

"ILLINOENSIS" NEWSLETTER OF THE ILLINOIS
NATIVE PLANT CONSERVATION PROGRAM
ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
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BOTANY PROGRAM MANAGER

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Illinoensis is issued semi-annually or more frequently by the Botany Program, Illinois Department of Conservation and is free of charge. It includes news of interest to the Illinois plant conservation community. Suggestions of news items for future issues are welcomed. Address correspondence and requests to be put on the mailing list to Botany Program, Illinois Department of Conservation, Division of Natural Heritage, 524 South 2nd Street, Springfield, IL 62701-1787. (Phone 217/785-8774).

This newsletter is appearing only once in 1986 due to staff limitations in the new Division of Natural Heritage. We intend to resume semiannual publication in 1987.

NEW PERSONNEL AT DOC

Effective May 1, 1986, Carl Becker was appointed Division Head of the new Natural Heritage Division at DOC. David Cooper has been appointed Regional Administrator for Regions 4 & 5 (southern Illinois) and Francis Harty is administrator for Regions 1, 2 & 3. Four new District Biologists and one tainee were also employed in 1986. A directory to the 11 Natural Heritage Districts and personnel filling these positions is appended to this newsletter.

NEW STAFF AT NATURE PRESERVES COMMISSION AND ENDANGERED SPECIES BOARD IN 1986

New Natural Area Preservation Specialists for the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission include Gary Burnett, Sterling; Joel Greenberg, Morton Arboretum; and Judy Faulkner, Murphysboro. Glenn Kruse, Springfield, is a new project manager for the Endangered Species Protection Board.

NEW BOTANIST AT SURVEY

Dr. Louis Iverson has been employed by the Illinois Natural History Survey to fill a newly created plant ecologist position. This position adds depth to the Survey's concern for Illinois' plant communities and species.

ILLINOIS NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Two new chapters of the Illinois Native Plant Society were organized in 1986, both in Central Illinois. The first to form was the East-central Chapter which can be reached through President Ray Boehmer, 307 Engineering Hall, U of I, 1308 West Green, Urbana, 61801 (217/333-3490). The second is the Forest Glen Chapter at Forest Glen Preserve, RR1 Westville, IL 61883 (217/662-8028). The President of this chapter is Ken Consis. It is good to see continued interest in our native plants.

NEW "GUIDE TO THE VASCULAR FLORA" NOW AVAILABLE

Dr. Robert Mohlenbrock's revised 1986 edition of his "Guide to the vascular flora of Illinois" was released in July. While it is available from the SIU Press, the best deal currently is through the Illinois Native Plant Society, Dept. of Botany, SIU Carbondale, IL 62901. Their price is \$16.25 including tax and shipping. This is for the soft cover edition. The new edition treats 300 taxa not in the 1975 edition.

NEW KEY TO THE NORTHEASTERN FLORA

Floyd Swink of the Morton Arboretum has completed a key to the spontaneously occurring vascular flora of the northeastern United States which is scheduled for publication in 1987. It is being published by the Good Earth Publishing Co. of Glenwood. The pocket sized key is designed for keying out plants in the field and is the culmination of 47 year effort by the author. Floyd feels that a field key will reduce the number of plants pulled up in the field for later identification and thus will help conserve plants. Of course a field key will be useful to almost anyone interested in plants. The range covered is essentially that of Gray's Manual.

LINCOLN MEMORIAL GARDEN PROPAGATES ENDANGERED PLANTS

Abraham Lincoln Memorial Garden, located on Lake Springfield in central Illinois, is cooperating with the DOC Botany Program to maintain endangered plants. The objectives of this program are to guard against extinction in the wild by maintaining a cultivated population and increasing public awareness of the plight of our flora by growing them where they can be viewed by the public. Plant materials were provided by DOC Forestry Division's Mason Nursery. The species being grown are Kankakee Mallow (Iliamna remota) July, prairie bush clover (Lespedeza leptostachya) August, and decurrent false aster (Boltonia decurrens) September. Look for them if you visit the Garden.

SEED BANKING ENDANGERED PLANTS

The DOC Botany program provided seed of Kankakee Mallow, fame flower (Talinum rugospermum) and forked aster (Aster furcatus) to The Center for Plant Conservation in 1986. Some of the seed is being used to propagate the species at the Holden Arboretum, Mentor, Ohio. The majority of the seed has been placed in long term storage at the U. S. Department of Agriculture which is cooperating with the Center's plant Conservation efforts. Illinois is fortunate to get free storage of seed of some of our endangered plants. The Botany Program intends to propose more plant species for storage in 1987.

