



# Kansas Native Plant Society

## Summer Newsletter



Volume 36 Number 3  
July 2014

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### Plans for KNPS Annual Wildflower Weekend

By Phyllis Scherich and Nancy Goulden

Get out your Kansas map and find “Pratt.” That will be the location of the 2014 Kansas Native Plant Society Annual Wildflower Weekend, September 19-21, 2014. As you can tell, we are going to another interesting section of the state where we can explore and get to know the unique native plants of south-central Kansas, including those of the Red Hills. Although Pratt itself is not in the Red Hills, it is



Red Hills Vista, photo provided by Phyllis Scherich

close enough for us to easily visit at least two Red Hills sites south of Pratt for our outings, plus a third area near Pratt. Since Pratt, and the surrounding area, are mostly in the High Plains ecosystem, we will have the opportunity to compare the plants of the two areas.

In addition to the local natural locations, our group is scheduled to visit the “Pollinator Garden and Pratt Education Center at Wildlife and Parks” on Friday afternoon. Following that visit will be a bus tour near Sun City, with a possible short stop to see the Petrified Wood

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**Have you renewed your membership in KNPS? Check the first line in your address for your membership expiration date. If the date is past, your membership has expired. To continue receiving the newsletter, please renew now.**

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.



## President's Message

By Mike Haddock

In recent weeks, parts of Kansas have received significant amounts of much-needed precipitation. I was traveling out of the country for the first part of June, and when I arrived back was surprised to observe how green and lush the vegetation was in the Manhattan area. I missed getting out to photograph our native Kansas plants during this time, but got my botanizing "fix" while visiting Australia. Even though it was the beginning of winter down under, we were surprised at the number of plants we encountered that were in full bloom. My family traveled to Uluru National Park in the center of that continent, which had recently received higher than normal rainfall. In this area, large numbers of wildflowers were in bloom. It was fascinating to see these outback plants, which are very different from species we have here in the Great Plains. As an isolated and geologically very ancient continent, Australia hosts many plants that are absolutely foreign to a U.S. Midwesterner. I took many photos and hope to be able to show a few of these plants at some point in the future.

At the beginning of May, the KNPS board held our spring meeting at the headquarters of the Nature Conservancy's Smoky Valley Ranch near Oakley. We had several KNPS members join us for outings on the ranch and at nearby Scott Lake State Park. Though the area was suffering from severe drought, we were lucky to encounter a number of high plains species in bloom, including some infrequently observed plants such as spiked gilia, *Ipomopsis spicata*. As always, we greatly enjoyed our time together.

Our summer board meeting will occur on July 12th in Minneapolis, Kansas, with a morning outing

to a Dakota sandstone pasture near the Ottawa County State Lake. As always, KNPS members will be very welcome to participate. Check our website for additional information and directions.

Arrangements are being finalized for our 2014 Annual Wildflower Weekend, which will be held in Pratt September 19-21. We hope you will make plans to join us! Many thanks go to Phyllis and Dee Scherich and other members of the AWW planning committee for lining-up what looks to be a very fun weekend. Outings will be at a variety of sites in the Pratt area with our Saturday business meeting and program at Pratt Community College. We believe we will have some bus transportation arranged to help get folks to our activities, including a visit to Busters in Sun City. For those of you who have not had an opportunity to visit this establishment, it should be a memorable evening. At our annual meeting on Saturday morning, we hope to have Iralee Barnard speak about her new book, *Field Guide to the Common Grasses of Oklahoma, Kansas, and Nebraska*, and Craig Freeman will discuss his work with penstemons. We may also have a surprise or two lined up. Please be aware that the board recently voted to institute a \$10 AWW registration fee for members and \$20 for non-members to help offset meeting costs. Look for detailed information about the AWW to be mailed later this summer.

Lastly, please regularly check the events calendar on our KNPS website. Our member regions are becoming ever more active and provide many local opportunities to get out in the field to discover and enjoy our native plants. This looks to be a good summer for wildflower viewing; so take advantage of these chances to get outdoors with fellow plant enthusiasts. I hope to see many of you in Pratt this fall!



