

P E T A L P U S H E R

July-August 2026 Newsletter of the Missouri Native Plant Society Volume 41 No.4

“... to promote the enjoyment, preservation, conservation, restoration, and study of the flora native to Missouri.”

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Plants of Dolomite and Limestone Glades

by Susan Farrington. Photos by the author, except where indicated

Glades are natural openings in an open woodland landscape, featuring bedrock that is close to the surface (the soil is typically less than 12” deep), often with prominent rock outcrops. Some glades feature seeps that are quite moist in late winter/early spring, but which typically dry out rapidly in the summer heat. Glades can be unforgivingly hot and dry environments in July and August.

Calcareous substrate glades are by far the most common type of glade in Missouri (most are dolomite, but some are limestone). Acidic substrate glades include the more common igneous glades, followed by sandstone glades and the rarest of all, chert glades.

The plants you find on dolomite and limestone glades are an interesting mix of plants you might find on prairies or in southwestern US desert-type communities, plus a few you might also find in our woodlands. Although there are plants we call “glade indicator plants,” generally I want to see a number of these before I declare that it’s a glade for sure.

There are exceptions: Missouri black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia missouriensis*) seems to ONLY occur on dolomite glades. (You might spy it on a prairie, but if so, it will be on a rocky outcrop that is a “glade inclusion” within a prairie landscape.) The tricky

thing about this plant is you need to be able to distinguish it from its cousin, the common black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*), which will grow anywhere and is an



Missouri black-eyed Susan, photo by Alicia Mullarkey

indicator of nothing in particular. *Rudbeckia hirta* has a larger bloom which typically appears late May into June. It grows rapidly from seed and is not a long-lived perennial. It does not spread by underground roots. *Rudbeckia missouriensis* has narrower leaves in general, has smaller flowers, often in clusters of 2-4 and doesn't bloom until at least July to early September. It spreads by underground roots, so it typically appears as a colony. During droughty periods of late summer, it wilts up and looks pathetic, but just as soon as rains return, it perks up and blooms before it gets dry again.

Another exception is Bush's skullcap, *Scutellaria bushii*, which grows on dolomite glades. It is an Ozark endemic, meaning it is found only in the Ozarks of Missouri and Arkansas, and it is more common in southcentral Missouri than anywhere else. Its purple and white flowers are very showy in late May. All skullcap species have opposite leaves and can be identified by the "tractor seat" shaped calyx that holds their tubular blossoms and which goes on to hold its seeds. Bush's skullcap can be distinguished from its more common cousins by its small narrow lance-shaped leaves.

A plant usually found only on calcareous glades is narrow-leaved bluet (*Houstonia nigricans*). This species is distinguished from its



Bush's skullcap



Houstonia nigricans

woodland cousins by its thick branching foliage and white blooms in the middle of summer. *Houstonia longifolia*, by contrast, blooms in spring in our woodlands and has a much less dense, airy habit.

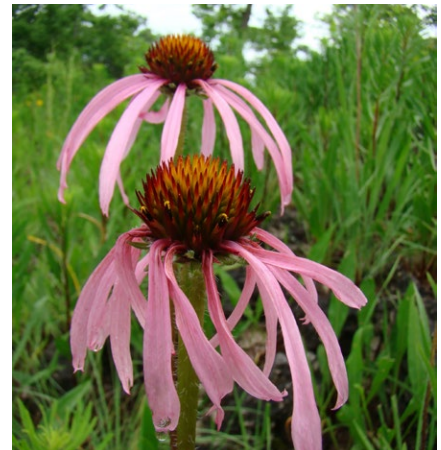
Glade coneflowers, *Echinacea simulata*, are usually true to their name, occurring on calcareous glades. But you will occasionally spy them in woodlands as well, and they're said to occur on prairies, although I've not noted that myself. They are very similar to their prairie cousins, pale-purple coneflowers (*Echinacea pallida*). The only sure way to distinguish them is to see their pollen, which is visible typically only in the morning for a couple of weeks. *Echinacea simulata* has yellow pollen, while *E. pallida* has white pollen.