NEW ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT IN EFFECT

On July 1, 1986 the revised Illinois Endangered Species Act went into effect. It is now illegal to take state-listed endangered or threatened species of plants from the land of another without written permission from the landowner. It is also now unlawful to sell or offer to sell plants, seeds or roots from Illinois listed

endangered plants. A permit from the DOC is now required to possess and/or collect a federally listed endangered plant. The only federally listed endangered plant in the state at present is the small whorled pogonia orchid (Isotria medeoloides). Requests for permits should be addressed to the DOC's Natural Heritage Division in Springfield.

NEW WOODLAND WILDFLOWER POSTER

The Citizens Committee governing the funds generated by the state income tax nongame wildlife checkoff has approved a wildflower poster proposal by the DOC's Botany Program. The poster will depict 33 spring mesic woodland wildflowers of statewide distribution in a natural habitat setting. Four fungi, 2 insects and a mammal are also depicted. The full color poster will measure about 24" X 34" and will include a line drawing key for species identification. It should be available for distribution prior to the coming spring wildflower season. It will be free but details of distribution have not been finalized.

NONGAME WILDLIFE TO INCLUDE PLANTS

Backers of Illinois' Nongame Conservation Act, which makes state income tax checkoff funds available for conservation projects, plan to amend the act to clarify that plants are included in its definition of wildlife eligible to benefit from the funds. Amendments are also planned to permit grants in advance of project implementation. Currently, funds are administered through contracts payable only upon project completion. If you wish to propose a project for funding, write the DOC Division of Natural Heritage in Springfield for proposal instructions. Proposals for the next cycle are being accepted through March 1, 1987.

PRESCRIBE BURNING RESUMES

The DOC resumed prescribed burning for prairie and savanna management this past spring under a new policy which restricts the time available for burning by establishing earlier cut-off dates for stopping spring burns. Results were mixed. Some burns were ineffective due to biologists trying to burn too early in the season or under adverse weather conditions in order to accomplish burning in the more limited time available. Other burns simply were not accomplished for lack of time. The expanded District Heritage Biologist staff may help some in the future by reducing the number of burns each District has to accomplish. This program is of great importance to the many plants and animals dependent on fire for their health and survival.

ILLINOIS ENDANGERED PLANT LIST UPDATE

The Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board has contracted with the Morton Arboretum to provide updated information on the list of official state endangered and threatened species of plants and recommendations for additions/deletions to the list. If you have information on new locations for listed plants or other information relevant to the listing or delisting of a species please send it to Marlin Bowles, The Morton Arboretum, Lisle, IL 60532. Copies of the current list are available free from the DOC Botany Program.

RARE PLANT PROGRAM AT MORTON ARBORETUM

Marlin Bowles has joined the Morton Arboretum as a Research Associate specializing in rare plant ecology and conservation. The rare plant program involves research, propagation, and data base maintenance on rare plants of the 22 county Chicago flora region. Contract research is also conducted outside the primary region of concern.

PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE UPDATE

The DOC Botany Program has produced a full color identification and control leaflet for this noxious invader of wetlands. Copies are free upon request to the Natural Heritage Division or your local District Heritage Biologist.

District Heritage Biologists Bill Glass and Randy Heidorn flew aerial censuses for purple loosestrife in northeastern Illinois this summer. Their data show a continued expansion of this weed over aerial observations made in 1985. It is spreading most rapidly in the Fox River Valley but is also prevalent along the Calumet and Kankakee Rivers. A survey along the Illinois River from Ottawa to Bath revealed only one infestation near Spring Bay where it had escaped from plantings. Some large infestations are known from farther down the River in Morgan County. A request for non-game checkoff funds for aerial surveys to determine statewide distribution of this pest was not funded. Information from the surveys that were conducted was provided to state, local and some private land managers and helps guide DOC control efforts on its lands.

The Lake County Forest Preserve District received non-game checkoff funds to conduct chemical control of severe loosestrife infestations at and near Wauconda Bog and Gavin Bog. These bogs and associated sedge meadows contain many endangered plants, some of which have doubtless already succumbed to purple loosestrife.

