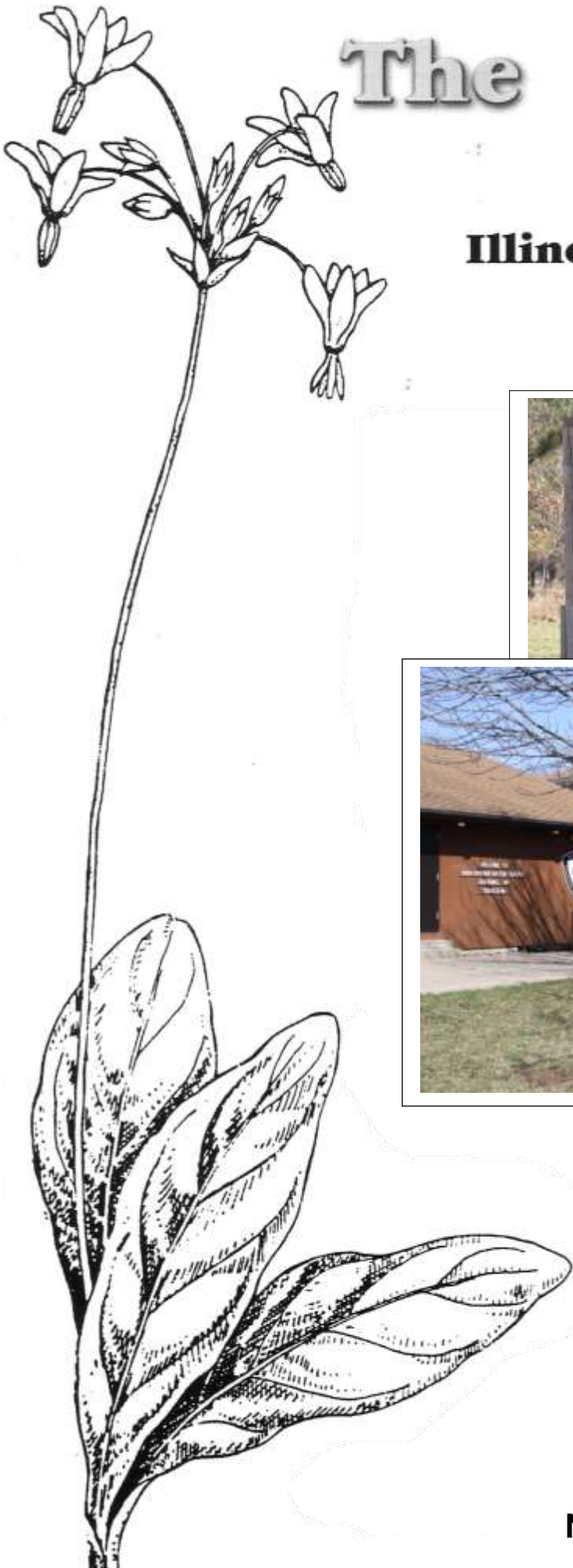


# The HARBINGER

Quarterly Newsletter

## Illinois Native Plant Society

*"...dedicated to the preservation, conservation and study of the native plants and vegetation of Illinois."*



**VOLUME 26,**  
**NO. 1 April 2009**

**ILLINIS NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY  
HARBINGER**

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**MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

Latest Report Available

Life members	121
Institutional	11
Patron	15
Supporting	73
Student	8
Regular	227
Exchange	35
<b>Total Statewide</b>	<b>490</b>

At-Large members	6
Central Chapter	99
Forest Glen	65
Irene Cull	32
Northeast	152
Quad City	43
Southern	57
Exchange	35
<b>Total Statewide</b>	<b>490</b>

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**Central Chapter**

April 25 <sup>th</sup>	PLANT SALE SET-UP
April 26 <sup>th</sup>	PLANT SALE
May 8 <sup>th</sup>	Becky Croteau, "Botany of Belize"
June 12 <sup>th</sup>	Open
July 10 <sup>th</sup>	Open
Aug 14 <sup>th</sup>	Mike Redmer, "Reptiles of Illinois"

For detailed information about meetings and directions, contact John Benedict at [johnlana@insightbb.com](mailto:johnlana@insightbb.com)

**Forest Glen Chapter**

March Meeting is being planned.  
Contact Connie Cunningham for details at [carrollc@inhs.uiuc.edu](mailto:carrollc@inhs.uiuc.edu) or 217/733-2660.