One indicator of a high quality glade (or prairie) is purple prairie clover, *Dalea purpurea*. Its dainty foliage has a lovely fruity scent when crushed and its purple blossoms in June attract many pollinators, including some specialist plasterer bees (*Colletes* species).



Katydid on purple prairie clover

A very showy glade species is Missouri evening primrose, *Oenothera macrocarpa*. Its huge yellow blossoms open at dusk, fading by mid-morning, and thus rely on nocturnal pollinators, including sphinx moths, hummingbird moths and clearwing moths. A bee does not have a long enough proboscis to effectively pollinate these huge flowers. Its large papery fruits are especially interesting with their four wings and 8 chambers of seeds. These are readily found on the ground through winter into spring.



Echinacea simulata showing a little yellow pollen

Prairie dock (*Silphium terebinthinaceum*) is found on glades, prairies, fens and



Left to Right: *Oenothera macrocarpa* rosette, flower and fruit

even roadsides. But it is always associated with dolomite. Its roots run very deep, bringing moisture from far below to the leaf surface where it is transpired. Hold a prairie dock leaf between both your palms on the hottest day of summer and you will feel that the leaves are distinctly cool to the touch.



Prairie dock flowers

Blazing stars (*Liatris* species) are found in many habitats, but the most likely ones to be found on a calcareous glade include rough blazing star (*Liatris aspera*) and cylindrical blazing star (*Liatris cylindracea*).

Bird's foot violets (*Viola pedata*) provide a nice splash of color very early in spring on calcareous glades, providing food for spangled fritillary butterfly caterpillars, which feed exclusively on violet species.



Prairie dock leaves



Liatris aspera

Hairy wild petunias (*Ruellia humilis*) bloom in late May-June on our glades. These hairiest of the wild petunias are found on glades, prairies and sometimes woodlands, while their cousins, *Ruellia pedunculata* and *R. strepens* grow in our woodlands and our more mesic forests, respectively.

Several milkweed species are found on calcareous glades, particularly green milkweed (*Asclepias viridiflora*), a species that blooms in July with relatively subdued downturned green flowers on highly variable plants with leaves that range from narrow to quite wide. Showier species include spider milkweed (*Asclepias viridis*), named for the crab spiders that like to hide in the flowers, ready to ambush prospective pollinators, and butterfly milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*).

One of the more unusual glade plants is shaggy dwarf morning-glory, *Evovulus nuttallianus*. This tiny plant has fuzzy silver narrow leaves and the tiniest little light purple morning glory flowers you've ever seen, no bigger than your pinky fingernail at most.



Viola pedata



Ruellia humilis

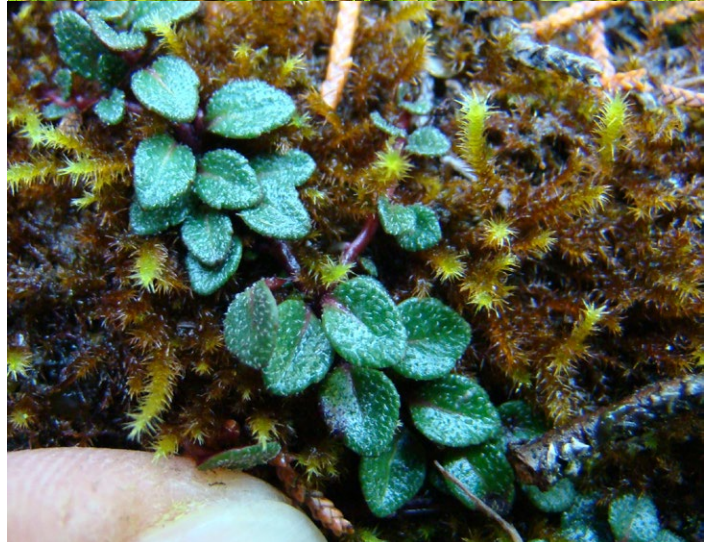


Asclepias viridiflora with red milkweed beetle

Right: *Clinopodium arkansanum*, photo by Steve Turner



Right: *Clinopodium arkansanum* fall runners



Evovulus nuttallianus

In seepy areas on glades you might find calamint, *Clinopodium arkansanum*. You're more likely to notice this tiny plant by the strong minty aroma it releases as you walk on it. Its spring and summer leaves are very narrow and linear, but in the late summer and fall it sends out runners along the ground with small round leaves that overwinter.

