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The PRAIRIE PROMOTER

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Grassroots Conservation at Work

TPE Named Conservation Organization of the Year

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress selected The Prairie Enthusiasts as the 2009 Statewide Conservation Organization of the Year. This award recognizes our efforts in conservation and conservation education throughout the state.

Ron Roettger, chair of the Conservation Congress Awards Committee, presented the plaque and certificate to TPE President Evanne Hunt at a gala dinner on Friday, May 8, 2009 in Lacrosse, Wis. "The projects that your organization has undertaken to protect and restore natural ecosystems are impressive, as are the educational opportunities you provide," said Roettger.

"This award demonstrates the Conservation Congress' appreciation for the connection between protecting our native fire-dependent ecosystems, such as prairie, oak savanna and oak woodland and quality habitat for game species and outdoor recreation opportunities," said Hunt.

Gary Eldred, the long-time Prairie Enthusiast who wrote the award-winning nomination to the Conservation Congress says, "We were long overdue for recognition."

Local TPE leaders Jessica Bolwahn (chair of the Coulee Region chapter) and Jim Rogala (TPE Board Member) accompanied Hunt to the awards ceremony.

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress provides citizens' input to Wisconsin's Natural Resources Board and the Department of Natural Resources on issues relating to the management of the state's natural resources, for present and future generations to enjoy. The organization celebrated their 75th anniversary at their annual convention in La Crosse, WI. Over 300 delegates from all counties attended the three-day event.



Evanne Hunt accepts the 2009 Organization of the Year Award on behalf of TPE. L to R: Jim Rogala, Ron Roettger, Evanne Hunt, and Jessica Bolwahn.

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TPE was incorporated in Wisconsin in 1987 as a private nonprofit, tax exempt corporation under section [501(c) 3] of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations are tax-deductible.

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The Prairie Promoter is a quarterly publication of The Prairie Enthusiasts. No part of this periodical may be reproduced without permission. We welcome submissions of articles, announcements, artwork and photographs that are relevant to prairie and savanna ecosystems. Mail or email submissions to local chapter editorial volunteers or to The Prairie Promoter Editor. Copy any text into the body of the email. Send photos (jpeg or bmp) as attachments. Letters and articles may be edited for length or style. Computer disks, art, and photographs will be returned. Deadlines for submission of material are March 6 (Spring issue); May 22 (Summer issue); August 22 (Fall issue); and November 28 (Winter issue).

If you would prefer to receive electronic notification of the newsletter please email Victoria at TPE@theprairieenthusiasts.org.

President's Message: Track Your Volunteer Hours

by Evanne Hunt

\$211,288.50

That is how much the 10,434 hours volunteered for land protection & management, education, development & promotion, and administration by TPE members in 2008 are worth, according to the Independent Sector (www.independentsector.org).

While volunteer service is, in many ways, immeasurably valuable, this national estimate provides a useful metric for understanding the enormous economic contribution of volunteers to TPE.

We report volunteer hours in the Annual Report given to donors, foundations and grantmakers. We use the hours to illustrate how we will leverage grant dollars to achieve greater "bang for the buck, such as running a \$75,000 program on \$25,000.

Log It or Forget It

While field work is typically easy to remember because we sign in with the work party leader, many other hours get forgotten. Here are few examples:

- You spend a couple hours at a project site mowing or pulling spotted knapweed on your own.
- Chapter leaders spend time welcoming new members and planning chapter meeting agendas.
- Chapter treasurers review quarterly statements and submit purchase advice forms.
- You help staff a booth at an Earth Day event.

Best Practices

- Each chapter should designate one person to track volunteer hours.
- Pass a log book around at each chapter meeting. Reporting your hours monthly is easier than remembering at the end of the year.
- Include enough detail so hours from all chapters can be consistently categorized.
- Each chapter should submit their volunteer hours to the business manager, Carol Winge, by January 31 of the following year.

Volunteer involvement is a cornerstone of our success. Without your "boots on the ground", we would not be able to educate the public, run the organization, or manage the 3970 acres for which we are responsible. Let's get full credit for what you do!

A New Way to Give

by Carol Winge

The Fundraising and Endowment Committee will create a new planned giving program for The Prairie Enthusiasts over the next few months. Gifts through wills and estate plans already provide a strong and growing source of support for all aspects of our organization. The new program will simplify the giving process.

Planned giving integrates the personal, financial and estate planning goals of donors with their desire to bestow current or future financial charitable gifts. Some planned gifts are made by a designation in a will or trust. Others, like charitable gift annuities, require additional planning and are designed to create present or future income streams for the donor or other beneficiaries, tax savings for the donor and a legacy gift for the charity.

Planned giving is attractive to donors for many reasons. It may allow you to make larger gifts than you can from your current assets. It may also provide a stream of income for life, higher investment yields or lower capital gains or estate taxes. Planned gifts often appeal to those who want to assist a

charitable organization but don't know which of their assets they will need during their lifetimes.

Through planned gifts like bequests, life insurance policies, gift annuities, charitable trusts, and even retirement plans, people can support charitable organizations they care about while satisfying important financial concerns. In today's world, planned giving can also be an excellent estate planning tool.

TPE will use flexible, unrestricted gifts wherever the need is greatest within the organization. A bequest to one of the new TPE Endowment Funds will provide lasting support for one of our prairies.

Watch the newsletter and our website for more information about TPE's new planned giving program. Your participation and generosity will secure the future of this organization and the prairie land we seek to preserve.



Barb and Brad Glass. Photo courtesy of Barbara Glass.

Member Profile: Barb and Brad Glass

by Barbara Glass

Our interest in prairies dates back to the early 1980's when we lived in Northfield, a Chicago suburb. I was a typical suburban garden club member. However, one day Steve Packard, from the Illinois chapter of the Nature Conservancy, came to speak at the club. He talked about a prairie project on the North Branch of the Chicago River.

At the time, we thought our garden looked quite artificial. We were ready to make a change. Steve's project attracted us—he seemed to be reclaiming history and returning the landscape to more natural conditions. I joined the work parties, which were nearby, on weekends and learned from Steve, who was devoted to prairie restoration and a great leader.

In 1985, we built our house in Spring Green, Wisconsin. Before we began construction, we visited the site on weekends. During the week, back in Illinois, I volunteered at the Chicago Botanic Gardens in Glencoe, growing prairie plants in their greenhouse.