## Landscaping: Crotons

Text and Photo by Jeff Hansen

I have a feeling that if I interviewed people on the street and asked them if they knew what a "croton" was, they would tell me it's something you put on salads. You might have guessed that a croton is a plant and not the popular salad ingredient, the croûton. Furthermore, it's a genus of plants. The genus is *Croton*, and the common name is the same. Other common names include doveweed and goatweed. The Crotons are members of the Spurge family (*Euphorbiaceae*). All of them are annuals. Flowers are not large and showy. Some have rough foliage; others are smooth to the touch. Most grow to a height of one to two feet.

Kansas has six species of Croton with at least one species of croton found in each county in Kansas. Two of the species are rare in the state. Lindheimer's Croton (*C. lindheimerianus*) is only found in the red hills of Kansas. Willdenow's croton (*C. willdenowii*) is only found in a few counties in the southeast.

The western 2/3 of Kansas has the Texas croton (*C. texensis*). It is unique among our crotons because male and female flowers are found on separate plants. It has a preference for sandy soil. The leaves are gray-green due to the tiny hairs on the leaf's surface. The glandular croton (*C. glandulosus*) is found roughly in the southern half of the eastern 2/3rds of the state.

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## Landscaping: Crotons

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This species differs from the other crotons in having smooth leaves. The leaves lack hairs on the surface. Most often it can be found growing in sandy soil.

The one-seeded croton (*C. monanthogynus*) is



One-seeded Croton (*C.monanthogynus*)

probably the most frequently encountered croton on sites that aren't sandy. It can be found roughly in the

eastern 2/3rds of the state. The leaves are gray green and round. This croton appeared in my gravel driveway, and I've been nurturing it since I first saw it. During the hot summer days, the plants are flourishing in the poor rocky soil of my driveway. Found roughly in the eastern half of the state is the woolly croton (*C. capitatus*). This is probably my favorite croton because of its large woolly leaves and strongly aromatic characteristics. It has relatively large flowers, and they can be relatively showy as well.

Many may consider all of the crotons to be weeds. They flourish in somewhat disturbed habitats (roadsides) overgrazed pastures. But they are very drought and heat tolerant. Many birds relish their abundantly produced seeds, hence the common name dove weed. They are THE host plant for the goatweed butterfly. Attendees of the 2013 AWW were mesmerized by the goatweed butterflies found at Kanopolis. Did they know the abundant crotons in the area supported this butterfly?

I doubt there are commercial sources for our native crotons, but it's simple to find a wild population and collect seeds. Because they are annual, you must let your plants mature and set seed to produce next year's plants. Managing a bed of crotons requires weeding of competing vegetation. Tall perennial plants will crowd out the crotons.



## Enter the KNPS Photo Contest!

By Valerie Wright

In 2014, the photo contest is **ALL DIGITAL**. Yes, really, this time! Photos will not be printed but sent to us digitally on an Internet site called [Shutterfly.com](http://Shutterfly.com). You can become familiar with the site anytime. It is free to become a member of Shutterfly, but you cannot upload to the KNPS photo contest section until we send out the password. Detailed directions for the use of Shutterfly will come to you in the mailing about the Annual Meeting, and directions will be added to our web site. **The deadline for entries is September 1. No photos will be accepted after this date.** Selected photos will be shown on the KNPS web site and printed in the fall KNPS newsletter. The Awards Committee will judge photos based on the same categories and rules as in previous years with the following changes. Judging will take place prior to the annual meeting. At the meeting all photos will be shown on screen. Winners will be announced on Saturday, September 20. Don't forget the Wildflower of the Year: Blue-eyed grass!

### Rules

Digital photo submissions are accepted from KNPS members only. The subject of all entries must be NATIVE plant species (or predominantly NATIVE plant species for photos of groups of plants) or native landscapes (where appropriate) in the state of Kansas.

Four entries per category per KNPS member are allowed.

Each photo must be submitted with the following information:

**Category** (see below)

**Photographer's Name and City**

**Title of photo** (include plant species name, if applicable)

**Location** where photo was taken

Photographs will be judged by the following criteria: Composition, Sharpness, Exposure, Color, Appropriateness to category, Presentation, Full label information.

Digital photographs that are cropped or enhanced must be indicated as such.

### Categories

**Flora:** a photo of a whole plant or plant part. Examples: flower, fruit, seed, leaf, bark, or bud.

**Fauna:** a photo of animals on or surrounded by native plants. Examples: mammals on the prairie, birds eating seeds, insects pollinating native flowers.

