



The Shooting Star

NEWSLETTER

of the

Illinois Native Plant Society – Southern Chapter

AUGUST 2011

“...dedicated to the preservation, conservation, and study of native plants and vegetation in Illinois.”

Next Regular Meeting August 16th @ 6:30pm Carbondale Township Hall

John Schwegman,
retired IDNR biologist, will present
“Rare and Little Known
Plants of Illinois”

See flyer next page

Next Month:

*Dr. Larry Stritch, USFS National Botanist, will be
the keynote speaker at the INPS Annual mtg.*



Silphium laciniatum
Compass Plant



Sabatia angularis
Rose Gentian

Stiltgrass Pull scheduled for August 6th at 9:30am

From member Laurel Toussaint: Japanese stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*) is has invaded the scenic and incredibly diverse Rocky Bluff Trail in the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge. The area is shaded and the valley is generally cooler than surrounding areas. Rocky Bluff is known for spectacular spring wildflowers. In the late spring an expanse of Blue-eyed Mary's covers the entire floodplain with an amazing array of flowers and ferns tucked into the ledges and crannies of surrounding sandstone bluffs. Rocky Bluff will lose all this diversity and Stiltgrass will be the single groundcover if we don't take action to control Stiltgrass. In addition to pulling Stiltgrass we will be searching the area and marking Stiltgrass stands. Refuge staff will follow-up and destroy Stiltgrass areas we have marked. Please join us even if you are unable to bend or stoop. Rocky Bluff is located 12 miles from Carbondale in Crab Orchard (no sticker needed). Water provided, please bring gloves. Stiltgrass has a small root and is easy to pull. Contact: Laurel at 618-549-5163



Register early for the Illinois Native Plant Society Annual Meeting! Please help the planning committee and avoid late fees by sending in your registration today!

Photo courtesy of John Schwegman



Silene regia – Royal Catchfly

Coming this month!

**Esteemed Botanist
John Schwegman**

presents



Photo courtesy of John Schwegman

Liatris remota – Kankakee Mallow

“Rare and Little Known Plants of Illinois”

Tuesday, August 16th, 2011 @ 6:30pm
Carbondale Township Hall
217 East Main St., Carbondale, IL

Companion hike to Wolf Creek Botanical Area

Saturday, August 20st, 2011 @ 1:00pm

Meet at the Egyptian School south of Diswood, IL

Email southernillinoisplants@gmail.com for directions

Events are free and open to the public



John Schwegman is a well known botanist from Illinois, who made his career with the Department of Natural Resources as the state’s Botanist. He was the first employee of the Illinois Nature Preserve Commission and co-founder of the Natural Areas Association. He has described several plant species new to science and his scientific knowledge extends well beyond botany. John and his nature-loving wife Martha live along the banks of the Ohio River in Metropolis, Illinois. John will present information about some of the overlooked and rare plant species in Illinois and lead the hike to Wolf Creek Botanical Area, where he will show us two rare Illinois plants.



This program is sponsored by the Southern Chapter of the Illinois Native Plant Society



We have a beautiful facebook page for the Southern Chapter of the Illinois Native Plant Society! Follow this link and you can browse the photo albums without having to sign up...or if you have a facebook profile, please click on the “like” button to add to your favorite pages.
www.facebook.com/southernillinoisplants

Last Month's Event



Prairie creations are where it's at these days, and starting prairie plantings is spreading like wildfire. Last month we featured experienced plant propagator Ken Schaal. Ken is a retired school teacher and owner of Bluestem Prairie Nursery in Hillsboro, Illinois. He created a small but extremely diverse prairie on his property in rural Montgomery County and his presentation was loaded with information and observations from over 30 years of careful plant nurturing. He showed us many photographs of his beautiful prairie from the spring to winter seasons and the audience was impressed by his presentation and filled with questions.

Over fifty people were in attendance. From the variety of questions asked after the presentation, it was clear that many of these folks are determined to do what it takes to change the paradigm from maintaining well manicured and resource-intensive landscaping to promoting properties that sustain native plant communities and provide valuable wildlife habitat.

Ken stressed the importance of the structural component of the prairie. Small spacing between plants as well as a mixture of tall and short plants allows for the diversity to be maintained. He warned us of the aggressive nature of some prairie species like Big Bluestem and Indian Grass and touted other plants for their beneficial properties. One such plant he taught us about is Wood Betony (*Pedicularis canadensis*). As a hemi-parasitic plant, Wood Betony comprises the roots of other nearby plants, hindering their growth. Overall, it was an excellent presentation and you are welcome to email Ken at blustemnursery@yahoo.com for more information about the plant seed available from his nursery.



President Chris Benda thanking Ken Schaal for the excellent presentation.

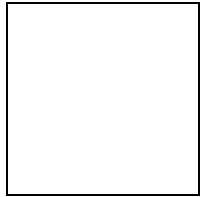
Related August Events

- August 6th: Stiltgrass Pull at Rocky Bluff Trail in the Crab Orchard Wildlife Refuge from 9:30 to 11:30. Meet at the parking lot, no sticker required, bring gloves. Cold water will be available. More info at this link - <http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=250246505002696>
- August 6th: Biodiversity of the Cache. John Schwegman will give an illustrated lecture at 10am at the Cache River Wetlands Center, south of Cypress on route 37. Information 618-657-2064.
- August 6th: Fossil program at Giant City State Park visitor's center at 11am. Noted fossil collector George Stone of Carterville will discuss his lifelong passion with trilobites and share their natural history.
- August 27th: Cold-blooded creatures of the Cache, 1 to 4pm at the Cache River Wetlands Center.

Visit the Beautiful Southern Illinois calendar at <http://www.beautifysouthernillinois.org/events/calendar.htm> for more!

**Botany humor – Q: How do you identify a Dogwood tree?
A: By its bark!**

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Dodecatheon frenchii –
French's Shooting Star

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The Southern Chapter of the INPS thanks **Ken Schaal** for the presentation on **Prairie Restoration** at Southern Illinois University last month!

INPS 2011 CALENDAR

Upcoming Events:	<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>PROGRAM</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
August 16 th	John Schwegman	<i>Rare and Little Known Plants of IL</i>	CTH
August 20 th	John Schwegman	<i>Hike at Wolf Creek Botanical Area</i>	Tamms, IL
September 23-25 th	INPS 30 th Anniversary Celebration in Ozark, IL		
October 15 th	Scott Schuette	<i>Bryophyte Foray</i>	Giant City State Park

CTH = Carbondale Township Hall, 217 East Main Street
TBA = To Be Announced

Loss of Large Predators Caused Widespread Disruption of Ecosystems

The decline of large predators and other "apex consumers" at the top of the food chain has disrupted ecosystems across the planet. The finding is reported by an international team of scientists in a paper in this week's issue of the journal "Science".

The study looked at research results from a wide range of terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems and concluded "the loss of apex consumers is arguably humankind's most pervasive influence on the natural world." More at http://www.nsf.gov/news/news_summ.jsp?cntn_id=119843&WT.mc_id=USNSF_51&WT.mc_ev=click



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