A few years later, we moved permanently into our house in Wisconsin. In 1988, we learned that David Kopitzke, a professor of botany and a botanical artist, was selling "Little Valley Farm," his native plant nursery business in Richland County. We bought the business and moved it to our barn on Sneed Creek Road, with the stipulation that Dave would teach us about prairie plants. Besides being very knowledgeable and dedicated to prairies, David was a fine teacher. He also used his botanical artistic talents to illustrate the nursery catalog.

During these years, we discovered that not everyone appreciates prairies -- like when the man who put in our driveway commented to a mutual friend, "you know Mrs. Glass; she's the lady who grows weeds."

As owners of Little Valley Farm, we participated in a number of activities related to prairies, including

conferences and plant sales. We also became members of The Prairie Enthusiasts, headed by Gary Eldred, the founder of the very first TPE chapter.

The TPE Annual Banquet was then, as it is now, the major activity which draws the membership together. Then banquets used to feature live auctions, which were a lot of fun, as well as silent auctions like the ones we have now. Generally, the banquets were held in southwestern Wisconsin -- Dodgeville, Platteville, Monroe, Madison, LaCrosse, and so forth.

We see TPE's primary achievements as the preservation of lands with prairie plants and grasses and prairie remnants, as well as the maintenance of these lands. We have enjoyed being part of TPE work parties, especially on The Nature Conservancy land near Spring Green and the Eldred Prairie near Lancaster.

In 2000, Brad helped establish the Driftless Area Land Conservancy and became a member of the Board of Directors for that organization. Both Brad and I believe in the importance of conservation organizations working together to preserve land.

We believe that the most effective ways to protect land are by obtaining conservation easements or acquiring lands outright. With that in mind, we have placed a conservation easement on our own land (209 acres).

We have learned a lot from the knowledgeable and dedicated members of The Prairie Enthusiasts and from programs that TPE has sponsored. We are pleased with the direction TPE has taken in recent years, especially by expanding into Illinois and Minnesota. We hope this expansion continues and look forward to more years of active membership.

Brad Glass contributed to this article

News from the Board

by Carol Winge

The Prairie Enthusiasts Board of Directors participated in a working session on Friday, February 20, 2009. At this meeting, Board members reviewed priorities identified at the 2007 strategic planning session. The goal for February's meeting was to re-evaluate the priorities and to develop an action plan that best reflects the organization's objectives. Board members judged priorities by their relationship to TPE's mission and the organization's future role—do we want to be small or do we want to grow into a force? The strategic plan can be found on our website under TPE business, February 20, 2009 Board Meeting Minutes. Watch for updates in *The Prairie Promoter* and on our website.

BioCON: Interactions Between CO₂, Nitrogen and Biodiversity

Reprinted courtesy of the Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve

Why study these three variables?

Global carbon dioxide (CO₂) levels have increased steadily since the Industrial Revolution. After WWII and the invention of the artificial nitrogen fixation process, global nitrogen levels also increased as a result of nitrogen-enriched agricultural fertilizers. At the same time, plant biodiversity is diminishing on a world-wide scale.

During the early 1990s, in response to elevated global CO₂ levels, the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) asked the question: "What are the effects of increased CO₂ on global systems?" Researchers here in Minnesota pondered the idea and added nitrogen deposition and biodiversity loss, two other environmental changes occurring on a global scale, to the question. In 1997, BioCON was born, the name combining all three effects: bio for biodiversity, CO for CO₂ and N for nitrogen.

The experiment was designed to study how plant and soil communities respond to three major global environmental changes: increased soil nitrogen, increased atmospheric CO₂ and loss of biodiversity.

The Experiment

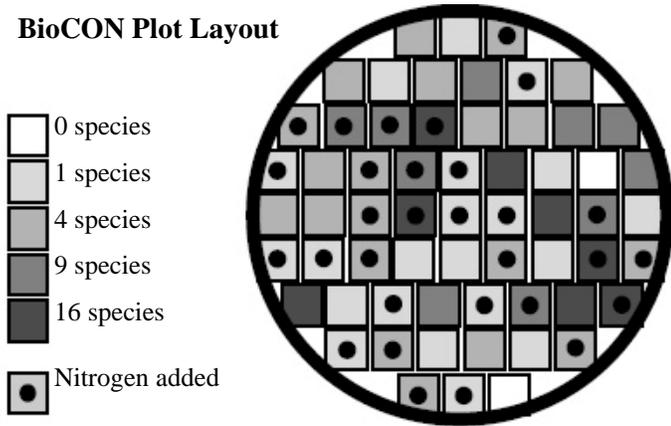
That plants require CO₂ and nitrogen was already established prior to BioCON's inception. Also known was plant species use resources in different ways, and that different resources interact to influence plant growth. Based on this knowledge, researchers initially developed a three-pronged study involving the following treatments:

BioCON Treatments			
CO₂	380 ppm ambient	or	560 ppm est. 2050 level
Nitrogen	ambient	or	ambient+4g/m/yr
Diversity	test plots were planted with either 0,1,4,9, or 16 prairie species per plot		
Rainfall	ambient	or	half of ambient
added in 2007			

Simulating elevated CO₂ levels is accomplished with the FACE (Free Air Carbon Enrichment) system, a CO₂ delivery system developed by Brookhaven National Laboratory. Nitrogen is added in the form of dry granules and diversity achieved using the technique described in the box above. The idea that soil moisture might play a role was added in 2007, and tested by protecting certain plots to keep out rainfall.

Six study areas, or rings, were constructed. Three use elevated CO₂, the other three use ambient levels. The figure below is a sample layout of each ring:

BioCON Plot Layout



Ring 1, elevated CO₂ (560 ppm)

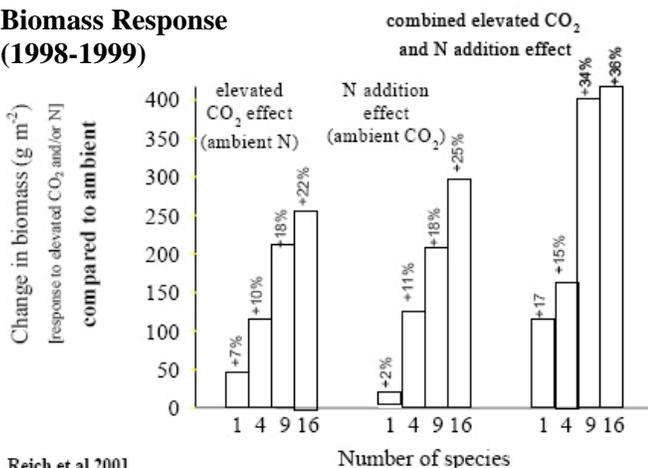
Research Results

Plant diversity, CO₂ and nitrogen interact to increase plant productivity.

