**Spring Meeting Highlights**
— JOAN PRITCHARD

Some twenty-five adults of all ages gathered at Camp Wood, located west of Cottonwood Falls, for the late spring/early summer KNPS board meeting. Due to an approaching thunderstorm, the group decided by consensus to tour the new Preston Outdoor Education Center first, being guided by Camp Wood Executive Director, Ken Wold. Students from the Kansas State Design + Make program worked the past two semesters designing and building this outdoor lab. Their design settled on the pathway concept with five stations representing the prairie ecosystem: first, a gathering station, and then the wind, flora, fauna, geology, and atmosphere (rock, grass, wind, and sky) stations. Our group combed the hillside adjoining the trail and found a wide variety of native plants adapted to the location, many in abundant bloom, but others to be seen in later seasons. An integrated retaining wall along the hillside had recently been constructed of area limestone, and provided a natural backdrop to the tour. Finally, the rain urged the members inside to conduct the scheduled, but delayed, board meeting.

As a new member to the KNPS board, I was pleased with the high energy, get-er-done nature of this board meeting. Although we covered a lengthy agenda, there was a good interchange of ideas, focused committee reports, and readiness for the fall AWW meeting planned for Concordia, September 9-10. Board members were eager to move — CONTINUED ON PAGE 2
Spring Meeting  — CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

on to the native plant tours and outings planned for the weekend, and the business was conducted efficiently.

The after-lunch tour took us to Clover Cliff Bed and Breakfast on Hwy 50 near Elmada. This 3300 acre ranch includes woods pasture, canyon pasture, and hilltop/rock pasture, as well as farm land and a watershed lake with spring runoff. The curious botanizers found that each of these physical areas had unique plants adapted to that specific environment. The large two-story ranch house was built in 1831 and is on the National Register of Historic places. Stone was taken from the nearby canyon pasture to build the house, currently owned by Warren and Susan Harshman. A new building is currently under construction to serve as a wedding and event rental venue.

Our Saturday tours included two private prairies also located off Hwy 50 near Elmada. The prairie pastures owned by Benny and Marie Holtclaw included an area that had been sprayed for invasives, contrasted with a pasture around the lake that was undisturbed. The property owned by Gary and Charlotte Steed featured a pasture that had been burned earlier in the year, as well as an area used for heavy cattle feeding that was not completely recovered. Unique plants were found at each ranch and the group was most grateful for gracious hosts who opened their property for our observations.

Following a great lunch at the Town and Country Café in Florence, the group explored Crystal Spring, just north of Florence. This spring feeds fresh spring water through a year-round limestone aquifer with a flow of 1000 gallons per minute to the city of Florence. It is reported to have been a popular Indian camping ground at one time, and is currently privately owned by John Deforest of Peabody, with the water leased to the city of Florence. It is a lovely area to explore along the water’s edge and atop the adjoining outcroppings.

On our way to our final tour of the area around Chase County Lake, we toured two historical sites. The town of Cedar Point is just west of Elmada and is nearly deserted. The Drinkwater and Schriver Flour Mill, still standing and in full repair, was the key reason for the town’s existence. Originally built as a saw mill in 1867, it was converted to a stone flour mill in 1873, and sold flour for local use and eastern markets. In 1941, the mill equipment was again converted to grind cattle feed, and continued to operate until the 1960’s. The mill is on the National Register of Historic Places and efforts are being made to restore it.

The nearby Clements Stone Arch Bridge was built in 1888 to cross the Cottonwood River. It is a double-arch bridge with twenty-eight foot arches, the largest bridge of its type in Kansas, and built of local limestone. It has been closed to motorized traffic for years, but is still open for foot traffic use. Although old, it is certainly a beautiful structure.

Tours ended for most as they traveled past Chase County Lake. Others stopped to visit the waterfall area, while some continued to botanize in the adjacent hills before traveling home. For the record, all seemed to enjoy the plants and history of the Flint Hills in spring – one of the most beautiful areas of Kansas.

**President’s Message**

Phyllis Scherich

Even after living on a ranch for forty years, the resiliency of the prairie never ceases to amaze me. Dee and I have watched the prairies in south-central Kansas survive drought, floods, late freezes, early freezes, blizzards, and other tricks of Mother Nature. We have used controlled burns to get rid of invasive plants, mostly eastern red cedar trees, and to improve the grasses. However, the rapid recovery of the prairie after the 2016 Anderson Creek fire which burned over 400,000 acres in Kansas (Barber and Comanche Counties) and Oklahoma (mostly Woods County) is incomparable to any we have witnessed. We had the opportunity to spend a few hours on a ranch near the Comanche/Barber County line during the first week of June. The 2016 fire burned about eighty-five to ninety percent of the area of this ranch. To allow recovery since the fire, the pastures have been either grazed extremely lightly, or not at all. We spent about two hours touring the ranch on an ATV, stopping often to take pictures of the wildflowers and grasses. In that short time and using my camera, we cataloged over sixty species of blooming wildflowers, and observed many others that either had completed their bloom or will not bloom until later in the season. The few cows that we saw on the ranch that day were grazing in near-belly-deep grasses in some areas (more cows will have been added by the time you read this).

