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# A Prairie Rendezvous

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Grand  
Prairie  
Friends



Prairie Grove  
Volunteers

SPRING VOL 9, NO. 2, 2007  
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## TREE SWALLOWS

by Jean Mengelkoch and Sue Gallo

Swooping through the air while catching insects on the fly, the acrobatic flight of the Tree Swallow (*Tachycineta bicolor*) is truly remarkable. To perform these aerial feats they need plenty of open country and lots of insects! Perhaps you have seen these birds in action while wandering in meadows, fields, wetlands or any number of open areas near water.

Tree Swallows have a very striking appearance. Adults have a white belly and throat and their back is an iridescent blue that shimmers in the light. Juveniles are brownish. Their long, narrow wings make them very adept and maneuverable fliers, which is necessary because the bulk of their diet is captured in flight.

Tree Swallows are cavity nesters. Their numbers declined with the advent of cutting down dead limbs or removing dead trees that generally provide good cavities for nesting. Competitors for cavity nesting sites include Bluebirds, Starlings, House Sparrows, and House Wrens. The advent of "Bluebird Trails" of nest boxes has tremendously helped Tree Swallows as well as Bluebirds, since Tree Swallows readily use nest boxes.

Their cup-shaped nest is made of grasses and lined with different kinds of feathers – a cozier nest would be difficult to find. Inside the nest there are generally 4-6 white eggs, each laid a day apart. A 14-15 day incubation period commences with the laying of the last egg. The young are helpless at birth and are fed by both parents. Parents catch a number of insects and wad them together in a dense ball of undigested food. They make numerous trips each day feeding the boluses to the begging young. Fledging occurs at 18-22 days after hatching, but the young may fledge earlier if the nest is disturbed.

Despite their small size, Tree Swallows are very protective of their nestlings. If someone is near the nest, Tree Swallows

will aggressively swoop down on him or her as if attacking. Although they rarely hit anyone, they do tend to make a loud, chipping noise before they deftly divert away. Tree Swallows in the area will often join in the swooping behavior to fend off the person. Believe me, it is a surprisingly intimidating experience!

So, the next time you are out at one of the GPF-PGV sites, between April and August, take some time to notice and appreciate these extraordinary birds.



## A Prairie Rendezvous

P.O. Box 36 • Urbana, IL 61803-0036

**Editor:** Brenda Molano-Flores

**Assistant Editors:** Jamie Ellis, Mary Ann Feist, and Lynne Scott

**Production Designer:** Ray Meredith

*A Prairie Rendezvous* is a publication of Grand Prairie Friends-Prairie Grove Volunteers for the restoration community of East Central Illinois. In February 2004, the membership of GPF voted to broaden the group's Constitution and By-laws bringing the missions of GPF and PGV together and the two groups merged.

*A Prairie Rendezvous* is published quarterly. Article submissions should be sent electronically to the editor at [gpf@prairienet.org](mailto:gpf@prairienet.org) or by mail to the GPF-PGV P.O. Box (above). Member submissions are gladly welcomed.

Grand Prairie Friends-Prairie Grove Volunteers is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization dedicated to natural community preservation, restoration, and education in East Central Illinois. Our stewards help coordinate volunteer workdays at native prairie, savanna, wetland, and woodland remnants. Inquiries and tax-deductible donations should be sent to the GPF-PGV P.O. Box (above).

[www.prairienet.org/gpf](http://www.prairienet.org/gpf)

### **GPF-PGV Board of Directors** (term ends)

Jamie Ellis, President (2006)

Derek Liebert, Vice-President (2007)

Jim Payne, Treasurer (2006)

Lynne Scott, Secretary (2007)

Betsy Kuchinke (2007), Nate Beccue (2008), Paul Marcum (2008), and Dan Olson (2008)

One board position is vacant and unfilled with the departure of Patrick Hubert.

Board meetings are the third Monday of the month at 5:30 p.m. and are open to the public. Directions to the meeting location can be obtained by contacting the President.

### **GPF-PGV Committees**

For information on volunteering and getting involved with any committees, please contact the following:

Membership & Volunteerism: Brenda Molano

Stewardship: Betsy Kuchinke, Paul Marcum, and Dan Olson

Education: Lynne Scott

Publicity: Derek Liebert

Land Acquisition: Dan Olson and Jim Payne

Fund Raising: Derek Liebert and Lynne Scott

### **Submission Deadlines**

☞ **Summer Issue 07** (June, July, Aug.): **May 1**

☞ **Fall Issue 07** (Sept., Oct., Nov.): **Aug. 1**

☞ **Winter Issue 07-08** (Dec., Jan., Feb.): **Nov. 1**

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Jamie Ellis, President GPF-PGV

I sit and look out of my window on a landscape blanketed with snow and gripped by cold. The dormant season persists, and as a biologist, subjects of my interest lie sleeping in wait for a warmer day. The prairie landscape seems to be renewed by the covering of snow that seems to smooth out the injustices humans have perpetrated on our natural world.

