the prairies of South Central Kansas with prairie enthusiast, Brad Guhr, Dyck Arboretum Education Coordinator. See July 28 for details.

August 17-19: Tallgrass Rangeland Management Class, 8am to 3pm. Plan to attend this Kansas Grazing Lands Coalition class at White Memorial Camp near Council Grove. The theme is Principles of Rangeland Management-- Grass and Animal Ecology in Kansas, Reaching Harmony . . . profit and environment. The focus will be the balance between making a sustainable living while keeping a sustainable environment. The schools cost \$250 per person, but scholarships are available to most ranchers interested in attending, reducing the fee to \$100 per person. Agency staffs may qualify for a \$100 scholarship. Students can also receive a \$150 scholarship. For more information about scholarships and the schools go to the KGLC website [www.kglc.org]. Contact: Tim Christian [tschristian@kglc.org] 620-241-3636

 **August 21:** Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs prairie maintenance and preservation projects. See July 17 info.

August 25: Discover the prairies of South Central Kansas with prairie enthusiast, Brad Guhr, Dyck Arboretum Education Coordinator. See July 28 for details.

 **August 28:** Explore Native Tallgrass Prairie at Tuttle Creek Lake, 1:30-3pm. Kansas Native Plant Society volunteers will lead the walk near the Visitor Center at the lake. Rain date is August 29. Pre-registration is required, contact Park Ranger Paul Weidhaas [Paul.K.Weidhaas@usace.army.mil] (785) 539-8511.

September 2: Prairie Seed Harvesting at the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve in Chase County, KS. Help harvest seeds for the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve's bottomland restoration project. [www.nps.gov/tapr] [tapr_interpretation@nps.gov] (620) 2738494

September 4: Fall Wildflower Tour at Maxwell Wildlife Refuge, McPherson County, KS. Board the tram for a tour of the prairie with wildflowers and buffalo, 10am. There is also a self guided walking tour with flowers flagged. The Refuge is located 6 miles north of Canton, KS. [<http://www.cyberkraft.com/maxwell/>] (620)-628-4455

 **September 9-12:** FloraKansas: Great Plains Plant Bazaar at Dyck Arboretum of the Plains, Hesston, KS. This plant sale features hard-to-find native perennials plus classes and tours. Kansas Native Plant Society co-sponsors Dyck Arboretum events. Ask about member's only sale dates; 10% members discount on all days. Admission charge is by donation. [arboretum@Hesston.edu] (620) 327-8127

 **September 11:** Wilson County Wildflower Tour in southeast Kansas. Join us as we enjoy the blooming wildflowers of the fall! Come face to face with nature's wonders in southeast Kansas. Tucked into the beautiful Osage Cuestas (rolling hills), the landscape is sculpted in rich woodlands and winding rivers. The day starts off at 8:30am with coffee and home baked pastries at Nedesha High School. On the tour, knowledgeable

🌸 Kansas Area Native Plant Wildflower Events - Continued 🌸

(**September 11:** Wilson County , continued) group leaders will assist in plant ID, historical interpretations, etc. Kansas Native Plant Society co-sponsors this event. A picnic lunch with cool refreshments will be served. Cost is \$10, which includes breakfast, lunch, lanyard & bottled water and transportation to the site. Pre-registration required by Sept 9th. Contact Gina Thompson with questions (620) 378-2866

🌸 **September 11-12:** 5th Annual Wildflower Weekend at the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve in Chase County, KS. Bring the family for an educational and enjoyable weekend for all ages, 10am-4pm. Members of Kansas Native Plant Society will be on hand to lead wildflower hikes. [www.nps.gov/tapr] (620) 2738494

🌸 **September 17-19:** Kansas Native Plant Society's 32nd Annual Wildflower Weekend will be in Great Bend, KS. We will visit wetlands and prairies in and around Barton County. Come enjoy native plants with us in the Arkansas River Lowlands of south central Kansas! The weekend is filled with outings, programs, a silent auction, photo contest, dinner, and socializing. Please contact KNPS for more information. (785) 864-3453

🌸 **September 18:** Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs prairie maintenance and preservation projects. See July 17 info.