**Garden:** a photo of native plants used in a garden created by people. Examples: your favorite garden.

**People:** a photo of people enjoying native plants and their habitats. Examples: people at a KNPS outing, people enjoying a favorite bloom.

**Scenery:** a photo of a native landscape such as a prairie, woodland, or wetland. Examples: fire in the Flint Hills, sunrise on the wetlands.

**Wildflower of the Year:** a photo of the current year's Wildflower of the Year.



## The Silent Auction During AWW

By Krista Dahlinger

The Silent Auction is an interesting and fun part of the Annual Wildflower Weekend each year. Donations have included new and old books about plants, gardening or nature, live plants, artwork, and a wide assortment of items with a plant theme. Bidding is

usually intense for home-made jelly, cookies and breads. During the break times on Saturday morning, when we have several chances to look over the goods, we bid on the donated items. Please think about a useful item or two that you could donate to the Silent Auction fundraising event. We really appreciate your donations, and your bids!

## KNPS Annual Wildflower Weekend

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Garden. This part of Kansas has far more unique and interesting sites than we can possibly see in our three-day stay; consequently, the planners are still trying to decide just which ones we will include in the Friday afternoon and Saturday outings. There are several other advantages for having the weekend in Pratt. There

are three new motels, plus existing ones; so there will be plenty of rooms available. Our meeting headquarters will be at Pratt Junior College with lots of space and media “set-ups.” We will have the Juco cafeteria available for lunch before the Friday Board

Meeting; for the Continental Breakfast during registration on Saturday morning, and lunch after the Annual Meeting. Phyllis Scherich has high praise for the food.

The presentations on Saturday morning are another plus. Two of our long-time members, Craig Freeman and Iralee Barnard will be sharing their research and projects. Craig is a Senior Curator in the R.L. McGregor Herbarium, a Senior Scientist in the Kansas Biological Survey, co-author of *Roadside Wildflowers*

*of the Southern Great Plains*, and a member of KNPS since 1987. Craig will present an overview of his work to prepare a taxonomic treatment for *Penstemon* (Plantaginaceae) for the Flora of North America Project. Called “beardtongues” because of the hairy, sterile stamen in each corolla, *Penstemon* is the third largest genus of flowering plants in North America, north of Mexico.



Red Hills geological feature. Photo courtesy of Kansas Geological Survey. Check out GeoKansas at <http://www.kgs.ku.edu/Extension/home.html>

Iralee worked at the Kansas State Herbarium, where she identified plants from across the state and served as Interim Herbarium Curator. For the past 15 years, she has worked for the National Park Service at Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve. She was also a KNPS charter member. She is the author of *A Pocket Guide to Kansas*

*Flint Hills Wildflowers and Grasses* and just this year has published *Field Guide to the Common Grasses of Oklahoma, Kansas and Nebraska*, a much needed comprehensive and helpful book on our prairie grasses.

All of the above give us plenty of reasons for coming to the Annual Meeting at Pratt. But members will tell you there is another reason. KNPS members are friendly and welcoming. Those of us who love our native plants have a wonderful time being with others who have the same passions. Come join us.



## Red Hills Flora

Photos by Phyllis Scherich

Phyllis Scherich has supplied photos of a few plants that should be blooming on our tour stops in the Red Hills area during this year's AWW. \*Check the January, 2014 issue of the newsletter for information about the new field guide, *A Pocket Guide to Kansas Red Hills Wildflowers*.



White flower ipomopsis  
(*Ipomopsis longiflora*)



Scratch daisy  
(*Crotilon divaricatus*)



Rough purple gerardia  
(*Agalinis aspera*)



Rocky mountain bee plant  
(*Cleome serrulata*)



Wax goldenweed  
(*Grindelia papposa*)



Sand lily  
(*Bractless mentzelia*)



## Stewardship of Native Plants and Natural Areas

By Krista Dahlinger

There are more than 130 parks within the City of Wichita/Sedgwick County boundaries. As the number of city dwellers increased over the last 100 years, flood-prone-lands near the Arkansas River, Chisholm Creek and Cowskin Creek were not developed as residential or commercial properties. Instead, these lands were set aside as parks for the public to use and enjoy. The City and County maintain five large parks as "Wild Habitat Areas" with a focus on leaving remnant habitat intact and restoring it where needed.