**Northeast Chapter**

For upcoming meetings, contact Floyd Catchpole at 815/603-5190 or e-mail him at [fcatchpole@fpdwc.org](mailto:fcatchpole@fpdwc.org)

**Quad City Chapter**

For upcoming meetings, contact QC Secretary by e-mail at [gc\\_inps@yahoo.com](mailto:gc_inps@yahoo.com)

**Southern Chapter**

There is no meeting information available for the Southern Chapter at press time

**Irene Cull Chapter**

Contact Mary Hartley for upcoming chapter events at 309/995-3356 or e-mail at [haywool@winco.net](mailto:haywool@winco.net)

## President's Message

By R. J. Fehl

[Rjfjr4eco@aol.com](mailto:Rjfjr4eco@aol.com)



Spring is underway and progressing nicely or so I thought last week. When I woke up Sunday morning and found 4-plus inches of snow blanketing everything outside I had second thoughts. Still, late snows are not unusual for Illinois in the springtime and by late afternoon the snow had disappeared and spring was back on track. Spring is a time for new hope and renewal and there is much beauty in the fields and woodlands of Illinois to anticipate. Many of the spring ephemerals have poked through in the woods and some are blooming. Prairie forbs dormant over the long winter are beginning to show against the dark ashes from a controlled burn. Redbuds and wild plum need only a few more warm, sunny days before they begin the procession of spring-blooming trees and shrubs. Spicebush is already covered in tiny yellow flowers. Spring is not so much a season as it is a happening, a wondrous reaffirmation of life following the long slumber of winter. Over the next couple months there will be much to remind us of all the reasons we cherish our native plants and look forward to their reemergence each spring.

As spring winds down and gives way to the rich, lazy days of summer there is another event to anticipate. That is the Illinois Native Plant Society annual meeting. This year the annual meeting will be hosted by the Forest Glen Chapter at Rock Springs Nature Center in Decatur, Illinois. This is a great opportunity to meet fellow INPS members and view new native plant communities during interesting field trips. Set aside the last weekend of May, the 29<sup>th</sup>- 31<sup>st</sup>, and join us for fun , food and camaraderie at the annual meeting.

RJ

## LASTEST EMERALD ASH BORER REPORT

Officials with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and the Department of Natural Resources today announced that the emerald ash borer (EAB) has been confirmed in Vernon County. The tiny, invasive beetle, whose larva destroys North American ash trees, was discovered in Victory, a small community along the banks of the Mississippi River, about 20 miles south of La Crosse. State officials were made aware of the infestation by an observant property owner.

For additional information: [http://www.datcp.state.wi.us/press\\_release/result.jsp?prid=2296](http://www.datcp.state.wi.us/press_release/result.jsp?prid=2296)

## INPS Membership Mailing

Dorothy Hosto has assumed processing and record keeping as Membership Chair for INPS. To facilitate this change please send all Membership Applications and Membership Renewals to her at:

**Dorothy Hosto**  
**INPS Membership Chair**  
**710 S. Columbia Ave.**  
**Springfield, IL 62704**

And, just a reminder that the INPS address is:

**Illinois Native Plant Society**  
**P.O. Box 3341**  
**Springfield, IL 62708**

Clifftop, a nonprofit conservation >> organization of bluff landholders, and IDNR will co-host a bluff >> festival on Saturday, 16 May 2009 at Fults' Cedar Bluff Park, from 9 AM until 4 PM.

The festival will celebrate our bluffs, center on interpretive field >> trips at Fults Hill Prairie Nature Preserve, and offer a variety of >> practicum-based information about our natural area at the park.

