Plains Coreopsis

Plains coreopsis (Coreopsis tinctoria) is the Kansas Native Plant Society 2017 Wildflower of the Year (WOY). Plains coreopsis is two to four feet tall with many yellow and reddish brown terminal flowers blooming June through September. Leaves are divided, narrowly linear, and oppositely arranged on the stem. This species is found in damp disturbed areas, roadside ditches, and low, sandy to silty mixed grass prairies and floodplains statewide. Plains coreopsis is in the Asteraceae or sunflower family.

Plains coreopsis is the first annual species the plant resources committee has chosen for WOY. It is a cosmopolitan plant existing throughout the state that can produce stunning displays of color along roadsides. It is also easy to grow in gardens from seed. The Latin word tinctoria means “to impart color” and flowers can be cut and soaked to produce a colorful dye.

For more photos and a detailed description of Coreopsis tinctoria, visit kswildflower.org.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3
Myrna Campbell became interested in native plants in 1970 when she began spending time at the expansive Ferrell Ranch in Butler County. She was fascinated by the many varieties of native grasses and forbs, and how some were found only in certain areas while others thrived nearly anywhere. She began to study plant habitats and growth cycles. In 1978, while Myrna was working as a legal secretary, a client came into the office with a painting he had made of Big Bluestem. She was not impressed and thought to herself, “I can do better than that.” She stopped on the way home from work and bought paper, watercolor paints, and brushes. She immediately began painting, having never had any formal training. She used photographs and collected specimens to paint from, most often painting at her dining room table with a drafting table light attached. She studied each plant in detail, and sometimes used a magnifying glass to ensure she got the small details correct. She wanted people to see the intricacies of each plant she painted and made botanical portraits of nearly forty different grasses and forbs. Myrna painted a series of paintings showing typical plant communities found in six Kansas Counties: Butler, Elk, Cowley, Riley, Harper, and Chautauqua. She submitted her paintings for poster contests at Botanica (1990), Wichita River Festival and Chamber Music at the Barn (2003). Myrna also studied theater and was a talented singer and musician. She enjoyed art work and the outlet it gave her, but, most of all, she enjoyed just being out in the Kansas prairie, tromping around identifying familiar plant species and looking for new ones, and sharing the beauty of nature with all those around her. Myrna allowed KNPS to use her painting of Little Bluestem during the campaign to have it named the State Grass of Kansas. Myrna slipped her mortal coils May 16, 2016. The KNPS Scholarship Award was chosen as an avenue for memorial donations to honor her memory and her work with native plants of Kansas.
As I sit here and write this message, we are experiencing our first snowfall of the season. We have only received enough to almost cover the ground, but I am already looking forward to spring and the return of the growing season.

Remember that as you read this edition of the KNPS Newsletter, it is only one of the many benefits of KNPS membership. Other benefits include the following.

- Free poster “ Kansas Wildflowers: Gems of the Plains” (a small fee is added for mailing, or you can pick one up at one of our outings)
- Field trips (led by experienced, knowledgeable guides, enjoy plants in their natural habitats)
- AWW (Annual Wildflower Weekend that includes forays, programs, silent auction, photo contest, socializing — members receive a reduced registration fee)
- Extensive website — (take time to look through it — it is packed with information)
- Education (identification, ecology, landscaping)
- Information (natural areas, propagation, restoration)
- E-list (electronic mailing list)
- Volunteer opportunities
- An opportunity to submit your photos and stories for the newsletter
- Mary A. Bancroft Memorial Scholarship
- Regional plant walks — members receive up-to-date information on them frequently
- Register your event on the KNPS website (click on Events at www.knsps.org — then click on Send KNPS to submit your event information)
- An opportunity to connect with others who have a common interest in the native plants of Kansas

If you have not yet renewed your subscription to KNPS, take the time to do it now. Go to www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org and click on Membership. You can renew using either the online membership form or the printable membership form. Memberships are the major income for KNPS and make the newsletter, the website, and the scholarship possible. If you have already sent in your renewal, THANK YOU and welcome back!

We are looking forward to our Winter Board Meeting at Ottawa University on January 14, 2017, at 12:00 noon. (The inclement weather date is January 21.) This will be our budget meeting, and will include other current business items. Lunch is available at the student union before the meeting. All members are welcome to attend, but the cafeteria would like to know how many to expect. If you plan to eat lunch there, contact me at pscherich@yahoo.com.

Also, in the planning stages is our Spring/Summer two-day board meeting with field trips in the Cottonwood Falls area. We hope members who are looking for a late spring/early summer outing will join us. If you have not yet joined KNPS, what are you waiting for?

Wildflower of the Year – CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

PAST KNPS WOY SELECTIONS
2016 Golden alexanders (Zizia aurea)
2015 Green antelopehorn (Asclepias viridis)
2014 Blue-eyed grass (Sisyrinchium species)
2013 Little bluestem (Schizachyrium scoparium)
2012 Lead plant (Amorpha canescens)
2011 Prairie coneflower (Ratibida columnifera)
2010 Catclaw sensitive briar (Schrankia nuttallii)
2009 Prairie larkspur (Delphinium virescens)
2008 Fringed puccoon (Lithospermum incisum)
2007 Purple poppy mallow (Callirhoe involucrata)
2006 Blue sage (Salvia azurea)
2005 Rose verbena (Glandularia canadensis)
2004 Missouri evening primrose (Oenothera macrocarpa)
2003 Large beardtongue (Penstemon grandiflorus)
2002 Fremont’s clematis (Clematis fremontii)
2001 Thickspike gayfeather (Liatris pycnostachya)
2000 Maximillian sunflower (Helianthus maximilliani)
1999 Butterfly milkweed (Asclepias tuberosa)
1998 Black-sampson echinacea (Echinacea angustifolia)

KNPS outings are not ALL about native plants. They are a part of the ecosystem that provides a home to many creatures.
In the 2016 Winter KNPS Newsletter, I shared my experience of supplanting a “weed bed” of vinca/wintercreeper/bermudagrass with mainly native plants grown from locally collected seeds. Thanks to ample rain the past two summers, this garden has had a great survival rate. I lost only a few plants; although I have a dozen or so that clearly would be happier in other locations.