Plantings of several species use resources (CO₂ and nitrogen) more efficiently than monocultures, because each species uses the resources in a specific way. Thus, overall productivity of the plants in the area increases. It is comparable to a community filled with various businesses and occupations and one that contains only bankers, for example. Which community would be more productive?

The graph below shows how plant productivity, measured as plant material, or biomass, increases 36% with increased plant diversity, CO₂ and nitrogen levels. In

Biomass Response (1998-1999)



Reich et al 2001

other words, the greater diversity improved the plants' ability to use the elevated amounts of CO₂ and nitrogen, and convert them to biomass.

Adding nitrogen increases a plant's ability to take up more CO₂ as indicated by increased plant biomass.

The study shows that plants are more efficient at using increased atmospheric CO₂ when nitrogen levels are augmented as well. Each plant species has a genetic limit determining the amount of carbon and nitrogen it can physiologically use. In other words, plants will not continue growing unchecked just because an unlimited amount of a limiting factor (i.e. nitrogen) is available.

A side note: consequent long-term studies show a decrease in overall plant diversity with an increase in nitrogen. The plants that compete better in high-nitrogen soils out-compete plants that prefer low nitrogen soils.

Study results do not support the hypothesis that plants will produce more biomass when increased CO₂ levels are combined with dry conditions.

There does not seem to be a positive link between elevated CO₂ levels, dry conditions and increased plant biomass.

What does it all mean?

BioCON studies the possible future effects of four global environmental changes; increased atmospheric CO₂ and soil nitrogen levels, decreasing biodiversity of plants, and diminishing rainfall. It is clear that studies concerning ecosystem processes take years to produce adequate data. Long-term studies, such as BioCON, will contribute to our overall knowledge of ecosystem processes, enabling us to better predict and prepare for the future.

Annual Appeal a Big Success

by Carol Winge

The results are in! Thanks to you, our 2008 Annual Appeal was very successful. Contributions to the 2008 Annual Appeal totaled \$26,972. In these difficult economic times, we were very pleased and grateful for the contributions received.

As you know, membership dues and donations to the Annual Appeal cover all of our operational expenses (office rent, part-time staff, office equipment and supplies, newsletters, membership services, board and committee assistance, chapter assistance, website, land purchase administration, grant administration and day-to-day operations). We keep our operations to a minimum but rely on your generous contributions to keep our doors

open and to provide organization and membership services.

On behalf of The Prairie Enthusiasts Board of Directors, Fundraising and Endowment Committee and staff.....THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!!

Tools and Techniques: Combating Leafy Spurge at Koltes Prairie

by Jim O'Brien

My wife Rumi and I agreed to be stewards for Koltes Prairie, located north of Madison, without knowing what to expect. During a tour with Ted Cochrane and Rich Henderson, we learned that a concentration of leafy spurge in the center of the prairie needed attention soon.

Novices at herbicide treatment, we sought advice. Our mentors in prairie matters recommended Tordon RTU, but left the method of application up to us. We prefer to target just the offending plant, and oppose spraying, even up close. Applying the Tordon directly by hand seemed the best option.

We devised a variation of the cloth-glove-over-protective-rubber or vinyl-glove method. Instead of wearing two gloves, we simply hold a dishcloth or terrycloth in our protective glove. We cut and fold the cloth

several times to fit our hands. A rubber band fastened to a corner of the cloth with a safety pin can be slipped about one wrist. This helps keep the cloth from falling.

We use two buckets, one inside the other, to hold the herbicide. The smaller bucket holds the bottle of Tordon and a small dispenser. A plastic mustard jar works nicely to dispense the herbicide. The buckets can also hold some extra cloths or towels for cleaning up and a Ziploc bag for holding the soaked Tordon cloths. They also make a nice storage area for your wet gloves between work sessions.

We apply the Tordon on individual leafy spurge without touching other plants. First, squeeze ample liquid onto the cloth, making sure to do this over the bucket to prevent spills on the ground. Then, pull the leafy spurge toward your body—not too hard because the plants are quite tender at the tip and break easily—and gently rub the moist cloth up and down the plant. One squeeze of the liquid can treat six or seven plants. The Tordon will glisten on the leaves of the treated plant. If it looks dry, you need another squeeze. But don't let the cloth get so soppy that it drips.

Any tips that break off of the leafy spurge should be put into the bucket and disposed of. If you accidentally paint the wrong plant, break it off instantly and toss it into the bucket.

With only three work sessions to date, we have only tentative observations on the effect of this treatment. We are encouraged that each treated plant quickly turns limp and the entire stem withers in less than a week. Kelly

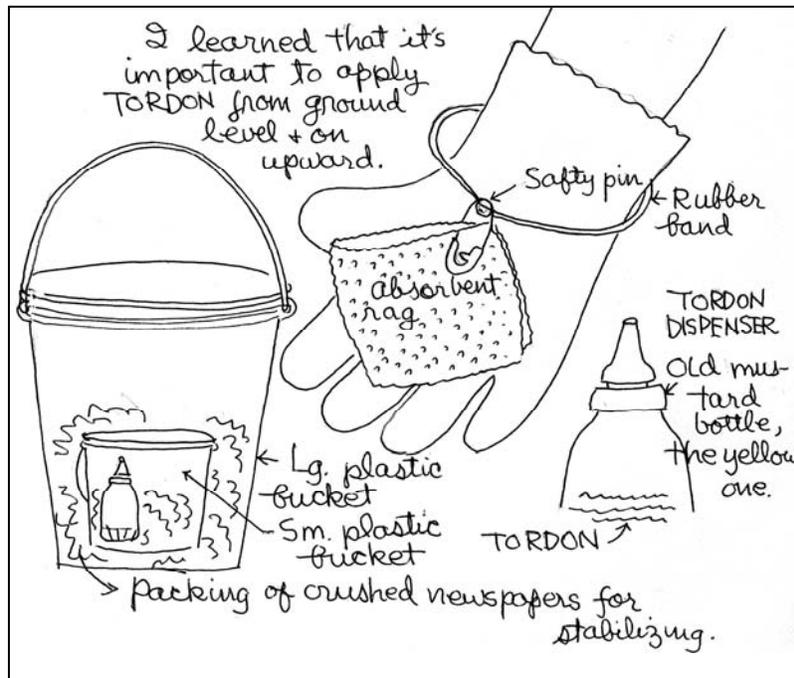
Kearns of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources assures us that these plants are dead, and our only worry hereafter will be the latent underground buds and the roots that might resist treatment. So, we will keep watch throughout the growing season for leafy spurge—and be ready to repeat the process next spring.