September 24-26: The Land Institute's 29th Annual Prairie Festival is in Salina, KS. This year's festival features writer Wendell Berry among the speakers! Also enjoy art, music, dancing, guided prairie walks, bird watching, children's activities, and food. [www.landinstitute.org] (785) 823-5376.

September 25: Konza Prairie Biennial Visitors' Day, 8am-5pm. Featuring guided hikes, hay wagon rides, homestead and van tours, exhibits, video, youth activities, near Manhattan, KS. Presented by KSU Div. of Biology, The Nature Conservancy and Friends of Konza Prairie. From I-70, take exit 307 and go northeast on McDowell Creek Road for 4.2 miles to the entrance. [<http://keep.konza.ksu.edu/visit/events.htm>] (785) 587-0441

September 25: The American Indians and Bison Program at the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve in Chase County, KS. Please join us for this informative event on the Native American tribes of the tallgrass prairie and the role bison played on the tallgrass prairie. [www.nps.gov/tapr] (620) 2738494

🌸 **October 16:** Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs prairie maintenance and preservation projects. See July 17 info.

October 16: Prairie Harvest Festival and Barn Dance at the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve in Chase County, KS. Come out for the Prairie Harvest Festival and watch historic demonstrations or take a hayrack ride through the prairie. [www.nps.gov/tapr] (620) 2738494



KNPS TECH CORNER— by Mickey Delfelder

Did you know that there are more KNPS events than what we include in the newsletters? We try to make it easy for you to get the latest news and events through our website and social media offerings.

The KNPS website (<http://www.ksnps.org/>) is updated often and it's your primary source for new information. For convenience, you can sign up for our Email List via the link in the left column on the front page of the website. Once on the list, you will receive a weekly email with an event listing for the next 2 months. Other news and events are also periodically distributed via the Email List.

Lastly, don't forget our Facebook presence and our occasional blog postings, both of which are also accessible from the front page of our website.



Annual Wildflower Weekend Photo Contest Rules

The photo contest is a great opportunity to show off your favorite photos of native plants and native Kansas landscapes. Photos are accepted from KNPS members only, and entries are limited to four photos per category per person. Photos should be no smaller than 4" x 5" and no larger than 8" x 10"; each must be mounted on poster board (matting is optional). Photos must be labeled according to category (collage, flora, fauna, people, scenery, and garden), photographer's name and city, photo title, location where the photo was taken, and camera type. First, second, and third place ribbons will be awarded for photographs in each category judged best in terms of composition, sharpness, exposure, color, appropriateness to category, and other criteria.

including lead plant, *Echinacea*, milkweeds (butterfly, spider, narrow-leaf), catchlaw sensitive briar, yellow flax, marble-seed and western yarrow. We also examined seed-pod structures of the milkweed, Missouri primrose and plum vetch. We learned that the abundance of so many forbs and grasses in this pasture indicates that it has not



Leadplant blossom

being over-grazed and that the pasture is in good condition to continue supplying nutrition to cattle into the future.

We moved from the pasture to the "home place" farmhouse for lunch--sloppy joes, fruits and vegetables and home-made cinnamon rolls. Many thanks to the NCRS and Farm Services offices for providing personnel and resources to organize this wildflower tour, and also many thanks to Marjorie Snyder for hosting the tour at the Snyder Ranch.

After lunch there was a big round of applause from everyone who attended the tour to express their appreciation for the wonderful time they had on this wildflower tour.



New Jersey Tea in Seed, Cowley County

SYMPHONY IN THE FLINT HILLS--2010 on JUNE 12 text by Nancy Goulden, photos by Phyllis Scherich

KNPS volunteers, sharing their knowledge of native plants and the prairie, have become a tradition at the annual Symphony in the Flint Hills in June. The event celebrates the treasure of Kansas prairie land with an afternoon of activities, lectures, and food, followed by a concert by the Kansas City Orchestra. At this year's concert on June 12, country singer Lyle Lovett was also featured.



