

# The Prairie Enthusiasts



## TPE Field Trips Summer and Fall 2010

See also the TPE web site  
[www.ThePrairieEnthusiasts.org](http://www.ThePrairieEnthusiasts.org)

Join us for informative tours of prairies, savannas, and open woodlands that range from high quality natural areas to newly begun restorations and plantings. Learn to identify the wildflowers and animals that inhabit these gems of nature, or come to simply enjoy the sites and sounds. These trips give you opportunities to see, first hand, the results of various management/restoration strategies & techniques, and a chance to share your interest in prairies by bringing a friend.

**What to bring:** Field trips generally proceed rain or shine (except for severe weather or unless otherwise noted), so bring appropriate clothing and apparel. A hat, long-pants, and sturdy footwear are recommended, along with sunscreen and insect/tick repellent. For long hikes, be sure to bring water, and, if it is an all-day event, something to eat.

---

**Please call trip leaders to confirm that the trip is still on.**

---

**July 5 (Monday)**

**Butterflies, Dragonflies & Picnic at Swamp Lovers Preserve**

Dane Co, WI

This preserve is on private land. It consists of remnant wetlands, remnant bluff prairie, restored tall grass prairie, and dry hilly oak-hickory woodland. We will observe and learn about various butterflies and dragonflies as we explore the preserve. Bring binoculars (close-focusing ones work best) -- or just get close! At the top of the ridge we will picnic at a shelter. Hamburgers, hot dogs and buns will be cooked on the grill and provided for the participants. You just bring your own supplementary food and drink. Leaders are Tod Highsmith, Karl and Dorothy Legler. This trip is conducted by the Southern Wis. Butterfly Assoc., co-sponsored by the Madison Audubon Society and Wisconsin Wetlands Association.

**Time:** Meet at 9:30 AM This trip will last until 1:00 p.m.

**Contact:** Karl Legler 608-643-4926 or cell 608-228-0743 only if you have a question about the trip or weather is questionable.

**Directions:** Travel west from Cross Plains on Hwy 14. Just outside town take County KP to the right (north) and go 0.3 mile. Turn left onto Scheele Road. Then turn right and park before the hill.

**July 7 (Wednesday evening)**

**Sugar River Oak Savanna**

Dane Co, WI

Come see a diverse 9-acre oak savanna. Although it still shows some signs of past use as a pasture, 34 years of annual fire has fostered a remarkable recovery of native prairie and savanna vegetation. There are now nearly 400 native plant species present. Leadplant, Coreopsis, pale purple coneflower, white Baptisia, and many other flowers of early summer should be in bloom, and many species of butterfly on the wing. This is a new preserve of The Prairie Enthusiasts managed by the Empire-Sauk of TPE.

**Time:** 6:00 to 8:00 PM

**Trip leader:** Rich Henderson (608-845-7065)

**Directions:** From the intersection of CTH M and PD (north of Verona and SW of Madison) take PD west 3.0 miles to Timber Lane, turn right (north) on to Timber Lane and then immediately turn left into a joint driveway. Proceed to the brick house (2845 Timber Lane). Park in mowed lawn (please do not block the neighbors driveway).

**July 8 (Thursday evening)**

**Prairie Home Estates**

Dane Co, WI

This unique Town of Middleton 121acre rural clustered subdivision contains 34 acres of planted prairie in three outlots of 5, 12, and 17 acres. The original planting done by the developer lacked diversity and proper preparation, however through the efforts of residence who performed intensive inter-seeding for several years using purchased and collected seeds the diversity of the planting has been increased to as many as 80 species in the 12-acre outlot. Come see what is now a wonderful display of showy prairie plants including Pale Purple Coneflowers in full bloom and many of your other color favorites.

**Time:** 6:30 PM

**Trip leader:** Richard Oberle (608-826-0559)

**Directions:** Go north on the beltline, as you are about to leave the Middleton/Madison area take the last exit onto Airport Road and go west (left turn) for a little over 2 miles. After going over the hill turn north (right) onto Ellington Way, take the next right onto Blazingstars Drive. Feel free to park in the driveway at 7428 Blazingstars Drive.