This is just a brief introduction to SOME of the plants on a calcareous glade. Vegetative monitoring shows us that glades are some of our most diverse habitats, with many different species occurring in each square meter. The many species of grasses that occur on glades would require another article all of their own.

Each issue, the Petal Pusher attempts to coordinate a theme for all of the articles as sort of a fun way to get information to you, the reader. This issue's theme is "Plants of Dolomite glades." Enjoy!

2026 MONPS Awards

Michael Laschober was awarded the Erna Eisendrath Memorial Education Award, which recognizes individuals who, through teaching, writing, or other activity, have conveyed to others a significant appreciation and knowledge of Missouri's native flora.

In early 2020, Michael Laschober recruited a group of schoolteachers who were interested in going on Botany Walks together. But days before their first scheduled walk, the COVID-19 virus brought all of St. Louis to a halt. A year later, Michael tried again and was able to recruit another group of teachers. On the first Sunday of April 2021, they set out botanizing in Castlewood State Park – wearing surgical masks! Rain or shine, the summer Botany Walks have continued to this day (thankfully without the masks). His group, [St. Louis Nature Students \(STLNS\)](#), has grown and has progressed from one walk, repeated on both Saturday and Sunday, to two walks in different locations on weekend days. He documents the group's activities on his website, [St. Louis Nature Students](#), provides illustrated botany lessons on [floral structure](#) and [plant families](#), and in detailed reports shared with attendees. Others have also benefited from his efforts, including the WGNSS Monday Botany walks participants. Michael is a faithful attendee on those walks as well and has provided plant lists and documentation for many of our trips ([example](#)). Few people have done more in the past few years to convey their appreciation of Missouri's native flora to others than Michael! The links above for examples of his hard work and of his passion for this project. He is truly deserving of this award.

MONPS' Education Award is named in honor of Erna Eisendrath, author of [Missouri Wildflowers of the St. Louis area](#).



John Oliver and Hilary Haley (via FaceTime) present the MONPS Education Award to Michael

Poetry Corner

My Dilemma with Poison Plants

by Kathy Morris

I think that I shall ne'er foresee
The poison plant that conquers me.

A rhyme of three and five falls short
Of dealing with the varied sort.

A fragrant *Rhus*, three leaves to hold
But all three same, so safe as gold.
The odors range from foul to zest
And berries red confirm it's blest.

A sumac, poison, with red stem
Leaves more than six, beware, no gem!
With smooth-edged leaves and berries white
Eschew this boggy bush's bite.

What rhyme exists to sort apace
The Hemlock and the Queen Anne's Lace?
The legs are hairy of the queen –
With Hemlock purple blotches seen.

But now it's time for my repast
Wild onion has the cook amassed.
A new array with scents of grass
No layers, it is quite the lass!