Of the many benefits of the fire, one can readily be seen: a large percentage of the invasive cedar trees on the ranch were burned. Wildlife has returned; insects, butterflies and birds are abundant; lizards and other herps can be seen. The nutrients in the ashes have been returned to the soil. The “duff” and old grasses are gone allowing growth of new mixed grasses and forbs. The abundance and vigor of the buffalo grass, in particular, caught our attention. Springs and creeks are flowing with the early spring rains. There are, however, negatives to be observed. The weather and fragrant sumacs have returned with a vengeance: they thrive with fire. Many of the standing skeletons of the burned cedar trees still litter the landscape and need to be removed. There are long stretches of fences that need to be rebuilt. The many cattle burned in the fire need to be replanted.

I am convinced that the timely, generous spring rains of 2016 and 2017 have greatly facilitated this amazing comeback, but the resilient nature of the prairie to recover has, once again, been powerfully demonstrated. In this issue’s President’s Message, I also had planned to share my experiences on the Chase/Butler County Wildflower Tour. However, we showed up for the tour on Saturday, June 10, only to find out that it was held the previous Thursday! A friend who did attend the tour stated there were about fifty or sixty people in attendance. He commented, “The hills were the greenest… I’ve ever seen and the weather was absolutely perfect!” Dee and I did make several stops where there and back to check out some flowering meadows: one on the road from US Hwy 50 into Marion County Lake, several within the Marion County Lake area, and a few at Chase County Lake, so all was not lost. I noted about fifty blooming wildflowers during the day, but mostly left my camera in the car because of the wind. Particularly outstanding were the butterfly milkweed at Chase County Lake and the roadsides approaching it.

Also, I want to mention the upcoming Annual Wildflower Weekend (AWW) in Concordia on September 8-10. Organized by Nadine Champlin and her enthusiastic and capable AWW committee, we are certainly in for an AWW-some TREAT! Information and registration forms will be available later in July. Please come and join us, everyone is welcome!
Hunting Shade Plants at Camp Wood

ANDREW MITCHELL

KNPS members held the Spring/Summer board meeting on May 19 at Camp Wood near Elmdale. Camp Wood sits on a rocky hilltop in the heart of the Flint Hills. This terrain consists of large limestone outcroppings and steep slopes covered in wildflowers and grasses. Although the board meeting was scheduled first that Friday morning, with unanimous agreement, members decided to beat the incoming rain storm and take the tour of the Preston Outdoor Education Station, led by Executive Director Ken Wold, first.

Overlooking the prairie, Kansas State University students had designed and built a limestone wall with amphitheater seating as part of the Preston Outdoor Education Station. Not too far from this wall was a long outcropping of native limestone boulders. A natural spring flowed from under one of the boulders gently whispered and bubbled into the shade of a nearby stand of trees. It was here that several members hunted for ferns and native shade loving plants. It did not take long to find the first fern, the delicate Purple Cliff brake Fern Phegopteris connectilis. This tiny fern is difficult to spot if you are not looking for it, but once one was found, others were easy to spot. Another fern, the Smooth Cliff brake Fern Pellaea glabella, which bears a striking resemblance to the first fern, was soon located and identified. As members moved deeper into the shade, jumping over boulders and moving aside the tall grasses, the Rattlesnake Fern Botrychium virginianum and Marginal Wood Fern Dryopteris marginalis were spotted. Among the trees, the author delighted in seeing a blooming Venus’ Looking Glass Triadenum perfoliatum for the first time in his life! (He had seen this pretty little wildflower before, but just always before or after the bloom!)

Another unique plant noted in the shade was the Tuberous Indian Plantain Arisaema triphyllum whose leaves greatly resemble those of hostas. And yet another plant found was identified as Green Dragon Arisaema triphyllum var. jimaense. This tiny plant was discovered as the group moved through the shade of a nearby tree. It amazed me to see that the groups had not yet been tooled over this plant before. It was interesting to see how different the flowers were. One was purplish and the other was white. And yet another plant found was identified as Green Dragon Arisaema triphyllum var. jimaense. This tiny plant was discovered as the group moved through the shade of a nearby tree. It amazed me to see that the groups had not yet been tooled over this plant before. It was interesting to see how different the flowers were. One was purplish and the other was white.

At this point, the group decided that anything the symphony played would sound good out there! And, so it was with us. We lingered on site and gazed at the brilliant stars studding the black night sky, and enjoyed listening to the music in the background as we watched the couples dancing, and wished that we could two-step that way. We eventually joined the line of headlights driving away from the Schwarting Ranch. But, our destination was different. As all those vehicles headed east or north to Topeka, Lawrence, or Kansas City, Rod and I headed west toward home, and as we drove, I felt like we were alone in the hills, certainly, there was no traffic. Even in the darkness, the majesty was there. The sky was clear and abundant with stars. It was a fitting end to that wonderful day.

A few weeks after the symphony, I received a cardboard tube in the mail. Enclosed was a wildflower poster and a year’s membership to Kansas Native Plant Society. I had been a winner, and I was very pleased.