First, there are a handful of plants that are already becoming pests because they are so aggressive. My Ashy sunflower (Helianthus molos) went from a single stalk to forty (and they were four feet tall). Willowleaf sunflower (H. salicifolius) grew to fourteen feet tall, and, I kid you not, Beebalm (Monarda fistulosa) that topped eight feet in height. I also confirmed that Cutleaf coneflower (Rudbeckia laciniata) has no place in a small home garden (eight feet tall and pushing out smaller plants beneath)!

This year, because I did not want to damage any species, I experimented with cutting back a few plants during the growing season. I had no issues with this and all of the plants recovered and bloomed well. I will certainly be more proactive in pruning the more aggressive species in the coming year.

Still, at the end of the growing season, I was left with a large amount of seedheads. I know that a few groups like Asters and Goldenrods can spread aggressively by seed and I am keen to curtail their propagation throughout my entire yard.

Therefore, I used a variety of techniques to inhibit propagation and much of that focused on fall clean-up. I am not claiming to be an expert in native gardening, but here are a few approaches that I used this year:

1. Collect seed and share it with friends — seed packets make a great Christmas or birthday present for gardening friends. The seed packets will also go over well at local seed swaps and fairs.
2. Collect seed to sell on eBay — package the seeds to make a little money on the side.
3. Collect seed, grow new plants the following year, and sell or give away the seedlings.
4. Collect seedheads and spread (with permission) in a nearby prairie restoration or along roadsides; this is what I did with most of my seedheads. Thankfully I have a restoration less than a mile from my house which has a few bare spots!
5. Leave seedheads and stalks up over the winter. Quite often, overwintering birds will take care of any remaining seeds on your Illinois bushflowers, Rudbeckia and Echinaceas. Also, some beneficial bees and other insects overwinter in plant stalks and need this cover. In the spring, I cut the stalks off about two inches above the ground which should still give the insects room to hatch, thrive, and enjoy my garden.
6. Save those stalks! I still proceeded to cut back some of the stalks so I could get to the plants at the back of the garden. I bundled these and placed them along the fence figuring that insects or other critters would find them useful.
7. Disperse the seeds that you want to propagate in place. I do this with a few species that I want to grow more aggressively in a few spots. I would like my Drummond’s aster (Symphyotrichum drummondi) and Prairie petunia (Ruellia humilis) to fill in their respective areas.

Finally, leaving some plants in the garden provides interesting colors and textures over the winter. My Little bluestem (Schizachyrium scoparium), in particular, is still a pretty red and I am sure some critter will enjoy the seeds.

In the spring, I expect that my clean-up will take only an hour or two. At a minimum, I will take my trimmers and just cut everything off a few inches above the ground and leave the stems and other debris lying in place. If the pieces are too big, I will move them to another spot in the garden where they will be allowed to decompose naturally. Next, it will be time to apply a light layer of chopped leaf mulch that I saved from the previous fall.

Then, I will just sit back and watch with enjoyment as my garden grows, blooms beautifully, and then matures throughout the rest of the year until the next fall and I begin the clean-up process once again!
Most gardeners enjoy seeing butterflies flitting from flower to flower in their garden and would like to attract more. However, butterflies have specific needs beyond beautiful flowers. Are you willing and able to meet those needs?

The first Hurdle
Butterflies are insects. OH NO! Most people hate insects, and gardeners can be the worst, spraying poisons on any creature with more than four legs. However, if you want these flying flowers gracing your garden, insecticides are forbidden. Organic insecticides such as Bt and neonicotinoids are just as deadly as synthetics like Sevin and Malathion. We butterfly gardeners celebrate big ragged holes in the leaves of host plants, but if you are a gardener who must spray at the sight of a chewed leaf, then butterfly gardening is not for you.

Eating and Drinking
Adult butterflies do not eat since they have no mouth. They do have a tongue (aka proboscis) and many species sip nectar, so your garden must contain nectar-rich flowers from March to November. Only flowers with a flat landing surface and shallow nectaries can accommodate adult butterflies. If you strictly focus on the newest hybrid flowers, which are often sterile without nectar, you may not be able to meet their needs.

Even more importantly, are you willing to feed the caterpillars? The caterpillar stage does all the eating and growing for this insect. Most species of butterfly restrict their caterpillar’s diet to only a few species of plants that you must supply if you wish to attract them. Will you welcome these utilitarian plants into your garden? To my eye, most of the caterpillar host plants are attractive, but gardeners focused on flowers and ornamentals may not wish to devote precious space to these vital host plants.

Another Issue: Caterpillars
Everybody loves the beautiful adults, but some are repulsed by the crawling caterpillars. First, they are NOT ‘worms’. They have legs, faces and eyes; calling them ‘worms’ is as rude as hurling a racial slur. Academic types may try to impress you by calling them ‘larvae’, but the North American Butterfly Association, the entity responsible for butterfly taxonomy and nomenclature, declares that the immature feeding stage of the Lepidoptera (moths & butterflies) is correctly referred to as a ‘caterpillar’, a name as charming as the critter itself.