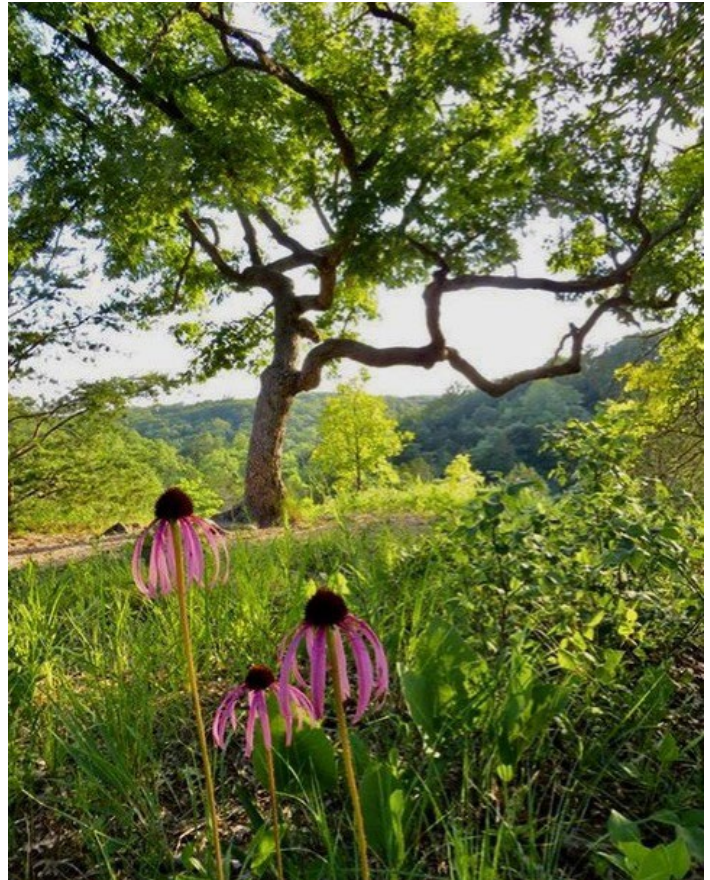
*Editors Note: published posthumously.
The author died shortly after his last meal.*

Actual editors' note from Michelle and Pam: the note in italics above is part of the poem, and the implication is that the "wild onion" was actually death camas (possibly [Zigadenus elegans](#) in Liliaceae).

Save the Dates: Fall Field Trip Weekend, September 25-27

Our next MONPS field trip weekend will be held in the Rolla area on Friday, September 25, through Sunday, September 27. Field trip weekends include botany walks on Friday afternoon, Saturday morning and afternoon, and Sunday morning, as well as a speaker on Friday evening and Board meeting on Saturday evening. Everyone is welcome to attend any or all of these events, no registration is required and no fees are charged. Details will be published in the September issue of the Petal Pusher and on our website, monativeplants.org.

Right: photo by W. Langston



Shop Online for Embroidered MONPS Logo Apparel

A new feature has been added to the MONPS website: from the “MONPS Logo Apparel” link on the menu bar of our home page (MONPS.org), you’ll be able to access our online store. Short-sleeved and long-sleeved t-shirts, sweatshirts, and ball caps with embroidered MONPS logos are available in five colors. There’s also a booney hat with embroidered logo, in dark brown. The tote bag has a direct-to-garment print of our logo. Our vendor, Fast Yowi, is located in Columbia, so you can pick up your order there if it’s convenient, or have it shipped.



MONPS Board Election

At the 2026 Annual Meeting in June, an election was held to fill two Director positions with terms due to expire. Mike Skinner agreed to serve as Director for another three-year term, 2026-2029. Paul McKenzie, long-term board member and past president, stepped down from the Board. Blake Pagnier was nominated to fill that position. As there were no other nominations, Mike and Blake were elected by acclamation. Welcome!

Seeking Donations for the Stan Hudson Research Grant

Could you help us support students who are conducting botanical research in Missouri? The Stan Hudson Research Grant is available to assist with funding for research projects conducted by college or university students under the supervision of a faculty member. The grant honors the late H. Stanton Hudson (1921–2002), a long-time member of the Missouri Native Plant Society whose passion for the flora of Missouri and its conservation inspired his friends and family to create a small grants program in his memory. The grant is usually given annually.

To qualify for the Stan Hudson Research Grant, research must involve Missouri native plants in some way, but may have as its primary focus any pertinent subject area in plant biology, including conservation, ecology, physiology, systematics and evolution, etc. The grant may be used for any non-salary expenses relating to the proposed research, including travel, equipment, and supplies. At the conclusion of the project, grant recipients will be expected to prepare research results for publication in a peer-reviewed scientific journal, *Missouriensis* (the peer-reviewed journal of the Missouri Native Plant Society), or the society's newsletter *The Petal Pusher*. Alternatively, recipients can present their research at the Missouri Botanical Symposium as either a poster or oral presentation. The symposium is held each fall in Rolla, Missouri. To learn more about the grant, check out this link to the [Missouri Native Plants website-Hudson Fund](#).

