

PRAIRIE SMOKE

Nachusa Grasslands Newsletter

Issue 33

February 1999

AUTUMN ON THE PRAIRIE 1998 REPORT AND THANK YOU

by Susan Kleiman

The 9th Annual Autumn On The Prairie (AOTP) celebration this past September was another great success. Thanks to Chairman, Gerald McDermott, preparations went smoothly. Gerald started putting his friendly coordinating skills to work in January and kept the team motivated and on task. Thanks also to the dedicated and talented volunteer team that coordinated and ran the various aspects of Autumn On The Prairie: Mike Adolph (exhibits & self-guided plant tour), Tonya Bittner (raffle), Ron Ingraham (welcome & sales tent), Bob Shone (tours), and Gene St. Louis (stewardship tent). Not only did they put many hours into AOTP during the year, but the morning "set up" went smoother than usual because they put in many hours the Saturday before and the day before.

There were the usual highly popular tours to far flung corners of the preserve and tents with information and hands-on activities. Three artists (Suzanne Shedosky, Pat Lathe, and Dan Letourneau) painted scenes of Nachusa during the day. It was fun to walk by now and then and watch the preserve "bloom" on canvas. In the children's tent storyteller, Gene Gryniewicz, livened things up with his tales while his wife Celeste painted prairie flowers and critters on the



Visitors on a tour to Wade Creek at Autumn On The Prairie.



Hugh Sakols with the Professor, a western fox snake, at the Children's Tent at Autumn On The Prairie.

faces of future restorationists. A very popular addition to this year's event was a horse drawn hayride through the prairie. Volunteers, Rich Markeloff, Jim Long, and Mike Engel took turns riding with participants and sharing with them information about Nachusa Grasslands. Jim Wolber stayed an hour longer than contracted as the ride was so popular. Each time he returned to the starting point, another group was waiting for the ride.

Thanks to all the volunteers who helped in every aspect (set up, tours, children's events, displays, parking, shuttles, and clean up): Ellen Baker, Sally Baumgardner, Todd Bittner, Mary Blackmore, Jackie Bray, Dave Breen, Laura Busch, Cristina Canales, Terri Clarke, Mike Crowe, Thelma Dahlberg, Ray Derksen, David Edelbach, Emily Oros, Mike Engel, Jeannine Esmond, Nate Fuller, Celeste & Gene Gryniewicz, Corey Harmon, Paul Harmon, Don & Nancy Henegar, Rae Ivy, Kevin Kaltenbach, Bill & Susan Kleiman, Pete Knysz, Jim Lahman, Pat Lathe, Dan Letourneau, Fran Lowman, Jim & Lela Long, Rich Markeloff, Kim McFarland, Brandon Meiners, Tom & Jenny Mitchell, Bob Parenteau, Brent Phelps, Gene & Dianne Rod, Al Roloph, Hugh Sakols, John & Cindy Schmadeke, Larry & Ellen Sheaffer, Suzanne Shedosky, Jay Stacy, Earl Thomas, Eric Thomas, Dot Wade, Bill Webb, Dean Weidman, Beth Wiltshire, and Rob Wise. If we forgot anyone please forgive us.

AWARDS GIVEN TO VOLUNTEERS MIKE ADOLPH AND GENE ST. LOUIS

by Bill Kleiman



**Gene St. Louis among
pale purple coneflowers
on Dot's Knob.**

Nachusa Grasslands. Mike is a retired history teacher from Aurora and Gene is a software programmer in DeKalb. The Illinois chapter of The Nature Conservancy usually gives one of these awards a year. We awarded them together because they have both done just about everything one can for Nachusa Grasslands and we couldn't decide who was more deserving of our humble accolades.

Over the last ten years, both Gene and Mike have become wise owls in the care and restoration of natural areas. They know many of the plants and animals they see, they know the techniques of weed management, seed harvest, use of fire, monitoring and other tasks. Both are what we call Unit Stewards at the preserve, whereby each has over 80-acres to care for. This season, Gene again worked hard on controlling several weeds in his unit, he also filled several barrels with bags of precious hand picked seed. Mike Adolph created a comprehensive database of all the plants in our area that helps us determine what species should be restored, when each plant sets seed, and where they can be found on the preserve. Gene St. Louis used two weeks of his vacation to take an advanced prescribed fire course and both he and Mike are earning stewardship certificates from the Morton Arboretum. They both have chaired Nachusa Grasslands' Autumn On The Prairie celebration (always the third Saturday of September!). Numerous times, Gene has generously donated tools and supplies to the preserve, he photographs most of our events, helps maintain equipment, and is a pillar of support to Nachusa Grasslands. Mike is out at least once a week for stewardship, he also runs a butterfly monitoring route in mid-summer, he leads tours for VIP's and he is one of the leaders in our Youth Stewards education program.

