
A Prairie Rendezvous



SUMMER VOL. II, No. 3, 2009
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CROWDS CLAMOR FOR NATIVE PLANTS

by Jamie Ellis—Plant Sale Coordinator

Saturday morning, May 9th, inside Lincoln Square Village in Urbana was a seething mass of people in search of things green. No, dollar bills weren't being handed out—these people were seeking plants. Specifically people sought native wildflowers and grasses to beautify the home landscape. Woodland plants like Jack-in-the-pulpit, bloodroot, and Virginia bluebells for those with shady yards, and prairie plants like little bluestem, orange butterfly weed, pale purple coneflower, and beardtongue for those with a bit more sun. There were close to fifty species to choose from. Hundreds of pots of woodland prairie wildflowers and grasses went home with happy gardeners.

Grand Prairie Friends to raise money for and awareness about the organization and about the importance of native plants. Funds raised at this event go to fund the summer internship program. Each summer GPF hires two college age students



to collect, thresh, and stratify seed; plant seeds in the greenhouse; transplant seedlings into pots; advertise the sale; and then haul, sell, and clean up plants before, during, and after the sale. We sincerely thank all the volunteers who get their hands dirty and give of their time. GPF wants to especially thank those who donated plants from their own yards and gardens including Phil Hult, Gail



Every year, the annual Native Plant Sale is a way for

who spend time doing management tasks on prairie, woodland, and wetland natural areas around east-central Illinois. In turn, GPF gives them a bit of an education about ecological management and stewardship of natural areas.

This plant sale doesn't just happen by itself—dozens of volunteers put in many hours



Snowdon, Andy Coyle, Beth Wolgemuth, Bob Vaiden, Paul

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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 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 Prairie Grove Volunteers together through a merger of two groups.

A Prairie Rendezvous is published quarterly. Article submissions should be sent electronically to the editor at james.ellis72@gmail.com or by mail to the GPF P.O. Box (above). Member submissions are gladly welcomed.

Grand Prairie Friends 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 P.O. Box (above).

www.prairienet.org/gpf

GPF Board of Directors (term ends)

Jamie Ellis, President (2009)

Derek Liebert, Vice-President (2009)

Jim Payne, Treasurer (2009)

Lynne Scott, Secretary (2010)

Drew Becker (2011)

Fred Delcomyn (2010)

Rob Kanter (2011)

Dan Olson (2011)

One board position is vacant and unfilled.

Board meetings are not regularly scheduled. The next meeting is Tuesday, April 14. Meeting times and directions can be obtained by contacting the President, Jamie Ellis (james.ellis72@gmail.com).

GPF Committees

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

Membership & Volunteerism: Brenda Molano-Flores

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

🌀 **Fall Issue** (Sept., Oct., Nov.): **Aug. 1, 2009**

🌀 **Winter Issue** (Dec., Jan., Feb.): **Nov. 1, 2009**

🌀 **Spring Issue** (Mar., Apr., May.): **Feb. 1, 2009**

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Jamie Ellis, President, GPF

Spring has slipped by and we are getting well into summer as I write this piece. Once again we didn't seem to have much of a progression of weather that eased us from the dry cold of winter into the muggy hot of summer. I hope all of you fared well through the deluge of spring rains this year. The songs of frogs and toads as well as the lush growth of plants makes me think that they're happy with the rain.

Much of my spring for GPF has been consumed with the plant sale—planting seeds, recruiting volunteers, transplanting seedlings, and coordinating the big sale on May 9 as well as the Farmer's Market sales May 16 and 23. Once again, from my viewpoint, the native plant sale was a success. We sold thousands of pots of native prairie and woodland wildflowers and raised money to support the mission of GPF. I feel heartened that so many people care enough to take the time put native plants in their home landscape. I also want to send a hearty thank you to all of the people who volunteered their time, energy, and knowledge to make the plant sale a success.

By the time you read this, our summer interns will have started their tenure. I am pleased that GPF has hired two enthusiastic young people for 2009. You can read about Sharon and Joe elsewhere in this newsletter. I hope you get the chance to meet them this summer and share your own knowledge and passion for natural areas in east-central Illinois.

As you have read in these pages previously, your GPF Board is working on crafting new policies and proce-

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INTRODUCING THE 2009 SUMMER INTERNS

by Jamie Ellis

Grand Prairie Friends is once again proud to announce the 2009 Summer Interns.

Started in 1994, the summer internship program provides an opportunity for two people to learn about natural areas conservation and stewardship in east-central Illinois.

They provide some much needed labor to pull weeds, cut brush, maintain signs, and collect seeds at prairie and woodland natural areas around the region. In turn, we provide them with an education about ecological management, plant identification, and the opportunity to interact with dedicated professionals and volunteers. Here is an introduction to the two young people we hired for 2009 in their own words...



Sharon Orpet

This May, I was very excited to graduate with a degree in community health from the University of Illinois. My concentration is health education and I am interested in health and behavioral interventions and preventative health care. I am passionate about outreach and education involving health topics as well as the environment. I see natural areas

not only recreational but also as learning tools to educated people of all ages about ecology. This internship will give me the opportunity to give back to the community and the environment. I very grateful for this opportunity and can't wait to get my hands dirty.