[Click here to make a donation](#) to the Hudson Fund
Any amount is appreciated!

Not getting the Missouri Native Plant Society organizational emails?

Most email clients have a "safe senders" mechanism for you to make sure that your email server always sends mail from our MONPS server to your inbox.

- *Some just have you add our server to your "Contacts"
- *Some have you create "Rules".
- *Some have an actual "Safe Senders/Domains" area in the settings.

To ensure that you get the organizational emails please add these two domains to whatever your email's "safe senders" process is: monps.org and webapps.monps.org

OR: You may simply need to update your email address with us. If so, click this link: <https://monativeplants.org/ask-a-question/>

From the Editor

As the nation celebrates its semiquincentennial, we in the plant world continue our field trips and botanical studies. We are especially grateful for the nation's wild areas: they are one of the things that make US great!

As for this issue, I thank our Assistant Editor, Pam Barnabee for getting everything in good shape before it came to me. Thanks also to our Board members who proofread each issue and all authors, chapter representatives, and other contributors. Please consider making a submission for a future Petal Pusher! Here is some information for submissions:

A. The theme for the September 2026 Petal Pusher is "Rare plant conservation," but other submissions are encouraged, especially Genus or Family descriptions ("Better know a genus/family"), Conundrum Corner, Invasive Tip of the Month, Name Change of the Month, Terminology, and Poetry Corner.

B. Send ONE email saying "here is my contribution on _____," and attach (don't embed) the following:

1) an article in Word format with photo captions at the end (no photos in the Word document) and your name in the text.

2) Images, in JPEG format--NOT in a document file.

C. Use only one space between sentences

D. Even short notes with pictures would be great!

E. Send to: pamela.barnabee@gmail.com (don't send them directly to me!)

F. Due date for the next issue is: August 20

**Thank you so much,
Michelle Bowe**

Do You Have a Plant Story?

Learn more about Missouri native plants at the newest feature on the MONPS website (MONPS.org): Plant Stories. Do you have a favorite Missouri native plant? A photo you're particularly proud of? Please submit your story to pamela.barnabee@gmail.com for posting.

We Welcome Member Submissions!

The Petal Pusher wants YOU ... to write articles for the newsletter.

Consider these possibilities:

- Conundrum Corner: Tips on how to distinguish between tricky, look-alike species.
- Invasive Tip of the Month: How to identify and eradicate a particular invasive species.
- What's Cooking: Recipes using native Missouri plants.
- Name Change of the Month: Latin names, they keep on a-changin'; help us all stay up-to-date.
- Poetry Corner or Quotation Corner: Give us your suggestions for poems or quotes, or submit your original poetry. (Note that for poems, we must have permission from the publisher.)

Chapter Reports and Events

PARADOXA

by Edie Starbuck, Chapter Secretary and Pam Barnabee, Chapter President

The Paradoxa Chapter teamed with the Meramec Hills Chapter of Missouri Master Naturalists to bring a native plant sale to Rolla on May 16. Doolittle Gardens and Prairie Hill Nursery provided a variety of herbaceous perennials, and SJ Nature Shop added bird feeding and nesting supplies to the mix of nature-related items. In addition to herbaceous perennials, the chapter potted shrubs from the Missouri Department of Conservation and offered them for sale at cost (\$2 each). Threatening skies did not seem



Photo by E. Starbuck

to deter shoppers from this well-attended event!

For our May meeting, Nathan Aaron, botanist with the Institute of Botanical Training, led a Sedge Workshop/Hike at Audubon Trails Nature Center on the evening of the 18th. It was another rainy day, but the rain stopped on cue, 10 minutes before our scheduled start time. We welcomed three newcomers who heard about the walk from our Ozark Rivers Audubon Chapter friends. The Nature Center has riparian habitat as well as woodland and grassland, and our hike took us through all three. Nathan showed us at least 15 sedge species, mostly *Carex*, but also *Scleria*, *Scirpus*, and *Eleocharis*. Between sedge hotspots, we digressed into distinguishing *Dichanthelium* species. I can now confidently identify several species we observed, but *Carex amphibola* versus *C. grisea*? I'm not there yet.