Nancy Coombs on the Trail

Visitors who return year after year, know that as they walk the trail to the symphony site, they will be greeted by KNPS volunteers who will give them their first introduction to the prairie plants. We estimate that our KNPS representatives

had at least a brief conversation with a minimum of 535 guests along the trail.

After they arrive at the main site, many of the attendees (about 225) head for the "Nature Walk"



Poster and aromatic plant display

tent; spend some time looking at the amazing flowering plant photos, posters and KNPS "notebook" Phyllis Scherich constructed for this year's display. Our KNPS helpers answer questions; tell them about KNPS; and encourage them to "smell" the Aromatic Plant Display

Continued on Page 10

(thanks to Joc Baker) and enter the Name the Plants Contest (bouquet collected by Valerie Wright). This year the Big KNPS Attraction was the half-hour prairie hikes. The number who signed up for the hikes was 345. This was way up from last year's participation of 189. All afternoon as you looked out the tent, you would see clumps of visitors clustered around their KNPS guides. We have heard many comments about what a positive and interesting experience it was for the visitors.



Symphony strains greet the hushed crowd as a line of cattle grazes below the horizon at sunset.

To all the numbers of KNPS-Visitor Contact listed above add in 200 (standing room only) for the attendees at Dee and Phyllis Scherich's presentation. At the end of the day, we counted 1,305 guests who learned more about the prairie and its plants from our twenty-two KNPS volunteers. The other good news is that the threatening weather held off.

GROWING PLANTS FROM SEED:

Native Petunias

text and photo by Ken O'Dell

The eastern part of Kansas has interesting native petunias that have pretty flowers, some character and are easy and fun to look at and grow. *Ruellia humilis*, fringleaf wild petunia, is the shorter of the two and the one that we have more of on our farm in Miami County, in eastern Kansas. Other common names are Hairy Wild Petunia and Wild Petunia. Thriving at the edge of hayfields and pastures, this 10 inch tall native has wonderful light lavender flowers about 2 inches long in a funnel shape. The bloom is usually open for one day and falls from the plant during the night. Not to worry--you will have many attractive flowers, day after day, as this native continues to bloom and bloom during the summer, one tough little herbaceous perennial.



Fringeleaf wild petunia
Ruellia humilis

Continued on Page 11

The leaves are about 2 inches long and 1 inch wide, on opposite sides of the stem, of a light green coloring with many tiny white hairs on both sides. The stems also have short hairs. Thus it gets one of the common names, "hairy wild petunia." A nursery in Texas has selected a variety of *Ruellia humilis* that they claim has much darker flowers, and is called "blue shade."

Thriving in full or dappled sun in eastern Kansas, *Ruellia humilis* is endangered or threatened in Wisconsin and four other states. I consider myself fortunate to have thousands of them on our farm. I gather the seed and sow it in other areas where I want it to grow. It makes me happy to see it grow all summer in regular to dry well-drained soils on our farm. This species does not compete well with annuals or perennials in flower beds as it does not like to be crowded by other more vigorous plants. I have also tried to grow this native petunia in pots, but it does not do well for me as a pot plant. Both ruellias are easily propagated by seed or from soft tips cuttings taken in June. Soft wood tip cuttings, stuck in well drained potting soil will root immediately and can be transplanted to flower beds in about 6 weeks.

The other petunia growing native on our farm in Miami County, Kansas, is *Ruellia strepens*, also known as "tall wild petunia" or "limestone wild petunia," native in the eastern one-third of Kansas.

It favors dappled shaded areas. I have not seen these growing in pasture or in hayfields as *R. humilis* does.

The flowers of *Ruellia strepens* are a darker blue and a longer funnel shape than *R. humilis*. The plant grows to about 18 to 20 inches tall on tough stems with opposite leaves that are often 4 inches long and 1½ inches wide, of a dark green color with less hair than *R. humilis*. Both of these native perennials have a place in your wild or native areas. In my work with them, I have found that *R. humilis* is frequently not aggressive enough and *R. strepens* is a bit too aggressive when used as a native perennial in gardens. Steyermark in *Flora of Missouri* lists three forms of *R. strepens*. One has white or whitish flowers. I have only seen the darker blue flowers in eastern Kansas.

