

# ILLINOENSIS

NEWSLETTER OF THE ILLINOIS NATIVE PLANT CONSERVATION PROGRAM  
ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION  
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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).

## Purple Loosestrife Update

Rejoice! All naturalists who have spent hot sweaty days pulling and spraying purple loosestrife from wetlands and natural areas now have hope for a permanent solution in the future. All Federal funds allotted for alien plant control in the USFWS FY87 budget (\$100,000.00) have been transferred to the New York Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit for research into control of purple loosestrife. Their plans emphasize biological control as the best choice. For the next year or so funding will support continued research into control agents in Europe by the Commonwealth Institute for Biological Control. This will be followed by 2-3 years of tests under quarantine of control insect candidates before experimental releases in North American habitats can begin. Don't stop your physical control efforts yet, but it is good to know that someone is working on a permanent solution.

Illinois played a major role in getting biological control going at the Federal level. Congressman Sidney Yates, Chairman of the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, played a key role by inserting funds for the project in the USFWS budget and following up to see that they were spent. The Great Lakes Chapter of the Sierra Club (Donna Hriljac) obtained Yates' support. The Illinois DOC spread the word throughout the midwest when we learned that the biological control initiative had been sidetracked within the USFWS. This led to resolutions in support of biological control by the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and various state conservation agencies. IDOC Director Witte supported biological control directly with the Director of the USFWS.

Through it all, Dan Thompson, USFWS retired, was a guiding force within the federal bureaucracy. From his home in Ft. Collins, Colorado Dan saw the project he started before retirement get killed and eventually restored. Hopefully he can relax and enjoy his retirement now.

The aerial survey of Northeastern Illinois for purple loosestrife in preserves and natural areas will not be conducted this year. The DOC has flown this survey for the past 2 years, but had to cancel this year because of insufficient funds.

### New Legislation

The recent session of the General Assembly passed several pieces of legislation of interest to native plant enthusiasts. Governor Thompson is expected to sign them into law in the near future.

Senate Bill 1225 amends the Nongame Wildlife Checkoff statute to include plants in the definition of "wildlife" to be benefited by the fund. Remember to donate a portion of your state income tax refund to this fund next year. Your donation will help plants now even more than in the past. Thank the Illinois Environmental Council for getting this amendment introduced.

House Bill 2235 enacts the Illinois Exotic Weed Control Act. This law prohibits selling, offering to sell or planting purple loosestrife, multiflora rose and Japanese honeysuckle in Illinois. It does not require the removal of these plants from ones property as does the State's noxious weed law. The original bill, initiated by the IDOC Botany Program, would have allowed listing of exotic weeds by Administrative Rule as is done by the Noxious Weed Law. This was opposed by the State Nurseryman's Association which eventually agreed to the listing of the three species by statute.

The Off Road Vehicle Safety Act was passed. This law requires licensing ORVs (\$45.00 for 3 years) with one third of the funds going for DOC Law Enforcement, one third for repair of damage done by ORVs and the remainder to organizations to develop areas to ride ORVs. License fees will increase to \$60.00 for three years in the future. The law does not open any public land to ORV use.

The Illinois Ginseng Conservation Act was ammended to restrict sales of wild ginseng to dealers licensed by the State of Illinois. The amendment also authorizes state confiscation of ginseng aquired in violation of state law and regulations.

### New Native Vegetation in Landscape Organization

ANVIL (the Association for use of Native Vegetation in Landscapes) was founded this summer. Its offices are at 871 Shawnee Avenue, LaFayette, IN 47905. The intent of ANVIL is to set up a program of education to share and disseminate knowledge and experience, and to further public understanding of this type of landscaping. The Executive Director is Dr. Ray Freeborg of the Dept. of Agronomy at Purdue U:niversity. Jock Ingels of LaFayette IL is President. Individual memberships start at \$25.00 annually.