My name is Joe Murphy and I

Joseph Murphy

My name is Joe Murphy and I

am thrilled to be working with Grand Prairie Friends this summer. I am currently a student at Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois, and I will be starting my senior year this coming fall. My college experience at Augustana has been spectacular, and my biology major has led me to strong interests in wild-



life, ecology, organic chemistry and biochemistry. I am also involved in Alpha Phi Omega service fraternity, the Big Brothers

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CARLE PARK PLANTING

by John C. Marlin

About 60 neighborhood volunteers planted woodland wildflowers and spread mulch at Urbana's Carle Park on April 9th. A variety of common species were placed within ten feet of large trees on the north side of the park. If this planting is successful it will be expanded in coming years. The plants came from an Urbana Park District experimental propagation area, the Marlin's, and neighbor Thom Fehrman.



Grand Prairie Friends

Activity Calendar



SUMMER 2009

Volunteer Stewardship Activities

Sunday June 14: 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 Rt 47 north away from Mahomet to the first parking lot on the left at the Champaign County Forest Preserve - Lake of the Woods. 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 21: 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 Rt 47 north away from Mahomet to the first parking lot on the left at the Champaign County Forest Preserve - Lake of the Woods. 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 27: 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 APNC (see inset box) to carpool or 9:45 am at the site. For more information contact Paul Marcum (333-8459, 390-6141).

Saturday, June 27: Paxton Railroad Prairie. This high quality prairie has about 100 species, and many will be blooming! Help collect seeds and remove non-native species. Wear long sleeves; bring gloves and water. Contact Betsy Kuchinke for more info. (896-2506 or ekuchink@illinois.edu).

Sunday June 28: Loda Addition Seed Collection Workday. Come out and collect early season seed for the new Loda Cemetery Prairie Nature Preserve Addition. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at APNC (see inset box) to carpool. For more information contact Paul Marcum [217-333-8459 (w), 217-390-6141 (c)].

- 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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SHOW PRIDE FOR YOUR NATIVE PLANT GARDEN

by Jamie Ellis

Many of you take the time and effort to landscape your yard and garden with native plants. Whether they are woodland wildflowers under the shade tree, prairie grasses soaking in the sun, or wetland plants at home in your rain garden, you can now show your pride and let passers-by know about your efforts with a Native Plant Garden sign! These signs are available from Grand Prairie Friends for the reasonable price of \$10 each.

GPF members Kerry Helms and Rob Kanter collaborated to create the sign. Kerry lent his artistic skills to come up with a pleasing and eye-catching design while Rob's skill with prose provides a simple yet effective message. Signs and Blanks, a company in Ohio, produced the signs, which are printed on UV resistant vinyl adhered to aluminum. The signs are six by twelve inches with two pre-drilled holes to allow mounting to a post of your choice.

With this sign posted in your garden, neighbors don't have to wonder about the plants that they don't seem to recognize, and it will catch the eye and educate those walking by on the sidewalk. Please drop Jamie an email if you want one to display in your native plant garden.



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Saturday July 11: Loda Cemetery Prairie Nature Preserve. Tour this high quality Grade A Prairie site and maybe help pull a few weeds. Also check on progress of Loda Cemetery Prairie Addition (part of which was planted this winter). Meet at APNC in Urbana at 9:00 a.m. to carpool or 10:00 a.m. at the preserve. For more information contact Jamie Ellis (james.ellis72@gmail.com or 244-5695).

Sunday July 12: Buffalo Trace Prairie. Help pull parsnip and sweet clover! 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 Rt 47 north

away from Mahomet to the first parking lot on the left at the Champaign County Forest Preserve - Lake of the Woods. 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 July 18: Jasmine Hollow. We'll be removing woody brush or fences. Meet on site at 9:30 a.m. 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 jpayne@shout.net if you need directions.

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Tessene, Mary Kay Solecki, and Jesse Kurylo. Lynne Scott made sure there was a space at Lincoln Square again for GPF this year and Jim Payne always makes sure cash and checks are handled properly. Jesse gets



thanks again for setting up at Urbana's Market at the Square. GPF would also like to thank those groups who also set up to sell plants on the same day—John C. and John E. Marlin, the CU Business and Professional Women's Society, the CU Herb Society, and the Prairie Hosta Club.



All photos from native plant sale by Gail Snowdon and Jim Payne.