For our June 15 walkabout, we returned to the property of Treva and Jeff Imes. They have done a beautiful job of reconstructing prairie, with pale purple coneflower (*Echinacea pallida*) and the yellows of false sunflower (*Heliopsis helianthoides*) and gray-headed coneflower (*Ratibida pinnata*) dominating for the moment, intermixed with a variety of graminoids and forbs including five species of milkweeds. Treva has also established several beds of native plants with even more species.

Upcoming Events

Thursday, July 2, 6:30-8:00 p.m. Walkabout at Triangle Prairie, Phelps County's intact prairie, which is about 20 minutes south of Rolla off Highway 72. Check out their Facebook page! Owner John Cable will mow a path for us. Please contact paradoxarolla@gmail.com for directions.

Saturday, August 8, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Missouri Wildflower Nursery Tour. Merv Wallace will show us how they grow native plants from seed. We'll carpool from Rolla. Please let me know at paradoxa-rolla@gmail.com if you plan to come.

ST LOUIS

by Len Meier, Chapter Representative

History, Membership and Meeting Attendance

The Saint Louis Chapter dates back to the 1970's. However, we did not meet in the second half of 2024 or all of 2025. We are reinvigorating the St Louis Chapter in 2026. Meeting attendance has increased steadily from 22 people in January, to 39 in February, to 44 plus two zoom attendees in March. We are beginning to solicit a slate of officer candidates for election in August. St Louis Chapter membership has also grown steadily during that time.

St Louis Chapter members attended the MONPS Spring field trips and meeting April 17 to 19 in the Farmington, Missouri area, and June 19-21 trip in the Sedalia area.

On Saturday April 25, several St. Louis Chapter members tabled for the Missouri Native Plant Society at the Riverlands Native Plant Fest at West Alton. Members also attended and tabled at the Ozark Flora Fest at Shaw Arboretum on May 29.

Botany Hikes

St. Louis Chapter members viewed several large populations of yellow lady slipper orchids, *Cypripedium parviflorum*, and other spring wildflowers at the Meier family farm in Warren County, Missouri, on Saturday, May 2 at 10 a.m.

Saturday May 23, twelve St. Louis Chapter members visited Valley View Glades Natural Area, hiked the trails and viewed the spring glade wildflowers in full bloom.

The June STL Chapter meeting was an evening field trip to Bellefontaine Cemetery and Arboretum in St

Louis. The visit was guided by the arboretum manager and STL Chapter member James Faupel.

Chapter members also attended the Monday botany walks sponsored by the Webster Groves Nature Study Society, including:

Millstream Gardens Conservation Area, April 13

Englemann Woods Natural Area, April 20

Faust County Park, April 27

Valley View Glades Natural Area, May 11

Pickle Springs Natural Area, May 18

Onondaga Cave State Park, May 25

Bootleg Access Conservation Area, June 8

Labarque Creek Conservation Area, June 15

Upcoming Events

The St Louis Chapter conducts monthly meetings at the Commerce Bank Center for Science Education (CBEC), 4651 Shaw Blvd, St Louis. Future 2026 meetings are scheduled at 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. on: July 23, August 20, September 17, and October 15.

We are currently soliciting nominations for 2-year terms for President, Vice-president and Secretary positions. The closing date for nominations is June 30, 2026. We will conduct elections in person and via zoom at our August meeting. Officer Duties are available from the Chapter Representative.

Open Invitation

Everyone is welcome to attend our meetings and hikes. If you wish to learn more, feel free to contact Len Meier, 636-795-0804, lxmeier.meier@gmail.com

HAWTHORN

by Elena Vega, Chapter Representative

The Hawthorn Chapter had a busy month in June. Its June 10, 2026 meeting was at Wild Haven Nature Area, a Columbia Audubon Society property along the northern edge of Hinkson Creek. We shared a potluck dinner followed by a business meeting and a walk through the nature area.