As I look out at the snow, I sit and think and worry. I think about the warm days of spring ahead, but I also worry about big problems—an unending war in Iraq, the uncertainty of global climate change, the global loss of species, and the decline of natural habitats. We continue to destroy the life giving ecosystem of our planet Earth.

Even though we, as humans, are to blame for this destruction, we are also the hope. You, who care about the environment, give me hope. Your actions are important. Soon, I'll gather with volunteer stewards who help protect and manage our local natural areas. We'll hire summer interns who will work to care for these same areas. We'll grow native plants that will brighten someone's garden and educate their neighbors. I see students from the East-central Illinois Master Naturalist class volunteering their time and talents. We plan to make a land purchase this year to expand a prairie remnant. For these reasons, I have hope.

I want to thank all of our volunteers who have and will give their time. We need you as we gear up for spring burn season, for workdays to remove invasive plant species, and for the native plant sale on May 12. We also need some of you step up as we now need to fill two vacant positions on the Board. Thanks go to departing Board member Betsy Kuchinke for her time and talent.

I also want to thank members who renewed their membership for 2007. Old or new, there is still time send in your contribution. Many of you also donated extra funds for the stewardship endowment. Thanks! This fund was set up to provide money for the care of our sites indefinitely. Luckily, we've not had to dip into this fund yet, so it continues to grow every so slowly.

That's it for now. Bundle up and enjoy the snow while it lasts. I look forward to seeing you soon.

## SITE SPOTLIGHT: JASMINE HOLLOW

by Jim Payne

Jasmine Hollow is a 143 acre natural area along the Sangamon River in Piatt County. It is located 3 miles southwest of Allerton Park. The site includes a large, functional floodplain and its associated forest, as well as upland and slope forest communities. The site is bisected by the river. Floods inundate the floodplain completely at least once per year, with several smaller events dependent on precipitation. An old oxbow channel, as well as a couple of other flood channels, serve to retain water in ponds free from predation by fish, providing good habitat for amphibians. Beavers pass through the area; though not seen, evidence of their passing is left in gnawed tree trunks.

Trees of the floodplain include silver maple, sycamore, cottonwood, bur oak, black walnut, American and slippery elm, hackberry, box elder, and green ash. Herbaceous plants include wood nettle, green dragon, and muskingum sedge.

Slopes rising out of the floodplain are populated with red oak, sugar maple, bladdernut, and bitternut hickory. Spring wildflowers include sharp-lobed hepatica, bluebells, and yellow bellwort.

The upland forest is home to black, shingle, and white oak; pignut, shagbark, and kingnut hickory; smooth sumac; hazelnut; hop hornbeam; white ash; and basswood. A profusion of spring wildflowers, including bloodroot, spring beauty, trout lily, toothwort, rue anemone, wild ginger, Dutchman's breeches, mayapple, phlox, and yellow and blue violet, reward the visitor in April and May. Other flowers bloom throughout the season, and many grasses, sedges, and vines are also present.

Many species of birds are visitors or permanent residents. Hummingbirds

are usually heard before being seen, as they visit the trumpet creeper flowers in summer. Pileated woodpeckers, wild turkeys, and barred owls are usually heard, but rarely glimpsed.

The history of this site, like most of Illinois, includes several farm owners. Aerial photographs show active pastures south of the river as late as the 1930s, but subsequent images show the forest overtaking the cleared areas. The most visible effect of the grazing today is the large number of



grazing-tolerant shrub species, principally Missouri gooseberry and coral-berry, as well as old fences. These shrubs are being thinned to more closely approximate their natural population density as time permits. In 1944, the site was purchased by William Bodman, an attorney and former circuit judge, as a retreat. It was sold to the present owners in 1993, and enrolled in the state Natural Heritage Landmark program, which marked the beginning of concerted efforts to restore the site to pre-settlement conditions. In recognition of the need to assure its protection as a natural area into the future, it was dedicated as a Land and Water Reserve in 2006.

Visitors to Jasmine Hollow will find many activities of interest, such as

hiking, bird watching, botanizing, or quiet contemplation along the banks of the river. There are no established trails, however a path to the river is often mowed. During archery deer hunting season (October through January), bow hunters may be present in the early morning or late afternoon, as the deer herd in this part of the state is very large and is hampering some of the restoration efforts.