In the meantime, we take comfort in preserving the native species that surround the hated spurge. We have not seen a single instance of a nearby plant being affected by the Tordon. We imagine that the

amount of toxin getting into the ground must be small—certainly far less than even a careful spraying would leave. With such a persistent and migrating chemical, keeping the Tordon off the ground seems imperative.

We invite you to Koltes Prairie to view the results. It's located on Bong Road off Highway 113 immediately north of Madison. Westport Drumlin lies just north of the site, and you can visit Cherokee Marsh a short distance down Bong Road.

Rumi O'Brien contributed to this article.



The O'Brien's herbicide application technique. Illustration by Rumi O'Brien.

Recovery at Schurch-Thomson Prairie

by Rich Henderson

In the fall of 2003, a band of optimistic Prairie Enthusiast volunteers began clearing 50 years' worth of tree and brush invasion from some 30 acres of remnant prairie sod in southeast Iowa County, Wisconsin. They worked together with contractors funded by numerous land restoration grants from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Private Lands Program and various Wisconsin DNR wildlife habitat grants. In 2007, this sod became part of TPE's Mounds View Grassland Preserve.

From the beginning, we could see prairie vegetation under the brush. Plant surveys made by volunteers from 2001 to 2003 documented the remnant's current composition. Records from past plant surveys indicated the presence of a diverse prairie in the recent past. Andrew Williams, a member of TPE, explored the site in the early 1990's and produced an extensive species list. John and Olive Thomson had compiled an earlier species list from observations they made in the 1970's. This information gave us hope that recovery was possible. So, we put our faith in nature's power to heal and put our backs into recovering the prairie.

As we cleared brush and reintroduced fire to the land over the next four years, many species came roaring back. Plants such as shooting star (*Dodecatheon meadia*), cream wild indigo (*Baptisia bracteata*), valerian (*Valeriana edulis*), prairie thistle (*Cirsium hillii*), pomme-de-prairie (*Pediomelum esculentum*), alumroot (*Heuchera richardsonii*) and many more simply exploded, exceeding our expectations.

That alone would have made all the hard work worthwhile. But, in addition, three species which had not been observed by any botanist exploring the site over the past 30 years also made an appearance: prairie buttercup (*Ranunculus rhomboideus*), Canada hawkweed (*Hieracium kalmii*) and the very rare, federally-listed prairie bushclover (*Lespedeza leptostachya*).

To be honest, there have been some disappointments. Six species observed by the Thomsons in the 1970's have not reappeared. Neither Andrew Williams nor volunteers on extensive walk-about controlling for weeds have seen them. Downy painted cup (*Castilleja sessiliflora*), prairie tickseed (*Coreopsis palmata*), white prairie clover (*Dalea*

candida), marbleseed (*Onosmodium molle*), prairie phlox (*Phlox pilosa*) and possibly wood betony (*Pedicularis canadensis*) have all eluded observation.

Some uncertainty remains regarding wood betony. A few of the plants may have survived. In 2007, volunteer Pat Handrick found a couple betony while pulling weeds. The plants had flowered in an area where we had not planted seed during our inter-seeding operations of 2005. Even if the area had been seeded, it is unlikely that the betony would have begun flowering in just two growing seasons. In my experience, it takes three to five years of growth from seed before this species begins to flower. Therefore, we think wood betony may have pulled through on its own, but only "by the skin of its teeth."

As mentioned earlier, to assist recovery, in 2005 we began planting seed of species that had likely been present in the past but were now gone--species most likely lost due to years of intense livestock grazing and brush invasion. The seed came from other prairie remnants in the region. We planted four of the six species not observed since the 1970s: wood betony, prairie phlox, prairie tickseed and white prairie clover.

All four species took hold and began blooming during the third or fourth growing season after seeding. The phlox bloomed for the first time this spring, while the wood betony, white prairie clover and prairie tickseed started blooming in 2008. The wood betony is starting to really take off. In 2003, marbleseed was planted in an inter-seeding restoration (Underwood Prairie) adjacent to the Schurch-Thomson Preserve. A dozen marbleseed plants have since established there. Some bloomed for the first time in 2008, their fifth growing season.

We have also been planting seed of species thought to have been lost from the site well before

the 1970's. These include compass plant (*Silphium laciniatum*), wood lily (*Lilium philadelphicum*), white wild indigo (*Baptisia alba*), rattlesnake master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*), smooth white lettuce (*Prenanthes racemosa*), wild quinine (*Parthenium integrifolium*) and pale purple coneflower (*Echinacea pallida*). For the most part, these species are establishing nicely, although we have yet to see signs of wood lily and smooth white lettuce.

Overall, our initial optimism for the recovery of the Schurch-Thomson Prairie has proven justified. With each passing year, more success stories emerge. I encourage everyone to come and check out the progress.



Wood betony. Photo by Rich Henderson

New Invasive Species of Savanna and Woodland

by Meaghan Proctor, Americorps Restoration Assistant

Ah spring! The time of warmer temperatures, the return of migratory birds and the intense green of new plant growth; and of course the time of garlic mustard control. In many places, particularly southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois, eradication of garlic mustard is simply not possible; the best we can do is reduce its spread and impact. But the story might have been different if we had started controlling garlic mustard before it gained a root-hold in these regions.

While we may never completely eradicate garlic mustard, we have the opportunity to get an early start on controlling three new species that show serious potential for invasiveness in the upper Midwest: Japanese hedge-parsley, spreading hedge-parsley, and celandine. We need to familiarize ourselves with these species, be on the lookout for their presence, and respond with rapid eradication measures when we find them.