This past May, Rod and I attended the KNPS late spring/early summer weekend board meeting and outings in Chase County. During this event, I was asked to write about how I got involved with KNPS. It was a good assignment. After ten years, I am still a member, and have learned many things through the society’s newsletters, publications, and emails. In the past few years, we have taken part in several of the sponsored activities near our home, and the most recent weekend at Chase County was great (except for all the mud). Even today, after ten years, I still find everyone involved to be friendly, helpful, knowledgeable, and so willing to share about their love for native plants. Thank you for all the planning that went into this outing. And, after spending a little time with Mr. Dee Scherich, I think he was the man ten years ago at Symphony in the Flint Hills who took us on our first KNPS walk. Good job!
As I became more aware of the plants around me, I searched them out at all times wherever I wandered. The amazing Clematis fremontii astounded me. I could easily find it blooming in the pasture from April to September. I could also find many more of what would become my favorites among the wildflowers and grasses — Dubia aurata, Echinacea angustifolia, Mimosa nectarifolia, and Bouleboea carpellendula. Late summer and fall brought spectacular displays of Asclepias, Helianthus, Liatris, Ratibida, Silphium, Solidago, and Stenosiphon in the mixed-grass prairies. The discovery of these and other plants, and a love for photography, helped turn me into the plant enthusiast I am today.

Besides its distinctive flora, Concordia is a Stained Glass Capital of Kansas, which can be seen on the wall of the Cloud County Museum Annex. Concordia is the home to the stone arch bridge, a limestone structure east of Rice along Highway 9, built in 1899 and restored by my former neighbor in 1990. Just east of Concordia on Rock Road is an outcrop of large sandstone boulders that was once a popular picnic site for the early townspeople.

These are just a few of the many attractions available to participants who attend the 2017 Annual Wildflower Weekend from September 8-10, 2017, so save the date on your calendar. Come and learn about Cloud County’s exciting and diverse flora and fauna, explore the rolling byways, and experience the rich history and culture of north central Kansas. We hope to see all of you in September in Concordia!
**FEATURED PLANT**

**Longflower beeblossom | GAURA LONGIFLORA**

— LORRAINE KAUFMAN

From a distance, the waist-high bush seemed to be covered with happy white butterflies fluttering in the Indian summer breeze. It was November, 1983, and I had just begun to seriously search for prairie wildflowers on our family farm, inspired by John Madson’s book Where the Sky Begins: Land of the Tallgrass Prairie. Closer up, I saw that the “butterflies” were actually showy white blossoms atop four foot stems covered with soft hairs. So, before me now was my first challenge: to identify this new prairie friend whose lovely white blossoms seemed to waltze with the breeze.

After poring through Janet Bare’s Wildflowers and Weeds of Kansas, I learned that this apparition was the Longflower beeblossom *Gauro longiflora* — a forb that I could expect to find in the eastern one-third of Kansas. It blooms from August to October in full sun and well drained rocky soil. It is a clump-forming perennial that may self seed. Its pinkish August to October in full sun and well drained rocky soil. It is a clump-forming perennial that may self seed. Its pinkish white blossoms seemed to waltz with the breeze.

Long after my first discovery, I was surprised and gratified that my daughter and daughter-in-law found buds open late in the day to white flowers which appear to hover in long open, much branched terminal panicles. Long after my first discovery, I was surprised and gratified that my daughter and daughter-in-law found buds open late in the day to white flowers which appear to hover in long open, much branched terminal panicles.

Since then, I have seen this rare clematis bloom primarily in early spring from April to May, but another flush of blooms can sporadically present again in the cooler weather of late August and into September.

As a youngster, I often walked the many fields and pastures of my grandparents’ farms. This was my favorite thing to do: a “walkabout,” as my brother, and companion, often called them. These ramblings caused us to be very well acquainted with the land and to love everything we found there. One of my favorite plants that I discovered on the “south place” was the beautiful Fremont’s Clematis (Clematis fremontii) — a forb that I could expect to find in the eastern one-third of Kansas. It blooms from August to October in full sun and well drained rocky soil. It is a clump-forming perennial that may self seed. Its pinkish white blossoms seemed to waltz with the breeze.

The flowers are generally pale lavender to deep purple hued. The flowers are generally pale lavender to deep purple hued. But, I have located a few pinkish and cream colored blooms, as well. The flowers are bell shaped with upturned petals when fully opened. The fanciful seed heads that follow the flowers are great for dried arrangements. In late fall and winter, the plant breaks off from the ground and rolls along with the Kansas wind, dropping seeds here and there, and ultimately getting stuck with tumbleweeds in the fence lines. So, this September, come to the Smoky Hills for the AWW, and maybe, just maybe, we will see a few late-blooming flowers of the beautiful Fremont’s Clematis.