Hawthorn volunteers continue to work the Adopt-a-Spot at Providence and Nifong and the Native Garden at the Center for Early Learning in Columbia. Our work has turned a former muddy corner into a beautiful native wetland. Our volunteer coordinator, Lea, organizes workdays at native garden plots at several elementary schools in Columbia. If you are interested in helping, please contact the Hawthorn Chapter to be added to Lea's emails.

In addition, Hawthorn Chapter President Cindy delivered native plants from the Hawthorn nursery to the Marshall Public Library for an educational program.

Upcoming Events

Wednesday July 8, 9:00 a.m, Hawthorn mosey of the University of Missouri Campus Arboretum followed by a stop at Shakespeare's Pizza at 225 S. 9th Street, Columbia (Rain Date: Friday July 10, 9:00 a.m.).

Thursday July 16 at 11:30 a.m, Hawthorn Third Thursday Lunch, Uprise Bakery at 10 Hitt Street, Columbia.

Friday July 17, 9:00-11:00 a.m, Adopt-a-Spot Workday at Providence & Nifong.

Date & time in **August** to be determined for a Hawthorn tour of the Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture.

Thursday August 20, 11:30 a.m, Hawthorn Third Thursday Lunch, Uprise Bakery at 10 Hitt Street.

Friday August 21, 9:00-11:00 a.m, Adopt-a-Spot Workday at Providence & Nifong.

SOUTHWEST

by Mike Skinner

On May 23 the Southwest Chapter had a morning walk at La Petite Gemme Prairie Natural Area. La Petite Gemme Prairie is 38 acres owned by the Missouri Prairie Foundation since 1977, southwest of Bolivar in Polk County.

The morning was bright and cool with lots of dew on the prairie. There were eight of us including Blake Pagnier and Danielle Schulte. This prairie is particularly rich with well over 300 species. Lots of coneflowers, slender mountain mint, rattlesnake master, prairie hyacinth, purple prairie clover along with a few spring flowers like Indian paintbrush and hoary puccoon still hanging on. We spent a little time looking for Mead's milkweed in the area where it was located last year but had no luck. The prairie is bisected by the Frisco Highline Trail which goes from Springfield to Bolivar. Walking along the trail which is an abandoned rail line, we saw plants more indicative to wet areas such as elderberry, sedges (both *Carex* and *Scirpus*), and unfortunately some poison hemlock which seems to be having a good year. One interesting find on the trail was two dung beetles making use of animal scat that was conveniently deposited.

Missouri Native Plant Society Membership Form

Name	
Address	
City, State, ZIP	
Phone	
Email	

Membership Type (circle one): New Member Renewing Member

Membership Period (circle one): 1 2 3 4 5 year(s)

Membership Level (check one):

<input type="checkbox"/>	Student	\$5
<input type="checkbox"/>	Goldenrod	\$10
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sunflower	\$25
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bluebell	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/>	Blazing Star	\$100

Chapter dues (optional, check all that apply):

<input type="checkbox"/>	Hawthorn (Columbia)	\$5
<input type="checkbox"/>	Kansas City	\$5
<input type="checkbox"/>	Osage Plains (Clinton)	\$5
<input type="checkbox"/>	Paradoxa (Rolla)	\$5
<input type="checkbox"/>	Perennis (Cape Girardeau)	\$5
<input type="checkbox"/>	Saint Louis	\$5
<input type="checkbox"/>	Southwest (Springfield)	\$5

Newsletter Delivery (normal delivery is via email):

<input type="checkbox"/>	Check here if you prefer to receive your newsletters via postal mail!	\$10
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Other contributions (optional, check all that apply, specify amount, tax deductible):

<input type="checkbox"/>	Hudson Grant Fund	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other contributions	

Total:

Total amount	\$
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To contact the Missouri Native Plant Society, please **click the "Have a Question" link** on our website.

"Where flowers bloom, so does hope." — Lady Bird Johnson, First Lady and founder of the National Park Foundation