

Prairie management concern

The following text is the body of a letter sent Dec. 20 on behalf of the board of the Missouri Native Plant Society to Bob Ziehmer, director of the Missouri Department of Conservation. After debate at the Dec. 5 MONPS board meeting in Columbia, Mo., the board asked Rex Hill, past president of MONPS, to write and send the letter. Copies were also sent to Deretha Darrow, MDC Wildlife Division chief; Malissa Underwood, MDC state botanist; and Mike Leahy, Natural Areas coordinator for MDC.



After listening to and reading presentations both in favor of and opposed to patch-burn grazing with cattle (PBGC) on Missouri prairie remnants, the Board of Directors of the Missouri Native Plant Society has reached the consensus view that we recommend this treatment be suspended on Missouri Natural Areas, including Niawathe, Pawnee and Taberville prairies, until further supporting data can warrant these actions. We also feel strongly that this type of management should not be applied to any additional natural areas. For example, Tingler Prairie in Howell County and Diamond Grove Prairie in Newton County.

We feel that, to this point, insufficient data have been presented to demonstrate either benefit or harm to the biological systems of these prairies and that these very few remaining precious resources could potentially be harmed by this treatment method. Many experienced natural resource professionals involved in the initial designation of these Natural Areas — persons who have spent their careers protecting these areas and bringing them to the attention of Missouri citizens — have expressed grave concerns about the continued use of PBGC on these areas. These misgivings cannot be ignored. We feel that although there may be some merit to this technique, there are many prairie sites not presently part of the Missouri Natural Areas program where PBGC can be employed and additional scientific evidence can be gathered to guide the use of this method in the future.

Our few remaining high quality prairie segments have suffered enough degradation from invasive exotic species and the severe fragmentation that has resulted from the pressures of human impact on the land. We feel that the many variables in the application of PBGC have not thoroughly been considered and that further irreparable damage may be done before enough is understood to control the parameters of this somewhat experimental technique.

We appreciate the opportunity to voice our concerns and your consideration of our recommendations.

Patch-burn grazing program in Springfield

A program on "Prairie Butterflies: Their Need for (and Vulnerability to) Ecological Management" is planned at 4 p.m. on Friday, April 1 at Missouri State University, Springfield.

Ray Moranz, researcher at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, will present the program, which is free and open to the public. It is part of the MSU Biology

Department Seminar Series

Moranz plans to explain how experiments with ecologically designed disturbances such as grazing and fire affected native butterflies, including the regal fritillary. Observation of nectaring plants was also a component of the study.

The lecture is scheduled for Room 3 in Temple Hall. No RSVP is required.

Officer and board nominations for 2011

The following slate of candidates has been submitted by the Nominating Committee for 2011.

Officers (terms from 2011-13):

President: Paul McKenzie

Vice-President: Malissa Underwood

Treasurer: Bob Siemer

Secretary: Ann Schuette

Two board member positions (terms from 2011-14):

Robin Kennedy

Allison Vaughn

Continuing board members (not up for election this year):

Sherry Leis (2009-12)

Ted Bolich (2009-12)

John Oliver (2010-13)

Bruce Schuette (2010-13)

Additional nominations for the two vacant board positions and the officers can be made through March 20. Please send them by e-mail or snail mail to:

Susan Farrington

551 Joe Jones Blvd

West Plains, MO 65775

Email: susan.farrington@mdc.mo.gov

(417) 255-9561 x 307

For more information about the duties of any office, please contact board President George Yatskievych, the person filling that position or Susan.

Calendar of Events

Hawthorn Chapter

Thursday, Feb. 17 — Lunch with Native Plant Enthusiasts! 11:30 a.m. at the Uprise Bakery (RagTag Theater) 10 Hitt St., just south of Broadway.

Friday, Feb. 18 at 7 p.m. — Douglas Tallamy will be speaking at Southern Illinois University at the Browne Auditorium in Parkinson Lab Building, 1259 Lincoln Drive.

Monday, March 14 — Regular membership meeting at 5:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Church, 2615 Shepard Blvd. Speaker TBA.

Thursday, March 17 — Lunch with Native Plant Enthusiasts! 11:30 am at the Uprise Bakery (RagTag Theater) 10 Hitt St., just south of Broadway.

Saturday, April 9 — Plant Sale at MU Bradford Farm 2 miles south on Rangeline. In spite of the early date, this sale is well attended. Please sign up with Paula to help with our booth.