May 17th on our farm in Miami County showed a temperature of 65 degrees with the Kansas wind gusting to 45 mph; we had to tie concrete blocks to our feet to keep from being blown over as we spent two hours botanizing on this pristine prairie in eastern Kansas. Thirty people attended; we had a wonderful time, and everyone, including me, learned more about the prairie. If you put thirty native plant people together, there is always at least one person that knows the odd looking plant that is not easily recognized. These were enthusiastic plant people: they love the prairie, and they love what they are doing. Some of the early prairie plants that were flowering that day included Orange pincusion, Verbena, and Pale purple coneflowers. The New Jersey tea showed nice white flowers, a couple of flower spikes stood for the Eastern Gammagras, the purple coneflowers had strong flower buds, but only one flower of Wild hyacinth was still around, with Pink Prairie phlox, Nodding, raspberries, and Spider milkweed all showing and strutting their stuff. The tour participants were invited back at their leisure to walk through the Moser/O’Dell prairie anytime, and perhaps delight in the intricate differences of this native prairie with the passing of time.

**Moser/O’Dell Prairie Tour**

— ANDREW MITCHELL

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**Youngmeyer Ranch Dedication**

— CYNTHIA RHODES

A beautiful, sunny afternoon on Tuesday, June 6 added to the ceremony as the Kansas Land Trust (KLT) celebrated the preservation of the Youngmeyer Ranch in Elk County; this 4,676-acre prairie nestled in the Flint Hills is now preserved forever as a working ranch. Owned by the Earl W., Jr. and Terry Youngmeyer Family Foundation, the ranch is also an ecological research site for Wichita State University. Nearly 500 plant species have been documented on the site including rich biodiversity indicator species such as green dragon, bottlebrush sedge, ground plum milkvetch, bread-root scurf-pea, inland ceanothus, and two-flower celestial lily. This prairie also provides rich wildlife habitat for the greater prairie chicken.

Emcee Jerry Jost, KLT Executive Director, gave special thanks to Daniel Offidani, trustee for the Youngmeyer Family Foundation, a funding partner, and his wife, Leslie. Over the past several years the Kansas Land Trust collaborated with National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, represented by Eric Forward, Assistant Director of the Central Regional Office, to conserve over 16,000 acres, including the Youngmeyer Ranch, through a Native Environment Conservation Plan with financial support from Tradewind Energy and Enel Green Power North America, owner and operator of the Caney River Wind Project.

Following the dedication ceremony, the forty people present participate in plant identification walks led by Kelly Kindscher and Courtney Masterson, native plant experts. Plants identified included long-bearded hawkweed, St. John’s wort, and narrowleaf milkweed. The New Jersey tea showed nice white flowers, a couple of flower spikes stood for the Eastern Gammagras, the purple coneflowers had strong flower buds, but only one flower of Wild hyacinth was still around, with Pink Prairie phlox, Nodding raspberries, and Spider milkweed all showing and strutting their stuff. The tour participants were invited back at their leisure to walk through the Youngmeyer Ranch near Beaumont is approximately seven miles square and offers a diverse ecosystem for outdoor classroom use, study, and research. The gift from the Youngmeyer’s illustrates how people can make a difference.

**The Beautiful Fremont’s Clematis!**

— ANDREW MITCHELL

As a youngster, I often walked the many fields and pastures of my grandparents’ farms. This was my favorite thing to do: a “walkabout,” as my brother, and companion, often called them. These ramblings caused us to be very well acquainted with the land and to love everything we found there. One of my favorite plants that I discovered on the “south place” was the beautiful Fremont’s Clematis (Clematis fremontii).

Fremont’s Clematis is named for the explorer, John C. Fremont, who traveled the West in the mid-1800’s mapping and exploring. This bushy little clematis is also known as leather flower for its smooth, tough leaves that do, in fact, resemble thick leather. Fremont’s Clematis grows primarily in North Central Kansas in the Smoky Hills Region and in South Central Nebraska in the adjoining counties.

Through my studies of native plants in the Smoky Hills, I have seen this rare clematis bloom primarily in early spring from April to May, but another flush of blooms can sporadically present again in the cooler weather of late August and into September.

I have searched long for the color variations of this beautiful little blossom. The flowers are generally pale lavender to deep purple hued and they are bell shaped with upturned petals when fully opened. The fanciful seed heads that follow the flowers are great for dried arrangements. In late fall and winter, the plant breaks off from the ground and rolls along with the Kansas wind, dropping seeds here and there, and ultimately getting stuck with tumbleweeds in the fence lines.

So, this September, come to the Smoky Hills for the AWW, and maybe, just maybe, we will see a few late-blooming flowers of the beautiful Fremont’s Clematis.
AUGUST 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 fnorman@sunflower.com (785) 691-9748 (cell).

21

Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve Solar Eclipse Event. Come see a spectacular event unfold as the moon’s shadow crosses in front of the sun, creating a partial solar eclipse at our location. Experts will be on hand from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. with telescopes and information. Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve is located two miles north of Strong City on Kansas State Highway 177 (the Flint Hills National Scenic Byway) and is a unique public/private partnership between the National Park Service and The Nature Conservancy. For more information, visit the preserve’s Facebook page at http://www.facebook.com/NPS.TallgrassPrairie, or visit the website at www.nps.gov/tapr, email tapr_interpretation@nps.gov, (620) 273-8494.

8-10

19

The 10th annual fall festival is a community event for the whole family featuring Pioneer Bluffs Fall Festival. For schedule of events and tours, food, music, the Hedge Fire Circle, and always a few surprises.