Gardeners may worry that these caterpillars will ravish their gardens. No! Each species of caterpillar only eats its specific plant, which you planted just for them. A munched leaf may signal that a pregnant butterfly has found the right host plant in your yard. For instance, the Giant Swallowtail caterpillar can only eat plants in the citrus family. If you see holes in the leaves of a Rue, Hop Tree or Prickly Ash, you should check the plant for ‘bird droppings’, the caterpillar’s clever disguise to avoid being eaten by birds.

The Butterfly Gardener
Butterfly gardening exemplifies the maxim, ‘plant it and they will come’. But it is not just flowers; it is also the caterpillar host plants that are necessary to attract multitudes of butterflies. If you can give up insecticides and plant to feed the children, then you are ready to celebrate life as a butterfly gardener.
Create a Butterfly Waystation

– NADINE CHAMPLIN
OWNER OF PRAIRIE PLACE DESIGNS

The Xerces Society is challenging the nation to action in preserving and creating gardens and landscapes that help revive the health of bees, butterflies, birds, bats, and other pollinators across America. We have been made aware of the need to protect many species that are on the endangered list and now pollinators are joining this list! The numbers of Monarch butterflies have been declining in the last several years. Partly due to freezing temperatures in the mountains of Mexico that killed many overwintering butterflies. But, blame has been targeted toward the use of pesticides and the fact that farms no longer preserve the “weeds” or native plants in their fields and pastures.

Public awareness has attempted to educate people to allow native plants in ditches and gardens so the native pollinators have a safe haven to live and reproduce. But further education is needed and that is where KNPS can help. By leading tours and talking to the public we can instill how the beauty of native plants is not only necessary for our well-being but for all life in general. Pollinators are responsible for one out of three bites of food we take each day and yet pollinators are at critical point in their own survival. Increasing the number of pollinator-friendly gardens and landscapes will help revive the health of the lower food chain group of species — the pollinators.

As a Landscape Designer, I suggest incorporating a Butterfly Garden or Waystation into many designs. Often the customer is very excited about a lovely flower garden and they can imagine the beautiful butterflies flitting about. Children are delighted watching butterflies and they love to explore to find a caterpillar or chrysalis. I have had the opportunity to place Butterfly Gardens in Assistant Living Homes, a McDonalds Restaurant, pre-schools, elementary schools, ballfield walking trails, public parks, and 4-H grounds as well as many private gardens. I have certified several gardens through Chip Taylor’s Monarchwatch.org (based in Lawrence, Kansas). You can purchase signage as well as a certificate to present to the owner or donors for a garden.

One particular project for an Assistant Living Home led to an experience that the installation crew shared with me. An existing landscape bed needed to be re-done that had a grouping of Common Milkweed growing, so I carefully preserved the plants and added more native plants. As the crew was completing the landscape a resident approached them and was horrified that those “weeds” were left in place. She was a farm wife and she spent her life getting rid of this nasty weed. The crew explained to her that the Milkweed was food to the Monarch Butterfly and habitat for them to lay eggs and the larvae to grow. She stormed off and they were sure she would come back with the Manager of the Home. But, instead she came back with a plate of cookies and apologized. A little education can go a long way!

By protecting the Monarch Butterfly we are protecting many pollinators. Butterflies neither bite, sting, nor spread diseases so people feel they are not only beautiful but safe to be around.
A butterfly garden must contain four components: a sunny location, protection from predators, food, and water.

**Sunny Location:** It is important to design your garden around the sun and wind. All butterfly activities are oriented around the sun. They love to bask in the sun; they navigate by the sun; they eat plants that grow in the full sun; and their body temperatures are regulated by the sun. Incorporate boulders in your garden for places they can "sun" themselves.

**Protection:** Trees, shrubs and grasses provide protection from birds, shelter from the rain, and protection from the wind. They use a lot of energy to fly in the wind so they avoid it when they can.

**Food:** A variety of plants that bloom at different times is necessary to provide food for butterflies all summer. Different species of butterflies have different preferences of nectar. They need high energy food (sugar) so they can fly and search for food. Butterflies have compound eyes that allow them to see in all directions without turning their head. They are nearsighted, like most insects, so they are attracted to masses of flowers. They like plants they can easily land on so provide plenty of landing pads such as coneflower, daisies, and zinnias.

**Water:** They need a source of water but only shallow water. They have thousands of shingle-like scales attached to wing membrane. If you rub your finger across a butterfly wing the scales brush off like dust. If their wings get wet they may drown or they cannot fly away from predators, so it is important to use a shallow dish like a pie tin and place rocks in it for them to land on. Fill the dish to barely cover the rocks. Rinse weekly to provide a fresh source of water.

Your garden can become a safe haven or “Waystation” for butterflies. As our population continues to grow we place more pressure upon the land for food, living, and working space. This demand has caused a severe altercation in the loss of natural vegetation or habitat. To help learn what specific plants particular butterflies prefer, obtain the pocket guide "Common Kansas Butterflies" by Jim Mason. You will be amazed at the insects you will observe while looking for butterflies.

A Native American legend tells us: “If you have a secret wish, find a butterfly and whisper your wish to it. When you release the butterfly it will carry your wish to the Great Spirit. Because you have not harmed the butterfly and not upset the balance of nature, the Great Spirit will grant you your wish.”

Start your own butterfly garden and watch miracles happen.

**Pollinators in Winter!**

> Betsy Betros

Insects have a variety of ways to survive winter. Depending on the species, the overwintering stage can be any of the four life stages: Egg, larvae, pupae, adults.