Sunday, April 17 — Earth Day Festival (rain date 1 May) in Columbia next to Peace Park. Booth and plant sale. This is one of our best opportunities to connect with people. Please sign up with Paula to help with the booth.

Kansas City Chapter

Tuesday, March 1 at 7 p.m. — Regular meeting at the Discovery Center, 4750 Troost, Kansas City, Mo. Our speaker will be Professor Doug Martin speaking on Native Orchids. This will be a great introduction for our May field trip. If you have any questions, please contact Dan Rice at drice95875@aol.com or (816) 461-0206 (evenings).

Saturday, April 16 — Richter Holler Field Trip. Meet at the Walmart parking lot in Liberty, Mo., at 9 a.m. (going north on I-35, take the Liberty 152 exit, turn left and go to the second light and take the left onto the side street by Walmart). We will be hiking in semi-rugged terrain on the 96-acre property to view ephemeral wildflowers. Bring a sack lunch, water bottle, binoculars and, if you need it, a toiletry bag (no buildings on property). RSVP at least two days in advance by e-mailing lisa.richter@mdc.mo.gov or calling (816) 228-3766 by Thursday, April 14, at 5 p.m.

Osage Plains Chapter

March 21 — Monthly meeting with topic TBA. Henry County Library, 6:30 p.m. For information contact Emily Horner 660-351-2816, emily.horner3@yahoo.com

April 2 — Celebrate Arbor Day with a field trip to see the newly emerging leaves and spring ephemerals. Location TBA. Meet at the Henry County Library parking lot, 9 a.m. to carpool.

April 18 — Monthly meeting. "The Enduring and Entomological Side of Missouri's Milkweeds" by Casey Berks. Annual Elections to follow. Henry County Library, 6:30 p.m. For more information contact Emily Horner.

Ozarks Chapter

Tuesday March 15, 6:30 p.m. — Chapter meeting at the MDC Ozark Regional Office, 551 Joe Jones Blvd, West Plains. Local herbalist Sasha Daucus will share with us some of the best places in our area to find native herbs and edibles. For more information, contact Susan Farrington (contact info on back).

Tuesday April 19, 6 p.m. — For our regular chapter meeting, we will join the Master Naturalists training group for a presentation by Susan Farrington on prairies, including prairie plant identification and the history of our own local Tingler Prairie. *Note the earlier than normal starting time, meeting as usual at the MDC Ozark Regional Office.

Saturday April 23, 8 a.m. — Field trip to Tingler Prairie with the Master Naturalists training group.

Perennis Chapter

Feb. 19, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. — Ste Genevieve Winery Tour. We will meet at Ste. Genevieve Winery (245 Merchant, downtown Ste. Genevieve) at 11 AM. Following a tasting of fruit wines, we will proceed to Chaumette, Cave, Charleville and Crown Valley wineries throughout the day. Picnic lunches are encouraged, as some wineries only offer light snacks. Please contact Kent Fothergill (kent@csr-inc.com) or Kelly Tindall (Tindallk@missouri.edu) by Feb. 16 if you plan on joining us. Wineries prefer to be notified in advance of the arrival of larger groups.

March 19, 10 a.m.-noon — Presentation on Mushrooms by Chris Crabtree at the Cape Girardeau Conservation Nature Center. Chris serves as the Natural Resource Steward at Big Oak Tree State Park and is widely recognized as one of Missouri's most accomplished mycologists. Please contact the Nature Center for more details: (573) 290-5218.

St. Louis Chapter

March 23 at 7:30 p.m. — Bruce Schuette of the Missouri Department of Conservation will present on Graham Cave. Program to be held at Powder Valley Nature Center, 11715 Cragwold Road, Kirkwood.

April 27 at 7:30 p.m. — Danelle Haake of the Litzinger Road Ecology Center will present on ecosystem restoration at the Center and some of her work with the River Des Peres Watershed Coalition. Program to be held at Powder Valley Nature Center, 11715 Cragwold Road, Kirkwood.

Southwest Missouri Chapter

Thursday, Feb. 17 — Chapter's monthly meeting, 6 p.m. at the Springfield Botanical Center. Topic: "Fire Ecology Amidst Lions, Giraffes, Elephants and Rhinos" presented by Sherry Leis, fire ecologist for the National Park Service.