We also are inviting several vendors to sell nature-related materials >> to reinforce our goals.

We are delighted you have agreed to sell some of your books at the >> event.

Thanks

Carl Daubach  
Clifftop Co- Coordinator  
618.458.4674  
[clifftop@htc.net](mailto:clifftop@htc.net)  
[www.clifftopalliance.org](http://www.clifftopalliance.org)

# ANNUAL MEETING

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Bulblet bladder-fern (*Cystopteris bulbifera*), an uncommon fern in northeastern Illinois, is fairly common in this bedrock ravine in southeastern DuPage County. The bedrock here is dolomitic limestone, and the outcrops support many unusual plants not often found naturally elsewhere in northeastern Illinois, including spikenard (*Aralia racemosa*), purple cliff-brake (*Pellaea glabella*), and several hybrid bladder-ferns (*Cystopteris* spp.).

Northeast Chapter members visited this site in August 2008, led by Ecologist Scott Kobal. Scott is with the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County



INPS member Dave Wendt examines rare ferns, mosses, and liverworts during a field trip to Waterfall Glen Forest Preserve in southeastern DuPage County. This natural area, one of a very few natural bedrock ravines in northeastern Illinois, was one of many interesting natural areas visited by the Northeast Chapter in 2008



Scott Kobal, Ecologist with the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County, explains the history of management in this fine oak savanna in Waterfall Glen Forest Preserve. This site, located in southeastern DuPage County, was visited by the Northeast Chapter in August 2008.



# ANNUAL MEETING

## ILLINOIS NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY 2009 ANNUAL MEETING May 29-31, 2009 Rock Springs Nature Center, Decatur

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### LOCATION

Join us this spring for a wonderful weekend in central Illinois! The 2009 Annual INPS Meeting will be centered out of the Rock Springs Nature Center at 3939 Nearing Lane, Decatur, IL 62521

Rock Springs Nature Center is located in Rock Springs Conservation Area, the largest conservation area in the Macon County Conservation District, totaling 1,343 acres. The Conservation Area contains many walking trails and a paved bike path that run along the Sangamon River and through a diversity of habitats including forests, wetlands, and restored prairies.

<http://www.maconcountyconservation.org>

### THE AGENDA

#### Friday Evening, May 29

6:00 to 8:00 pm

Rock Springs Nature Center. **Registration packets and Social hour.**

Pick up your registration packets at Rock Springs Nature Center; enjoy a snack and socialize while listening to music provided by local musicians.

#### Saturday, May 30

7:30-8:30 am

Decatur Area Conference Center and Hotel, 4191 US Highway 36 West, Decatur, IL 62522

Pick up your registration packets if you didn't Friday evening. Check in for your field trips and pick up your box lunch.

8:00 am - Gardner Restoration Field Trip departs (Field Trip #3)

8:30 am - All other all-day Field Trips depart (1,2,4,5,6)

1:00 pm - Oglesby Mansion Tour - **meet at the Mansion**

2:30 pm - Rock Springs Nature Center and Conservation Area tour - **meet at Rock Springs Nature Center**