Stewardship is synonymous with "maintenance" in this case, and we can all appreciate how much planning, funding, machinery and labor would be necessary to maintain nearly 1,200 acres (about two square miles) of native habitat within a city. Wetland, riparian, woodland and prairie habitat are all accessible by paved trail. There are also mowed trails and deer trails to explore. Spring burning occurs, when safe, in the parks. Edges are mowed and the interior of the parks are inhabited by deer,

birds, turtles, snakes, frogs, pollinators, etc. Migrating birds utilize the parks as well for stop-overs on their travels.

Access to these Wild Habitat Areas is available a short distance from about anywhere in the City. Because the parks are free and open to the public, they present the opportunity to see the progression of native plant growth throughout the year. Not everyone has a contact outside of the city with native habitat that can be visited— and because of the near presence of these parks, everyone still has the opportunity to connect. There are more than 125 other parks available for picnicking, sports, fishing, golf, swimming and entertainment venues.

While researching and writing about what stewardship may mean to different people, I located the City of Wichita's philosophy for the Wild Habitat Areas. "Maintaining a natural appearance within the


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## **2014 Kansas Area Native Plant & Wildflower Events**

Information provided by [Kansas Native Plant Society](http://www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org), see more events on our website:  
[www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org](http://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 12:**  **Kansas Native Plant Society** Summer Board Meeting and Outing in Minneapolis, KS. There will be a field outing from 10am to noon at a 640 acre pasture near the Ottawa County State Lake. The Board meeting will be held at Minneapolis Public Library 1 to 3pm. Food is allowed, so folks may bring sack lunches if they so desire. There is also a microwave available. Please contact KNPS President Mike Haddock for more information <haddock@ksu.edu> (785) 776-0680.


**July 19:** Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs. Volunteer prairie maintenance and preservation projects, third Saturday each month except Dec. [www.grasslandheritage.org]. Wear appropriate clothing. No special skills or tools needed. For details, please contact Frank Norman <fjnorman@sunflower.com> (785) 887-6775 (home) or (785) 691-9748 (cell).

**August 16:** Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs. See July 19 info.


**September 13:**  Tuttle Creek Lake Summer Wildflower Walk, 10am-noon. Plan to be a part of the fall wildflower walk at Tuttle Creek Lake, led by KNPS guides. This is an opportunity to see and learn about the fall flowers of the Flint Hills such as: boneset, tall thistle; curly cup gumweed, liatris (gayfeather); several different species of sunflowers and also goldenrods and native asters. Each participant will receive a free copy of *A Pocket Guide to Kansas Flint Hills Wildflowers and Grasses* to use during the hike and then take home. So we will know how many to expect for the outing, please pre-register with UFM Community Learning Center (785) 539-8763 or <info@tryufm.org>. There is no registration fee. Sponsor: Tuttle Creek Lake and **Kansas Native Plant Society**. Tuttle Creek Lake Visitor's Center 5020 Tuttle Creek Blvd, Manhattan, KS. Contact: Paul Weidhaas <paul.k.weidhass@usace.army.mil> (785) 539-8511


**September 19-21:**  **Kansas Native Plant Society's** 36th Annual Wildflower Weekend will be in Pratt, KS. We will visit natural areas in Pratt County and the Red Hills of Barber and/or Comanche County. Come enjoy native plants with us in south central Kansas! The weekend is filled with outings, programs, a silent auction, photo contest, dinner, and socializing. Please contact KNPS for more information <email@KSNPS.org> (785) 806-6917


**September 20:** Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs. See July 19 info.

**September 20:**  Allegawaho Park Prairie Walk in Council Grove, KS. Join Glenn Fell to tour the historic Kaw Nation prairie at this 158 acre park, 5pm. There are two miles of hiking trails. Directions: Turn south from US Highway 56 on Fifth Street. Follow the main road as it turns east onto Walnut Street and then bends to the southeast. Travel 3.5 miles and turn left onto the gravel, X Avenue. Drive .4 miles and turn left on to K-525. The gravel road runs past the Kaw Agency ruins and the trail though the park starts 200 yards north of the ruins at Morris County Dunlap Road. Sponsor: **Kansas Native Plant Society**. More Info: Allegawaho Memorial Heritage Park Contact: Glenn Fell <glenfell13@gmail.com> (620) 794-8478