Decreasing day length and temperatures trigger insects to prepare for winter. Some avoid freezing weather by leaving such as the Monarch butterfly. They must huddle together in mass in their overwintering areas to stay warm as the temperatures can get down into the 30s F. Others avoid freezing by burrowing underground, into leaf litter or under tree bark and other protected areas. Some insects are adapted to being completely frozen.

The winter stage is called diapause, a time an insect’s metabolic rate drops to one tenth or less, so it can use stored body fat to survive winter. Antifreeze chemicals are produced including glycols (similar to car antifreeze), proteins, and sugars. These chemicals, plus reduction of water (including expelling gut contents) in the body combined reduces the freezing temperature of the body thus preventing ice formation. Some insects that are referred to as freeze tolerant produce chemicals to encourage ice forming around those chemicals, protecting their bodies. One of our freeze tolerant insects is the woolly bear, Pyrrharctia isabella (the red and black fuzzy caterpillar seen in the fall), which overwinters as a caterpillar and then pupates in the spring.

Because so many stages of insects overwinter in leaf litter or in burrows in the ground, gardeners are encouraged not to clean out all the vegetation litter in their gardens. One, many insects will be killed and two, it functions as an insulation of the ground for burrowing insects. One of our important garden friends are bees. Many species are ground dwelling. For example, only the pregnant queen bumble bee survives the winter, so loss of overwintering habitat can be devastating on bumble bees. So gardening for pollinators involves more than just planting nectar sources and host plants for caterpillars!

**Braunlich Joins Radio Show**

> Cynthia Rhodes

On November 14, 2016 at 6:00 pm, George Frazier, author of the recently published *The Last Wild Places of Kansas*, returned to Eco Radio KC (KKFI Community Radio 90.1 FM) and told stories about several wild places of Kansas. Joining Frazier’s panel of four wildlife experts was Shirley Braunlich, KNPS board member and serious amateur botanist. During the show, Shirley shared her thrilling experience of seeing a rare North American river otter (*Lontra canadensis*) at the 8th Street Access Ramp in Lawrence on Mother’s Day 2013. She also talked about the ancient pecan grove (*Carya illinoiensis*) of several hundred trees in the Leavenworth Woods near Weston Bend by Fort Leavenworth. The show podcast can be found at [http://www.kkfi.org/program-episodes/george-frazier-returns/](http://www.kkfi.org/program-episodes/george-frazier-returns/) and can be accessed for listening at any time. Join Shirley, George Frazier, and the other Kansas experts as they talk about wild, rare, and fascinating places and wildlife of Kansas.
FEATURED PLANT

Osage Orange | MACLURA POMIFERA

— LORRAINE KAUFMAN

“It’s an amazing tree, really,” I explained to my adult children as we stood before the aging tree. It has been a friend that I have known all my life. We have a snapshot dated early 1920s of my dad as a young farmer standing by that tree when it was half-grown. Now it was offering to us another year’s gift of yellow-green hedge apples, as it has for nigh on to 100 years. No one seems to take the apples seriously except some rabbits and squirrels, which seem to enjoy eating seeds they dig from the sticky, milky juice inside, leaving neat piles of shredded pulp to show their appreciation.

Osage orange trees, (Maclura pomifera), are native to south central United States so are at home on our farm. The earliest pioneers planted hedge balls in rows to designate boundaries for their fields and provide windbreaks against the incessant prairie wind. The wood of the Osage orange is extremely strong and durable, and it was used for bows by Native Americans. Later hedge was used for railroad ties and fence posts. It is tolerant of many kinds of soil, is drought resistant, and has no known serious pest problems.

There are many interesting ways to use the lowly hedge ball. The last one I tried was to make a “flower” arrangement from them. Slice an “apple” thinly then bake the slices on a foil-lined cookie sheet until they are the desired color and form. Cut a length of floral wire long enough for the desired length of stem, and thread it through as many disks as you want “petals,” twisting the wire to hold them on the “stem.” Do not hurry, and you will have made yourself a unique arrangement that reminds you of the warm fall days when your tree dropped its gifts to you.

— ILLUSTRATION BY LORNA HARDER

Recognition for Native Landscape Plantings

— IRALEE BARNARD

Have you ever come home and found a note from your neighbor taped to your door about your “weeds,” which in reality is a beautiful, well-groomed perennial garden? One of our KNPS members had this experience. Realizing that many people who enjoy wildflowers in their urban yards are looked upon by neighbors and city officials as “Weed Violators,” the KNPS Education Committee wants to encourage public awareness and recognition of native gardens.

Alison Vaughn, from Missouri, writes about her confrontation with city managers in her blog titled “Passing the Weed Inspection” http://allisonjvaughn.blogspot.com/2015/08/passing-weed-inspection.html. Alison made a planned effort to restore native plants to her woodland yard and after four years of care and attention amassed a plant list of 125 plant species that had returned. Then Alison got a notice from city officials of “weeds in excess of 12 inches” growing throughout the property. She wasted no time in responding.

Part of the solution for Alison was to post metal signs issued from the National Wildlife Federation proclaiming her property as a “Backyard Wildlife Habitat” project so that passersby and civic officials recognize that the area is not overgrown from benign neglect, but is being managed as “habitat” beneficial to pollinators and wildlife.

Another example, from a KNPS board member, related the following experience when putting in a pollinator garden at a retirement home. Happy to find native milkweeds growing in the neglected flowerbed, the milkweeds were saved and used as part of the planting. One of the tenants became very upset that all those nasty weeds were not pulled. When a person installing the new garden explained to the lady that the plant was the host for the monarch butterfly, she left in a hurry. The workers thought she was running to complain to the manager. But instead she brought the people doing the planting cookies and something to drink!