I have stuck soft wood tip cuttings of *R. strepens* in June, and they root easily. Transplant 6 weeks after rooting. Water the plants, if needed, to establish. After they are established, wild petunias need no help to survive. I gather the seed throughout summer. Store it in a paper envelope in the fridge and plant some in pots in spring, then transfer to flower beds. If I want to plant the seed in the prairie, I spread it immediately after picking to the areas I want to see it growing. If you need seed to get started, go to Jeff Hansen at www.KansasNativePlants.com in Topeka. If Jeff does not have seed at the time you need it, contact me and I will pick and send a dozen or so seed to you late this summer.

32nd Annual Wildflower Weekend

Continued from Page 1

(See photo contest rules on p. 8.) The silent auction is a fundraiser, with proceeds benefiting the programs of KNPS. Attendees are encouraged to bring a few items to donate to the auction. Artwork, crafts, books, posters, clothing, jellies, and baked goods are but a few of the items donated in the past. KNPS members already have donated some special items for this year's auction. If you cannot attend the meeting but would like to donate auction items, please contact the KNPS administration office to arrange a donation.

A special presentation on some of the conservation work being done at Cheyenne Bottoms is planned after the silent auction and photo contests. Following a catered lunch at the library from 1-2 pm, we will carpool to Quivira National Wildlife Refuge, about 20 miles southeast of Great Bend. The Refuge is sponsoring "Monarch Mania" on the day of our tour; so staff members will not be available to conduct a guided tour. However, we have permission to visit areas open to the public, with stops planned at Little Salt Marsh (immediately north of the Refuge

headquarters) and Big Salt Marsh (at the northwest part of the Refuge). Our tour of Quivira National Wildlife Refuge will conclude when attendees are ready to head back to Great Bend.

Activities on Sunday, September 19, will commence at 9 am. We will carpool from Great Bend southwest to visit a tract of private land on the Pawnee/Barton County line, 2.5 miles east of Pawnee Rock, situated on the southeast side of the Arkansas River. It supports sand prairie and associated plant communities. A brief stop at Pawnee Rock State Historic Site, an important landmark along the Santa Fe Trail, also is planned.

Later this summer, a full description of the weekend's activities, directions to meeting and foray sites, motel and restaurant information, and reservation forms will be mailed to KNPS members. Please watch our web site for periodic updates and new information.

If you've never been to a KNPS Annual Meeting before, give the 2010 AWW a try. We promise you will enjoy the friendly comrades who you meet and will leave inspired and stimulated from learning about "new plants" and a new location.



Westar Energy Green Team and Volunteers

By Brad Loveless

On May 15, fourteen volunteers gathered at Topeka's Skyline Park to begin a multi-year process of tree removal and prairie restoration. Beginning at the park's peak, known as Burnett's Mound, we used chainsaws, loppers, and herbicide to cut and stump-treat Osage orange, elm, mulberry, and rough-leaved dogwood, which have encroached over 50 years. In recent years, the city has been diligent about burning to battle this spread, but years of earlier burn avoidance enabled an entrenched array of trees and shrubs to develop. Historically, this was a high-quality tallgrass prairie that was never sprayed. We believe that removal of shade and more comprehensive burning will return this to a prairie showcase.

The "we" is the Westar Energy Green Team, which is partnering with the City of Topeka and a passionate local volunteer named Dave Fisher. Dave explored this ridge as a youth, has been disheartened by its deterioration, and has a vision

that it would be restored to its former beauty and prominence. The Potawatomi Tribe, because of their connection to the Potawatomi Chief, Adam Burnett, the mound's namesake, is also very interested. The park has been closed for the past few years due to vandalism problems and the city has been pondering its options.