Thursday, March 17 — Chapter's monthly meeting, 6 p.m. at the Springfield Botanical Center. Topic: Butterfly Gardening with Native Plants presented by Rose Atchley, Scott Cunningham, and Bill Roston.

Spring field trip to the Joplin area

Agenda

Friday night, April 29

■ In the Old Izaak Walton League Lodge (renovated in 1991) at Walter Woods Conservation Area in Joplin. The program meeting is planned for 7-8:30 p.m. Doors are planned to open at 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 30 field trips

■ Meet at the Joplin Super 8 north of the intersection of I-44 and Rangeline Road (Business Highway 71, Exit 8B). The address is 2830 E. 36 St. E. 36 Street is between Route FF (E. 32 St.) and I-44. We plan to meet in front of the lobby at 8 a.m.

■ Field trip in the morning will be on the trails at Walter Woods from about 8:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. and at Wildcat Glade Natural Area from about 10:30 a.m. to noon. For those who are driving in Saturday morning, we will meet at Walter Woods at 8:30.

■ We plan to eat lunch at the picnic tables at the Audubon Center.

■ After lunch we will spend the afternoon at Diamond Grove Prairie.

Saturday night Board of Directors meeting

■ Planned for 7 p.m. at the Old Izaak Walton League Lodge at Walter Woods Conservation Area. Doors are scheduled to open at 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, May 1 Field Trip

■ Wah-Sha-She Prairie in Jasper County

Directions to Walter Woods Conservation Area

■ **Directions from Joplin:** At I-44's exit 6, go south on Highway 86 about 1¼ miles to Redings Mill.

Cross the bridge and turn left on Highway NN. Drive about 1 mile and turn right on Dutch Elm Road. Drive about three-quarters of a mile.

Walter Woods Conservation Area is the area on the left with the stone wall. Turn at the stone gate entrance and drive to the lodge.

■ **Directions from Neosho:** Drive north out of Neosho on U.S. Highway 171. Stay on 171 where it turns into Highway 86.

Take the new Highway 71 underpass and continue on 86, drive about 2½ miles and turn north on NN Highway.

Go about 5½ miles to the junction on NN and P Highways. Drive 2 miles west on P Highway.

Turn right onto Eland Road and drive about 3 miles north. Walter Woods will be on your right.

Turn in at the stone entrance gate, the one with the Walter Woods welcome sign.

For those with GPS, the address is 5265 Eland Road, Joplin, MO 64804

Directions to the Joplin Super 8

■ **From the North:** Range Line Road Business Highway 71 South, turn right at the Waffle House. The property is behind Denny's.

■ **From the South:** Range Line Road Business Highway 71 north, turn left at the Waffle House. The property is behind Denny's.

■ **From the East:** I-44 West to exit 8B, turn north on Range Line Road Business Highway 71 North, turn left at the Waffle House. The property is behind Denny's.

■ **From the West:** I-44 East to exit 8 A, turn north on Range Line Road Business Highway 71 North, turn left at the Waffle House. The property is behind Denny's.

Alternate hotels: if you Google "JoplinHotelspy.com" it will give you numerous alternatives and prices. In the same vicinity of the Super 8 are: Baymont, Days Inn, Fairfield Inn, Hampton Inn, Holiday Inn and La Quinta, depending on your budget. You are responsible for making your own hotel reservations — no block of rooms has been set aside.

Directions to Wildcat Glade: Wildcat Glade Natural Area is 1.1 miles south of Joplin on Highway 86 to the Shoal Creek Bridge. Cross the bridge, then turn west immediately on Castle Drive and go 2.5 miles.

Directions to Wildcat Park (Missouri Audubon) for lunch on Saturday: From I-44 in Joplin take Highway 86 south (exit 4) one mile to Riviera Drive and turn west into the area.

Directions to Diamond Prairie: Note: getting to Route V from Joplin can be tricky so beware of directions. The prairie is about 4 miles west-northwest of Diamond on Route V, then 1.25 miles north on Lark Road. From Joplin take Business Route 71 (Exit 8A) south (not main Route 71, which is exit 11 and not Alt. 71 which is also Route 59 and Exit 18A) and then turn left (north on Route 71) and then turn right (east) on Route V and then north on Lark Road about 1.25 mi. We will meet at the parking lot off of Lark Road around 1 p.m. If you get to Diamond going east on Route V, you missed Lark Road. Lark Road. is the first gravel road east of Kodiak Road.