**July 11 (Sunday)** **Weaver Dunes (TNC) Prairie Walk** Wabasha Co., MN  
Join us to tour this large sand prairie; to enjoy the diverse and distinctive plant and animal life; to climb the dunes and enjoy the vistas. Hear how the sand prairie benefits wildlife from the nearby backwaters of the Mississippi River. We may even see some elusive Flameflower in bloom.  
**Time:** 2:00 PM **Contact:** Joel Dunnette (507-269-7064)  
**Directions:** Weaver Dunes is on Wabasha County 84, about 1 mile north of the intersection with US 61 just north of Weaver, MN. Meet at the maintenance building area, down the driveway from the sign on 84.

**July 11 (Sunday)** **La Crosse River State Trail's Rockland Prairie** La Crosse Co, WI  
This is the fifth of nine scheduled hikes in 2009 to track the seasonal changes on remnant prairies along the bike trail. Local naturalist Bob Lee will lead the search for such as forbs as Turk's-cap Lily, Leadplant, Bergamot, Gray-headed Coneflower, and Missouri Goldenrod. Bob will add his usual perspective, with anecdotes related to prairies and local history. This will be a leisurely walk on level terrain.  
**Time:** 1:30 PM **Trip Leader:** Bob Lee (608-486-2154)  
**Directions:** Meet in Rockland, WI (near I-90 in eastern La Crosse County) at the railroad crossing on Commercial St. (CTH J).

**July 11 (Sunday)** **Tyrone Prairies Botany Tour and Seed Collecting** Dunn Co, WI  
Come see the early results of TPE's restoration efforts at several prairies in the Tyrone Property (owned by Xcel Energy) located within the Lower Chippewa River watershed. We will tour the area & browse the rich diversity of species known to occur at the site. Along the way, we will stop to collect seed of early blooming plants such as lupine & hoary pucoon. Expect to hike along uneven terrain. Bring paper bags & markers if you are planning to help collect seed (no experience necessary, we will train you!)  
**Time:** 1 PM - 4 PM **Trip Leader:** Matt McFarlane (715-737-2434)  
**Directions:** Duscham Creek, Tyrone Property. Meet at Rock Falls Feed Mill (west of Rock Falls, E9075 Highway 85) at 1PM and we will carpool from there (Tyrone is 4 miles west of Rock Falls)

**July 18 (Sunday)** **2010 Annual Meeting and Picnic** Fennimore, WI  
The Southwest Chapter of The Prairie Enthusiasts is hoping you will join us at our newest preserve, Borah Creek Prairie. All members are invited to attend.  
**Time:** The festivities will begin at 10:00 AM with a TPE board or directors meeting. For those not planning to attend the board meeting, join southwest chapter members on tours of the site. A picnic lunch will be served at noon. The Southwest Chapter will provide hot beef sandwiches and drinks in our newly cleaned barn. Please bring a dish to pass, your own table service & chairs. After lunch there will be a brief TPE annual meeting followed by a short ceremony transferring the title of Borah Creek Prairie from The Mississippi Valley Conservancy to The Prairie Enthusiasts. There will also be a short, official dedication of Borah Creek Prairie as a State Natural Area by Mark Martin, a representative of the DNR Bureau of Endangered Resources.

Having given your lunch some time to settle, there will be tours of Borah Creek and two nearby Eldred and Bush Clover Prairies. Borah Creek Prairie is 138 acres of recovering prairie with a long history of extensive grazing. With the reduction of woody vegetation and numerous invasives, it is the Chapter's dream to restore to health a host of many rare and threatened species including the federally endangered Prairie Bush-Clover and state-threatened Woolly Milkweed, Prairie Indian Plantain, Hill's Thistle, Wild Quinine and Pale Purple Coneflower. With luck one might see grassland birds which use the area including upland sandpiper, eastern kingbird, brown thrasher, dickcissel, eastern meadowlark, grasshopper sparrow, and bell's vireo.

Eldred Prairie and Prairie Bush Clover prairies are within 10 miles of Borah Creek and have their own unique qualities and are well worth a visit. There will be shuttles or caravans to those prairies for folks wishing to see those prairies.