#### Field Trips

##### All Day

1. Fort Daniel Conservation Area & Bois du Sangamon Nature Preserve [local] - Guided tour of 2 old growth forests with rich herbaceous layers. Fort Daniel is a dry-mesic forest. Bois du Sangamon is a drier forest atop a steep bluff overlooking Lake Decatur. Bushwhack hiking on Bois du Sangamon. Lunch at Fort Daniel. *Options may be available for 1/2 day trips for these 2 areas.*
2. Calamus Lake State Nature Preserve [local] - Rare central Illinois natural wetland in a former oxbow of the Sangamon River. Diversity of vegetation includes shrubs, trees, sedges, rushes, spatterdock, and water lilies. - Bushwhack hiking and potential wet conditions. *Potential of 1/2 day trip.*
3. Don Gardner Prairie Restoration/Broughton Cemetery Prairie/English Prairie [2 hour drive] (max 8-10 people) - Visit to 3 high quality prairie communities: A high quality 30-year old prairie restoration (one of two recognized on the INAI in central IL); A newly designated INAI cemetery prairie remnant abundant in prairie legumes; and A tiny, but outstanding remnant of mesic prairie. Two of these areas are privately owned. Please use care.
4. Coneflower Hill Prairie/Capel Hill Prairie/Sullivan Woods [1 hour drive] - 3 areas along the borders of Lake Shelbyville; Coneflower and Capel are 2 small glacial drift hill prairie remnants overlooking the lake, Sullivan Woods is a 38-acre high quality dry-mesic forest.
5. Lake Sara Flatwoods [1 1/2 hour drive] - One of the best examples of the southern post oak flatwoods communities in Illinois. This area has been managed with regular prescribed burns over the past 30+ years and contains a rich ground layer with species ranging from those of forests to prairies.
6. Parklands Foundation Merwin Preserve/Ridgetop Hill Prairie [1 1/2 hour drive] - Guided tour to Prairie Parklands' savanna and hill prairie restorations in the am. Then on to a series of 3 glacial drift hill prairie remnants on narrow ridges above the Mackinaw River surrounded by upland and bottomland forests. Some bushwhack hiking.

Afternoon

7. Oglesby Historic Mansion [local] – \$2.00 entry fee/person [local] (Bruce Leonard)
8. Rock Springs Conservation Area [local] – arrange with staff – Guided hike through woodlands and restored prairies to the Sangamon River and the Homestead Prairie Farm

#### Programs

4:00 pm.

INPS State Board Meeting – all are welcome that wish to attend

6:00 – 9:00 pm.

Rock Springs Nature Center. Banquet and General Meeting of the Illinois Native Plant Society. **Banquet will be served buffet style with meat and vegetarian options.** The after dinner talk “Snapshot in time – Geologic Secrets of the Danville, Illinois, Fossilized Forest - Riola and Vermilion Grove Mines” by Scott Elrick from the Illinois State Geological Survey.

#### Sunday, May 31

7:30-8:30 am

Decatur Area Conference Center and Hotel, 4191 US Highway 36 West, Decatur, IL 62522

Check in for your field trips.

8:30 am - All Field Trips depart - all trips are morning only

#### Field Trips

9. Spitler Woods Nature Preserve [local] – One of the largest remnants of old growth forest in central IL. Forest communities range from dry-mesic and mesic uplands to wet-mesic floodplains, with a wide array of spring wildflowers in the ground layer.
10. Calamus Lake State Nature Preserve [local] –see description above
11. Evans Woods [local] (max 12) (Marge Evans) – 60 acres of privately owned forest land with a rich herbaceous layer. The backyard is a certified IAS bird and butterfly sanctuary. Guided tour by the landowner, also author of *Green Heritage, Vascular Flora of Macon Co and Environs*.
12. Bois du Sangamon Nature Preserve [local] – see Saturday field trip description
13. Illinois Raptor Center [local] – Guided tour of the facilities which house permanently injured birds of prey and others in rehabilitation for future release back into the wild.

Self Guided Tours/Other places to visit – on your own

Scovill Zoo

Fairview Park Tree Trail

#### ACCOMMODATIONS

##### Hotels

Decatur Area Conference Center and Hotel, at 4191 US Highway 36 West, Decatur, IL 62522

Block of 25 rooms (doubles) reserved until April 29 at a rate of \$84/night (plus tax). This rate does not include breakfast. Restaurant and Lounge in Hotel. Call (877) 352-8800 and mention Illinois Native Plant Society when making your reservation.

Days Inn, nearby on 333 N Wyckles Rd., Decatur, IL 62522. Call (217) 422-5900. Rates for a single are about \$55.00 per night.