Directions to Wah-Sha-She Prairie: Wah-Sha-She Prairie is north of Asbury in NW Jasper County on Route M approximately three-fourths mile east of Highway 171. From Super 8: go north on Rangeline to Route FF (32 St.); turn left on 32 Street; turn right on Route 43; go north about 6 miles and turn left on Route 171; go about 7 miles north to Asbury; proceed 2 miles north on Route 171 and turn right (east) on Base Line Blvd., which is also Route M. Go about half mile. The prairie is on north side of road. For individuals not staying at Super 8, folks will also meet at parking lot at the prairie around 8:30-8:45 a.m.

Hawthorn Chapter

Submitted by John White, chapter representative

The first Hawthorn chapter meeting of the year was held January 18, at the Unitarian Church, Columbia, Mo.

The following officers were elected for the next two-year term:

Vice President, Nancy Langworthy;

Treasurer, John George;

State Representative, John White.

Officers with one year remaining in their term are Vanessa Melton, president and Ann Wakeman, secretary.

Plans were discussed for developing a Hawthorn Award, which would be awarded to nonmembers only, in recognition of their contributions to native plant conservation, such as wildflower gardens and restoration projects. Suggestions for field trip destinations and dates were discussed. None have been scheduled to date but will be in the May-June *Petal Pusher*.

Blazing Star Award

The Hawthorn Chapter Blazing Star Award was presented to Becky Erickson. Congratulations to Becky. The following was stated on her award:

"The Hawthorn Chapter of the Missouri Native Plant Society thanks Becky Erickson for her ongoing zeal as seed collector and plant propagator, provider of plants and hours of work at our booths and our outings, for her energy and commitment in establishing the Stadium Blvd. site.

We value her dedication to botanizing, fighting invasive nonnatives, and to supporting the chapter's school grant program. We respect her willingness to share what she knows and openness to learning more whether of local ecotypes or prairie habitat; and we appreciate her forthright acceptance of the role of newsletter producer."

Several members attended a very detailed and informative Propagation Workshop on Jan. 30 at the home of Nancy Brakhage. The workshop was organized and instructed by Becky Erickson. Everyone enjoyed snacks and coffee. Thanks to Becky for her time and effort and to Nancy for her hospitality.

Big thanks to Doug Miller for reviving the website.

Kansas City Chapter

Submitted by Daniel Rice, chapter representative

The Kansas City Chapter had its first meeting of the new year on Jan. 4 at the Discovery Center in Kansas City. The first order of business was the election of officers. With Dave Winn agreeing to serve one more year as President, the slate was complete and the election was by acclamation. Congratulations to our officers for 2011!

President Dave Winn

Vice-President Lance Jesse

Secretary Lisa Richter

Treasurer Ed O'Donnell

Chapter Representative Dan Rice

We also had a brief discussion on patch-burn grazing, and the pros and cons of this form of management. We all agreed that more research should be performed to determine the long-term

effects this form of management would have on Missouri prairies.

Our final task was to set dates for chapter field trips and plant sales. In April we will be visiting the Richter farm to see spring wildflowers. In May we will be visiting with Doug Keever at his farm in northern Missouri to see various species of native orchid. June will be the annual mead's milkweed count at the Winn prairie in Cass County. Our final field trip will be in October to see the late fall natives and leaf color at Maple Woods Natural Area in Kansas City North.

We will also have two plant sales in May. The first will be at the Powell Gardens Springfest, and the second will be on May 21 in Kansas City. Watch the Chapter Newsletter for details and times of all events.

Our next meeting will be on March 1 at the Discovery Center in Kansas City. We will have Professor Doug Martin speaking on the topic of native orchids. This will be a great opportunity to learn about the native orchids we will be seeing on our May field trip.

That's all for now from the Kansas City Chapter. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at 816-461-0206 or drice95875@aol.com.

Osage Plains Chapter

Submitted by Sharon Warnaca, chapter representative

Nothing to report at this time.

Ozarks Chapter

Submitted by Susan Farrington, chapter representative

We take the months of December and January off, so there are no chapter notes to relay at this time.

Perennis Chapter

Submitted by Allison Vaughn, chapter representative

The Perennis Chapter winter meeting was postponed in January and is rescheduled during the Ste. Genevieve Wine Tour field trip at 11 a.m. on Feb. 19.