Nachusa Grasslands is blessed with Volunteer Stewards like Mike Adolph and Gene St. Louis who are committed to this place, its mission and people.

[Editor's note: Gene and Mike join two other Nachusa Grasslands volunteers, Sally and Max Baumgardner, as recipients of this award!]

Mike Adolph and Gene St. Louis have been given the Volunteer Appreciation Award, for their commitment to our preserve, by the Illinois chapter of The Nature Conservancy. The awards were presented to them this summer at the chapter's annual festival and fund-raising dinner.

For about a decade now, Mike and Gene have been Volunteer Stewards with

ON THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS

by Gene St. Louis

On September 12, Mike Adolph and myself were presented with the Nature Conservancy of Illinois 1998 Volunteer Appreciation Award. Having worked with my fellow recipient and previous recipients, it is indeed a great honor to be considered worthy of such an esteemed group.

Isaac Newton paid homage to those who preceded him with the words "If I have seen farther than other men, it is because I have stood on the shoulders of giants." I would also like to recognize those who have made my achievements possible. First and foremost, we owe a huge debt to Douglas and Dorothy Wade along with Tim Keller. Without their efforts, Nachusa would today be a cozy subdivision with vigilant homeowners trying to kill those pesky "weeds" that keep coming up in their bluegrass lawns.

I remember Ed Collins, who came to Nachusa to work on wetland restoration, and wound up taking the band of volunteers he found there under his very knowledgeable wing. It was he who suggested dividing the preserve into smaller management units with individual stewards. It was then that I became Mother Nature's watch-keeper over what I consider to be the plum of Nachusa, the Doug and Dot Wade unit. Shortly after Ed left, Bill Kleiman came to become our preserve manager. With Bill's arrival, restoration at Nachusa went from part-time hobby to full-time business. He has obtained equipment, materials, and training that had been pipe dreams before. Restoration has progressed at a significantly enhanced pace ever since.

I most heartily thank my fellow stewards and volunteers at Nachusa. It is through their tireless effort that trees and brush are removed, and seed gathered and sown to restore the natural landscape. Their dedication to restoration and enthusiastic camaraderie make our workdays a memorable pleasure. Last, but certainly not least, I thank those generous supporters who supply us with the financial resources to continue our work and expand the preserve. It is through the generous gifts of people such as the Meiners family, Clarence Heinkel, Thelma Carpenter, and Hook Larson that we are able to add new land to the preserve and meet our goal of preserving an entire native Illinois ecosystem. They provide us with the opportunity to preserve Nachusa. It is up to us -- the stewards, volunteers, and staff -- to deliver the reality of a fully restored habitat.



**Mike Adolph with grand-
daughter, Leah.**

THE RAREST OF THE RARE

by Todd Bittner

The populations of upland sandpipers and prairie bush clover are two of the reasons The Nature Conservancy was originally drawn to a degraded remnant prairie complex in Lee and Ogle Counties. Soon the ambitious program of Nachusa Grasslands evolved. Over a decade later, we are looking back to measure successes and failures, to determine the future course for the area.

Since the initial acquisition in the mid 1980's, intensive management and an expanded preserve have resulted in significant achievements. For example, the creation of large, unfragmented grasslands has resulted in providing premier habitat for common and area-sensitive grassland birds. Nachusa also contains a very diverse assemblage of insects and small mammals that is as complete as any other grassland in Illinois. And several new rare plant species have been "discovered" since acquisition, most recently the pink milkwort (*Polygala incarnata*) and the yellow monkey flower (*Mimulus glabratus*). These are just a few of the concrete Nachusa Grasslands successes. However, the success of protecting one of the species originally responsible for bringing The Nature Conservancy to Nachusa isn't as clear-cut.

The Federally-threatened prairie bush clover (*Lespedeza leptostachya*) is in scattered populations within the high-quality, remnant dry prairies at Nachusa Grasslands. This endemic Midwestern tallgrass prairie species is known from fewer than 40 sites in 23 counties within Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Illinois, with a section of south-central Minnesota and northwestern Iowa containing the majority of populations.