The main hope for stopping purple loosestrife is the development of biological controls. This involves screening, testing and propagating of insect pests of this plant in its native range in Europe, followed by their introduction here. Feasibility studies already completed show bright prospects for success. At the request of Chicago area constituents, Cong. Sidney Yates, Chairman of Interior appropriations, appropriated \$20,000.00 to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service to begin biological control research and development during the current fiscal year. The Service's involvement is needed since it is a nationwide wetland habitat problem and biological control R & D is best done cooperatively with the U S Department of Agriculture. In spite of support for biological control from the International Assn. of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and many state conservation agency Directors (including past DOC Director Mike Witte), the Service recently decided not to spend the funds on biological control. They plan to use the funds to look at control through herbicides and habitat manipulations. Enough research and management has been conducted by the states to show that such "solutions" are only holding actions at best. It is hoped that the USFWS will change its mind and start biological control development.

In the absence of a staff community ecologist, the Botany Program Manager continues as coordinator for purple loosestrife concerns at DOC.

NEW PRACTICAL APPROACH TO ENDANGERED PLANT CONSERVATION

During the 1986 field season, District Biologists and Botany Program staff of the DOC implemented a census and demographic monitoring program on 18 species of vascular plants. The program is aimed at gathering information of value in managing the plants. Working mostly with plants under federal review for listing as endangered species, the program's basic assumption is that detailed ecology and life history studies can be replaced by careful systematic observations as the basis for management in most cases. The program requires about 2 field days and 1 office day per species per year. Copies of the procedures, which are currently being revised, are available from the DOC Botany Program. Preliminary results, from as many as 3 years of data for some species, will be presented in the next Illinoisensis.

ALGIFIC SLOPE FLORA

The Botany Program Manager completed a manuscript on the flora of Illinois' best known algific (cold air producing) talus slope. It appeared in the July issue of "Erigenia", Journal of the Illinois Native Plant Society. The paper reviews the literature on the origin and nature of this special community as well as listing the flora. This paper will be of interest to most persons interested in the flora and natural communities of Illinois. Free reprints are available from the DOC Botany Program.

PLANT CONSERVATION AND THE LAW

The Botany Program Manager presented a talk at the Botany Section of the Illinois State Academy of Science annual meeting on "Plant Conservation in Illinois and the Law". After reviewing the Illinois statutes, it appears that new laws prohibiting the taking of plants from the land of another without written permission of the landowner and regulating the introduction of aggressive exotic plant species into the state are needed if we are to succeed in conserving our native plant life.

AVOID CROWN VETCH

Crown vetch (Coronilla varia) is fast climbing to the top of the ranks of the exotic species that threaten our native flora. Huge "mounds" of it are spreading into Goose Lake Prairie from plantings on adjacent land and it invading the dunes at Illinois Beach State Park. Here it is threatening the endangered purple fringed orchis (Platanthera psycodes). Control efforts to date by DOC staff have been ineffective, and different control methods are being experimented with in 1987.

GINSENG

Some 2,943 licensed harvesters dug 6,626 pounds of wild ginseng roots in Illinois in 1985, based on records of the DOC'S Natural Heritage Division which administers the program. This compares with 4,765 harvested in 1984. The '85 harvest averages 2.25 pounds (about 400 plants) per digger. Over one million plants were harvested.

SPECIES NEWS

LEAFY PRAIRIE CLOVER

The DOC Botany Program reintroduced seed of the leafy prairie clover (Dalea foliosa) into Kankakee River Nature Preserve this fall. This state endangered plant is now restricted to rocky prairies along the Des Plaines River in Will County and glades in middle Tennessee and northern Alabama. It was last seen in the preserve in 1873 when E.J. Hill dug up 4 of 5 plants present. The reintroduction was approved by the Nature Preserves Commission and Endangered Species Protection Board.

PRAIRIE BUSH CLOVER

Recent word from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service indicates that prairie bush clover (Lespedeza leptostachya) will be listed as a federally threatened species in the near future. This will be just the second Illinois plant protected by the federal Act.

BLOODROOT THREATENED

The negative impact that harvest for the market has had on ginseng and goldenseal may be in the offing for bloodroot (Sanguinaria canadensis). The root of this showy spring wildflower is an ingredient in some anti-plaque toothpastes. The Botany Program Manager saw many pounds of bloodroot being marketed this year incidental to his inspection of ginseng roots. Seeds are also being harvested from the wild for propagation. Lets hope that this beautiful harbinger of spring does not decline or disappear from Illinois woodlands. You can help by avoiding toothpaste with "sanguinaria extract".

MEETINGS

NATIONAL MEETING TO BE IN ILLINOIS

The DOC's Division of Natural Heritage is joining with the Natural Areas Association to sponsor the 14th annual Natural Areas Conference in 1987. This National conference will be held October 13-16 at Peoria.