Among the items for discussion at the meeting will be the chapter's involvement in local native plant sales, outreach and education efforts, and potential field trips, including a potential joint field trip with the Illinois Native Plant Society. Plans are under way to plant native milkweeds for distribution at local outreach events.

We will discuss the chapter's involvement in these and other events. Members are encouraged to bring suggestions for spring and summer field trips, so please bring your calendars.

Allison Vaughn plans to give a lunchtime presentation on the history of native wild grape cultivation in the Eastern U.S. If you are unable to come to the meeting, feel free to submit any field trip suggestions (with preferred time of year) to Kent Fothergill (kent@csr-inc.com) or Allison Vaughn (allisonjv@yahoo.com).

St. Louis Chapter

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From the previous page

Submitted by Pat Harris, chapter representative

The St. Louis Chapter's first meeting of the year was Jan. 26. Dr. Brad Oberle, research associate at Missouri Botanical Garden, was our presenter for the evening. He talked to us about climate change and plant biodiversity in general and specifically how it affects the genus *Dodecatheon* (shooting star).

Brad focused on three species: *Dodecatheon meadia*, *D. frenchii* and *D. amethystinum*, all which occur in Missouri.

Dodecatheon meadia is the generalist — it is widespread and can grow in many different habitats. Its range overlaps the other two, which are both cliff endemics. *D. amethystinum* prefers moist limestone cliff habitats, and *D. frenchii* prefers moist sandstone cliffs.

He discussed the difference between tops and bottoms of cliffs and how this resembles climate change. The top is exposed and drier, while the bottom can be cooler and moister. As climate warms after an ice age, the rarer plants, which may have been more widespread, become isolated in the moister, cool habitats. The generalist can now expand into many different habitats. The responses to climate change are highly complex.

Southwest Missouri Chapter

Submitted by Brian Edmond, chapter representative

Our December meeting, the last to be held at the Springfield Conservation Nature Center, featured Matt Curry, Private Land Conservationist with the Missouri Department of Conservation. Matt discussed methods of eliminating nonnative plant species in favor of more hardy and wildlife-friendly native species.

In particular, he discussed the elimination of the dreaded fence pasture and subsequent seeding with native prairie plants. There are so many different methods for conversion and so many different experts that it seems like almost anything you do will be a good practice or a bad practice, depending upon your expert and your particular situation. In the end, we all agreed that pretty much anything green in November just isn't very attractive and should be eliminated. (Unless it's moss or liverworts or ferns or money. Then, it's OK.)

Unfortunately, our January meeting was cancelled because of weather. A rather sudden snowstorm dumped a few inches of snow Thursday morning and roads still weren't all clear by the afternoon. In the process of deciding whether or not to cancel the meeting, we agreed to use the method that many people in the area use for their group meetings. That is, if Springfield Public Schools are cancelled, we'll plan to also cancel our meeting. Otherwise, plan to be there!

In addition to our three garden responsibility areas (wildflower, native shrub, rain garden) at the botanical Center, we're receiving a donation of shade-tolerant plants from a private collection.

Included in this collection are at least six species of ferns and many typical spring wildflowers. These include bluebells, Dutchman's breeches, jack-in-the-pulpit, trout lilies, many trillium species, baneberry, heuchera, uvularia and violets. So in the near future we will need to develop a design plan for the fern and shade garden at the Botanical Center.

Non-MONPS field trip offered to learn about managing prairies

Mike Leahy, natural areas coordinator for the Missouri Department of Conservation, has offered to lead a field trip to Taberville Prairie Natural Area and Wah'Kon-Tah Prairie Conservation Area on Saturday, June. 25.

Leahy intends for the field trip to be an opportunity to learn about prairie ecology and view a number of different prairie management techniques, including prescribed fire, haying, and the currently contentious patch-burn grazing with cattle. Attendees will view a variety of prairie sites being managed with these techniques, including sites that have been patch-burn grazed in the past, those receiving this management and sites without this management.

The field trip crew is planned to meet at 8 a.m. on June 25 at America's Best Value Inn in Nevada, Mo. Call (417) 667-6777 to make hotel reservations. The hotel is just west of the intersection of Austin Blvd. and Highway 71.

Dress for the prairie and bring water.

An indoor discussion and presentation may be scheduled for the afternoon at the Conservation Department's office in El Dorado Springs, Mo.