**Directions:** Borah Creek Prairie is located in southwest Wisconsin ~ 5 miles southwest of Fennimore. From Fennimore head west on US Hwy 18. Turn left onto Cemetery Road & right onto Mount Ridge Road for ~ 3 miles. Mount Ridge Road makes several right angle turns so be sure to stay on the ridge top & do not go straight ahead at the T intersection of Grahm Road. The access road into Borah Creek Prairie is on the right at 11949 Mount Ridge Road. Look for the signs & drive down to the barn.

If you wish to stay overnight, there are many lodging facilities in the area around Fennimore to fit every budget: Life O' Riley Bed and Breakfast [www.lifeorileyfarm.com](http://www.lifeorileyfarm.com), Northwoods Retreat/Laughing Llama, [www.laughingllama.com](http://www.laughingllama.com), Napp's Motel, [www.nappsmotel.com](http://www.nappsmotel.com), and Fenmore Hills Motel and Annex [www.femorehillsmotel.com](http://www.femorehillsmotel.com). The nearest campground is just a few miles from Borah Creek Prairie, Klondyke Secluded Acres at 6656 Pine Knob Road, Lancaster, WI 53813. It is a small campground so be sure to call for reservations at (608) 723-2844.

**Please RSVP to Carol Winge ([carolwinge@yahoo.com](mailto:carolwinge@yahoo.com)). Hope to see you there!**



**August 14 (Saturday)** **Butterflies of the Avoca/Blue River Area** Iowa & Grant Co., WI  
This trip will highlight several areas in the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway, including Avoca Prairie and Savanna State Natural Area in Iowa County, Blue River unit in Grant County and along the Wisconsin River north of Blue River. We expect to see late butterflies and several southern immigrants. A hat and long pants are recommended. Bring a lunch and binoculars (the closer they focus the better). A few extra binoculars are available. This is a joint trip of the Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association and Madison Audubon Society.

**Time:** 10:30 AM to 4:00 PM **Trip Leader:** Mike Reese, call (920) 787-2341 if you have a question about the trip.

**Directions:** Allow 1-1/4 hour travel time from Madison. Take Hwy 14 west to Lone Rock, south on Hwy 130 then turn right on Hwy 133. Go west about 5.5 miles, turn right on Hay Rd, and drive north to the parking lot just before the creek.

**August 14 (Saturday)** **Bluff Prairies of the Chippewa and Mississippi Rivers** Pepin Co, WI  
We will tour State Natural Areas (Five Mile Bluff and Maiden Rock Bluff) located on high bluffs in the Mississippi River basin. The sites are remnant hill prairies containing a diversity of native grasses and wildflowers located on high bluffs that offer stunning views of the Chippewa River and Mississippi River valleys. If we are lucky, we may see peregrine falcons, golden eagles, and rare reptiles. Expect to hike along difficult, steep, and uneven terrain.

**Time:** 10 AM-3 PM **Trip Leader:** Bill Hogseth, DNR Conservation Biologist (715-308-7798)

**Directions:** Five Mile Bluff and Maiden Rock Bluff. Meet at the BP Station in Pepin (at the corner of Hwy 35 and Prairie St.) We will caravan/carpool to the sites. We will eat lunch at Bogus Creek Cafe in Stockholm, WI.

**August 21 (Saturday)** **Fair Meadows** Rock County, WI  
This is your chance to see the birds and blooms at Fair Meadows, a 375-acre privately-owned State Natural Area on the south edge of Lake Koshkonong. Summer residents include sandhill cranes, osprey, sedge wrens, butterflies, dragonflies, and a variety of songbirds; the prairies should be in full bloom with opportunities to see the flora in oak savannas and woodlands, wet prairie, sedge meadow, shrub-carr, and open marsh. We'll hike on mowed prairie lanes, so bring your binoculars and insect repellent.

**Time:** 8 AM to 11 AM **Trip Leaders:** Gary and Penny Shackelford (608-868-3654)

**Directions:** Entrance to Fair Meadows is west off Vogel Road, about .8 mile north of County Highway N, between State Highways 59 and 25, north of Milton.