16

The Land Institute Prairie Festival: This annual prairie festival offers a unique opportunity to interact with some of the world’s most compelling authors, thinkers, artists, and advocates focused on agriculture, the environment, science, sustainability, and social and environmental justice. Tours, food, music, the Hedge Fire Circle, and always a few surprises. For schedule of events and registration: The Land Institute, 2440 E. Water Well Drive, Salina. www.thelandinstitute.org (785) 823-5376.

22-24

Pioneer Bluffs Fall Festival. The 10th annual fall festival is a community event for the whole family featuring local area music, car show, arts and crafts for old-time games, local food, historic performances, and more! Special this year: book talk on Kansas Guidebook 2 by Marc Penner. Kansas Sampler Foundation. For more information: Pioneer Bluffs, 695 Kansas Hwy 177, Matfield Green. www.pioneerbluffs.org, (785) 793-3484.

7

Newt Nature Book Club: Join us to talk about books connected to the natural world (fiction and non-fiction). Share your recent reads and hear recommendations from co-leaders Jake Vil and Shirley Braunlich and other book club members. 6:30-8 PM @ East Lawrence Recreation Center, 1245 East 15th St., Lawrence. RSVP is helpful, but not required. Contact Shirley: sbraunlich@kplks.org (785) 843-3833.

MEMBERS RETURNING AFTER A HIATUS

Jessica Carey – Olathe

LIFETIME MEMBERS AS OF 6/1/17

(Dual Membership Level - One Time Payment)

Earl Allen – Manhattan
Susan Agell – Leawood
Robert C. J. & Martha Bautch – Baldwin
Susan Bradcock – Manhattan
William Bradley – Olathe Park
Edith M. Bronson – Topeka
Fred & Nancy Coombs – Holton
Dorita Cooper – Topeka
Daniel Cottrell – Wichita
Crawd County Conservation District – Woldfield

Barbara Davis – Wichita
Joseph Dale – Lawrence
Melody Debeker – Topeka
Philip Easton – Cheney
Sally Emmons – Lawrence
Harold & Joyce Evans – Wichita
R. Clay Harry – Topeka
Karen Harnett – Manhattan
Barbara Hertig – Topeka
Kean Hise – Emporia

Elizabeth Lynch – Meno Island, VA
Lucy Franklin Foundation – Wichita
Douglas H. May – Lawrence
Carol McDowell – Topeka
Brian McFalls – Topeka
Joy Millard – Manhattan
Renee McRae – Lawrence
Carol Morgan – Topeka
Maya P. Neal – Chanute
Kim O’Dell – Pratt
Den & Brenda Rae – Hutchinson

CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS AS OF 6/1/17

(Single Membership, Annual Payment)

Ali Alipour – Manhattan
Erika M. Armstrong – Muncie
Dolores Baker – Redfield
Joe Bannin – Laclede, MO
Dolores Bennett – Beloit
Carolyn Birdwell – Baldwin
Sally Brandenburger – Sunflower.com 785) 691-9748 (cell)

Barbara Davis – Wichita
John H. Davis – Lawrence
Mary Jean Jackson – Salina
Karen Keim – Manhattan
Susan & George Geary – Baldwin City
Diana Harnett – Shawnee Mission

Catherine Reed – Lawrence

R. Clay Harvey – Topeka
Harriet & Joe Harris – Wichita
Sally Haines – Lawrence
Mickey Delfelder – Topeka
Joseph Davis – Topeka
Barbara Davis – Wichita

Algoon & Paula Rozell – Topeka
Cindy Kish – Baldwin City

New Members from 3/1/17 to 6/1/17

Steven M. Anderson – Beaver
Barbara Bergner – Gardner
Yasmin Bennett – Topeka
Nikki Bonniwell – Manhattan
Ben Bradley – Prairie Village
Tylor Brant – Wichita
Arista Bupp – Osawatomie
Margaret Curry – Baldwin
Daniel Davis – Shawnee
Lares Davis – Emporia
Jaden Easter – Andover
Sallie Egbert – Spring Hill
Vernon Gerstner – Robinson

Lori Gross – Baldwin
Rebecca Hamilton – El Dorado
Taylor Hampton – Wichita
Lisa Harcourt – Andover
Ruth Hanes – Wichita
Carolyn Hall – Lawrence
El Hubbs – Kaw Point
Lori Hunt – Augusta
Dana Hyballa – El Dorado
Nancy Johnson – Emporia
Legacy Garden Works – Wichita
Kendra Lander – Topeka
Anessa Lugo – Wichita

Briana McKee – Wichita
Don Montana – Leavenworth
John Messenger – Wichita
Bruce Meyer – Baldwin
Jim Moore – Ellsworth
Patricia Gosline – Ottawa
Sandy Schaefer Platz – Lawrence
Dawn Pulsifer – Olathe
Mike Rader – Wilson
Brian Robinson – Wichita
Kestrel Sanders – Wichita
Joni Sanders – El Dorado
David Shallow – Oklahoma

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Information provided by Kansas Native Plant Society, see more events on our website: www.knps.org. Please share this information and contact us about additional events to note. Thank you! email@knps.org

Studying 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!