There are many volunteer opportunities available to interested folks of all ages and abilities. Garlic mustard control is needed from March through June. Control of other invasives is done later in the season. Thinning of grazing-tolerant shrubs can be done any time, as can fence removal and boundary maintenance. A few workdays are scheduled – watch the Activity Calendar section of the newsletter. Volunteer help is welcomed most any time, however - for more information, contact Jim Payne at 344-7840 (h – machine), 493-7840 (cell), or [jpayne@shout.net](mailto:jpayne@shout.net).

Directions to Jasmine Hollow: Travel to Monticello via your favorite method (I-72 is probably best). The first exit from I-72 at Monticello is Market St, also SR105. Take SR105 all the way through town (it winds around a bit but then heads straight south). Continuing out of town, in 4 miles or so you'll see a grove of pine trees on your left. That's the Bement township cemetery. At the south edge of the cemetery, turn right (west) onto CR1100 N. Travel west for 7 miles until you come to a tee intersection, which is CR200 E. Turn right (north) and travel a mile or so to the end of the road. Jasmine Hollow is on the left side at 1172 N. 200 East.

Prairie Grove Volunteers  
and  
Grand Prairie Friends



Activity Calendar



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Volunteers

## SPRING 2007

Spring burns will be scheduled in March and early April for several sites. Burns are needed at these sites to discourage the competing non-native species and encourage growth of native plants and native wildlife habitat. Wear natural-fiber, non-flammable clothing (long pants, longsleeves, boots, and gloves); no synthetic fabrics. Bring drinking water and a snack. Call Jamie Ellis (jamese@inhs.uiuc.edu, 244-5695) or Paul Marcum (pmarcum@inhs.uiuc.edu; 333-8459) for more information.

### Volunteer Stewardship Activities

**Urbana Park District Workdays:** Enjoy a natural area close to home. Help remove invasive species, improve trails, collect seed, and plant native species. Tools and refreshments will be provided. Call 217-384-4062 to register or for more information.

#### Second Saturday of every month:

9-11 a.m.: Busey Woods--Meet at APNC\*.

1-3 p.m.: Weaver Grove--Pull off south of intersection of Main St. and Smith Rd Fourth Saturday of every month:

9-11 a.m.: Meadowbrook Prairie--Meet at Race St. parking lot.

1-3 p.m.: Perkins Road Site—Meet at Dog Park, ½ mile east of the Cunningham Ave. on Perkins Rd. The group will then walk down to the lower restoration project area.

**Funks Grove Stewardship Workdays:** Funks Grove is the largest remaining intact prairie grove in the state of Illinois. It is a dedicated National Natural Landmark consisting of over 1200 acres of forest and prairie. The Stewardship group meets at the Sugar Grove Nature Center located in the southern end of Funks Grove. We arrive at 9:00 a.m. September - May and at 8:00 a.m. June - August. Work Days typically last two hours. For a map and directions, please call Sugar Grove Nature Center at 309-874-2174. Upcoming work dates: *March 10 and 24; April 7 and 21; May 5 and 19; June 2, 16, and 30*

**Every Sunday:** Red Bison. Workdays held every Sunday unless otherwise noted. Members and non-members welcome. Meet at the University YMCA at 1:00 p.m. Contact Michael Avara (redbison@gmail.com) for more information.

**Saturday March 31:** Middle Fork Bluffs. Come enjoy an early season hike to see Snow Trillium (*Trillium nivale*). We will also pull and scout for garlic mustard as we hike through the woods. Bring gloves and drinking water. Water, food, and restrooms are also available at the Salt Kettle I-74 rest-stop (just west of the site). Meet at APNC (see inset box) at 9:00 a.m. to carpool or at the Salt Kettle rest-stop at 10:00 a.m. This rest area is just west of Danville. Contact Paul Marcum for more information (333-8459, 390-6141).

**Saturday April 14:** Horseshoe Bottom and Windfall Prairie Nature Preserves. Spring Wildflower Hike. Hike the long way to HBNP. See hill prairies, seeps, marsh marigolds, and breath-taking views of the Middle Fork of the Vermilion!!! Pull garlic mustard along the way!!! Be prepared for several miles of rough (and maybe a bit wet) hiking. Wear good boots and bring wa-

- APNC (Anita Purves Nature Center) is located at 1505 N. Broadway Ave. in Urbana.
- NATURAL RESOURCES STUDIES ANNEX: 1910 Griffith Drive, Champaign. Griffith Drive runs south from St. Mary's Road just east of the Illinois Central railroad viaduct (next to St. Mary's Cemetery).
- Workday reminders and updates will be posted on the ecostewards listserv.
- Please leave your pets at home. Pets are not allowed on Nature Preserves. Activities such as prescribed burnings may endanger pets, even if they are on leashes or otherwise supervised.
- Please wear clean clothes and boots as a general precaution. After a workday wire brush or scrape lug soles clean. Also, do not wear the same clothes that were used to visit a site with mature exotic seed into another site before laundering them. This is to avoid becoming unwitting carriers of the very invasive species that we are trying to control!