Please RSVP by June 20 at Mike.Leahy@mdc.mo.gov or (573) 522-4115 x 3192.

Bryophytes workshop planned

Stephen Timme is offering a free two-day workshop on the identifying bryophytes in southwest Missouri.

On Saturday, April 2, the workshop will cover basic characteristics for the identification of common species. All needed materials will be provided. A general key to species will be available for use during the workshop and for the participants to keep.

On Sunday, April 3, a field trip will be offered for participants to see a variety of species in the field and will cover field characteristics.

The group is scheduled to meet at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday for coffee and pastries in 305 Heckert/Wells Hall at Pittsburg State University in Pittsburg, Kan. The workshop is scheduled to start at 9 a.m.

Anyone interested must pre-register by e-mailing Timme at botanydoctor@hotmail.com or stimme@pittstate.edu.

Timme is professor of biology and director of the Sperry Herbarium at Pittsburg State. He has published "Wildflowers of Southeast Kansas and Counties of Surrounding States" and three other books.

New members

- Phillip Mohebalian, Columbia
- Lillian Collins, Brentwood
- Eileen & Benjamin Hulsey, St. Louis
- Karen Richardson, Atlanta, GA

Eastertime Botanical Musings

By Kevin Bley
St. Louis Chapter

With Easter fast approaching, Christians and plant lovers around the world celebrate a new birth. Easter marks the beginning of the church's calendar and the beginning of the growing season. With this in mind, a couple "Old Testament plants" and "New Testament plants" were chosen to reflect upon.



Jacob's ladder-
Polemonium reptans

Blooms: April-June

Growing to about 15 inches tall, this phlox species forms alternate leaves with each leaf having 3-13 leaflets resembling a ladder. It is found through much of the state in mesic woods. The clustered flowers are comprised of five light blue petals that form a bell shape.



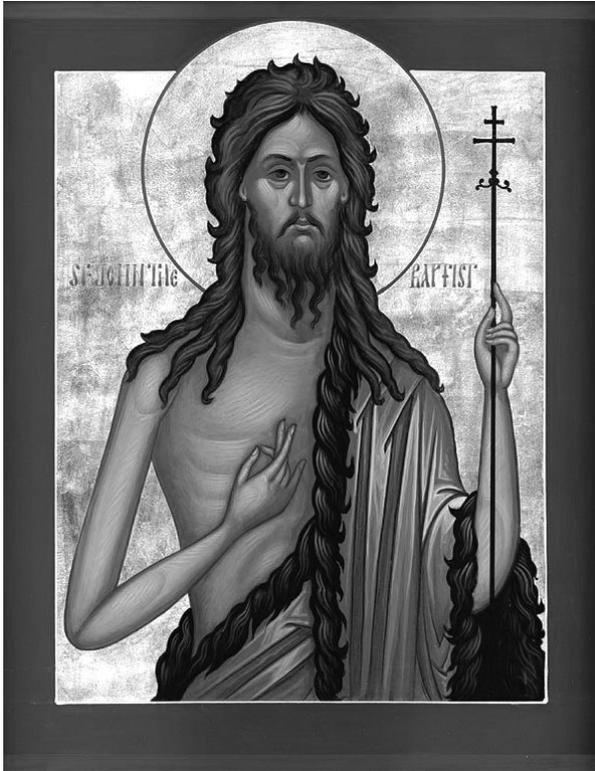
Adam and Eve (aka putty root)- *Aplectrum hyemale*

Blooms: May-June



This orchid can be found throughout much of the Ozarks, but primarily in the eastern half. It prefers the moist conditions associated with wooded creek and ravine bottoms. Good luck finding it with leaves and flowers simultaneously. Adam-and-Eve will wait until fall to send up a solitary leaf that will overwinter until the following spring. When spring arrives, the leaf will wither while the new stem, sometimes reaching 20 inches, emerges from an underground corm. 8-20 yellowish purple flowers soon follow. The species gets its common name by annually forming a new corm that is connected by a thin branch to the previous year's corm. The term putty root comes from the corm's glue-like properties.

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Spotted St. John's wort- *Hypericum punctatum*

Blooms: June- September

It is scattered across the state in a wide variety of habitats including moist prairies, fields, stream edges, rocky woods and roadsides. The stems grow sturdily up to 3 feet with opposite leaves and yellow flowers. Check the undersides of the leaves, sepals and petals for small black spots. The origin of the common name comes from its flowering near June 24th, St. John's feast day. Traditionally used to fend off evil, Hypericum is derived from the Greek words hyper (above) and eikon (picture) for the practice of hanging plants over a religious icon in the house on St John's day.