## 2014 Kansas Area Native Plant & Wildflower Events—Continued

**September 25:**  Invasive Plant Thugs, 6:30pm. Alan Branhagen, Powell Gardens Director of Horticulture, will discuss some of the common ornamental plants that may escape our gardens and over-run native plant communities. Location: Miami County Extension Office 104 South Brayman St, Paola, KS. Sponsor: MICO Extension Master Gardeners Contact: Lenora Larson <lenora.longlips@gmail.com> (913) 284-3360

**October 4:**  Protect & Serve Your Over-wintering Wildlife, 10am-noon. Homeowners may understand that native plants are necessary for wildlife as food and shelter in the spring and summer but unintentionally destroy their winter habitat and food supply when they do their fall clean-up. Learn why it is noble to leave your garden in a more natural state (code for “messy”!) until spring. Once you see the cocoons, chrysalids and nests that shelter our wild friends through the cold winter, you can make more informed clean-up decisions. Long Lips Farm is a certified wildlife habitat and features many native plants that support our wild friends. It is located 1/2 blk South of K-68 at 27995 Plum Creek Road, Paola, KS. Sponsor: **Kansas Native Plant Society**. Contact: Lenora Larson <lenora.longlips@gmail.com> (913) 284-3360

**October 5:**  Presentation: The Colors of Autumn at Overland Park Arboretum, 1-3pm. Why do plants change color in the fall? This presentation will explain the processes that reveal the vivid red, orange and yellow pigments in leaves. The Powerpoint presentation illustrates the many trees, shrubs, colorful perennials, vines and grasses that glory our area each fall. Ken O’Dell is a master plantsman and Regional Director of the Kansas Native Plant Society. He is a frequent, favorite presenter to gardening groups throughout the area. There is a \$3 fee to enter the Arboretum but the class is free. Sponsor: **Kansas Native Plant Society**. Contact: Ken O’Dell <ken@springvalleynursery.com> (913) 832-0745

**October 18:** Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs. See July 19 info.

**November 15:** Grassland Heritage Foundation Groundhogs. See July 19 info.

Join the KNPS email list to receive the latest event announcements: [www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org/email\\_list.php](http://www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org/email_list.php)



### Stewardship of Native Plants and Natural Areas

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the parks requires specific management goals and procedures. Specialized land management is required to maintain the natural appearance of these parks. Non-native plants such as Johnson Grass, Garlic Mustard, Bush Honeysuckle and Eastern Red Cedar threaten the health of native prairie and riparian forest habitats. Several management techniques are used to combat the infestation of invasive plant species, including

volunteer service projects, chemical or mechanical removal, and prescribed or controlled burning." Sounds like a plan for stewardship to me.

Do you have a story about stewardship or maintenance of native plants and natural areas where you live? To share your experience, please send me an email at [email@ksnps.org](mailto:email@ksnps.org).



### Tech Notes

By Mickey Delfelter

For those of you in the social media realm, The Kansas Native Plant Society maintains a fairly active Facebook presence. We post a weekly event listing, photos, and reports from outings around the state. Several of the membership regions also maintain separate pages with information specific to their region.

To find the statewide page, search for us on Facebook, or click the Facebook link on the left-hand side of our website. To find the membership region pages, click on “Membership Regions” in the left-hand column and scroll down to see the list of regions and pages.



## The Birds and the Bees and KDWPT

Text by Rita Schartz and Chris Berens Photos by Chris Berens

It is a chilly Saturday in early May. A dozen people, bundled in coats and gloves, scramble over a rock strewn, but otherwise bare, mound of earth. Most are on their hands and knees bowed down before small containers of living plants. Have we stumbled on some secret pagan May Day fertility ritual? I don't know about secret or pagan but otherwise that is not an inaccurate description.

The mound of earth in question is located at the Kansas Department of Park Wildlife and Tourism's (KDWPT) Pratt Education Center. Just a month before, it had been covered with

ivy, a pine tree, cannas and other traditional landscaping. But a committee of conservation professionals from Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and KDWPT developed a vision for replacing it with a garden of native plants to provide pollen and nectar for bees, butterflies, moths, beetles, birds and bats that depend on flowering plants (a.k.a. pollinators) for a food source. And so, the idea of the Pollinator Garden was born.