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ter and a lunch (WE WILL BE MOST of the DAY). Meet at APNC\* at 9:00 a.m. to carpool to the site or at the Lake Mingo dam parking lot at 9:45. Contact Rick Larimore (hm: 337-7006, w: 244-6716) or Jim Smith (hm: 896-2079) for more information.

**Saturday April 21:** Jasmine Hollow. We'll be pulling garlic mustard, and thinning coralberry and gooseberry. The spring wildflowers should be showing nicely! Meet on site at 9:30. We'll work until noon, then have refreshments and take a hike afterward if folks are interested. The address is 1172 N. 200 East Rd., Piatt County. Phone 344-7840 or email [jjayne@shout.net](mailto:jjayne@shout.net) if you need directions.

**Saturday April 28.** Nettie Hart Memorial Woodland. Help us remove one of the more insidious invasive plants - garlic mustard, as well as other non-natives. This woodland includes upland forest and floodplain forest along the Sangamon River. Wear gloves and bring drinking water too. Meet at APNC\* at 9:00 a.m. to carpool. Contact Bryant Barnes (493-8686; email: [bbarnes@prairienet.org](mailto:bbarnes@prairienet.org)) for more information.

**Saturday April 28.** Pellville Cemetery. Help pull some invasive species!!!! at Pellville Cemetery. Wear gloves and bring drinking water too. Meet at APNC\* at 9:00 a.m. to carpool. Contact Paul Tessene (244-7984; [ptessene@inhs.uiuc.edu](mailto:ptessene@inhs.uiuc.edu)) for more information.

**Sunday May 6.** Russell Duffin Nature Preserve. Wildflower hick and garlic mustard. Meet in the Big Woods parking lot in Forest Glen Preserve, Vermilion County at 1:30 p.m. We'll mainly be hiking and looking at wildflowers, but we'll also keep our eye out for garlic mustard. Bring water to drink and gloves. Contact Connie Cunningham (h: 733-2660, w: 244-7741, email: [carrollc@inhs.uiuc.edu](mailto:carrollc@inhs.uiuc.edu)) for directions or more information.

**Saturday May 12.** GPF-PGV Annual Mother's Day Plant Sale at Lincoln Village in Urbana. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Sunday May 13:** (Mother's Day) Orchid Hill Tour led by Bob Szafoni (Illinois District Heritage Biologist). 10:00 a.m. Come see the orchids in spring bloom and enjoy some topography! This is a rare chance to explore this natural area which is usually closed to the public. Contact Paul Marcum ([pmarcum@inhs.uiuc.edu](mailto:pmarcum@inhs.uiuc.edu); 333-8459) to sign up and get directions. Space is limited to 12 people. Meet at site at 10 a.m. or at APNC\* to car pool at 9:15 a.m.

**Saturday May 19:** Middle Fork Bluffs. Help pull garlic mustard. After working we'll take a hike around the woods to see the spring wildflowers. Bring gloves and drinking water. Water, food, and restrooms are also available at the Salt Kettle I-74 rest-stop (just west of the site). Meet at ANPC (see inset box) at 9:00 a.m. to carpool or at the Salt Kettle rest-stop at

10:00 a.m. This rest area is just west of Danville. Contact Paul Marcum for more information (333-8459, 390-6141).

**Saturday May 26:** Jasmine Hollow. We'll be pulling garlic mustard, and thinning coralberry and gooseberry. Meet on site at 9:30. We'll work until noon, then have refreshments and take a hike afterward if folks are interested. The address is 1172 N. 200 East Rd., Piatt County. Phone 344-7840 or email [jjayne@shout.net](mailto:jjayne@shout.net) if you need directions.

**Saturday June 2:** Ems Tract. Come and help make our vision of a prairie plant nursery a reality. We'll continue to remove unwanted woody vegetation and we may even start planting seedlings. Bring gloves and wear clothing appropriate for cutting and hauling brush. Some refreshments provided. Meet at APNC at 1:00 p.m. to carpool to this site just east of St. Joseph. We'll work for a couple of hours. Contact Jamie Ellis for more information (244-5695, [jamese@inhs.uiuc.edu](mailto:jamese@inhs.uiuc.edu)).