##### Camping

Friends Creek Conservation Area Campground, 13734 Friends Creek Park Road Cisco, IL 61830. First come-first served basis, or by reservation. Phone: 217-423-7708. Electric and non-electric sites, showers, flush toilets, and a dump station. Daily fees for electric sites: \$15 for Macon County, Illinois residents, \$18 for non-residents. Daily fees for non-electric: \$10 for Macon County, Illinois residents, \$12 for non-residents. <http://www.maconcountyconservation.org/friendscreek.php>

Weldon Springs State Park, 4734 Weldon Springs Rd, Clinton, IL 61727. Phone: 217-935-2644 for rates. Electric and non-electric sites, showers, pit toilets, and a dump station.

<http://dnr.state.il.us/Lands/Landmgmt/PARKS/R3/Weldonra.htm>

ILLINOIS NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY 2009 ANNUAL MEETING

REGISTRATION FORM

Registration Deadline: May 15, 2009

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday Events

Please indicate your preferences by placing an X in the appropriate box.

Event	First Choice	Second Choice	Third Choice
1. Fort Daniel/Bois du Sangamon			
2. Calamus Lake			
3. Prairie remnants/Gardner restoration			
4. Coneflower/Capel/Sullivan			
5. Lake Sara Flatwoods			
6. Prairie Parklands sites			
7. Oglesby Mansion			
8. Rock Springs Nature Center & Conservation Area			

Sunday Events

Please indicate your preferences by placing an X in the appropriate box

Event	First Choice	Second Choice	Third Choice
9. Spittler Woods			
10. Calamus Lake			
11. Evans Woods			
12. Bois du Sangamon			
13. Illinois Raptor Center			

The box lunch will include a sub sandwich, chips, cookie, and a drink. A vegetarian option is available.

Check here for vegetarian box lunch \_\_\_\_\_

FEEs	Number attending	Amount Due
Registration: \$25.00/person	_____	_____
Student: \$15.00	_____	_____
Banquet: \$20.00/person	_____	_____
	Total Paid	_____

Payment must accompany registration. Registration fee includes Saturday box lunch and Friday social.

Check or money orders made out to Forest Glen Chapter, Illinois Native Plant Society

Mail to: INPS Forest Glen Chapter  
 Forest Glen Preserve  
 20301 E 900 North Road  
 Westville, IL 61883

For more information contact Connie Cunningham, email: carrollc@inhs.illinois.edu

## Appreciate Trees Everyday

Planting trees is a great investment for the future. They grow more beautiful and valuable over time. Did you know? Investing in community trees brings a great return on investment. The US Forest Service has determined the average ratio of community tree benefits to cost ratio.

Typical Benefits		Typical Costs	
Energy	\$43,000	Planting	\$21,000
CO2	9,000	Pruning	37,000
Air Quality	9,000	Removal/disposal	8,000
Runoff	46,000	Irrigation	6,000
Aesthetic	118,000	Sidewalk repair	1,000
		Litter	3,000
		Admin	1,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>225,000</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>83,000</b>

In 40 years, the average tree returns **\$2.70 in benefits for every \$1** of community investment...**And trees improve the quality of the urban environment**

### Managing the Urban Forest for Environmental Benefits

- **Benefits depend on healthy trees**
  - **Large healthy trees remove 60-70 times more pollution than small trees**
  - **Large healthy trees sequester up to 1,000 more CO2 than small trees**
- **Trees require quality care to remain healthy**
- **Forestry program needs continued advocacy and support**

The **Chicago Urban Forest Climate Project** (US Forest Service 1991) was a **three-year study** of the environmental impacts of the urban forest of the Chicago region. It found that the estimated 50.8 million trees in Cook and DuPage County combined contributed the following benefits.