St. Andrew's cross- *Hypericum hypericoides*

Blooms: July-October

You can find this relative of St. John's wort in a broad variety of acidic Ozark and border habitats, but it does not survive winter well north of the Missouri River. It forms a small shrub 6-30 inches high with many sprawling branches. The flowers are yellow, but not abundant or showy. It has 2 large sepals and 2 small sepals. The petals form an oblique cross resembling the cross of St. Andrew, where it gets its common name.



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Summers, Bill. "Missouri Orchids." Jefferson City, MO: Missouri Department of Conservation, 1996.

Yatskievych, George. Steyermark's "Flora of Missouri" Vol. 1. Jefferson City, MO: Missouri Department of Conservation, 1999.

Yatskievych, George. Steyermark's "Flora of Missouri" Vol. 2. St. Louis, MO: Missouri Botanical Garden Press, 2006.

My love affair with Asclepias

By Casey Burks
Osage Chapter

My first memory of knowing that the common milkweed belonged to the genus *Asclepias* was only a few years ago. Of course, like children the world over, I had observed monarch butterfly larvae chomping away on the leaves. Adult monarch butterflies derive nectar from many different flowers, such as purple coneflowers, bee balm, butterfly bush and milkweed flowers, but monarch caterpillars develop solely on milkweed plant tissue.

In school I learned about the protective quality of the compounds in the milky sap the larvae ingested from the milkweed. A bird that dined on a monarch soon spit it out and, when presented one later, refused to eat it. I admired monarchs for their feats of migration to and from a certain mountainous area of Mexico — some of them flying over two thousand miles.

The name *Asclepias* comes from Asclepius, the Greek god of medicine and healing. Many parts of the milkweed plant have been used for medicinal purposes. However, as with many compounds, a minute amount may be beneficial but too much can be poisonous.

The tall, common milkweeds (*Asclepias syriaca*) with the large leaves I saw growing in clumps along roadside ditches seemed totally adequate to handle any migrating female Monarch needing to oviposit her eggs.

It didn't occur to me that there might be other milkweeds available.

One day a co-worker and I were walking a trail and she pointed to a plant with beautiful deep purple flowers and said "Oh look, there's a swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)."

It was a defining moment to me to realize this small, narrow leaved plant was also a milkweed.

From that point on it became almost an obsession to find other species. The difficulty in finding other varieties arose from their varying habitats and bloom times.

On our Henry County Missouri acreage, in early spring, I located over 50 lovely *Asclepias quadrifolia* scattered throughout the woods. I placed flags beside each of them and hope they are all there again this spring.

Also in April/May, along roadside rocky ditches, there were patches of low spreading green spider milkweed (*Asclepias viridis*) with purple flowers.

Later in the summer I scouted for seed pods but the ditches had been sprayed with an herbicide. The plants had turned black and no pods were to be found. Next year I plan on placing a protective cover on several blooms prior to spray time.

I found the short, whorled milkweed (*Asclepias verticillata*) with its pine needle-type leaves and small white flowers along a gravel road in July.

A short walk down the road by a culvert there were several gorgeous purple milkweeds (*Asclepias purpurescens*) blooming in July.

In August, I noticed *Asclepias hirtella* and *Asclepias viridiflora* growing in our neighbor's horse pasture. They were more than happy for me to dig up any of these plants so their horses wouldn't eat them. The roots were incredibly deep in the rock hard dirt but over several days I transplanted a few of each to my butterfly garden. They quickly died but I continued watering and finally saw a small shoot come up from several planting spots before frost set in.