**Saturday June 9:** Shortline Railroad Prairie. Help restore GPF-PGV first prairie remnant by removing non-native vegetation. Wear long sleeves and bring gloves and drinking water. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at ANPC (see inset box) to carpool or 9:45 at the site. For more information contact Paul Marcum (333-8459, 390-6141).

**Sunday June 10:** Buffalo Trace Prairie. Help pull parsnip!!!!. Bring gloves, drinking water, and wear long sleeves. Bring a snack too if you'd like. Workday will start at 8:30 a.m. (latecomers are more than welcome). Directions to Buffalo Trace Prairie: From I-74, take Route 47 North away from Mahomet. At first asphalt road to the left, turn left (2100 N) and turn left again at the next intersection (300E). Drive south to the parking lot on the left across from the cell-phone tower. Walk out on the bike path to the prairie between the 0.2 and 0.3 Mile mark on the bike path. Contact Phil Hult and Gail Snowdon for more information (217-586-4511).

**Sunday June 17:** Buffalo Trace Prairie. Help pull parsnip!!!!. Bring gloves, drinking water, and wear long sleeves. Bring a snack too if you'd like. Workday will start at 8:30 a.m. (latecomers are more than welcome). Directions to Buffalo Trace Prairie: From I-74, take Route 47 North away from Mahomet. At first asphalt road to the left, turn left (2100 N) and turn left again at the next intersection (300E). Drive south to the parking lot on the left across from the cell-phone tower. Walk out on the bike path to the prairie between the 0.2 and 0.3 Mile mark on the bike path. Contact Phil Hult and Gail Snowdon for more information (217-586-4511).

**Saturday June 30:** Shortline Railroad Prairie. Help restore GPF-PGV first prairie remnant by removing non-native vegetation. Wear long sleeves and bring gloves and drinking water. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at ANPC (see inset box) to carpool or 9:45 at the site. For more information contact Paul Marcum (333-8459, 390-6141).

## JEAN NANCE REMEMBERED

by Jim Payne

Jean Nance, one of GPF-PGV's first members, passed away December 13, 2006 at Albany, NY. She was 86 years old. She and her husband, Jim, served on our first board of directors. This was a difficult time for GPF, as the organization was struggling to determine its role in the conservation community, how it would fund its programs, and so on. Some of her meeting notes speak to the difficulties she experienced on that first board.

Jean received a Ph.D. in botany from the University of Rochester in 1946. She taught at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, where she met and married Jim, also a faculty member there. They moved to Champaign-Urbana in 1948, when Jim was appointed professor at the

University of Illinois. Since Jean could not also be on the faculty in those years, she worked in a school science curriculum project, and also did a lot of substitute teaching at the Champaign and Urbana high schools.

The Nances were early pioneers in prairie restoration. They purchased 80 acres of land in Shelby County in 1969, 50 acres of which was woodland with the remaining 30 acres being old fields. In considering what should be done with the old fields, Jim decided to plant it to prairie, and over several years they found enough seed in remnants in the area to plant 15 acres. The family moved to a cabin they had built on the site after Jim's retirement from the U of I, and remained there until 1982, when they

moved to a smaller acreage near St. Joseph. They sold 66 acres of the Shelby County property to a neighbor, retaining the other 14.

Eventually they moved to Urbana, where Jim passed away in 2003. Jean donated the remaining 14 acres of woodland in Shelby County to GPF-PGV, naming it James Nance Woods. She moved to a retirement community in New York to be closer to her children, but continued to stay in touch with GPF-PGV.

GPF-PGV is thankful for the contributions of the Nances' expertise and perseverance during some difficult formative years. They helped mold the organization into what it is today.

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## SUMMER CAMPING TRIPS TO EXPLORE SCENIC AREAS OF ILLINOIS AND INDIANA

by Lynne Scott

Are you looking for an opportunity to get outside in some beautiful natural areas of Illinois and Indiana this summer? If so, check out the latest edition of Parkland College's Live and Learn catalogue. Here you will find information about four exciting camping trips taking place this summer.

The idea behind the trips is to provide people an opportunity to work on their flora and fauna identification skills in some of the region's most beautiful natural areas. If you've ever been hiking and said to yourself, "I wish I understood more about what I'm looking at," these weekend camping trips are for you! Together we'll be exploring our surroundings, identifying what plants and animals we come across and putting it all in the bigger context of the ecology and geology of the area.