Hedge-parsleys

Both Japanese hedge-parsley (*Torilis japonica*) and spreading hedge-parsley (*Torilis arvensis*) grow in a spreading form up to three feet tall. These two biennials have a taproot and weak, floppy stems. Members of the carrot family (Apiaceae), their leaves are slightly downy, 2 to 5 inches long, alternate and feather divided. Their small, white flowers grow in open clusters of flat-topped umbels, and the seeds bear Velcro-like hairs that readily attach to clothing and fur.

The two species can be distinguished from each other by the presence or absence of pointed bracts at the base of each umbel: Japanese hedge-parsley has two or more pointed bracts, while spreading hedge-parsley lacks such bracts. Both species look similar to other weedy species such as Queen Ann's lace, wild chervil, and sweet cicely.

Japanese hedge-parsley has been reported throughout Illinois and Wisconsin, with the highest infestation occurring from northern Illinois to central Wisconsin. It has not yet been reported in Minnesota. Japanese hedge-parsley can be found in disturbed upland sites such as roadsides, urban areas, railroad rights-of-way and woodlands.

Spreading hedge-parsley is found in habitats similar to those of Japanese hedge-parsley. It has not yet been reported in Minnesota or Wisconsin, but is more common nationally than the Japanese. Populations of spreading

hedge parsley have been reported throughout southern Illinois as well as in northeastern Illinois.

These species can be controlled by treating the foliage with glyphosate or triclopyr herbicide in early spring or late fall, or mowing when flowering. Plants that are pulled when in flower or seed should be removed from the site.

Celandine

Celandine (*Chelidonium majus*), a member of the Poppy family (Papaveraceae), grows to three feet in height. This biennial has ribbed and branching stems, with slightly hairy lower branches. The leaves are alternate, 4-8" long, deeply lobed and feather-divided. Small (3/4") four-petaled yellow flowers are arranged in loose clusters and bloom between May and August (mostly in spring). The fruits are slender, smooth pods up to 2" long.

Celandine is found in areas with moist soil that have been disturbed, and can spread into oak savanna and oak woodlands.

This species can be controlled by applying glyphosate to the basal rosettes in the spring, or by pulling or digging adult plants. Plants that are pulled when in flower or seed should be removed from the site. Use a non-ionic penetrant/surfactant such as Liberate™ with herbicide, since the leaves have a waxy coating. CAUTION: Wear gloves when handling! When broken, the branches and roots emit a yellowish sap that can stain and irritate the skin.

Additional information on these invasive species and photos can be found on the web at:

Illinois DNR's conservation stewardship page:
<http://www.dnr.state.il.us/stewardship/>

Minnesota DNR's invasive species page:
<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/invasives/index.html>

Wisconsin DNR's invasive species page:
<http://dnr.wi.gov/invasives/>

Invasive Plants Association of Wisconsin:
<http://www.ipaw.org/>

Midwest Invasive Plant Network:
<http://www.mipn.org>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

2009 Annual Meeting

July 19, 2009

Wetlands Connections

June 21-26, 2009



Come learn about current and cutting edge wetland projects at the joint meeting of the Society of Wetland Scientists, Wisconsin Wetlands Association, and the Wetland Biogeochemistry Symposium in Madison, Wis.

The five-day meeting features hundreds of presentations and posters, field trips to fourteen local wetlands, and plenary talks by wetland professionals.

In addition, three of the plenary addresses and all of the conference workshops are open to the public (most for a nominal fee).

Late registrations are still being accepted.

To register or learn more, please visit: www.sws.org/2009_meeting/

Visit Meinert Prairie

July 7, 2009

Come on a prairie walk to Meinert Prairie just northwest of Davis in Illinois. The prairie boasts an abundance of pale purple cone flowers.

“If you stand up and stretch out your arms in a circle, within that circle will be some pale purple cone flowers,” says Nick Faessler.

Meet at Faessler's place on W1156 Stateline Road at 5:00 PM to carpool to the prairie. The walk will be easy and last no more than one hour. A potluck lunch and the Prairie Bluff chapter's July meeting will follow. The Prairie Bluff Chapter will provide grilled chicken and some refreshments. Bring lawn chairs.

Directions to Faessler's home: Highway 11-81 between Brodhead and Juda. Travel south on County Road G to Stateline Road. The first place left on Stateline is Faessler's home.

Contact Nick with questions at (608) 214-3852 or (608) 897-4993.

Please join the Northwest Illinois Prairie Enthusiast (NIPE) Chapter at Hanley Savanna on Sunday, July 19, for the TPE Annual Meeting and potluck. The festivities will begin at 10 a.m. with a TPE board meeting—early birds who do not plan to attend the board meeting may join a walking tour with Jim Rachuy. A picnic lunch will be served at noon. NIPE will provide bison burgers and drinks under a canvas tent. Please bring a dish to pass, your own table service, and folding chairs (if convenient).

After lunch there will be a brief TPE annual meeting followed by a site tour via hay wagon. Hanley Savanna is an 160-acre TPE site located between and connecting the Lost Mound National Wildlife Refuge (5400 ac) and the Hanover Bluff Nature Preserve (1200 ac). Local habitats of interest include loess hill prairie, mesic oak savanna, dry sand savanna, wet sand prairie, tallgrass prairie and Mississippi backwaters.

Hanley Savanna is located in northwest Illinois, three miles west of the Village of Hanover, at the junction of Whitton and South Hanover Hill Roads. The address is 9417 Whitton Road, Hanover, IL 61041. Aerials and photos of the site are in the gallery at www.nipes.org.

The scenic route runs from Galena (10 miles to the north) and from there to Hanover via Blackjack Road (off US20). In Hanover, turn west at the Apple River bridge, which is Fulton Street. It will become Hanover Hill Road (stay left at the Y), which will take you to Hanley.

If you wish to stay the weekend, there are ample lodging facilities in JoDaviess County to fit every budget. You can request a free visitors guide at www.galena.com. Visit www.bedandbreakfast.com/galena-illinois for a local listing of B&Bs. Although camp sites are plentiful in JoDaviess County, reservations are often necessary. For details, search “Palisades State Park” or “Apple Canyon State Park” or visit www.dnr.state.il.us/lands/Landmgt/programs/camping.

Please RSVP to Carol Winge
(carolwinge@yahoo.com).