Education is the key to public understanding of this misperception about weeds in the landscape, but it appears that education involves more than articles and pamphlets promoting the value of wildflower plantings and the importance of pollinators. People must become familiar with how wild gardens look. Signage is effective in explaining and giving credibility to what might appear to some as a shaggy looking garden.

There are a variety of sources where signs may be obtained. Here I mention three. By providing water, cover, and other wildlife
BOOK REVIEW

Jewels of the Plains: Wildflowers of the Great Plains Grasslands and Hills

– DR. VALERIE F. WRIGHT, EMERITUS
KNPS FORMER BOARD MEMBER


Twenty-five years ago I planted a small wildflower garden in front of my Prairie home. It was meant to be an alternative to grass, which had to be mowed and watered. It has matured into a lovely little piece of prairie. Soon I was collecting grocery bags of Missouri Evening Primrose seed pods and smaller quantities of other seeds, which were given to others. When I started a “restoration” project on five acres of previously plowed ground, this little garden became a good source of native seed. It is easy for me to see how Claude Barr’s wildflower garden became a source of income and inspiration.

In 1994, my husband and I returned from working abroad to our home in the Flint Hills of Kansas. I immersed myself into the prairie around my house, learning as much as I could about the native plants, animals, and geology. One of the first books I purchased was Jewels of the Great Plains. It was not a field guide you could slip into your pocket, but the rich stories and descriptions were inspiring. I decided to write about my experiences wandering the tallgrass prairie. A sample of my stories was sent off to a publisher. It was turned down. I put Claude Barr’s book on the shelf and went on to other things. Now the opportunity has arisen to renew the joy of my 1994 reading in this revised edition.

Claude Barr was a true “plants man”. His generation and the generations before him abounded with men scouring the globe for plants of agricultural and horticultural value. While others travelled the world, Claude did what he could on limited resources. He stayed “home” in the Great Plains of North America. His love for the land is obvious in this description of the Kansas-Colorado border: “The distant view has a lonely, quieting effect, bringing a sense of things as they ought to be and a wonderment that any portion of the earth’s surface could be so perfect.”

Barr was an intelligent and educated man. He turned down an opportunity of graduate study at Harvard to help his parents survive on the farm in South Dakota. Self-educated in botany and geology of the region, his list of topographical features was presented “to depict novel and attractive characteristics of the region, as well as to correct the common concept of the Great Plains as a featureless expanse…” Chapter One describes the land from Saskatchewan to the High Plains of Texas, including the Llano Estacado. Interestingly, he explains the Llano Estacado without mentioning the legacy of Spanish exploration of the Great Plains.

His simple explanation of why the central portion of our continent is open prairie is the same as I taught in my role as educator at a biological field station with the exception that he is speaking of the “short grass prairie” where “drought is the greater enemy of trees than fire.” His reiteration of the role water plays in the lives of prairie plants is important for gardeners to respect.

The majority of the book is descriptions of the Great Plains native plants, better than the field guides with their difficult botanical verbiage. For example, the lyric description of pasque flower brought back fond memories of my seventeen years living in Minnesota. Some species not well known to him or not thriving in his garden have shorter descriptions, not so lovingly described. He warns us about the dangers of species that spread (both introduced and native), a problem that has become of major importance today. James Locklear’s introduction and notes, especially the additional comments on other species of garden merit, add value to this edition without interfering with Barr’s personal account. I highly recommend this book to gardeners and lovers of wildflowers everywhere.

Elements to your garden, the National Wildlife Federation offers certification of your habitat garden for $20. This includes NWF membership and a personalized certificate. The NWF garden sign may be purchased for $30. NWF also encourages habitat development with signs for schools and businesses.

Monarch Watch has a Waystation program that, after confirming certain criteria are met, gives you certification for $16 and a sign for $17. The Xerces Society produces an attractive aluminum garden sign that can be purchased for $25. Signs from these sources are 9 x 12 inches.

Many businesses, parks, and municipal plantings now use wildflowers and tall grasses in their landscaping. These public places are an ideal opportunity to aid people in awareness and appreciation of the beauty and effectiveness of wildflowers by posting information.

It requires education for public recognition that wild plants, native to our area, can be beautiful and functional in landscaping and also provide wildlife benefits. Informative signage can help accomplish this.

http://monarchwatch.org/waystations/
http://www.xerces.org/pollinatorhabitatsign/
2017 KANSAS AREA NATIVE PLANT & 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!

**Kansas Native Plant Society Winter Board Meeting, noon–3 pm** at Ottawa University in Ottawa, KS in the Argubright Hays Classroom in the Mowbray Student Union. The University cafeteria is available for lunch before the meeting. Our snow date is January 21. Please contact KNPS for more information, www.ksnps.org  email@KSNPS.org (785) 864-3453

**JAN 14**

**Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Nature Walk, 1–4 pm**. A family-friendly walk for reflection and to honor Dr. Martin Luther King’s legacy of peaceful demonstrations will be led by a community naturalist. The walk will begin with remarks and a prayer from a local pastor at the Martin Luther King, Jr., Square Park, 1800 Swope Pkwy, Kansas City, MO (parking available) and conclude at the Bruce R. Watkins Cultural Heritage Center, 3700 Blue Pkwy, Kansas City, Mo. A shuttle will be provided to return to the park. Sponsor: Heartland Conservation Alliance. Contact: Joy Heaviland  hcapartnerships@gmail.com (816) 759-7305

**JAN 16**

**Great Native Trees of the Kansas City Region Presentation, 1–2 pm**. The Kansas City Region of KNPS will sponsor a one-hour presentation at Overland Park Arboretum, 8909 W. 179th St., Overland Park, KS. Fee $3 if you are not a member or volunteer of the OP Arboretum. Contact: Ken O’Dell  ken@springvalleynursery.com (913) 837-5112