These trips will be led by four of Parkland's Natural Sciences instructors: Heidi Leuszler, Van Grissom, Jim Peters, and Lynne Scott. On the first trip, Heidi will lead us to western Indiana near Turkey Run State Park where we'll explore and identify spring wildflowers, trees, and ferns. The trip is scheduled for mid-May so lots of spring wildflowers like trillium, wild geranium, and great solomon's seal will be blooming. One of the nature preserves we will visit, Pine Hills, has an extraordinary geological and vegetative history and we will see trees and orchids that are rare in this part of the country. The second trip will be led by Van in June. He'll take the group to Southern Illinois to go "herp hunting". Of course while hunting for these sometimes elusive creatures, we'll explore the geology and ecology of the area. If you're

lucky, its rumored Van can play the harmonica pretty well; maybe he'll call in a snake or two! The third camping trip of the summer will be led by me (Lynne) and will take us to northwest Indiana. Here you'll stroll the sandy beaches of Lake Michigan and hike through a variety of habitats where you can observe dune succession and a bog. Along the way we'll try to spot as many birds as possible. Its bound to be an amazing trip. After all, we'll be visiting a National Lakeshore that is ranked 7<sup>th</sup> for plant diversity among all national parks! The last (and certainly not least) trip of the summer will be led by Jim. He is going to take us insect hunting at Nachusa Grasslands in northern Illinois. This 2500 acre (!) grassland is truly a remarkable place to visit, rich in diverse ecological communities. The prairie will be in full bloom and by day we'll be sure to see lots of plant-insect interactions taking place. By night we'll see what nocturnal critters there are too!

Heidi, Van, Jim, and I are all really excited about these trips. I have a feeling that with all our enthusiasm we won't be able to hike more than 10ft. on a trail without having to stop and figure out what plant, insect, reptile, or amphibian we see! Another fun aspect of these trips is that they will be "staffed" by all four of us, so though a particular weekend will be devoted to a specific topic (herps/insects/flowers), we will be on the lookout for all sorts of natural history. Come join the fun!

Logistics: each trip begins Friday at 3:00 by carpooling to the destination and ends when we return Sunday at 9:00 p.m. The fee for each weekend is \$60 but if you choose to do all

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## GPF-PGV ANNUAL NATIVE PLANT SALE

by Molly McNicoll

Save the date! The annual GPF-PGV plant sale will take place on Saturday, May 12, 2007, from 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. at Lincoln Square Village in Urbana.

Whether you want to see a view outside your window like that seen by the settlers of Illinois, with tall and short grasses waving in the wind, or just want to add a bit of color to your yard, the native plant sale is a great place for beginners and experts. Come pick from wildflowers in reds, yellows, purples, blues and everything in between. The easy to grow black-eyed Susan is always a good starter, or the purple blazing star and orange butterflyweed will brighten up any garden. Who can pass up the subtle hues of grasses like little bluestem and Indian grass in colors of auburn and golden straw in the fall after the wildflowers have bloomed their last flower? Or if you want more structure in your prairie plantings, why not add round-headed bush clover, compass plant or white wild indigo.

Two other dates to buy native plants: Look for us at Allerton Park on April 28-29 for a pre-sale on select native plants. GPF-PGV will also be selling plants at the Farmers market from 9 a.m. - Noon on May 19 and 26.

### Volunteer Opportunities for Native Plant Sales

- ✧ Transplanting Dates: April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 and May 7
- ✧ Sale preparation and Sale Setup Dates: May 11 and 12
- ✧ Allerton Plant Sale Setup and Sales: April 28 and 29
- ✧ Farmers Market Setup and Sales: May 19 and 26



Calling for volunteers! Would you like to volunteer for the GPF-PGV annual native plant sale? There are a variety of volunteer opportunities to get involved with the plant sale – everything from transplanting to selling plants. Come help out with as much (or little) time you have: No experience necessary!

**Transplanting** (a chance to get your hands dirty!): We will be transplanting germinating seedlings into pots at the NRB greenhouse (corner of Pennsylvania and Sixth in Champaign) from 6:30-8 p.m. on the following dates April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 and May 7.

**Sale prep, set up, day of sale, and clean up:** We will move plants from the greenhouse and set up at Lincoln Square Village the afternoon/evening before the sale (May 11). Volunteers are also needed the day of the sale to work with both customers and plants, as well as clean up and moving after the sale (May 12).

**Allerton Plant Sale setup and sale:** Volunteers will be needed to help transport and sell GPF-PGV plants at the Allerton Park plant sale on April 28-29.

**Farmers Market set up and sale:** If you like spending Saturday mornings going to Market at the Square (in the parking lot of Lincoln Square Village), maybe you would like to help with transport, set up and sales of native plants from 9am-Noon on May 19 and 26.

Please contact **Jamie Ellis** (jamese@inhs.uiuc.edu or 244-5695) if you are interested any of the above volunteer opportunities, the sales, or would like more details.