SEPTEMBER 16

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14

Author Presentation of The Last Wild Places of Kansas by George Frazier. Join us to hear Frazier share about the natural wonders in Kansas with a plethora of stories! 7 pm at Lawrence Public Library in Lawrence. events@lawrencepubliclibrary.org (785) 843-8383.

22-24

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MEMBERSHIP REGIONS

2017 KANSAS AREA NATIVE PLANT & WILDFLOWER EVENTS

MEMBERSHIP REGIONS

2017 KANSAS NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
Our great native silver maple tree is not as well known for sugar or autumn leaf colors as our native sugar maple tree, but it is the second leading maple tree for producing the sugary sap that goes into making delicious maple syrup. The scientific name for the silver maple is *Acer saccharinum*. *Acer* means bitter, or in some cases sharp, and *saccharinum* means sugary. Silver maple trees grow well in the eastern half of Kansas and grow naturally from the Great Plains states all the way to the Atlantic coast. A giant tree often reaches 60 to 100 feet into the blue Kansas sky, and with its silvery coloring to the backs of its leaves, is distinctly showy when the gusty Kansas wind is blowing. The top sides of the leaves are a light yellows-green color in April and May, changing to a deeper green color in the summer. At its best, the autumn leaf color is a slightly yellowish color.

The flowers on a silver maple tree are both attractive and interesting. The tree is polygamous: having some male flowers, or some female flowers, and some flowers with both on the same tree. The female flowers will generally have some reddish coloring to them, and the male flowers will generally have more of a light off white coloring. The female flowers will produce fruit in pairs called samaras. The samara is a winged fruit which allows the wind to carry the fruit (seed) away from the parent tree. (Mama tree does not want a bunch of hungry saplings standing around, and encourages her children to spread their wings and fly away quite early in life! Of course, the Kansas wind is most obliging every spring.)

The fast growing silver maple trees, along with the Chinese elm tree, were once quite popular and, thus, over-planted in the 1950s and 1960s. Home owners and city park managers soon realized that these were generally weak trees, and today they are not used for landscaping purposes as they once were. The advice of a good landscape architect, and the Prairie Studies Initiative, is known as The Meadow.

Volunteers assist with maintenance of The Meadow at occasional work days helping to prune unwanted voluntary plants. Thus, it was that I found myself tending the borders of the walkways and harvesting the dandelion plants. These hardy flora were considered invasive plants in The Meadow, but the flavorful and nutritious greens became the star ingredient for a surprisingly delicious dandelion quiche.

Dandelions are not native to the New World, but were introduced intentionally by early European settlers. Quoting from the *Act for Libraries* website (www.actforlibraries.org):

“Dandelions are known botanically as *Taraxacum officinale* and are members of the daisy family, Asteraceae. The name, ‘dandelion’ is a mispronunciation of the French name dent de lion which translates to ‘tooth of the lion’. The tooth of the lion refers to the dandelion’s leaves which are serrated and look much like teeth. It is estimated that dandelions have been in cultivation since the Roman times. For the last thousand years, dandelions have been used as remedies for illnesses including liver problems, gastrointestinal distress, fluid retention, and skin ailments. Besides being a medicinal plant, the dandelion is a tasty and highly nutritious vegetable. All parts of the plant can be eaten including the root and flowers. Leaves can be eaten as salad greens or steamed with beets, flowers are used to make dandelion wine, and roots can be boiled and steeped in a tea or roasted and made into a coffee substitute.

During the 17th century, dandelions were heavily used as remedies for illnesses including liver problems, gastrointestinal distress, fluid retention, and skin ailments. Besides being a medicinal plant, the dandelion is a tasty and highly nutritious vegetable. All parts of the plant can be eaten including the root and flowers. Leaves can be eaten as salad greens or steamed with beets, flowers are used to make dandelion wine, and roots can be boiled and steeped in a tea or roasted and made into a coffee substitute.

The following quiche recipe is based on one from the book *Wild Seasons* – Gathering and Cooking Wild Plants of the Great Plains by Kay Young. The crust recipe is my own.

**Dandelion Quiche**

**Crust** (makes two small quiches)

- 2 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 1/2 cup cold shortening (I use mostly lard with a little butter for a flavorful, tender, and flaky crust)
- 5 – 7 tablespoons cold water

Mix flour and salt. Work shortening into flour mixture thoroughly, until mixture is consistent of peas. Add water a little at a time until dough forms. Turn out on lightly floured surface, form into two balls, flatten each with the heel of your hand, then cover tightly with plastic wrap and let set for an hour, or up to a day. Roll out each ball with a rolling pin and place into pie plate. Crimp edges and prick bottom (or cover bottom with dried legumes to keep it from puffing during baking). Pre-bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes. Cool crust.

**Filling** (for two 8-inch pies)

- 1 ½ cups grated Swiss or Gruyere cheese
- ½ cup sliced green onion tops
- ½ cup chopped mushrooms (white or baby bella)
- 6 strips bacon, chopped
- 2 tablespoons flour
- ½ cup milk
- 1 ½ cups prepared dandelion leaves (see following instructions)
- 1 ½ cups milk, half & half, or a 1/2 cup of evaporated milk (the evaporated milk gives the quiche a good, consistent texture)
- 3 large eggs
- Salt and pepper to taste

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees.