The Green Team views this area as a wonderful environmental, educational, recreational and cultural opportunity. We believe that ultimately, removing public vehicle access and establishing hiking trails will make this a destination place for people wanting modest exercise and an unequalled bird's eye view of Topeka. Restoration of this tallgrass prairie in Topeka's front yard re-establishes the ecological foundation that this region has been built upon within easy reach of the city. Clearing the woody invaders from this mounded ridge will once again expose this beautiful landmark and cultural icon.

Work will resume in the fall and all volunteers are welcome. Please contact Brad Loveless, Westar Energy Green Team, 785.575.8115, with questions, ideas, or to get on the volunteer notification list.



Mead's Milkweed text and photo by Allen Casey – USDA-NRCS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Kansas Plant Materials Center (PMC) located in Manhattan, Kansas, collects seeds from native plants and grows them to produce more seed. Commercial seed growers are then provided the seed to grow more plants. Then seeds or plants are provided to the public for use. The term "plant materials" is used because we deal with all of the things associated with plants, including the roots, stems, seeds, flowers, and just information about plants of public interest and how to establish them. The PMC started in the 1930's as a tree and grass nursery to provide plants to stabilize the blowing soils from the dust bowl. Since that time the program has provided plants and information to address environmental issues. The PMC does evaluations to determine different or better methods to grow, establish, and harvest seed from native plants. The emphasis is focused on using native plants as a healthy way to solve conservation problems and protect ecosystems.

A special project at the PMC is the study and propagation of the threatened Mead's milkweed (*Asclepias meadii*), native to eastern Kansas. It belongs to the milkweed family (*Asclepiadaceae*) and has been a federally threatened species since 1988. Mead's milkweed is long lived and could take more than 15 years to mature from a

seed into a flowering plant, reproducing by seed or vegetatively through rhizomes. It requires moderately wet to dry upland tallgrass prairie with vegetation that can tolerate drought and fire. The PMC is working to propagate the species and restore it to areas



Mead's Milkweed

where it was historically present. The study was started in 1996 from seeds collected at the Rockefeller Native Prairie near Lawrence, Kansas. Germination tests were conducted on those seeds, and they were grown and planted into prairie and monoculture scenarios for evaluation and monitoring. Trials include plants that came from different populations. Monitoring and evaluations that compare the growth and flowering traits between the different populations are conducted. The 2009 season was the best for flowering and fruit production in 6 years, possibly due to a wetter than normal growing season. Information about habitat requirements and establishment techniques are vital to the recovery efforts for the species. For more information, visit <http://plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/kspm/>.



Featured Plant: Prairie Wild Rose (*Rosa arkansana* Porter)

Text by Lorraine J. Kaufman, photo by Dennis A Kaufman

I have loved wild roses for as long as I can remember. They grew (and still grow) along the lane that led to our mailbox (which is gone now). But I admired them greatly on my daily walk to get the mail--was there ever a more delicate pink, a more simple, open and "innocent face" or a more delightful fragrance? They were perfection to my child's eye!

I wanted to take a bouquet to my mother but was disappointed and frustrated that the flowers picked when in full bloom dropped their petals before I could get them home. I finally found a way however--in late afternoon, cut leafy branches with buds that just show the colored tips of their petals; immediately slit the stem and place into a jar of water (which you have brought with you) and cover with a lid. At home invert a larger jar over the jar of roses to conserve all moisture. By morning the buds will open and when you remove the covering jar you will be greeted by their lovely fresh appearance and heavenly fragrance--an eloquent gift free from the prairie!

Found in prairies, pastures and roadsides, the Prairie rose is the most common rose in Kansas. It is a shrub nearly two feet tall with branched stems containing some prickles and leaves pinnately compound with toothed leaflets. They bloom in late May and June with five delicately pink, heart-shaped petals making about a two-inch flower with numerous yellow stamens and a wonderful fragrance. They grow on low bushes sending their roots down many feet, making them surprisingly drought resistant. While it is the delicate form and fragrance of the flowers that delight us in early summer, I learned from relatives in Sweden how their usefulness can be realized.