Why, you ask, would one desire to attract stinging insects to a museum or anywhere else? Well, three-fourths of the world's flowering plants require the as-

sistance of insects and animals to reproduce. Those plants include most of the fruits, vegetables and seeds that we eat. But pollinators have been having a rough time of it in civilized society. The diverse mosaic of plants that existed on the prairie has been replaced with large blocks of a single species of crop plant. This is great for a huge quantity of pollen over a short period of time but creates a food desert the rest of the

year. Diseases, parasites, competition with introduced species and environmental contamination all add to their struggle. Every flower garden (native or not) or prairie restoration that includes wild-



Volunteers prepare for work on the Pollinator Garden

flowers provides refuge and sustenance for those small workers who in turn provide our sustenance.

So, with the promise of spring and renewal, the committee of Jamie Johnson (NRCS Earth Team Volunteer Coordinator), Rita Schartz (NRCS District Conservationist), Chris Berens (KDWPT Habitat Conservation Ecologist), and Chris Shrack, (KDWPT Pratt Education Info Rep.) formed a partnership with a group of professionals and volunteers who came together to bring the vision of the Pollinator Garden to life. Earth Team Volunteers, Pratt County

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## The Birds and the Bees and KDWPT

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Master Gardeners, Pratt County Conservation District, Dyck Arboretum of the Plains, and KDWPT staff all contributed to this project.

The old landscaping was cleared and the ground was prepared for planting. A design was created and plants were selected for their adaptation and ability to provide blooms all spring, summer and fall. Then, on that cold morning in May, the volunteers gathered to plant and mulch the Pollinator Garden, insuring food for the pollinators and the fertility and reproduction of plant life for miles around.

The ritual was renewed again this May, including the chilly weather, to replace plants that didn't survive, add new mulch, and lay out the drip irrigation line. So, maybe it is not as romantic as a May Day festival, but it is a great way to make your corner of the Earth a better place.



Volunteers on Planting Day



Pollinator Garden in its second year after planting



## KNPS Spring Board Meeting--Smoky Valley Ranch Highlights

Text and Photos by Chelsea Erickson

The Kansas Native Plant Society held its spring board meeting in western Kansas this year. The board of directors and guests were treated to a lunch time presentation by Matt Bain, manager of Smoky Valley Ranch. The ranch is owned and operated by the Nature Conservancy and occupies 16,800 acres in Logan County, serving as a working model for shortgrass prairie conservation. To achieve this important goal, the Nature Conservancy works in partnership with private landowners and other conservation groups.

The Nature Conservancy's goal is to promote biodiversity by encouraging key species, such as prairie dogs and prairie chickens. Vegetation is a vital component of the equation for success. Matt told the group that one way to accomplish this is managing the cattle herd in a way that mimics native herbivores.

Drought conditions have taken their toll on the grand plans for the ranch's restoration. Plant Society members from Eastern Kansas were shocked to hear only a 1/2 inch rainfall was recorded at the ranch since October 2013.



Two mule deer peer from the shelter of a rock outcrop conditions. On the way to the first site near an old quarry, several KNPS members were treated to the quaint scene of two mule deer enjoying the shade under a rock outcrop. We marveled over specimens of plains hymenoxys, blue bowls, prince's plume (ready to flower), buffalo currant, aromatic sumac, fringed puccoon, Missouri milkvetch, creamy poison vetch, western wallflower, and Townsend's aster.



Drought conditions are apparent at Smoky Valley Ranch

After an informative Q&A session with Matt, the KNPS group enjoyed several hours of botanizing around the ranch. I think we were all surprised to find so many wonderful plants in bloom given the drought

As a resident of western Kansas, I had to giggle at the various comments I heard from the other KNPS members who were experiencing the thrills of western Kansas for the first time. I believe "this is such a foreign land out here" was my favorite! Everyone seemed to enjoy the second wildflower exploration site situated along the dry creek where an old farmhouse and rusted shell of a late-20s car stood like crumbling sentinels watching over the ranch restoration, no doubt dreaming of "the good ole days."

We all have high hopes for the Smoky Valley Ranch's success in the coming years! Good job to Matt Bain and all of his dedicated staff. We certainly appreciated their hospitality and expert knowledge.