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four weekends there is a discount. If the trips sound great but the idea of sleeping in a tent is holding you back, most of the areas have hotels nearby and arrangements could be made. Questions? contact Heidi Leuszler at hleuszler@parkland.edu or call Parkland's Live and Learn program at 351-2546.

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fun – dribble water on the leaves and watch it run off or form beads. Older plants bear tiny green flowers; the tiny black seeds have convex faces.

Lamb's Quarters have long been used as a wild green both raw and cooked. Numerous Southwest Indian tribes used the leaves in soups, salads, and stews. Napoleon reportedly lived on the black bread made from seeds of Pigweed during times of scarcity.

In cultivated ground the young plants can be found from mid-spring until frost and are considered by many to be superior to spinach. HA... that's why pigs love it too! But, as Euell Gibbons said: "All in all, I would say that pigweeds are too good for pigs." Try the following soup and you'll agree!

Remember when collecting wild foods: never take an entire stand, be respectful of private property, and be **positive** of correct identification of your

plants. Never eat plants that grow near roads or driveways. Heavy metals from car exhausts poison the ground and end up in the plants for decades.

**WARNING:** there are a small number of aromatic *Chenopodiums* that are covered with oil glands; **do not eat their leaves.** 2 examples are Mexican Tea and Jerusalem Oak – they smell somewhat like turpentine.

### SCHEDULE

- ✧ Plants of Western Indiana: May 11-13
- ✧ Herps of Southern Illinois: June 15-17
- ✧ General Ecology and Birds in the Lake Michigan Sand Dunes: June 29 - July 1
- ✧ Insects in the Nachusa Grasslands: August 3-5



### SUMMER 2007 INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Sponsored by GRAND PRAIRIE FRIENDS-PRAIRIE GROVE  
VOLUNTEERS OF ILLINOIS

**Position:** Grand Prairie Friends-Prairie Grove Volunteers (GPF-PGV) seeks interested applicants for two full-time summer internship positions for summer 2007 in ecological stewardship and management of natural areas in east-central Illinois. Interns will work independently and in teams to control and remove exotic, invasive plant species from prairie and forest natural areas using mechanical and chemical techniques. Educational opportunities including outings in the field with natural resource professionals, scientists, and volunteers will be scheduled. Interns may also assist with planting native plant seedlings and collecting native plant seed.

**Qualifications:** Applicants should be highly self-motivated and able to work with little or no direct supervision. Applicants must be willing and able to work in the field under a variety of environmental conditions. Course work or interest in the biological and ecological sciences is preferred. Ability or willingness to operate hand and power tools including bow saws, clippers, power brushcutter, chainsaw, etc. is also preferred. A pesticide applicator license will be required after the start of the internship. A valid automobile driver's license is required.

**Rate:** \$8.00/hr including up to \$300.00 in mileage reimbursement expenses for personal vehicle use (GPF-PGV has available a stick-shift pickup truck for use).

**Time Period:** Position begins May 30 and will continue until approximately August 31, 2006.

To ensure full consideration for the internship, applications should be received by **March 31, 2006**. Please send letter of application, resume, and contact information for three references (references need to fill out and send in a reference form) to:

**Grand Prairie Friends-Prairie Grove Volunteers**  
**Summer Internship**  
**P.O. Box 36**  
**Urbana, IL 61803**

Specific questions regarding the summer internship can be directed to Jamie Ellis  
([jamese@inhs.uiuc.edu](mailto:jamese@inhs.uiuc.edu) or 217.244.5695).

GPF-PGV is an all-volunteer not-for-profit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation and stewardship of prairie, forest, and wetland natural areas in east-central Illinois. We also educate interested citizens about the ecology, natural history, and importance of our remaining natural areas.

More information about GPF-PGV can be found at [www.prairienet.org/gpf](http://www.prairienet.org/gpf).

## ALLERTON PARK PLANT SALE

by Kimberly Petzing

Get ready to garden at Allerton's third annual plant sale, scheduled for Saturday, April 28 and Sunday, April 29. Held at the Park's Diversified Farm, the sale will take place from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. on Saturday and 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. on Sunday.

More than 100 different flowering plants, grasses, and shrubs will be available for purchase. There will be plants and shrubs that grow from full sun to shade, are drought and heat tolerant, and attract hundreds of butterflies. Many of the plants offered will be provided by Grand Prairie Friends-

Prairie Grove Volunteers, among other plant growers.

In addition to buying plants, you can attend University of Illinois Extension classes on container gardening; "ask the expert" your plant or garden-related questions; enter a raffle; purchase garden-related items such as wind chimes, bird feeders, lawn and garden art, books and more. Food will also be available for purchase.