**JAN 18**

**Kaw Valley Eagles Day** in Lawrence, KS. Celebrate the return of the eagles and learn about the environment, 9am–4pm. Programs on area Bald eagles and other wildlife. Exhibitors will offer educational resources related to nature. Sponsored by the Jayhawk Audubon Society, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Unified School District 497. Location: Free State High School, 1 block north of 6th & Wakarusa. More information: Bunnie Watkins (785) 393-0984

**JAN 21**

**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) 691-9748 (cell).

**JAN 31**

**Presentation on Fire Recovery in the Red Hills** at Dyck Arboretum. Ecologist and field manager Ken Brunson of the Nature Conservancy knows a lot about the Anderson Creek Wildfire of March 2016 that consumed about 390,000 acres of land in Oklahoma and Kansas. Positive and negative impacts to land and wildlife varies; it is a fascinating story. Sponsor: Dyck Arboretum of the Plains, 177 W. Hickory, Hesston, KS  dyckarboretum.org. Come for supper at 6 pm or just the lecture at 6:30 pm ($2 for lecture, $7 for supper and lecture). Call by 4 pm Jan. 27 for supper reservations. Contact: Brad Guhr  brad.guhr@hesston.edu (620) 327-8127

**FEB 15**

**Wildflowers of the Flint Hills Presentation, 1–2 pm**. The Kansas City Region of KNPS will sponsor a one-hour presentation on Wildflowers of the Flint Hills at Overland Park Arboretum and Botanical Gardens, 8909 W. 179th St., Overland Park, KS. Fee $3 if you are not a member or volunteer of the OP Arboretum. Contact: Ken O’Dell  ken@springvalleynursery.com (913) 837-5112

**FEB 28**

**Presentation on Animal Sounds Around Us** with Mark Nolen at Dyck Arboretum. “Bioacoustics” can teach us a lot about the ways that animals communicate with one another and general behavioral ecology. Being in tune with and being able to identify the sounds of animals in addition to the visual cues will also make us more keenly aware of wildlife populations around us. Biology professor Mark Nolen specializes in this area and will speak about the auditory world of wildlife (birds, frogs, and insects especially) around us that we often do not see. Sponsor: Dyck Arboretum of the Plains, 177 W. Hickory, Hesston, KS  dyckarboretum.org. Come for supper at 6 pm or 6:30 pm for lecture only ($2 for lecture, $7 for supper and lecture). Call by 4 pm on Feb. 24 for supper reservations. Contact: Brad Guhr  brad.guhr@hesston.edu (620) 327-8127

**MAR 22**

**Woodland Wildflowers Presentation, 1–2 pm**. Ken O’Dell will show many of the ephemeral woodland wildflowers that grow in the 140-acre woodlands at the Overland Park Arboretum, describing how they grow and how many of them reproduce and have continued to grow and multiply for the past several thousand years in these Eastern Kansas woodlands. Sponsor: The Kansas City Region of KNPS. Fee $3 if you are not a member or volunteer of the OP Arboretum. Contact: Ken O’Dell  ken@springvalleynursery.com (913) 837-5112

**MAR 25**

**Invasive Plant Removal at Oak Park in Wichita, KS at 9 am**. Asian bush honeysuckle is an invasive plant that is causing serious habitat damage in many Wichita parks. We’ll spend 3–4 hours removing these plants, directed by the Wichita Parks Department staff. Tools, gloves and bottled water will be provided. This is good exercise and a positive contribution to preserving habitat quality at one of our best local birding spots. Meet by the stone arch at the southwest corner of the park. Sponsored by Wichita Audubon Society. For information: Pete Janzen  pete.janzen@sbcglobal.net (316) 519-1970
Butterflies Go Native Presentation with Lenora Larson at Dyck Arboretum. Kansas native plants and native butterflies have evolved together in symbiosis. Likewise, native plant gardeners and butterfly enthusiasts are natural soul mates. Indeed, only native plants are allowed for garden certification by NABA (North American Butterfly Association). Scientist and Kansas State University master gardener, Lenora Larson, will share her insights on butterfly lifestyles and showcase stunning photographs of our native butterflies and their native plants hosts. Participants will learn how to expand their native plant focus to attract “flying flowers”. Sponsor: Dyck Arboretum of the Plains, 177 W. Hickory, Hesston, KS dyckarboretum.org. Come for supper at 6 pm or just the lecture at 6:30 p.m. ($2 for lecture, $7 for supper and lecture). Call by 4 pm on March 24 for supper reservations. Contact: Brad Guhr, brad.guhr@hesston.edu (620) 327-8127

Woodlands Tree Tour of Overland Park Arboretum at 1 pm. Tour the 140 acres of woodlands and view an estimated 4 million native trees in the O.P. Arboretum. We will be walking on mulched pathways as we see rare Leatherwoods, 60’ tall Basswood trees, Hop Hornbeam, Coffee Trees, Dogwood, Hickories, Bladdernut, and thousands of Pawpaw Trees. Kansas has about 85 species of native trees and half of these species grow naturally at these woodlands. Ken O’Dell and Jim Earnest will lead this tour. We will meet on the patio of the visitor center. Fee $3 if you are not a member or volunteer of the OP Arboretum. Location: 8909 W. 179th St., Overland Park, KS. Sponsor: Kansas City Region of KNPS. Contact: Ken O’Dell, ken@springvalleynursery.com (913) 837-5112