Membership Committee Openings

Have ideas on how to increase membership and retain current members? Join the Membership Committee -- all TPE members are eligible and we require only a one-year commitment.

The team will evaluate current trends, benefits, and needs of TPE membership, then develop and implement a new strategy to attract and retain members.

Your experience with other organizations and committees is needed. This is a great opportunity to meet and work with TPE members from other chapters and with board members. If you are interested, please email Carol Winge (CarolWinge@yahoo.com) and include why you want to be on the committee.

Outreach and Education Committee Openings

We are recruiting TPE members to develop and implement a photography contest. Join the Outreach and Education Committee -- all TPE members are eligible and we require only a one-year commitment.

The team will solicit and judge photos of prairie and oak savanna based on different criteria, such as technical merit. The goal is to display the photos and have the membership vote during the 2010 Annual Banquet. The winning photo will then be used on our 2009 Annual Report cover.

If you are interested, please email Carol Winge (CarolWinge@yahoo.com) and include why you want to be on the committee.

COULEE REGION CHAPTER

Please check chapter newsletter for announcements.

EMPIRE – SAUK CHAPTER

Board Meetings

Thursday, September 10, 7:00 p.m. at Rich and Kathy Henderson's home at 2845 Timber Lane, Verona. All members are welcome.

Chapter Picnic and Annual Meeting

Thursday, July 9, the Empire-Sauk Chapter will hold its Annual Potluck Picnic and Meeting of the Membership at Madison Audubon's Goose Pond Sanctuary. Following the meal and a very brief meeting and report of the chapter's activities, Mark Martin will lead a hike to two prairie restorations totaling 110 acres! One restoration is in the fourth growing year and the other in its second. Thirty-five species flowered the year of establishment in the younger restoration. Both were planted with a high diversity of species at a high

seeding rate. One of the highlights will be a large stand of old field thistle, an uncommon native prairie species.

Please don't miss the gathering. It will be a great opportunity to meet and talk with like-minded people, and to see a great conservation project.

Schedule:

6:00 p.m. - Potluck picnic

6:45 p.m. - Brief meeting, review highlights of past year, answer questions, elect chapter president and secretary

7:15 p.m. - Hike to see prairie plantings

What to Bring: A dish to pass, eating utensils, bug spray and hiking shoes.

Directions: From Madison, take Highway 51 north. Four miles north of DeForest, turn right (west) on Highway K. Travel on K for two miles and turn right on Goose Pond Road at a T intersection. Take Goose Pond Road right (north) for one mile. Then take Kampen Road left (west) for 0.5 mile; after you cross the railroad tracks, turn left (south) at W7503 Kampen Road to the farm house. If you have questions about the directions, call Mark or Sue at 608-635-4160.

Chapter Elections

Nominations are being sought to fill the positions of chapter president and chapter secretary. These are two-year terms. The elections will be held at the annual meeting of the chapter membership on the evening of Thursday, July 9 (see chapter picnic information below for details). We hope you are able to attend the meeting and help us fill these positions.

Intense Burn Season

by Rich Henderson

Although spring was slow in coming this year, eventually the weather did cooperate, almost too much so. Dry conditions and high winds resulted in a few burns being postponed. However, an army of dedicated volunteers, multiple burn bosses and mechanized equipment allowed us to complete 90 percent of the burns we had planned for this year.

The dry conditions made for some intense, and at times challenging, burns. In the end, though, all were completed safely, effectively and within prescription.

The Empire-Sauk Chapter completed 53 burns on 23 properties for a total of 416 acres. To accomplish this, 99 volunteers put in 1,311 hours! In addition, the Blufflands

Project, a joint effort of TPE's Empire-Sauk Chapter and the Aldo Leopold Foundation, conducted another six burns on six properties for a total of 450 acres. The largest single burn, 330 acres, was at Badger Prairie in Sauk County. Thirty-three volunteers put in 311 hours with the Blufflands Project. This makes for a grand total of 866 acres burned in 59 different events by 132 volunteers putting in 1,622 hours.

Thank you to the many volunteers who helped burn this spring. You're keeping our prairie and savanna heritage alive and well. A special thank you to the Brocks, Hendersons and Oberles for, once again, letting their trucks be used as pack horses for the pumper units.



One of many burns. Photo by Kathy Henderson.

Help Coordinate Seed Collecting, Cleaning and Planting

The Empire-Sauk Chapter must plant prairie and savanna seed on hundreds of acres over the next several years in order to recover degraded remnants and expand critical habitat for many rare and endangered plants and animals. Unfortunately, our seed collecting and planting efforts are starting to slip. If we can not find people to take leadership roles our progress may halt.

We very much need a person or two to step forward to get our seed collecting and processing program up and running in earnest. We could use both an overall coordinator of seed collecting, as well as local leaders focused on specific sites. We could also use an overall coordinator of seed cleaning and storage. Our seed processing facility at the Schurch-Thomson Prairie barn, south of Blue Mounds, is partially up and running. If you

are interested in any of these leadership roles, please contact Rich Henderson (608-845-7065 or tpe.rhenderson@tds.net).

Are You Mechanically Inclined?

The Empire-Sauk Chapter is looking for one or two volunteers to oversee field equipment maintenance and repair. This includes, but is not limited to, various small engines, drip torches, water backpack cans, herbicide sprayers, hand tools, brush-cutters, chainsaws, tractors, a truck, ATVs, mowers, propane torches, fire-pump units and seeders. A workshop is being developed at the Schurch-Thomson barn where most equipment will likely be stored when not in active use. However, some maintenance may be done at other locations. If you wish to help, please contact Rich Henderson (608-845-7065 or tpe.rhenderson@tds.net).

Help with Land Stewardship this Summer

As always, we need help through the summer. Volunteers will collect seed; cut or pull sweet clover, parsnip, knapweed, and other weeds; and tend the seed orchards. This summer, we will work at Underwood Prairie, Schurch-Thomson Prairie, Shea Prairie, the Ripp Prairies, Kalscheur Savanna, Koltjes Prairies, Smith/Egre Drumlins, Mazomanie Bluff, Schluckebier Prairie, Black Earth Rettenmund Prairie and other sites. If you wish to be on the contact lists to help with these activities, please contact our volunteer coordinator, Lois Komai at (608) 238- 2503 or lakomai@chorus.net.