The following day KNPS members and guests met at Scott Lake State Park, otherwise known as the

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location of Big Spring which happens to be the only place the Scott riffle beetle is found. This group of native plant fans delighted in the wide array of plant species, including mountain spring parsley, monkey flower, watercress, mana grass, chokecherry, wild licorice, Indian paint brush, and American plum. After meandering around the Big Spring area, many adventurous KNPS members continued their outing by scaling the bluffs surrounding Scott Lake. An enjoyable day was had by all! What an amazing weekend experience in western Kansas. Ya'll come back now!



Hilltop botanizers on a bluff above Scott Lake



**Meet Iralee Barnard's New *Field Guide to the Common Grasses of Oklahoma, Kansas, and Nebraska***

Text by Nancy Goulden, Photo by Ken Barnard

Many of our readers are already familiar with Iralee Barnard and her work with KNPS. She has been a board member for many years. Or you may have been fortunate enough to walk with her on native plant walks, either at the Annual Meetings or at any number of outings in the middle part of the state. You can



Judy Collins poses with author Iralee Barnard at Book Signing in Abilene

identify Iralee very easily. She is the one in the middle with everyone else surrounding her. The group members have recognized her as their informal leader. They have realized that she knows ALL of the PLANTS and is quietly willing to share them with you.

Her education and experiences working as a botanist in the K-State Herbarium and later at Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve have prepared her very well for sharing knowledge about native plants. Iralee seems equally at home talking or writing about

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## Meet Iralee Barnard's New *Field Guide to the Common Grasses of Oklahoma, Kansas, and Nebraska*

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about forbs, trees and shrubs, or grasses. Fortunately, for those of us who just never quite got a handle on the grasses and for those of you who have and want to learn more, Iralee decided to write a book about the prairie grasses from our part of the country: *Field Guide to the Common Grasses of Oklahoma, Kansas and Nebraska*.

This book goes much beyond just listing and describing the 70 prairie grasses. Barnard has pulled off the amazing task of making it usable and helpful to everyone from the novice to the knowledgeable grass fan through multiple approaches and a variety of techniques. When you get a copy, spend some time reading the 30 page introduction to learn more about the prairie areas in the three states and the historical relationship between grass and humans. The section in the introduction on features and structure of grasses works well as either a review or an introduction to get you ready to move into using the descriptions to identify the grasses.

The most obvious and noticeable part of the mature grass plant is the flowering head; consequently, Barnard uses it as the base to start to “key out” a grass plant. Her “grass finding lists” are designed to be as simple and straight forward as possible, beginning with shape and make-up of the grass plant’s inflorescence. The categories of the eight basic-flower-head-shapes that comprise the grass groups are accompanied by line drawings to help the reader with this initial sorting. From there, it only takes two more de-

isions: (1) the time of year the grass grows and matures and (2) the height of the grass. Then you go directly to the name and page number where you will find the plant. Yes, it is that quick and easy. Further verification comes when you check the clearly written description and compare what you see when examining the plant to a series of outstanding color photographs of plant parts and whole plant. There are as many as 6 pictures for each plant, including close-ups and distance shots!

The author gives readers two more easy tools to help with identification: a list of expected blooming dates in chronological order and three-plus pages of photos of leaf blades categorized by width. The ever-present Roosevelt dime in the pictures also helps to visualize the width.

Here comes another beneficial gift. The glossary not only provides clearly written definitions, but also is interspersed with photos for many of the terms. For example “anther” is defined as “pollen-bearing structure of the flower.” This is fine, but the reader may not have an instant mental image of the anther; however, the close-up picture with arrows pointing to the anthers takes care of that problem.

Field Guide to the Common Grasses of Oklahoma, Kansas, and Nebraska is published by University Press of Kansas. You can order copies directly from University Press or find them in book stores in the areas covered by the book. The book is 264 pages long, with 415 photographs and cost about \$25.



## Featured Plant: Hairy hawkweed (*Hieracium longipilum*)

Text by Lorraine J. Kaufman, Illustration by Lorna Habegger Harder

I laughed. Before me was the shaggiest long-haired plant I had ever seen in my prairie rambles. Its 4-8 inch long, 1/2 inch wide gray-green leaves, clustered at its base, were completely covered by tawny-white, coarse 1 inch long hairs. It was unlike any of

the neighboring plants in the central Kansas prairie that I was exploring on that warm July day. It was the long hairs that impressed me most and really peaked my curiosity. I leaned down, stroked the hairy leaves, and laughed again.