Divide the grated cheese between the two pie shells and set aside.

To prepare the greens: Wash thoroughly. Remove leaves from the root and stem. Chiffonade into 1/8 inch strips. Blanch in boiling water before cutting. The pies are good warm or cool. The mixture can also be baked in muffin papers to serve as an appetizer.

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- Salt and pepper to taste

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees.

Divide the grated cheese between the two pie shells and set aside.

To prepare the greens: Wash thoroughly. Remove leaves from the root and stem. Chiffonade into 1/8 inch strips. Blanch in boiling water for four minutes until bright green. Drain in colander. Pat dry.

I found that the greens were highly pungent and aromatic, so I altered the quiche preparation to allow ‘tuning’ to tone down the flavor a bit. Brown the bacon in a large saucepan. Remove bacon and set aside. Saute the onions and mushrooms in the bacon fat. Add the flour and mix. Add up to ½ cup milk to create a thick sauce and season to taste with salt and pepper. Add the prepared dandelion leaves, ½ cup at a time, tasting after each addition, until the flavor blends suit you.

Beat the eggs. Add the 1 ½ cup milk, eggs, bacon to the quiche mixture. Divide the quiche mixture between the two pie shells. Bake for 30 minutes until the quiche is a bit puffed, the surface is lightly browning, and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from the oven and allow to cool for 15 minutes or so before cutting. The pies are good warm or cool. The mixture can also be baked in muffin papers, cooled and stored in the freezer, and then warmed in the microwave for a quick breakfast, or baked in mini-muffin papers to serve as an appetizer.
Helping Your Garden So Your Garden Will Help You

Josie Harris

I came to gardening later in life, and while I was not a green thumb out of the gate, with time and patience, I have learned how beneficial, both mentally and physically, gardening is for me. When I first started gardening, there were two years where I spent a lot of money on plants, and then on watering them because the plants I bought were not accustomed to the long, hot summers. Needless to say, I ended up being more stressed out, which only added to my already existing anxiety. Once I realized the good sense of using only area-native plants, however, I finally found my gardening groove. I realized this method is much better for the plants, for my yard, and me; it keeps me enjoying this highly relaxing hobby. I now have a beautiful native plant garden with plants that love these long, hot summers and flourish even when it is dry, and I am much healthier for it! So, here are some tips I have learned that I would love to pass on to you!

When planting your garden, be sure to keep the environment in mind, avoid using chemicals, use plants that benefit wildlife in your area, and opt for sustainable resources. These actions will not only help the environment and allow your garden to prosper, but you will reap the healthy benefits of having the pleasurable hobby of gardening as an added bonus.

Protecting the Environment

Permaculture gardens are designed to be environmentally and wildlife friendly. Nearly every aspect of this kind of garden is created from sustainable energies and resources, and the garden itself is created to be a renewable resource. Permaculture gardeners grow nutritious food, eliminate waste production, conserve water and soil, use natural energy, and more. However, you do not have to go to the extent of permaculture gardening to promote a healthy environment. If you can provide the right elements in your garden, you will reap the healthy benefits of having the pleasurable hobby of gardening as an added bonus.

Organic Gardening

Another way to help the environment with your garden is to participate in organic gardening. Organic gardens are grown without the use of chemical sprays or powders. An easy first step is to plant heirloom plant varieties, which generally have greater resistance to garden pests because of genetic diversity.

In addition, use good bugs to fight off pesky bugs. Ladybugs eat aphids, scale, mites, and meal bugs. Praying mantises also eat unwanted bugs like beetles. You might also consider having a pet duck or two reside in your garden. Ducks love to eat insects and slugs. As an added bonus, you could also eat the eggs, or even hatch them!

Try planting companion plants, or trap plants, to lure insects away from plants you are trying to grow so that they eat the trap plants instead. For example, marigolds distract Japanese beetles from running herbs and vegetables. Likewise, garlic attracts slugs, and nasturtiums attract aphids. Other trap plants include aromatic herbs like thyme, rosemary, and mint, for example.

Remove and squash pesky bugs, especially larger ones like leaf roller caterpillars, or hold the plant over a container of soapy water and tap it to dislodge the pest into the water. Physical barriers, such as a row cover or a cabana, help to keep pests away. A chicken wire cover protects built plants like tulips from squirrels and other rodents. Crushed eggshells deter slugs, pillbugs, and earwigs.

Health Benefits

By protecting the environment with a healthy home garden, you will be rewarded with health benefits of your own. Carrying bags of soil, pushing a wheelbarrow, digging the soil, pulling weeds, and other gardening tasks provide a full body workout. A cardio benefit gained from these physical activities could cut the risk of a heart attack or stroke, and the exercise could burn many unneeded calories.

Gardening rewards the gardener with fruits, vegetables, flowers, and herbs that can be eaten and enjoyed. People who grow gardens may be more likely to consume the recommended daily servings of fruits and vegetables. And, in addition, they may also have a lower body mass index than non-gardeners.