1. Carbon Sequestration
  - **Store an estimated 6.1 million tons of carbon**
  - **Further studies led to the estimate that 100 mature trees remove five tons of CO2 from the atmosphere per year-equivalent to emissions from 1 car/year**
2. Air Quality Improvements
  - **The trees in our region remove these pollutants from our air**
    - **17 tons of CO**
    - **93 tons of SO2**
    - **98 tons of NO2**
    - **210 tons of O3**
    - **224 tons of particulate matter <10 microns (PM 10)**
3. **The estimated value of this pollution removal in 1991 was \$9.2 million**
4. **Localized air quality improvement could be 5-10% with high tree cover**
5. **The US Forest Service estimates 100 trees remove 1000 lbs. of pollutants per year, worth about \$4500 in emission credits (in the Central Valley of California)**

### Energy Savings

- **Optimally placed landscape shade trees could reduce local cooling energy use for 1.3%, cooling energy use by 7%, and peak cooling energy use by 6%**
- **Increasing the region's tree canopy by 10% could reduce total heating and cooling energy by 5-10%**
- **Reduced air-conditioning demands avoids CO2 generated from 'peak' energy production which is usually coal generated in Illinois.**

### Stormwater Management

**The US Forest Service estimates 100 mature trees intercept about 250,000 gallons of rainfall per year in their crowns, reducing runoff of polluted stormwater.**



**The Illinois Native Plant Society.  
For the next "Harbinger"**

**Copy to Exec. Director Elizabeth Kessler.  
McHenry County Conservation District**

**531, Blackhawk Drive,  
Lake in the Hills,  
Illinois, 60156.  
16 October 2008  
Phone and Fax # 847-658-0024  
e-mail: [LITHFen@aol.com](mailto:LITHFen@aol.com)**

In the Chicago Wilderness Magazine a reader's letter noted patches of high quality prairie remnant existed along the railroad tracks between Chicago and Carbondale; he felt that attempts should be made to save them. My reply to him, with a copy to the Magazine, told of this being an ongoing issue here along the C. & NW. tracks west of Chicago. The McHenry County Conservation District obtained access rights to work on land along the tracks between the towns of Huntley, Union & Marengo. Originally four restoration areas, defined by milepost markers, were assigned volunteer site stewards for these "HUM prairies". The State Endangered, Prairie White fringed Orchid, the Federally Endangered Prairie bush clover and a lot of both white and yellow Ladies slipper orchids were known to be amongst a host of remnant conservative species.

The remnants owe their existence to the frequent fires created during the steam locomotives era along with the absence of land use. The change over to diesel power eliminated regular burning and has allowed an invasion of non native species. The railroad increased herbicide spray applications to control "Weeds" along their Right of Way. The Conservation District's inability to resolve Herbicide Drift issues and a lack of volunteer help frustrated the stewards who eventually all quit.

For many years no restoration work has been done on these sites except at one location where the Volunteer Steward on an adjoining Conservation District property took on the task. Single handedly he cleared about 2 acres of brush and was rewarded by the re-emergence of high quality prairie forbs. Over 10 miles of work is needed and the absence of any help has caused him to quit. John Kloempken was concerned enough to request a visit from IDNR to note the GPS locations of rare species and to document the abundance of emergent native species; at least his work has now been documented.

The Conservation District is dedicating its resources to land acquisition. They have acquired and preserved many acres of open space, much of it with ecological significance that would otherwise have been lost to developers. The additional Conservation District property has not been matched by additional Natural Resource Management staff. Restoration work is extremely labor intensive and their efforts have been concentrated on major sites with high public visibility. Smaller sites with listed species have been left to volunteer stewards with few workers. Hopefully the future will see resource dedication revised to provide additional staff to maintain and enhance preserved land including sites closed to the public but home to endangered species. At Lake in the Hills Fen preserve volunteers have, for over 25 years, annually monitored the 6 dwindling populations of Woolly Milkweed, a species that has lost its pollinator. We have not seen any use made of these counts and wonder why we continue to spend so much volunteer effort doing this. This year we have located a second population of each of our two Bladderwort species, evidence that the restoration work has been worthwhile.