Explore Dingus Natural Area in southeast, KS. 10:30 am. Join Kansas Native Plant Society at this unique locale managed by Kansas Ornithological Society. The diverse habitat includes mixed sugar maple-basswood and oak-hickory forests with rocky prairie openings on the ridges. Wear long pants and sturdy footwear, as there are no developed trails. Caleb Morse, Collection Manager for the McGregor Herbarium will lead the foray. To car pool from Lawrence, meet at 9 am in the parking lot for the McGregor Herbarium/Bridwell Lab and Monarch Watch, Constant Ave. & Crowell Dr, West Campus at KU. Directions to Dingus Natural Area: From Mound City take K-52 southwest about 3 miles to the top of the hill. Turn right at the Dingus Natural Area sign and follow the road north 1.5 miles and then west. There is a large sign on the southeast corner of the property. cmorse@ku.edu (785) 864-4493

Missouri Prairie Foundation Spring Plant Sales at the City Market, KCMO. The Missouri Prairie Foundation will hold its Annual Native Plant Sales, 8am to 1pm, at the City Market, 5th & Walnut, Kansas City, MO. A variety of native plants will be available. This is a great opportunity to buy native plants to provide habitat for native pollinators and birds. A generous portion of proceeds is donated by vendors to benefit MPF’s prairie conservation work. Sponsor: Missouri Prairie Foundation http://www.moprairie.org. Questions? Contact: Doris Sherrick, djsher@fairpoint.net (816) 716-9159

Woodland Wildflower Tour of Overland Park Arboretum at 1 pm. Thousands of spring wildflowers grow and thrive along the mulched paths that lead visitors down in the beautiful woodlands at the O.P. Arboretum. This is your opportunity to see these stunning ephemerals before the trees fully leaf out, the shade canopy takes over, and these treasures of early spring go dormant for the rest of the year. Among the forty species and varieties of natives along the trails are Trout Lily, Jack in the Pulpit, False Rue Anemone, Blue-eyed Mary, Solomon Seal, Turks Cap Lily and Native Wild Geraniums. Many of these are the same wildflowers you will see on a hike in the Ozark Mountains of Missouri and Arkansas. We may also see the yellow flowers of the very rare Leatherwood. Experienced naturalists Lynda Ochs and Ken O’Dell will lead the tour. Wear your walking shoes and meet at the Visitor Center. If you are not a member or volunteer at the Arboretum there is a $3 fee to enter. Location: 8909 W. 179th St., Overland Park, KS. Sponsor: Kansas City Region of KNPS. Contact: Ken O’Dell, ken@springvalleynursery.com (913) 837-5112

FloraKansas: The Great Plains Plant Bazaar at Dyck Arboretum. Become acquainted with the plants that once grew in abundance on the Great Plains; touch them, plant them, observe their habits and beauty, and learn to call them by name. Sponsor: Dyck Arboretum of the Plains dyckarboretum.org. Location: 177 W. Hickory, Hesston, KS. Contact: Janelle Flory Schrock, arbor@hesston.edu (620) 327-8127

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

NEW MEMBERS FROM 9/25/16 TO 12/11/16

A MULLER FINE ARTS – RUSSELL
JUSTIN BAILEY – OVERLAND PARK
BRIGHTON BROWN – WICHITA
SHANIA BURKHEAD – MAIZE
ASHLEY CALL – WICHITA
CRYSTAL CARSON – WHITE CITY
CAREY HOBART – WICHITA
JAN JOHNSON – TOPEKA
THOMAS KLAK – SACO, ME
KATILEE LARUE-EASTMAN – EL DORADO
RYAN LEE – WICHITA
LINDA MCCAUGHEY – OVERLAND PARK
LORRAINE MCCLAIN – ABILENE
ESTEBAN PEREZ – WICHITA
MARYLEE RAMSEY – WICHITA
CHLOE RICKMAN – EUREKA
CINDE SMITH – TOPEKA
TESSA SMITH – EL DORADO
ANGI WHITTIKER – STERLING
ZACH’S LAWN & LANDSCAPING – OVERLAND PARK
MD NADIR UZ ZAMAN – WICHITA

Join the KNPS email list to receive the latest event announcements: www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org/email_list.php
The Great
Black Walnut Tree

Of the native nut trees in North America, if the black walnut is not the most valuable nut tree, it is second only to the native pecan. The black walnut tree is native in eastern Canada and the eastern United States. It grows as a native tree deep into the eastern half of Kansas. The leaves are eaten by larvae of Luna moths, regal moths, and others. Walnut trees produce a chemical, juglone, that stunts or kills, but on our farm we have dozens of native and non-native plant varieties that are successfully growing and thriving under the walnut trees from bird droppings. The champion black walnut tree in Kansas is 76 feet tall, 82 feet in spread, a circumference of 17 feet, and has a total of 306 points.

Black walnut trees frequently grow 75 to 100 feet tall and, if growing by itself, these magnificent trees will frequently be as wide as they are tall. Larger trees in the wild, growing in the open, will usually limb themselves up to about twenty feet above ground as the giant branches spread to absorb the sunlight. It is said the black walnut trees are the last to leaf out in the spring and the first to drop the leaves in the fall. Each leaf is made up of several leaflets which emerge very late in spring and are yellow-green. Fall color is clear yellow. These leaves have a pungent odor when crushed.

Flowers occur in May and June on the black walnut tree. Male flowers are long greenish catkins while the female flower looks like a tiny walnut about as large as a small match head. The mature fruit is 1-1/2 to 2 inches in diameter, round with a thick light green hull. A black moist dye or stain comes from the juice of the hull. The dye is used to color natural fabrics. It will also stain your hands if you break the hull off to get to the nut inside. The nut is hard shelled and can be broken into halves with the slight rap of a hammer. Squirrels and rodents will eat the walnuts so you have to pick them up before they do their feasting. The nutmeat inside is delicious and is used for flavors in baked goods, cooked dishes, candy, and desserts. After picking out the nutmeats, the hard shells are ground up for use in industrial products.

