

Friday Science Posts

Friends began these new type of posts in September 2019 and thus far there have been a total of eight. They don't occur every Friday, but whenever there's some interesting science to showcase. The green section design remains the same from post to post while compelling photos are used with a short amount of text.

The posts are created by a collaborative effort between the scientist, Elizabeth Bach, and Dee Hudson.

Friday Science posts have been a great way to draw attention to all the scientific research grants that the Friends fund.

Example:



Friday Science

Rusty patched bumble bee
Bombus affinis

Friends of Nachusa Grasslands

“Unbelievable” that another rare Nachusa species has been verified!

The rusty patched bumble bee, both a federal and state-endangered species, was documented by Bethanne Bruninga-Socolar, PhD. This species was found in a prairie planting, showing Nachusa's prairie restoration efforts are working. As pollinators, bumble bees are a keystone species group that help wildflowers reproduce, which in turn provide seed and fruits for native wildlife.

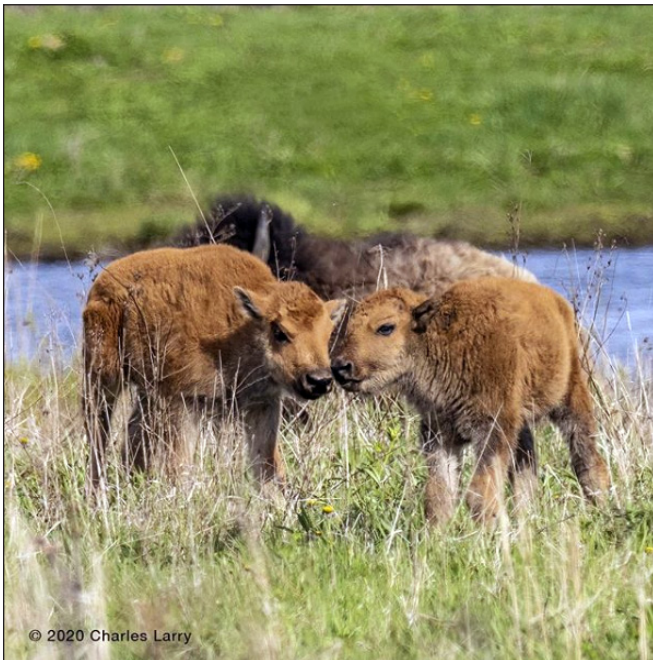
Bethanne's research was funded by a Friends of Nachusa Grasslands Scientific Research Grant from 2015–2018. The “buzz” is that the financial support for Friend's science grants have made these observations possible.

Instagram

Thirty posts were made since the last annual meeting and Instagram has gained another 390 followers, for a total of 1,389. With two new members joining the social media team, I'm looking forward to spending more time on Instagram and significantly increasing our followers during the next year. A new volunteer on my workday (from Chicago) discovered Nachusa due to Instagram, so it is successful at reaching interested people. In the coming year I want to continue to build an awareness and appreciation of Nachusa through this particular social media.

Another goal for this next year would be to switch to a business Instagram account so that we have some analytics information.

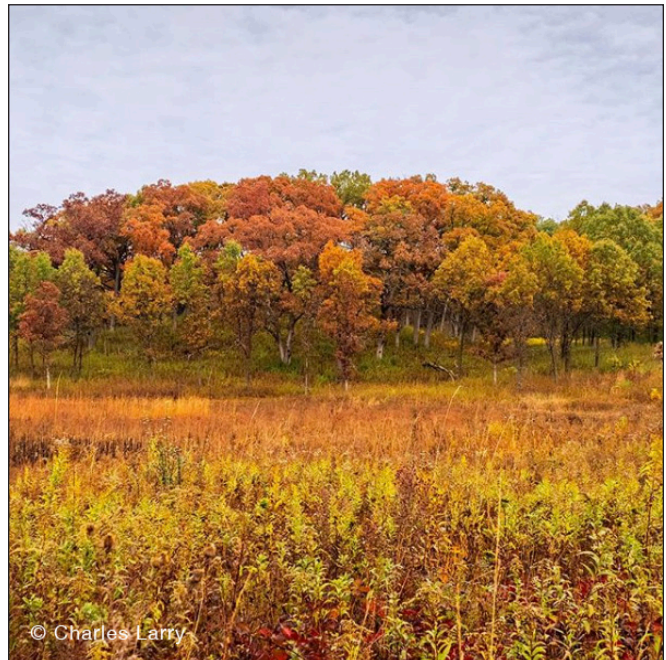
Examples of most popular posts this year:



Liked by 238 people

Every spring the orange-brown calves are a welcome sight on the prairie! These two are frolicking under the very watchful and protective eyes of their mothers and the herd.

The calves are born weighing about 40-60 pounds and they are ready to move with the herd shortly after birth. The calf will nurse about 8 months, but will be weaned by next spring when more calves are born.



Liked by 227 people

Nachusa's autumn colors are at their peak, so come see them! This photo was taken along the Stone Barn Savanna Trail. For trail directions, go to our website and explore the choices below the 'Plan Your Visit' menu.

Twitter

One hundred seventy-two posts were made since the last annual meeting and Twitter has gained another 290 followers, for a total of 1,289. With Heather Herakovich's help I'm looking forward to expanding our Twitter presence.

Top tweet:

Nachusa Grasslands @Nachusa · May 28
SANDHILL CRANES NESTING AT NACHUSA!
The young colts are the first documented instance that sandhill cranes have nested in Nachusa's wetlands. The exciting part is that the cranes have chosen a restored wetland.

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Nachusa's scientists mention us frequently. The bees at Nachusa have been a well-liked topic.

Top mention earned 432 engagements

Bethanne Bruninga-Socolar
@beepunstings · Jun 18

Bombus affinis (Rusty-patched Bumble Bee) briefly detained for positive ID in a 1.5 year old restored prairie @Nachusa today!!! Only 4 days in to a summer of bumble bee surveys! So excited to start getting an idea for how widespread this species is in the preserve. @larval_yeti
pic.twitter.com/fkbtZ8M9FI

7 18 124

Top mention earned 278 engagements

TNC in Illinois
@Nature_IL · Sep 21

Unbelievable! A researcher at Nachusa Grasslands recently spotted a rusty patched bumble bee, which is a federally- and state-endangered species. Thanks to the Friends of @Nachusa for funding the grant that made this research possible! CC: @phrelanzer @xercessociety @BeeCityUSA pic.twitter.com/hlxaKxlO9R

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Blog Posts

Fourteen blogs were posted, written by eleven different authors. Varied topics included: Blanding's turtles, fritillary butterflies, bison, small mammals, snakes, reed canary grass, fire refresher, science coding, the new crew, 2019 planting, Tellabs through the entire year, Nathaniel & Amanda, and the year in photos.

The blog averages 185 readers per post, determined by the number of readers that click the "like" button found at the end of each post.

The most popular post was written last fall by Charles Larry, with the help of Bill Kleiman. 349 readers "liked" this post. It was titled "To Everything There is a Season", and it walked the reader through an entire year at Tellabs, discussing the importance of fire to natural landscapes.



The Year in Photos by Charles Larry and Dee Hudson was also a favorite, with 301 readers. 277 readers liked Angie Burke's discussion on her research with small mammals, recently published in the *Natural Areas Journal*. Lastly, 235 readers liked the blog by former crew member, Riley Nylin. She wrote a blog about the 2019 crew planting that finished off Clear Creek Knolls.

The blog coordination is a time commitment and new social media members, Erin Rowland and Heather Herakovich, plan to work with Dee this next year. If anyone wants to write a blog, just contact any of us. We welcome you!