Equipment Donation

This spring, Donn D'Alessio and Julie Hayward generously donated a variety of used equipment to the Empire-Sauk Chapter. This included, among other things, a vest tank pump, a DR All-Terrain Field and Brush Mower, a DR ConVerta Mower, a Kubota tractor with a brush-hog mower and a DR Power Wagon. Thank you to Donn and Julie for this great donation. The equipment will help our land management activities.

Schurch-Thomson Prairie Barn Renovations

There is still some renovation work to complete at the Schurch-Thomson Prairie barn facility. If you would

like to lend a hand this summer, contact Rich Henderson (tpe.rhenderson@tds.net or 608-845-7065). We are also still accepting donations to cover the cost of supplies and material. If you wish to contribute, send donations (with a note as to their purpose) to:

TPE
c/o Rich Henderson
PO Box 1148
Madison, WI 53701

NORTHWEST ILLINOIS CHAPTER

No information submitted

PRAIRIE BLUFF CHAPTER

Field Trip and Chapter Meeting

Tuesday, July 7, there will be a prairie walk to Meinert Prairie just northwest of Davis in Illinois. The prairie boasts an abundance of pale purple cone flowers. "If you stand up and stretch out your arms in a circle, within that circle will be some pale purple cone flowers," says Nick Faessler.

Meet at Nick Faessler's place on W1156 Stateline Road at 5:00 PM to carpool to the prairie. The walk will be easy and last no more than one hour. After the walk, there will be a potluck lunch and the Prairie Enthusiasts July meeting. We will provide grilled chicken and some refreshments. Bring some lawn chairs.

Directions to Nick's home: Highway 11-81 between Brodhead and Juda. Travel south on County Road G to Stateline Road. The first place left on Stateline is Nick's home.

Contact Nick with questions at (608)214-3852 or (608)897-4993.

Chapter Update

by Tom Mitchell

Our chapter members either led or participated in nine prescribed fires in three counties during the spring burn season, including burns at Vale Prairie, Iltis Savanna, Butenhoff Prairie, Wellington Woods, Forest Prairie Park, Green's Prairie Cemetery, Twin Bridge Prairie, and Magnolia Bluff. Thirty-six individuals helped out on these fires.

Iltis Savanna responded especially well to a winter's worth of tree and brush clearing and then a controlled

burn. The spring ephemeral blooms were both profuse and colorful. Our burn at Green's Prairie Cemetery was followed by workdays during which brush was removed, the iron fence was repaired, and fallen headstones were discovered, all in preparation for our Memorial Day event to recall the lives of the seven Civil War veterans buried there.

Longtime member Gary Felder, who led a pasqueflower hike in April at Hoesly Prairie, returned there in May and counted 289 woolly milkweed plants, *Asclepias lanuginosa*, a listed species in this state. Peg Bredeson sold Parsnip Predators and handed out TPE pamphlets at an Earth Day event in the UW-Rock campus in Janesville. Jean Blum and Dorothy Gessert helped plant 50 shrubs -- plums and hazelnuts -- at Barry Prairie that we purchased from the Rock County Conservationists. At the conclusion of the burn season, we turned our attention to weeds, garlic mustard and leafy spurge.

One of our volunteers is Cole Rojas, a senior at Brodhead High School. He volunteered with The Prairie Enthusiasts to fulfill his school's community service requirement for graduation. His family has a 128-acre prairie restoration project, which led him to contact us.

"I picked my senior project because I love working with prairies," said Rojas. "I was well versed in prairie restoration, having helped my father with burns, plantings, and seed collection for the last five years. But I learned a lot about remnants by visiting the local prairies that are managed by the Prairie Bluff Chapter, seeing the differences among them, which provided insight into the vast difference between an original prairie and a planting."

Cole will attend Stanford University next fall, "which has been a dream of mine since sixth grade." He plans to study biochemistry and molecular biology with long range plans for either a doctorate degree or becoming a physician.

PRAIRIE SMOKE CHAPTER

No information submitted

PRAIRIE SANDS CHAPTER

No information submitted

ST. CROIX VALLEY CHAPTER

Changing of the Guard

Buck Malick replaced Jan Amberson as St. Croix Valley chapter representative to the TPE Board of Directors in May 2009.

For the past two years, Jan Amberson served on the TPE Board of Directors and acted as the Board secretary.

"It has been a pleasure to work with Jan and I appreciate her support so much," said Evanne Hunt who knows it is not always easy to drive to Madison for meetings and to give up evenings for teleconferences.

As most of you know, Buck practices law here in Hudson (estate planning, real estate and business law). He was also executive director of the Minnesota-Wisconsin Boundary Area Commission from 1998 to 2001 and was chairman of the St. Croix County board from 2002 to 2008.

We are very lucky to have Buck on the TPE Board. His experience in politics and on boards will serve TPE well.

Earth Day at the YMCA

Carol Kojis, Buck Malick, and Evanne Hunt staffed the TPE booth at the YMCA Camp St. Croix on Sunday afternoon, April 19.

This family event attracted kids and their parents for geocaching, demonstrations, and so forth. At the TPE booth, we had bio-degradable toilet paper pots for the kids to plant yellow coneflower, stiff goldenrod, and anise hyssop seeds.



Earth Day at the YMCA Camp. Photo courtesy of Evanne Hunt.

In-Kind Donation

Troy Meacham, owner of Landcraft Seed and Services gave our chapter a discount on his services. The discount totaled \$178.30 for his work on the Coveli-Hansen-Ross property. Thank you, Mr. Meacham, for helping us preserve prairie land in perpetuity.

Five Year Plan

The St. Croix Valley Chapter has begun to define success. Susan Goode, Jeannie Kant, Keith Relyea, and Buck Malick have embarked on a strategic planning approach to help us determine what would have happened or will be happening five years from now, if the chapter is successful.

Now Wait ... before your eyes glaze over and you stop reading... let me explain! We are using a simple, four-step process. First, we will summarize what is happening in our chapter. We are currently gathering information about membership and volunteer trends, land parcels under management, taking stock of our finances, inventorying our tools and equipment, identifying member talents in the chapter, etc.

Since we don't operate in isolation, the next step will be to build our understanding of what is happening in our community. What are other non-profits and government agencies undertaking? What are major trends in our community? What community activities impact us? Once we have this foundation, the third step will be to share the information with our members and begin defining potential outcomes and aligning our priorities. The last step will be to develop an action plan to achieve those priorities. See ... not that hard ... I promise.