**August 21 (Saturday)** **Tour of Blueberry Hill and Ulrich prairie** West Lakeland Township, MN  
It serves as a fine example of the native grasses and wildflowers that used to predominate in this area before settlement. Wayne Huhnke, owner of Kinnickinnic Natives will be our guide as he takes us through the restoration and management of this remnant.

**Time:** 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

**Directions:** We will meet at a small Oak Savanna and Native prairie area known locally as Blueberry Hill. The site located just south of Bayport at Hwy 95 & Quant Avenue holds a commanding view of the St. Croix Valley looking over to Hudson, WI Following the BB Hill tour, we will drive to the Ulrich's residence to tour the planted prairie where the owners are attempting to recreate an oak savanna from a cornfield development on a small acreage site. This is an opportunity to compare a planted prairie with a restored prairie where both projects have similarities in their size, time frames, and management for invasive species. We are expecting Liatris species and leadplant to be in bloom.

**Directions for second tour:** Joan and Andy Ulrich Residence Tour 2090 Oriole Avenue North, West Lakeland Township, MN 55082 Note: Please park on one side of street in front of the home to minimize congestion.

Refreshments served at Ulrich's after tours

Please RSVP to Joan at [joan.ulrich@comcast.net](mailto:joan.ulrich@comcast.net) or call (651-436-5329).

**August 22 (Sunday)** **La Crosse River State Trail's Rockland Prairie** La Crosse Co, WI  
Grasses such as Switchgrass, Big Bluestem, and Cord Grass should dominate these railroad remnants at this time. Prairie sunflower and Great blue lobelia should also be in bloom. This will be a leisurely walk on level terrain.

**Time:** 1:30 PM **Trip Leader:** Bob Lee (608-486-2154)

**Directions:** Meet in Rockland, WI (near I-90 in eastern La Crosse Co.) at the railroad crossing on Commercial St. (CTH J).

---

**Please call trip leaders to confirm that the trip is still on.**

---

**August 22 (Sunday)**

**Pleasure Valley Conservancy Field Trip**

Dane Co., WI

This 226 acre conservancy includes wooded and open valley bottoms, streams, springs, wetlands, a manmade pond, rugged dolomite-capped hills underlain by sandstone with outcrops that provide scenic views of nearby Blue Mounds. Habitats include: dry oak savanna, oak woodlands, mixed hardwood forest, black-ash and black walnut bottomlands with forested seeps, sedge meadow, sedge fen, and floodplain forest. Formerly cultivated old fields have been planted mesic prairie. Restoration activities have been carried out for 15 years. The conservancy supports a wide diversity of native flora and fauna that characterized the area before European settlement. Over 450 native plants species are present. Rare plants include the Wisconsin State Endangered nodding rattlesnake-root (*Prenanthes crepidinea*), and the Wisconsin State Special Concern woodland boneset (*Eupatorium sessilifolium* L. var. *brittonianum* Porter), common skullcap (*Scutellaria ovata*) and adder's-tongue (*Opioglossum pusillum*). Most of the conservancy is protected with a conservation easement held by TPE and Dane County. Trip includes walking 2 to 4 miles, some on rugged terrain.

**Time:** 10:30 AM

**Trip Leaders:** Ken Wade and Pat Trochlell (608-767-3111)

**Directions:** Take USH 18/151 west from Madison to 5 miles west of Mt. Horeb. Turn right at Cave of the Mounds Rd. Go ¼ mile and turn right on CTH "ID" then immediately turn left on CTH "F" and continue past Cave of the Mounds. Turn right toward Brigham Co. Park and continue 2 miles on CTH "F" past the park. Turn left on Moyer Rd. Turn left after ¼ mile into paved private drive (10747 Moyer Rd.).

**August 28 (Saturday evening)**

**Schluckebier Sand Prairie**

Sauk Co., WI

We will visit a 23-acre State Natural Area prairie formally owned by The Nature Conservancy, but now transferred to TPE for protection and care (managed by Empire-Sauk Chapter). This sandy, dry and dry-mesic prairie is home too many rare and unusual species associated with sand prairie habitat. The rough blazing stars should be in full bloom.

**Time:** 6:00 to 8:00 PM

**Contact:** Rich Henderson (608-845-7065)

**Directions:** Take US Highway 12 west of Sauk City, turn left (west) onto County PF. Schluckebier is 1.5 miles down PF, on the south (left side) of the road.