The red fruit or rose hips become succulent as they mature and can be gathered and dried. They then are made into a distinctive dessert, "rose hip soup" or "nyponsoppa" with a tart flavor, rich in Vitamin C and considered a real delicacy among Swedish people. Dried rose hips, instantly



Prairie Wild Rose
(*Rosa arkansana* Porter)

prepared mix and tinned nyponsoppa are available in Swedish import stores in the US.

If you would like the adventure of gathering your own rose hips you can make your own nyponsoppa with this recipe: 2/3 cup dried rose hips, 4 cups cold water, 1/2 cup sugar, 3 Tbsp. cornstarch, 1/4 cup whipping cream, slivered almonds. Wash rose hips thoroughly. Drain. Add 4 cups cold water, cover tightly and simmer gently about 2 hours, stirring occasionally. Drain cooked rose hips into a strainer, saving liquid. Reserve 1/2 cup liquid. Press rose hips through strainer. Measure 3 Tbsp. puree, add it and sugar to the liquid. Stir to dissolve sugar and heat to boiling. Mix cornstarch with the reserved 1/2 cup liquid. Pour slowly into boiling liquid, stirring constantly until all is thickened. Reduce heat to very low and cook 3-5 minutes longer. Carefully pour into crystal sherbet glasses. Cover each with plastic wrap to prevent "skin" from forming on top. Chill completely. To serve, top nyponsoppa with a dollop of sweetened whipped cream and slivered almonds. Rusks make a tasty and traditional accompaniment.

Membership News

NEW MEMBERS 3/7/2010 TO 6/5/2010

Cynthia Abbott- Clearwater
Amy Albright- Baldwin City
Janice Alfrey- Wakarusa
Sharon Ashworth- Lawrence
Loretta Baumgartner- Hesston
Bruce Crouse- Solomon
Kelli Douty- El Dorado
Kathy Farney- Wichita
Lisa Flores- Wichita
Great Bend Convention & Visitors Bureau-
Great Bend

Linda Hanney- Berryton
Marla Isaac- Topeka
Kathleen Jacobs- Overland Park
Valentine Kariuki- Wichita
Mary Anne King- Lawrence
Purity Kingori- Wichita
Myron Leinwetter- Rossville
Mary Ann Monzani- Wichita
Mark Neubrand- Salina
Audra Nold- Augusta
Mary Nyanganya- Wichita

Patty Ogle- Baldwin City
Random Acts of Baking- Leavenworth
Bryan Reber- Athens, GA
Angela Richard- Perry, IA
Jack Richard- Olpe
Belinda Smith- Wichita
Pat Waldron- Great Bend
Galen & Kathy Waltner- Moundridge
Marcella R. Whalen- Derby
Terri Wilke- Lawrence

Kansas Native Plant Society
 R. L. McGregor Herbarium
 University of Kansas
 2045 Constant Ave.
 Lawrence, KS 66047-3729



Address Service Requested

Newsletter Staff
 Copy and Assignment Editor: Nancy Goulden--
 nag@ksu.edu
 Layout Editor: Karen Hummel
 Proof-reader: June Kliesen

LEARN MORE ABOUT KNPS

Check us out online at www.ksnps.org
 Contact us by email at email@ksnps.org
 Contact us by phone at 785-864-3453



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 calendar year.

Please complete this form or a photocopy. Send the completed form and a check payable to the Kansas Native Plant Society to:

Kansas Native Plant Society
R. L. McGregor Herbarium
2045 Constant Avenue
Lawrence KS 66047-3729

A membership in the Kansas Native Plant Society makes a great gift for friends and family members. Recipients of gift memberships will receive notification of your gift membership within two weeks of receipt of your check. The Kansas Native Plant Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Gifts to KNPS are tax deductible to the extent provided by law.

Membership application/renewal form

Member Information:

Name:	
Address	
City/State:	
Zipcode:	
Phone:	
Email:	
County (if Kansas):	

Membership Category:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Student	\$10.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Individual	\$20.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Family	\$30.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Organization	\$35.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contributing	\$100.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lifetime	\$500.00