SOUTHWEST WISCONSIN CHAPTER

No information submitted

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

The following people have joined since February 28, 2009.

Karl Anderson, Lake Mills, WI
Neil Anderson, River Falls, WI
Gene Berlowski, Berlin, WI
Tyler Brandt, Potosi, WI
Ward Brossoit, Stewartville, MN
Stephen Fabos, Blanchardville, WI
Tracy Feldman, Stevens Point, WI
Bill Grimm & Sylvia Marek, Madison, WI
Mike Grisham, Hammond, WI
Doug Hansmann & Denise Thornton, Madison, WI
M.J. Hatfield, Ames, IA

Peter & Julie Hawley, Glenwood City, WI
Mike Healy, Madison, WI
William Hogseth & Crystal Halvorson, Menomonie, WI
Ben Jacobsen, Le Roy, MN
Harold Jensen, Lanesboro, MN
Arlene Kjar, Northfield, MN
John Koch, Hudson, WI
Carol Kojis, Hudson, WI
Alan Lipowitz & Jan Smaby, Peterson, MN
Harry Lunde, Galena, IL

Jerome McAllister, Hammond, WI
Trish McWilliams, Madison, WI
Christian Milaster, Lanesboro, MN
Todd Norwood, Madison, WI
Lee & Mary Powell, Madison, WI
Debbie Reitz, Edgerton, WI
M. Dian Strenski, Mt Prospect, IL
Kayla Sullwold, Shakopee, MN
Kurt Westbrook, Poynette, WI
Paul & Kathi Woods, La Crosse, WI
Gary Zamzow & Elizabeth Frawley, Davis, CA

BUMP-UP CAMPAIGN

Thank you to everyone who BUMPED UP their membership to a higher level during this same period!

to Family

Eddie Goplin
Marty Grell
David Middleton
Pete Oberhauser

to Shooting Star

Susan Kennedy
Gigi La Budde & Michael Whaley
Dave Marshall & Wendy Weisensel
Neil and Ellen Wenberg

THANK YOU, DONORS!

We thank everyone who made a donation to TPE this spring (Feb. 28-May 31). These gifts above and beyond membership dues are truly generous and appreciated.

\$1000 - \$5000

Karl Anderson
Dennis & Nancy Connor
Patrick Handrick
Jim & Rose Sime
Pheasants Forever Dane County Chapter

\$500-\$1000

Jeff & Erin Huebschman
Wisconsin Audubon Council Inc.
Richard Oberle
Gail & Willi Van Haren

\$100 - \$499

Kay Bongers *in memory of John Thomson*
Robert and Judith Brick

Kathie & Tom Brock *in memory of John Thomson*
Margaret & Florian Chollet *in memory of John Thomson*

Dean and Elizabeth Danielson *in memory of John Thomson*
Harold and Regine Deutsch *in memory of John Thomson*
Gary Eldred
Jeanne Eloranta *in memory of John Thomson*
Erik Goplin
Rich & Kathy Henderson
IBM International Foundation
Andrea Johannsen *in memory of John Thomson*
Leslie Jones

Jan Ketelle *in memory of John Thomson/In Honor of Olive Thomson*
Jack Kussmaul
Dave Marshall and Wendy Weisensel
Sharon McGann
Harold & Shirley Miller
Tom & Molly Murray
John and Evelyn Stiff *in memory of John Thomson*
Olive Thomson *in memory of John Thomson*

Under \$100

Clara Anderson *in memory of John Thomson*
Arvid & Avis Anderson *in memory of John Thomson*
Sally Bowers & Howard Fenton
Laura Brown & Mark Shahan
Rose Marie Burdick *in memory of John Thomson*
Hank & Linda Casner *in memory of John Thomson*
Rollin & Nancy Cooper *in memory of John Thomson*
Louise Coumbe *in memory of John Thomson*
Geraldine Despins *in memory of John Thomson*
Mary Eikens
Eddie Goplin
Ross Greden
Dolores Hanson *in memory of John Thomson*
Paul & Bernadette Hayes
Patricia Hitchcock *in memory of John Thomson*
William Hogseth & Crystal Halvorson
Virginia Johnson *in memory of John Thomson*
Rud & Grace Kussmaul
Kathryn Lammers
Russell & Vergeane Martin *in memory of John Thomson*
David Middleton
Bill Muehl
Tony & Darlene Nowak *in memory of John Thomson*

Stephen & Mary Peck
Ursula Petersen *in memory of John Thomson*
Gailen & Gordon Pierce *in memory of John Thomson*
Louis & Bonnie Pody
Gordon Powell
David & Mary Powell *in memory of John Thomson*
Steve Richter
Keith Rodli & Katharine Grant
Janet Scalpone *in memory of John Thomson*
Nancy Schlingen *in honor of Diana Webb's 90th birthday*
Thomas & Bonnie Sherman *in memory of John Thomson*
Bob Stodola
Kayla Sullwold
Edith & Emery Sylvester *in memory of John Thomson*
Pat & Glenn Tabor
Glenn Teschendorf & Mary Anne Derheimer
Erik Thomson & Sarah Weiss *on behalf of Sarah Weiss & in memory of John Thomson, Grandfather*
Austin & Connie Tronnes *in memory of John Thomson*
Mary Lou Underwood *in memory of John Thomson*
Pearl Vierima *in memory of John Thomson*
William Zarwell & Robin Chapman
State Bank of Cross Plains *in memory of John Thomson*

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www.ThePrairieEnthusiasts.org**

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Please note your membership renewal date is printed above your address. If you feel the renewal date is in error, help us keep our records accurate by emailing Victoria Oberle, membership coordinator at TPE@theprairieenthusiasts.org. Thank you.

If your membership has expired, tear off this back page, note changes below, and send in your check today!

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____ Zip: _____
Email: _____

The Prairie Enthusiasts Membership Levels:

\$100 Shooting Star (recommended level)
\$5,000 Bur Oak Benefactor, \$1,000 Monarch, \$500 Compass Plant, \$200 Blazing Star
\$40 Family, \$25 Individual, \$15 Student

Please send form and check to:

The Prairie Enthusiasts, P.O. Box 1148, Madison, WI 53701-1148