For more information and a complete schedule for the weekend, call 217-244-1035, visit the Allerton website at [www.allerton.uiuc.edu](http://www.allerton.uiuc.edu) or email [allertoninfo@uiuc.edu](mailto:allertoninfo@uiuc.edu).

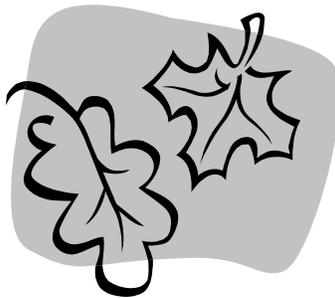
## VOLNTEER ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS SUGAR GROVE NATURE CENTER

### Edens Lost & Found-Professional Development

**Workshop:** Learn all about an amazing curriculum that blends sustainable practices with Service Learning in an effort to encourage students to become more connected with their local environment and community. The Presenter, Deb Perryman has been teaching Environmental Science at Elgin High School (Elgin, Illinois) since 1994 and has won many awards for her unique teaching style and philosophy. Saturday, March 17, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at Sugar Grove Nature Center. *To Register Contact:* Sugar Grove Nature Center at 309-874-2174 or [sugargrovec@earthlink.net](mailto:sugargrovec@earthlink.net). This is a *FREE* event.

### Prairie School Project-Professional

**Development Workshop:** Join us for an exciting day of prairie exploration as you learn about this multidisciplinary Tallgrass Prairie Educational Resource! Tuesday, March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2007 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Sugar Grove Nature Center in Funks Grove. Registration Deadline: March 15, Fee: \$20 (for materials, lunch, and snacks). For Questions or To Register call Angela Smith at 309-874-2174 or email: [sugargrovec@earthlink.net](mailto:sugargrovec@earthlink.net)



**The Leopold Education Project (LEP):** The LEP is an innovative, interdisciplinary, critical thinking, conservation and environmental education curriculum based on the classic writings of the renowned conservationist, Aldo Leopold. On Tuesday, April 10, 2007, from 9am-3pm, formal and non-formal educators are invited to join LEP facilitator, Debbie Ruff, for an energizing workshop. Every participant will receive their own copy of Aldo Leopold's *A Sand County Almanac*, Lessons in a Land Ethic Teacher's Guide, LEP Task Cards, and a wealth of other education resources. Space is limited to 20 participants, Fee is \$15. Lunch, snacks, and materials are provided. For Questions or To Register 309-874-2174 or email [sugargrovec@earthlink.net](mailto:sugargrovec@earthlink.net).

**Sugar Grove Nature Center** is located in beautiful, historic Funks Grove, just south of Bloomington-Normal off of Old Route 66. From Bloomington, travel on I-55 South, exiting on 154 to Shirley (there is also a sign advertising Funks Grove). Follow the signs to Funks Grove (the drive is about half an hour).

# THE PRAIRIE CHEF

by Betsy Kuchinke

Lamb, goose, or pig... if you were naming this plant, which animal would you choose to describe it?

The recipe I've chosen for you features Lamb's Quarters (*Chenopodium album*), but since it's found throughout the U.S., it may also be called Goose-foot or Pigweed. In fact, this is when



Lamb's quarters (*Chenopodium album*)  
Source: Google Images

the use of a botanical name becomes so helpful. The well-known Euell Gibbons used to think Latin names were "an affectation, designed to show off the knowledge of the user." But years later he said, "I think it was Pigweed, more than anything else, that cured me of this attitude."

Most of the *Chenopodium sp.* are edible, and garden beets and spinach belong to this family. This tells us that Pigweed will be rich in vitamins A and C and an excellent source of calcium, just like their relatives! They are commonly found in potato fields (and other cultivated fields), waste areas, and along roadsides. When they're less than 1 foot high, the entire plant can be eaten. In rich soil it can grow up to 4'-5' tall, so gather only the new leaves and tender tops.

This erect and many-branched plant has leaves that are coated with a slightly waxy white powder that's more pronounced on the undersides. Have some

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## Lamb's Quarters Soup

*This is a wonderfully creamy soup.*

- 1 onion
- 2 TBLS. butter or olive oil
- 3 cups water or stock
- 2 cups potatoes, diced
- 2 cups lamb's quarters, chopped
- Salt
- 1 cup sour cream, or 12 oz. can of evaporated milk
- Croutons & chopped parsley



1. Chop the onion and sauté it in the oil.
2. Add the remaining ingredients and cook for about 20 minutes until tender.
3. Add the sour cream or evaporated milk and reheat. Serve with croutons and chopped parsley.

Grand Prairie Friends - Prairie Grove Volunteers

*A Prairie Rendezvous*

PO Box 36

Urbana, IL 61803-0036



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