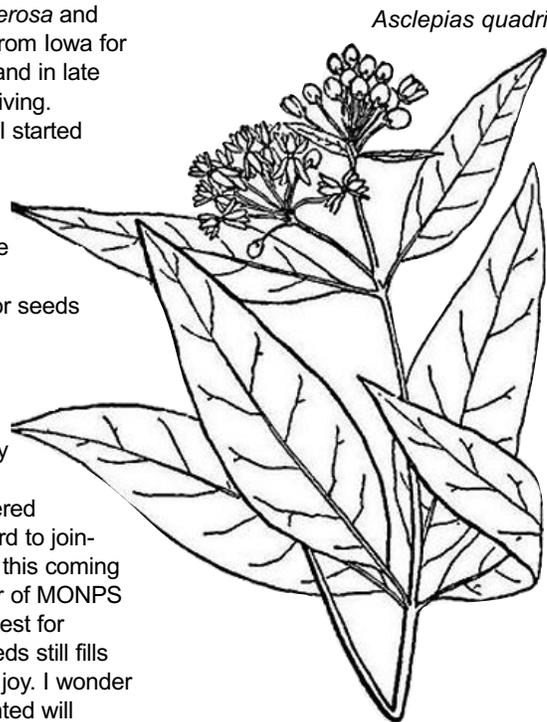
I had brought *Asclepias tuberosa* and *Asclepias curassavica* plants from Iowa for my Missouri butterfly garden, and in late summer of 2010 they were thriving.

In September and October, I started noticing monarch larvae of all sizes chowing down leaves and flowers. In a few days, 26 larvae had totally defoliated the milkweed plants, leaving only sticks. I will need to send off for seeds of these to grow in 2011.

There are so many other species of milkweed I hope to see and perhaps obtain seed to grow and add to my butterfly gardens. I have hopes of someday viewing the endangered Mead's milkweed. I look forward to joining the Mead's milkweed walk this coming spring with our Osage Chapter of MONPS president Emily Horner. My quest for knowledge of different milkweeds still fills me with such enthusiasm and joy. I wonder how many milkweeds I've planted will come up this spring.



Asclepias verticillata



Asclepias quadrifolia

Wildflower video

A 30-year veteran nature and wildlife photographer for Kansas Wildlife and Parks has created 30-minute video on Midwestern wildflowers that he is selling.

Mike Blair of Pratt, Kan., shot the video primarily in Kansas. The video describes wildflower growth and role in nature. He says it features by seasonal sequence more than hundred named species. The video sells for \$29.95, which includes tax and shipping.

Blair also offers a book he authored, "A Kansas Year," published by the University of Kansas Press in 2009. It has 240 pages and 150 photographs.

He can be reached at mikeblair53@gmail.com or call (620) 672-2621.

Kansas City WildLands

By Daniel Rice

Kansas City Chapter Representative

Just a note about what Kansas City WildLands has been doing.

Nov. 6 was the annual Death to Honeysuckle Day. There was lots of participation, and lots of honeysuckle was taken down.

Dec. 4 KC WildLands' annual cedar tree event, this year at Fleming Park. There were about 400 visitors to the event, with 50 volunteers on hand to help them out, and we raised about \$3,400 in donations.

Visitors removed more than 175 cedars from this grassland site. They received a tree tag at sign-in that explained the effects of too many cedars on grasslands, the historic role of fire in grassland health and this event's help with conservation efforts.

All this occurring on a bitterly cold, windy day!

That's the fall wrap-up for now.

The deadline for MONPS award nominations is April 1

The MONPS Awards Committee seeks nominations of people who have supported the preservation of Missouri's flora. MONPS offers five awards:

- Erna Eisendrath Memorial Education Award, recognizing individuals who, through teaching, writing, or other activity have conveyed to others a significant appreciation and knowledge of Missouri's native flora.

- Arthur Christ Research Award, recognizing an individual's significant contribution in furthering the knowledge of Missouri flora.

- Plant Stewardship Award, recognizing an individual or organization for the preservation of important elements of Missouri's flora through purchase, registry, and/or management practice.

- The John E. Wylie Award, recognizing individuals who have provided exceptional service to the Society.

- Julian A. Steyermark Award, the society's highest award, given to an individual who has made outstanding contributions to any and all aspects of Missouri botany.

The deadline for nominations is April 1.

Nominations should contain the full name of the nominee and the name of the person making the nomination, and they should set forth the contributions of the individual or organization that merits recognition.

Award recipients need not be members of MONPS.

Please submit nominations to Awards Committee Chairwoman Nadia Navarrete-Tindall.

2116 Grant Lane

Columbia, MO 65203

navarrete-tindalln@lincolnu.edu

INFORMATION ON JOINING THE MISSOURI NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

SOCIETY DUES

(Chapter dues additional)
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 Regular\$10
 Contributing\$20
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CHAPTER DUES

Columbia\$6
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\$_____ Contribution for student research award (Hudson Fund)

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- Easter botanical musings

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