Continued on Page 13



## Featured Plant: Hairy hawkweed (*Hieracium longipilum*)

Continued from Page 12



Hairy hawkweed (*Hieracium longipilum*)

What I had found was the hairy hawkweed, *Hieracium longipilum*, a perennial native forb that inhabits dry prairies in full sun, lives for three or more years, and reproduces only by seed. It grows erect to a height of about 4 feet, produces a milky sap, and blooms with yellow dandelion-type flowers one-half inch in diameter with many petals. Numerous flower heads are arranged at the upper end of the stem. In the fall the stem breaks off near the ground, leaving an overwintering rosette that sustains the new stem that begins to grow before the grasses in the spring.

Hawkweed is found in the old world as well as in the new. According to an ancient notion, hawks used a species of the genus (*H. pilosella*) to sharpen their eyesight, giving the name to the this unusual plant. It was used for a variety of ailments. First century writer Dioscorides reported that "the juice of it in wine helps digestion," that "it is good against the bite of venomous serpents," and that an application of bruised leaves mixed with salt would treat all kinds of skin eruptions." Hairy hawkweed doesn't appear to be available in today's nursery trade, but it can be propagated by seed. Next fall, keep your eyes open for a hairy gangly plant with seed heads, and see if you can't add this unusual and amusing plant to your native plant garden.



## Membership News

### NEW MEMBERS

#### FROM 3-16-14 TO 6-14-14

Moe Al Gaqqa - Wichita  
Dr. & Mrs. Eugene F. Anderson - Leawood  
Mike Bassett - Topeka  
Phillip Baweja - Wichita  
Carol Blocksome - Ransom  
William Bradley - Overland Park  
Leslie Carr - Topeka  
City of Overland Park - Overland Park  
Cheryl Cortez - Wichita  
Ranae Cushing - Tecumseh  
Ayi Dalmeida - Wichita  
Andrew Davis - Wichita  
Susan Ford - Kansas City, MO  
Ashley Gadeken - Wichita  
Roger & Evelyn Gilger - Wichita  
SL Gomez - Overland Park  
Lois Gould - Wichita  
Dan Harden - Lawrence  
Elizabeth Hennes-Sund, Greg Sund - Hays

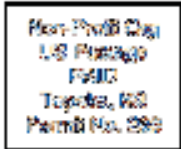
Bradley Hoffman - Wichita  
Zahidul Islam - Wichita  
Alyssa Johnson - Wichita  
Michael Kaye - Topeka  
Eric Kessler - Kansas City, MO  
Deambra Kunz - Wichita  
Carine Landon - Wichita  
Rose Lee - Atchison  
Ann Nguyen - Wichita  
Jeannie Parscal - Leon  
Joseph Pierce - Wichita  
Amber Rayburn - Hamilton  
Lindley Reimer - Liberal  
Rebecca Reynolds - Haysville  
Lesley Rigney - Louisburg  
Paul Robison - Wichita  
Erica Rudkin - Wichita  
Judy Scammon - Prairie Village  
Todd Seymour - Andover  
Paul Showalter - Shawnee  
Holly Shutt - Centralia  
Jennifer Smith - Wichita

Lisa Snody - White City  
Alberto Sugar - Andover  
Dylan Tetreault - Wichita  
Nichole Tiffany - Herington  
Jane Vandersteen - Leavenworth  
VV Wallace - Topeka  
Annie Washburn - Wichita  
Wild Within You, LLC - Liebenhal  
Bernetta Willis - Wichita  
Emily Wilton - Andover  
Robert Wood - Kansas City, MO  
Sarah Zukoff - Holcomb

### MEMBERS RETURNING AFTER A HIATUS

Tamara Fairbanks-Ishmael - Baldwin City  
James Morrissey - Topeka  
Wayne Rhodus - Bonner Springs

Kansas Native Plant Society  
 R. L. McGregor Herbarium  
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 Contact us by phone at 785-864-3453



**Kansas  
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**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.

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©(3) 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 KS)	

Membership Category

Student	\$10.00
Individual	\$20.00
Family	\$30.00
Organization	\$35.00
Contributing	\$100.00
Lifetime	\$500.00