Our participation in the work performed by the Chicago Botanical "Plants of Concern" program has given us a concern for Gene Pool expansion. To enhance species survival we should encourage the dispersion of seed between existing populations. Prairie remnants on railroad land are a glimpse of past but it will take a major effort to educate railroad companies of their value. Positive publicity would be available following a negotiated access agreement with an organization such as TNC. If access became possible efforts should be made to firstly collect seed and, if the quality of a site warranted intervention, try to organize local restoration efforts. With 425 species, including 16 T & E's on the 240 acre LITH site I would like to see other T & E's introduced so that the 28 years of intensive restoration work can benefit their preservation and proliferation.

Al Wilson. Ex Site steward. Lake in the Hills Fen.

At five minutes and six seconds after 4 AM on the 8th of July this year,  
the time and date will be

**04:05:06 07/08/09**

Greetings fellow plant enthusiasts,

I need your help. After a two year hiatus we are planning to publish a new edition of *Erigenia*. I apologize to the folks who have waited patiently for publication but I plan to have the next edition in the hands of the publishers Dec 1 for printing early 2009. Please.....send me some articles, ask your students to send appropriate papers or write an essay yourself. Research articles will follow the regular peer review process. For other articles, please follow the guidelines below. Thank you so much for your efforts in getting the journal back on track. Please send submissions to [tracy.evans@illinois.gov](mailto:tracy.evans@illinois.gov)

#### **INVITATION FOR SUBMISSION OF ARTICLES**

*ERIGENIA is a peer-reviewed journal of the Illinois Native Plant Society. We invite the submission of original articles on the biota of Illinois and adjacent states. This is a partial list of articles of interest to society members.*

*TAXONOMY of vascular plants, fungi, lichens and mosses*

*ECOLOGY of native species and plant communities, interactions and effects of birds, mammals, and insects on our ecosystem*

*NATURAL HISTORY of our state, including geology and geography*

*ETHNOBOTANY of native plants, their use by Native Americans*

*CULTURAL HISTORY as it intersects with natural history*

*BOTANISTS, SCIENTISTS, EXPLORERS, AND BOTANICAL ARTISTS who have played a major role in our understanding of our state and its natural resources*

*RESTORATION of our native landscapes, management techniques and results*

*HORTICULTURE as it relates to native plants in restored or cultural environments.*

## **\* Seed Collecting Opportunities \***

### **with the Dixon National Tallgrass Prairie Seed Bank Chicago Botanic Garden**

A Native Seed Collection Program for the Tallgrass Prairie and Surrounding Ecoregions  
The Dixon National Tallgrass Prairie Seed Bank (CBG), as part of the national Seeds of Success (SOS) program, is collecting seeds from native species for long-term plant conservation and restoration, focusing on the tallgrass prairie flora and surrounding Midwest ecoregions.

This project is an extension of an international ex-situ seed conservation initiative – the Millennium Seed Bank Project (MSBP) - developed and housed at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, UK. This global program aims to collect and seed bank 10% of the world's flora by 2010.

...and WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Making a seed collection for the National Tallgrass Prairie Seed Bank - For each species, we collect between 3,000 and 20,000 viable seeds from a single population. We harvest seed from a minimum of 50 individuals, in order to adequately capture the genetic diversity of the population, but ideally collect from considerably more. In addition, 2 or 3 herbarium vouchers of the collected species are taken and associated data is recorded on a standardized data sheet.

Become a contract seed collector with CBG...

**\$60 per species collected (compensation increases the more you collect!) + mileage reimbursement**

Where do we collect? Midwestern and Great Plains' states are targeted for collection. Appropriate permits will be obtained for collectors by the Seed Bank Coordinator.

Target species collection lists - Native species from wild populations can be collected for the Dixon National Tallgrass Prairie Seed Bank Project. Our current target list can be found here:

<http://cbgseedbank.org/targetspecies.html>

For more information on how you can become a contract seed collector with the Dixon National Tallgrass Prairie Seed Bank at the Chicago Botanic Garden contact Emily Yates, Seed Bank Coordinator, at

[eyates@chicagobotanic.org](mailto:eyates@chicagobotanic.org) and check out our project website at <http://cbgseedbank.org/>.