Most of us would not want a walnut tree in our small city yards, but since I live in the country on a farm, I love to walk among the large walnut trees and remember when I was a youngster and we would pick up walnuts and put them in a gunny sack, drag them to the farm house and either spread them in the dirt road in front of our house and wait for the three or four cars that passed each day to run over them and knock off the hull, or we would put them in an old Montgomery Ward hand crank single ear corn sheller and watch the mechanics of the day peel off the hull. (We would do almost anything to keep from getting the black stain on our hands.) Then we would take the clean hard nuts to the produce place in our small town and Mr. Powell, who owned the produce place, would give us three cents per pound for them. Hey, Chum Gum was one penny for a pack of four sticks and licorice was five cents for a package of ten sticks. There was always something to be done outside of the house after our chores were finished!

The beautiful strong wood of the black walnut is one of the most coveted of the native hardwoods. Especially great for furniture and veneer, the cut timber brings a good price on the lumber market. Black walnut lumber, when properly cured, can easily be worked with hand tools or power tools, and the wood is easy to nail into and work with screws. The wood finishes to a high polish which may take four or five steps to properly get the stain or finish you want. You can buy pieces of treated black walnut lumber of various sizes at many lumber stores.

Economically speaking, the wood and the nuts of the black walnut tree are very valuable parts of the tree. Plantations are being planted to produce both black walnut lumber and black walnut nuts. Branches grafted onto black walnut trees can start to produce nuts in about ten years. Seedling grown walnut trees will take more years than that to produce. Spacing must be adequate for the trees to spread out their giant limbs and to let as much sun as possible touch the foliage on the trees and this will, in turn, produce more black walnut flowers which will then produce the fruit or nuts. For the lumber plantation you want to plant the trees much closer together than you do for nut production. When it comes right down to it...
you either have to have a plantation for nut production or one for lumber production.

A friend of mine, Jeannie McPherson, in Linn County, Kansas, planted her black walnut plantation forty years ago for lumber. The trees are now eight feet apart and will be selectively thinned by taking out about fifty percent of the trees in a number of years, perhaps when the trees are twelve inches in diameter at breast height.

If you have a special tree in mind let me know about it. I love trees. They are totally resigned to their stately positions in life.

Welcome New KNPS Board Members

LORNA HABEGGER HARDER

Last June, I participated in a celebration of Prairie Pollinators at the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve with KNPS Board members Iralee Barnard, Susan Reimer, and Cynthia Ford. The reconnection with KNPS was energizing, and when I was invited to rejoin the Board I accepted. I look forward to serving an organization with individuals who combine expertise and talents with a genuine love of and passion for this prairie landscape which we call home. So, retirement from 25 years of teaching at Hesston College, and life becomes more complete filled with family, friends, and all things prairie — education, art, restoration, and so often those simply indescribable moments of wonder.

MIKE KAYE

This past June, I retired as a faculty member at Washburn Law School where I taught courses in Evidence, Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure, and Mediation for many years. I had visited the Konza with my wife Susana Valdovinos in the fall of 2012. As a K-State administrator, she was mentoring two incoming freshmen through the Guide for Personal Success (GPS) Program, and one of the GPS activities was a tour of Butterfly Hill.

I enjoyed the Konza outing and in 2013 decided to follow up by taking docent training in Manhattan through KEEP: The Konza Environmental Education Program. The KEEP Docent Program offers specialized training for people interested in becoming ambassadors for Konza Prairie and the tallgrass prairie ecosystem. Docent opportunities include leading hikes for groups of school children and organizations, guiding van tours of the bison enclosure, leading some educational activities for visiting school groups, participating in workdays on Konza Prairie, and other events. I joined a small group of experienced docents led by Earl Allen, and I now spend weekends with them on the prairie west of Manhattan identifying native plants for a project led by Gary Breckon, a retired professor of Botany. For the last two years, we have been actively engaged in removing bush honeysuckle (see accompanying photo) from the Konza.

This past summer, I also visited the Cimarron National Grassland at the time of the KNPS Board meeting in Garden City, and I hiked and botanized with Earl, Mike Haddock, and Valerie Wright. I became more interested in KNPS and decided to join as a life member. In fall, I attended the 2016 Annual Wildflower Weekend and KNPS Board meeting in Ft. Scott. I met some very interesting people and I look forward to actively participating as a board member in the life of KNPS.

CHAD PHILLIPS

Howdy! from a Trego County native; yes, that is in Kansas. Could it be that a fern (Marsilea sp.) could actually survive out in that parched/desolate area? Occasionally, like every twenty years or so, the ancient bison wallows in the pasture south of the home place fill with water for an extended time and the water clover will appear—amazing! Or how about Mentzelia decapetala anchored in a crack in the chalk rock bluffs; petals sudden unfurl after the sun descends releasing an incredible fragrance; and then come the moths—magic! Oh yes, I like plants. There are so many miracles to enjoy, so much to learn; so let’s get to it.

ANDREW MITCHELL

My name is Andrew Mitchell. I am a horticulturalist and arborist with Grimm’s Gardens in Hiawatha, Kansas. I live with my wife and three kids in Horton, KS. As a young boy, I became interested in native plants when I walked the fields of our family’s farms near Huscher, Kansas. I want to further my involvement in KNPS to help others understand the importance and benefits of using native plants in their landscapes and gardens.
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
University of Kansas
2045 Constant Ave.
Lawrence, KS 66047-3729

A membership to 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

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