**August 29 (Sunday afternoon)**

**Smith/Egre Drumlin Prairies**

Dane Co., WI

This is an opportunity to see spectacular stands of rough blazingstar in full bloom, and to visit a private site not open to the public. These are good quality, gravel and sand drumlins prairies nestled within 80 acres of grassland cover set in an open prairie landscape. Drumlin hills are interesting features formed by the passing of the last glacier. The Empire-Sauk Chapter of TPE is currently working with the landowners on long-term management.

**Time:** 1:00 to 3:00 PM

**Trip leader:** Rich Henderson (608-845-7065)

**Directions:** From the intersection of US Hwy 12 and Hwy 73 (2.5 miles west of Cambridge, WI), take 73 south 1.5 miles to County PQ. Turn left (east) onto PQ. Proceed 1.0 miles to Clearview Road. Take Clearview (right turn) south 0.5 miles. Park along the road, but off the shoulder. We will be hiking in a ½ mile from there.

**September 4 (Saturday)**

**Grasshoppers!**

Dane Co., WI

The trip leader co-authored "A Guide to the Grasshoppers of Wisconsin" published by Wisconsin DNR. The book exhibited the state's grasshopper species with color photos, range maps, and species accounts. Our appreciation of grasshoppers will take a big leap forward as Kathy leads this trip into sand prairie areas in search of these fascinating and beautiful insects. We will spend 2-3 hours learning how to discern grasshoppers from katydids, and learn about behavior, ecology, life history, and the biology needed for identification. We will net-and-release the various species for observation and discussion. Attendees that have aerial nets and minnow nets are encouraged to bring them to have fun chasing grasshoppers. Also bring close-focusing binoculars if you have them. This is a joint trip of SWBA and the Madison Audubon Society.

**Time:** 1:30 to 4:00 PM

**Trip Leader:** Kathy Kirk (608-442-1642), call only if you have a questions about the trip.

**Directions:** Meet at the parking lot of the Mazomanie Sand Barrens. From Middleton take Highway 12 toward Sauk City. At the intersection with Y turn left (west) onto Y and go nearly 2 1/2 miles to the sign for the Sand Barrens. Take the short road to the parking lot.

---

**Please call trip leaders to confirm that the trip is still on.**

---

**September 6** (Monday, Labor Day)                      **Pleasant Valley Conservancy SNA**                      Dane Co., WI  
Kathie and Tom Brock will lead an afternoon trip at Pleasant Valley Conservancy State Natural Area on Labor Day. This preserve is held jointly in trust by the Savanna Oak Foundation and TPE. The site is in the Town of Vermont, south of Black Earth, in the driftless area of southwestern Wisconsin. The property contains prairie remnants, wetlands, and extensive oak savannas and has been under intensive management for the past 12 years. An extensive prescribed burn program and judicious use of herbicides have resulted in excellent control of invasive brush. Hiking will be partly across steep bluffs, and long pants and good hiking shoes are recommended. This is a joint trip with Madison Audubon Society. At the end of the 3 hour trip, light refreshments will be served at the small cabin/shack.  
**Time:** 1:00 to 4:00 PM  
**Trip Leaders:** site stewards, Tom and Kathie Brock (608-238-5050 or email [kmbrock@charter.net](mailto:kmbrock@charter.net))  
**Directions:** From the Village of Black Earth take Cty F to the west and then south for 5 miles. Turn left on Pleasant Valley Rd. Park along the south side by the driveway at Fire Number 4609.

**September 6** (Monday, Labor Day)                      **Green County Prairies**                      Green County, WI  
Located within a few miles of each other, we can visit Muralt Bluff Prairie, Vale Prairie, Oliver Prairie, Butenhoff Prairie, and Sulzer Prairie to see what's blooming. Blazing stars, asters, goldenrods, gentians, tallgrasses, grassland birds and butterflies will be the main attractions, but these small sites include some rare and unusual plants. We may also collect some seeds as we go.  
**Time:** 11 AM to 3 PM                      **Trip Leaders:** Chris Roberts and Tom Mitchell (608-325-6228)  
**Directions:** Meet at Muralt Bluff parking lot, on County F, two miles north and west of its junctions with Highway 59, two miles west of Albany.