Tips for a Successful Native Garden  
Cindy Gilberg

Replacing a percent of high-maintenance lawn with a more sustainable low-maintenance landscape is a growing trend for the future. "The increased requests I get for assistance is proof that people are using more and more native plants each year, not less" states Scott Woodbury, head of the Horticulture Department at Shaw Nature Reserve. He goes on to say that an increasing number of people "are turning to native plants to landscape their homes, churches, businesses, and public parks. Compared to traditional high-maintenance landscapes, people are switching to native landscapes because they are more cost-effective to maintain and are good for the environment." Even so, there still exists some misconceptions in regards to using native plants in the landscape. Some novices feel as if by planting natives their garden will suddenly become 'wild'. Native plants simply represent a viable, alternative list of reliably hardy plants that can be integrated into any landscape. A plant list does not dictate the design style, rather, it is the gardener who decides their style and needs, adjusting the plant list accordingly. Likewise, selling your lawn mower does not automatically produce a native garden or habitat. Scott calls this the "shock and awe" approach and it is likely to produce a weed patch and draw the attention of neighbors (rightly so!), resulting in weed ordinance problems. Having worked with cities, weed ordinances and homeowners, Scott adds "Weed ordinance issues are tricky. Most of them originate from a complaining neighbor and not a city inspector so rule number one is to be neighborly. Rule number two is to start small and expand on your successes. Rule number three is to learn the basics of garden design. Most homeowners who get in trouble break one of these three rules."

First of all, consider that the word 'garden' includes in most of its definitions the word 'cultivate'. This implies that human hands are at work, manipulating and controlling the garden environment to some degree. Therefore, the element of intent goes hand in hand with planning a well-designed garden. If you are having some ordinance issues or you are not happy with your garden, review the following design principles and strive to include at least a few. A little planning goes a long way in creating an attractive, low-maintenance native landscape.

Line functions as one of the most important concepts in the landscape. Think of pathways, bed edging, fencing or mown turf as examples of line. Line visually guides the eye and points to a focal point. Focal points can be as simple as your front door, a bench, a sculpture or a planted urn. Small water features are also welcome sights and need not be elaborate. A line leading to nowhere and a view without a focal point are disappointing.

Hardscaping is an indispensable part of the landscape that serves to reinforce line and unify the view. As a design becomes more naturalistic and loose, the use of strong lines becomes essential. Stone is an element that is both visually strong and versatile enough to be useful in all design styles, from informal to formal and from traditional to naturalistic landscapes. Weathered stones used in a way that emulates the natural outcroppings so familiar in the Midwest add a sense of place to the scene. When choosing stone for paths and steps, edging, walls or patios be sure to use stone of the same kind and a similar color. Unmatched and jumbled stone will give a confused and disorganized look rather than acting to unify the garden. Wood complements stone and can be included by adding a deck, some fencing, an arbor, a bench or even a gazebo.

When choosing which plants to combine in a design, always keep the idea of contrast in mind. Foliar contrast is what will prevent a planting from appearing weedy. Combine bold textured plants with fine textured ones alternately so that each is accentuated by its neighbor. A garden full of fine textured plants and devoid of weeds will appear weedy regardless simply from a lack of foliar contrast.

Some simple maintenance practices strengthen the look of intention. Always maintain clean edges around the plantings. This can be in the form of a mass ground cover planting such as prairie dropseed in sunny spots or wild ginger in shady spots - there are many choices for plants that can be used. A well-maintained mown grass edge or a stone pathway is just as effective in keeping a tidy boundary. Another positive practice is to use shredded leaves or bark mulch in the beds to help control weeds and to add that finished look.

One extra tip would be to do an angle cut tip-pruning in spring on taller plants, especially those along the edges of beds. This will add some depth to the bed while encouraging a more compact growth habit. Don't hesitate to do a spring tip-pruning on any of the taller, summer and fall blooming perennials such as asters, hibiscus or goldenrods to create the same effect. A certain level of general maintenance, as with any landscape, will always send a message of the gardener's intention to cultivate the space.

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