### Search For Rare Plants Underway

The Illinois Department of Transportation is funding a project to search for native plants that have not been seen in many years. This is timely in that the Endangered Species Board is funding an update of information known about Illinois E & T plants at the present time. The search is being conducted by staff of the Illinois Natural History Survey

and the Morton Arboretum. Preliminary word is that many good finds have been made. Unfortunately some probable extirpations are also being documented. Please report any new collections of state E & T plants that you have found to Marlin Bowles at the Morton Arboretum.

#### Illinois Ginseng

The 1986 Illinois wild ginseng harvest was 5,455 pounds. This was down from 6,625 pounds harvested in 1985. There was also a reduction in licensed diggers from 2,493 to 2,190. Random counts of roots per pound revealed an average of 236 plants per pound of root. The average digger harvested 587 plants or about 2 1/2 pounds. The total harvest was some 1,287,380 ginseng plants.

#### Prairie Restoration on DOC Lands

The DOCs Division of Forestry Mason State Nursery produced 49,834 prairie forb seedlings of 27 species. The Nursery, with help from District Heritage Biologists, also made available 780 pounds of forb seed and 1,662 pounds of prairie grass seed. All of these plant materials were planted on DOC properties, thanks to the expanded District Heritage Biologist staff.

#### Federal Cooperative Agreement

Sue Lauzon, of the Endangered Species Board staff, advises that Illinois now has a cooperative agreement with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service covering Endangered and Threatened plants. This agreement qualifies the state to receive federal funds for survey and recovery projects for federally listed and candidate plant species.

#### Spring Woodland Wildflower Poster

This poster, announced in the last Illinoisian, is now available. Since we do not have the capability to mail this poster - its too pretty to fold and we can not afford mailing tubes - we are asking those who want one to pick them up at your District Heritage Biologists office or the Springfield, Champaign or Chicago offices. This was produced with nongame checkoff funds and single copies are free. In case you have forgotten the location of your District Biologist, we are reprinting the directory. Since not all district offices are staffed all the time, it would be good to call ahead.

#### Nongame Video Available

A 25 minute VHS video program entitled "The Nongame Wildlife Story" is available on loan from your District Heritage Biologist. It contains segments on the Bald Eagle, Prairie Ecology, Bats and the Peregrine Falcon. It was produced by the DOCs I & E Division. If your club is looking for a program, consider this one.

## Species News

The Kankakee Mallow (*Iliamna remota*) has shown a significant increase in flowering plants for the first time since implementing the state Recovery Plan in 1984. The 72 flowering plants in 1986 increased to 112 this year. The increase in seedlings and juvenile plants also continues. Deer depredation is very low this summer. The only problem that continues is Amur honeysuckle, which seems to reproduce as fast as it is killed.

Leafy Prairie Clover (*Dalea foliosa*) has been reintroduced to Langham Island in the Kankakee River. Seed planted on the Island last fall failed to produce noticeable seedlings this spring. However, seedlings grown at the Mason State Nursery were planted on the Island in June and 5 were still surviving in late July. Populations of this species being monitored in Will County increased this year over last. Seed from this species will be provided to the Center For Plant Conservation for long term storage.

Tennessee Milk Vetch (*Astragalus tennesseensis*) increased greatly this spring at its only known Illinois location. There were 116 flowering plants, far more than ever previously recorded. Monitoring data indicates the increase is due to a moist summer that allowed exceptional seedling survival. Data indicate the species is relatively short lived with a complete population turnover about every 5 years. It was confirmed this year that some large plant mortality is due to stem borer larvae. A spring prescribed burn did not injure this species.

Large Flowered Snowbell Bush (*Styrax grandifolia*), a southern shrub known from only a single site in Alexander County, flowered this spring, possibly for the first time since its discovery in 1969. The exceptionally mild winter seems to have stimulated this flowering.

Prairie Bush Clover (*Lespedeza leptostachya*) has been listed as a threatened species by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service since the last publication of Illinoisensis.

The Small Whorled Pogonia Orchid (*Isotria medeoloides*). Illinois' only federally endangered plant, is represented by a single flowering specimen in 1987. This is down from 2 plants last year and 3 the year before. The population has dipped this low before.



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