ILLINOIS ACADEMY TO FOCUS ON ENDANGERED SPECIES

The 80th annual meeting of the Illinois State Academy of Science will be held at Eastern Illinois Univ., Charleston on April 10-11, 1987. The meeting theme will be endangered species.

ILLINOIS NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

The Society's annual dinner meeting will be during April at the SIU Student Center in Carbondale. Guest speaker will be Marc Evans of the Kentucky Nature Preserves Commission. Contact the Society at the SIU Botany Department for specific details.

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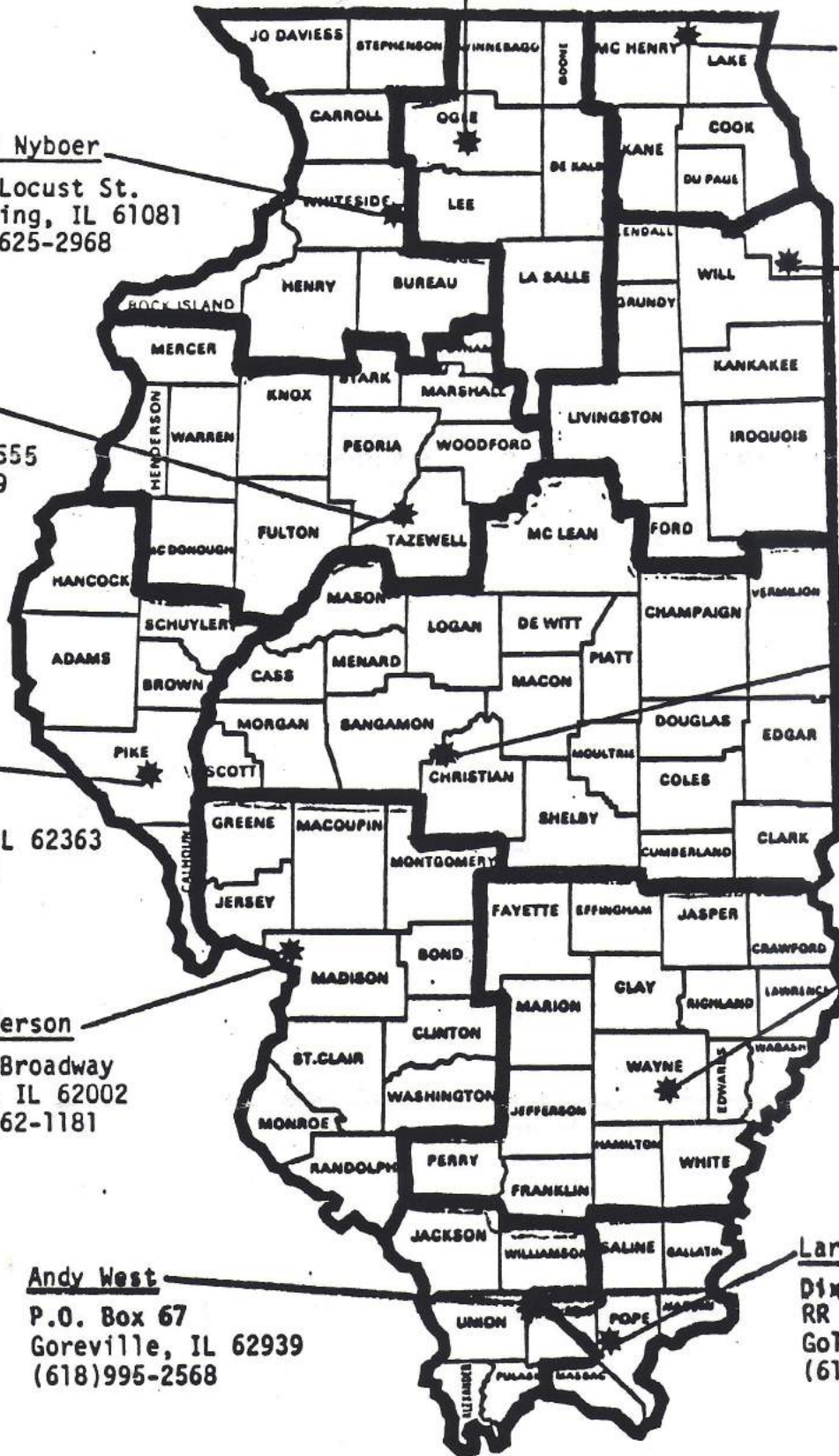
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