Working in the garden provides stress relief and sensory stimulation, which can promote a positive mental outlook. Gardening can also support cognitive health, increase the brain volume, and possibly also reduce the risk of Alzheimer’s disease. Gardening has been found to improve the immune system, prevent or decrease the severity of certain ailments, increase hand-eye coordination and body strength, and boost self-esteem. These are just a few of the health benefits a gardener might experience with a regular gardening routine.

Even if your garden is limited to a tiny plot, or just small pots, you can still reap the health benefits of gardening by being environmentally responsible with your gardening approach. From what you plant, to using fertilizers and insecticides, educate yourself on how these actions will affect the environment and wildlife in your area. Once you start giving to the environment by practicing healthy, sustainable gardening, your garden will give back to you in innumerable beneficial and healthy ways!

Meet the New KNPS Board Member: Joan Pritchard

Joan Pritchard joined the KNPS board in January of 2017. She is a retired educational administrator, having completed her career as Assistant Superintendent of Schools in Goddard, Kansas. Her interest in the outdoors and in native plants led her to train in the first Kansas Master Naturalist Class. She has since worked with Great Plains Nature Center, Wichita Botanical Gardens, the Symphony in the Prairie, and other local area agencies to encourage children and adults to become involved in the natural environment. She is a resident of the urban area of Wichita, and her city residence is landscaped with native plants. She also owns a 1.30 acre farm in Cowley County, Kansas which contains thirty-eight acres of mixed grass native prairie. She is currently taking an inventory of her prairie, and is establishing a native plant garden on the property. She writes for her own website and blog, as well as for GRIT blog, and has published several articles, musings, and poetry to date.

KANSAS NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

MARIA CANNON

KANSAS NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

TECH NOTES

We all enjoy the wildflower tours that KNPS and our fellow nature-related organizations love to host each year. But, when you live in a region that does not have an event? Or, what if you host one and would like to boost your attendance? Information on the KNPS website can help with both of those issues. Check out our Guide to Hosting a Wildflower Tour by clicking here, and tour in the left column on the front page of our website. And, do not forget to submit your event to the KNPS online calendar for maximum exposure. — MICKY DELFELDER

Predators in the Garden…

— LORNA HABEGGER HARDER

Quietly they wait, preparing to attack — assassin bugs, tiger beetles, wolf spiders, soldier beetles, ambush bugs, pirate bugs, predatory wasps, and more! These are just a few examples of the often overlooked native beneficial invertebrates that control insect pests in our fields, yards, and gardens. Just as native plants are critical to the survival of pollinator populations, so they are also essential to maintaining healthy populations of a host of invertebrate predators. It is time to garden for predators!

Last February, KNPS members Dwight Platt, Kate Schmidt, and I attended an information-packed workshop, Habitat Planning for Beneficial Insects. Hosted at Kansas State University (KSU) and presented by the Xerces Society, topics included an introduction to the identification and natural history of some of our primary beneficial insects, methodologies for assessing and creating beneficial insect habitat, and KSU’s current research in biocontrol using predatory insects. Although insect pests represent less than one percent of all insect species, their presence can significantly reduce crop production in fields and gardens. Use of beneficial insects for pest control at all scales can reduce the harmful effects of chemical pest control (pollution, pest resistance, secondary outbreaks, and the loss of beneficial species). It can also reduce the need for nonnative biocontrol insects.

Native predatory insects range in size from microscopic to up to four inches in length; they are diverse, they are typically generalists (consuming a number of different pest species), and they devour many times their weight in prey. The inclusion of native plant strips and borders in fields and gardens provides stable habitat for these critters — supplemental food, alternate prey, and year-round shelter for all life cycle stages. As an example, firefly adults typically drink nectar, but larvae use their strong sickle-like jaws to feed on slugs, snails, caterpillars, and other soft-bodied insects. In midsummer, firefly eggs are laid just under the soil surface. The eggs hatch in late summer, and the larvae feed through the winter. In the following late spring, the larva pupate in moist leaf litter or soil, emerging in early summer as the lightening bugs we know so well. Native plant habitat helps conserve fireflies by providing shelter and food resources for firefly larvae and adults throughout the year.

Beyond pest control, native plant habitat for beneficial insects attracts pollinators, and subsequently birds and other wildlife that prey on insects. In addition, if native plant strips are integrated into waterways, roadsides, or stream filter strips, they reduce soil loss and improve water quality. Native plants may also replace weed species that harbor insect pests. Last, but not least, native plant habitats contribute to the beauty of our Kansas landscapes. Functioning to provide life-giving services that feed both body and soul, Kansas Native Plants simply rock!

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

Member Information

Name _______________________________________________________________________________________
Address _____________________________________________________________________________________
City/State ___________________________________________________________________________________
Zipcode _____________________________________________________________________________________
Phone _______________________________________________________________________________________
Email _______________________________________________________________________________________
County (if KS) ________________________________________________________________________________

Additional Donation: Legacy Fund $_________________ Scholarship Fund $_________________ General Fund $_________________

Membership Category

☐ Student $10.00
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☐ Family $30.00
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☐ Contributing $100.00
☐ Lifetime $500.00