**September 12** (Sunday)                      **Chippewa Savannas Chapter Annual Meeting**                      Downsville, WI  
Lunch will be served with lemonade and beer as we meet to discuss the future of the Chippewa Savannas Chapter. Afterwards, we will take a field trip through the Dunnville Bottoms to explore the large grasslands and savannas along the floodplain terraces of the Chippewa River.  
**Time:** Noon – 4 PM                      **Trip Leader:** Call 715-308-7798 for more detailed directions.  
**Directions:** Louisville Church (aka Bill Hogseth's house) From Downsville, travel east on County Road C for 2 miles. Turn south and travel 2 miles on County Road Y. Meeting is at a big white old church building with a prairie in the front yard: fire number N2017.

**September 12** (Sunday)                      **La Crosse River State Trail's Rockland Prairie**                      La Crosse Co, WI  
Asters will dominate the scene at this time of year, with New England Aster, Bottle Gentian and Grey Goldenrod also likely in bloom. This will be a leisurely walk on level terrain.  
**Time:** 1:30 PM                      **Trip Leader:** Bob Lee (608-486-2154)  
**Directions:** Meet in Rockland, WI (near I-90 in eastern La Crosse Co) at the railroad crossing on Commercial St. (CTH J).

**October 3** (Sunday)                      **La Crosse River State Trail's Rockland Prairie**                      La Crosse Co, WI  
This will be the last in the series of prairie walks along the railroad remnants for 2009, with local naturalist Bob Lee leading the search for the late bloomers such as Little Bluestem, Sweet Everlasting, Downy Gentian. This will be a leisurely walk on level terrain.  
**Time:** 1:30 PM                      **Trip Leader:** Bob Lee (608-486-2154)  
**Directions:** Meet in Rockland, WI (near I-90 in eastern La Crosse Co) at the railroad crossing on Commercial St. (CTH J).

**October 9** (Saturday)                      **Schurch-Thomson and Underwood Prairies**                      Iowa Co., WI  
Come hike into the secluded valley of the Schurch-Thomson and Underwood prairies for an afternoon of exploring dry and dry-mesic prairie remnants, progress being made to recover degraded and overgrown prairie sod, and efforts at inter-seeding prairie vegetation into smooth brome sod. Displays of late summer flowers, waving prairie grass, and butterflies should be in the offering. Schurch-Thomson Prairie is a 190-acre unit of TPE's 530-acre Mounds View Grassland preserve, and is adjacent to the privately owned Underwood Prairie. TPE has a management agreement to manage and restore prairie on approximately 20 acres of the Underwood family land. Bring binoculars, a hat, and be prepared for a long hike.  
**Time:** 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM                      **Trip Leader:** Rich Henderson (608-845-7065)  
**Directions:** From the intersection of US Hwy 18-151 and County F (south of Blue Mounds in western Dane County), take F approximately 5 miles south. Turn right onto Reilly Road, and proceed to the end of the road. We will be meeting by the barn. (Note: A half mile down F from 18-151, pay close attention to the road signs, for F turns to the right & the straight ahead road becomes County Z. Stay on F.)

Field trips are a great way to see prairies that are normally closed to the public, as well as seeing the results of the maintenance from previous years. Not to mention a great way to share your enthusiasm with a friend. TPE Field Trips are open to the public, so feel free to invite a friend to come along!!!!

If you have a suggestion for a field trip you would like to see in the future or if you would like to lead a field trip of your own, be sure to let your chapter's field trip coordinator know so that we can include it in our next field trip season!!

### **NEXT FIELD TRIP FLIER**

The next Field Trip Flier will cover dates April 9 – July 10, 2011.

Field trips are also posted on our website at: [www.theprairieenthusiasts.org](http://www.theprairieenthusiasts.org)

### **Reminder:**

Field trips generally proceed rain or shine (except for severe weather or unless otherwise noted), so bring appropriate clothing and apparel. A hat, long-pants, and sturdy footwear are recommended, along with sunscreen and insect/tick repellent. For long hikes, be sure to bring water, and, if it is an all-day event, something to eat.