Volunteers

Sandy Bales	John C. Marlin
Megan Bales	John E. Marlin
Dave Beck	Nohra Mateus-Pinilla
Moni Berg-Binder	Vida Mazzocco
Eileen Borgia	Joel McDonal
Lisa Braddock	Molly McNicoll
Lisa Bucci	Sandra McVicker-
Lynn Crawford	Rosenfield
Duane Dassow	Justin Meissen
Lesley Deem	Maximo Menchaca
Roger Digger	Mike Miller
Brian Duggan	Dirk Mol
Chris Eberle	LeRoy Neitzel
Dan Elbert	Dan Olson
Jamie Ellis	Terry Rathgeber
Jim Fay	Beverly Rauchfuss
Aaron Fay	Sarah Redd-Illyes
Meredith Fay	Alan Rider
Lynn Fennema	Jackie Roy
Patricia Franke	Jennifer Rydzewski
Rachel Gushee	Tim Rye
Bill Handel	Leslie Rye
Bruce Hannon	Dick Schicht
Wendy Harris	Mike Sczerba
Kerry Helms	Gergana Slavova
Matt Hohmann	Suzanne Smith
Jim Hoyt	Gail Snowdon
Phil Hult	Greg Spyreas
Stacy James	John Taft
Rob Kanter	Robert Stanton
Ryan Kelly	Jim Talley
Betsy Kuchinke	Bob Vaiden
Peter Kuchinke	Bill Wasson
Jesse Kurylo	Stephanie Wheeler
Joan Lane	Jason Willand
Marilyn Leger	Beth Wohlgemuth
Mary Ann Leger	

IN MEMORIAM: HAROLD POESCHL (1923-2008)

Harold Poeschl of Urbana will be remembered as a tireless conservationist who worked for many years in the Soil Conservation Service as well as a person who restored prairie to his own land later in life. He graciously allowed a few members of GPF to harvest seeds from prairie plants on his land to be used to grow plants for the native plant sale. GPF also gave him a few plants to add to the species diversity on his property.

Long-time member and GPF supporter, Gloria Valenti, made a memorial contribution to GPF in the name of Mr. Poeschl. We want to remember Harold for his friendship and his love of prairie plants and to thank Ms. Valenti for her contribution.

LOOKING FOR LEADERS

What does it take to run an all-volunteer, not-for-profit organization? We for one, it takes volunteers dedicated to the mission of the organization. It takes people willing to lend their time and expertise. That might be you.

GPF is governed by a nine member Board of Directors who each serve a three year term. Three directors are elected each year by the membership at the annual meeting in September. The Board is working to nominate a slate of directors for 2009. If you're interested in giving of your time and talent, please contact Jamie Ellis (james.ellis72@gmail.com or 244-5695).

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program, as well as the cross country and track teams.

My interest in environmental science was fostered while I attended high school in Naperville, IL. Growing up I had always insisted on being outdoors, and I grew a strong appreciation for wildlife and natural environments. Throughout high school and college that appreciation began to influence my career goals. I think that the work GPF is doing is very important and I'm very excited to contribute.

I wanted to become an Intern with Grand Prairie Friends to gain some field experience. Graduate school has been a goal of mine for the last few years, and experience working in a professional environment is very important during the selection process. This internship will be a new learning experience for me, as I will be working alongside other interns, biologists, and ecologists. I will have the benefit of learning from their valuable experiences. I'm proud to be a part of the GPF team and I'm very excited to meet my co-workers and begin a great summer!

Poem

To a Hidden Wood

by Glen Martin

To a hidden wood today —
a place of boyhood escape
in bygone days.
A prohibited place
where research projects imposed
“No Trespassing” warnings,
inciting a trespass need for woods
in a prairie sea lacking woods.

As a boy with canid pal
— across open fields — undetected,
Yes!
Then a dash into the Forbidden Wood!
Entering into a secret world
with hidden paths for four-legged
interlopers,
now joined by hominid and canid.

But now this once forbidden wood
is a forgotten woods — no research or
apparent care.
Today below the towering trees
this place serves as a nursery of invasive
plants
that wreak havoc in all woodlands.
Bush honeysuckle commands the
understory,
sheltering dense carpets of garlic
mustard.
The edges of pathways and fence lines
host multiflora rose.
This wood now holds no allure —
it serves as a source of contagion
for the invasive species
that man has loosed
on the land.

From a hidden wood
I left behind fond memories,
to ponder
what future beckons for this place.....

(Continued from page 2)

dures as part of the process toward becoming accredited by the Land Trust Alliance. This has been and continues to be a lengthy process, but we will be a stronger organization in the end.

As an all-volunteer organization, we are always looking for dedicated and passionate people who care about the natural resources of Illinois. How could your interests and expertise help GPF? I truly love the growing native plants and coordinating the plant sale, but I need an apprentice to help me out. I also truly

love working with the summer interns, but this is another task where I could use some help. Interested? Give me a call (244-5695).

It is amazing that as we read about the economic meltdown that's happening in the U. S. and around the world right now, I can't really tell by looking at our membership renewal rates. Your donations to this organization are as strong as ever. I and the Board can't thank you enough for supporting our conservation and stewardship work. Thanks.

One last thing—by the time

you read this, a new prairie will be in the ground. Well at least seedlings of prairie wildflowers and grasses will be planted. This happened on Saturday June 6 on the Veterinary Medicine Campus at the University of Illinois. The plan is to plant about 8000 seedlings from 50 species of plants characteristic of tallgrass prairie in central Illinois. Hopefully a crew of about 40 to 50 volunteers showed up to help plant. If you weren't there to help, make sure to stop by Vet Med on South Lincoln Avenue in Urbana and take a look.

... and more

- ☞ Native Plant Garden Pride
- ☞ Carle Park Planting
- ☞ Summer Interns

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