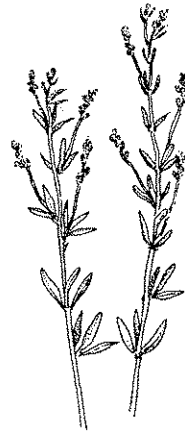
There are a handful of Illinois populations in the northern third of the State. Most of these populations are located in prairie remnants within the metropolitan areas surrounding Chicago and Rockford. However, the populations at Nachusa Grasslands are the largest known from any one site in Illinois, and frequently in a given year are larger than the combined populations of all other sites in the State.

The prairie bush clover is a member of the pea family, which is an important group within prairies for their nitrogen fixing properties. It has a leaf comprising three leaflets about an inch long and a quarter inch wide. Flowering plants are generally between nine and eighteen inches tall with flowers loosely arranged on an open spike. The pale pink or cream-colored flowers bloom in mid-July. Almost all of the flowers on an individual plant are cleistogamous. That is, they can only self-pollinate because they do not open up to allow cross-pollination. (Other species of flowering plants that do allow cross-pollination are termed chasogamous. Botanists sure do like lots of big, fancy words).

The prairie bush clover resembles its close relative, the round-headed bush clover (*Lespedeza capitata*) - which also grows at Nachusa, but the latter is more robust with larger leaflets and a more compact inflorescence. These two species occupy different habitats within a prairie, with the prairie bush clover being found near the driest prairies and the round-headed bush clover being found in dry-mesic prairies.

The typical causes for the destruction of remnant prairies are the same reasons that this species is most likely rare. Many populations that are not legally protected within a preserved site are still threatened by development, mining, and a variety of agricultural practices. Additionally, the lack of fire over the decades causes woody encroachment which threatens to destroy more of these populations due to excessive shade. Management, particularly fire and brush clearing, is needed to maintain remnant prairies, including the prairies with prairie bush clover.

Not all the news here is bad however. Annual surveys and monitoring by Illinois Department of Natural Resources staff and



**Prairie Bush
Clover
(*Lespedeza
leptostachya*)**

by Mary Phelan

The Nature Conservancy staff and volunteers have "discovered" several new populations at Nachusa Grasslands in the past few years. We are unsure whether these populations were always there and were overlooked, came up from the seedbank, responded from management practices, or most likely a combination of these. Last year there was a total of 11 known "sub-populations" at Nachusa, of which 10 had plants (a twelfth population is located adjacent to the preserve on private property). Since this species is believed to be very moisture dependent, the populations fluctuate significantly from year to year based upon precipitation. Given this, a population isn't necessarily gone if plants are not located in a given year.

Even though there are good numbers of plants and sub-populations at Nachusa Grasslands, the protection of this species isn't a guarantee. One threat at Nachusa comes from an invasive exotic that was planted extensively in the

past for erosion control in sandy soils throughout the Midwest. Bird's foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) has been encroaching on some of the high-quality, dry prairies where the prairie bush clover is found. This species, which is tolerant of fire, is extremely difficult to control. Efforts continue to prevent its spread, and to control this threat throughout Nachusa Grasslands.

Another potential threat, which is much more difficult to see and track, may be the lack of light to moderate disturbance. As unusual as this may seem, many species including some rare species are dependent on disturbance for their survival. For example, another Federally-threatened species, the decurrent false aster (*Boltonia decurrens*), is dependent on periodic flooding to reduce competition for seedling establishment in floodplains along the Illinois River.

At Nachusa, some populations of the prairie bush clover increased significantly after grazing was eliminated in the mid 1980's (up to 600 plants in 1986), only to continually decline in numbers since (down to a low of 82 in 1996). It is believed that the grazing allowed high seedling establishment of this disturbance tolerant species through removing competitors, and these grazed plants flowered abundantly once grazing was removed. In following years however, competition increased and seedling establishment was reduced significantly. Researchers in Iowa and Minnesota have come to a similar conclusion based on monitoring their populations and grazing regimes there, and believe that light to moderate rotational grazing may benefit this species. Research is planned in Minnesota to better determine the relationship between this species and grazing intensities.

This research may lead to experimental grazing at Nachusa Grasslands to help better manage this rare species (and potentially others such as Hill's thistle (*Cirsium hillii*) and the upland sandpiper), but more information about these species requirements and population trends at Nachusa will be gathered before any new management practices are implemented.

Unfortunately, not all measures of success at Nachusa are as obvious as clearing brush from a prairie. This re-emphasizes the critical need for monitoring and research as part of every aspect of stewardship. Through a collaboration of science and stewardship we can properly manage the significant natural resources at Nachusa Grasslands, and thereby preserve the "rarest of the rare."

STEWARDSHIP HAPPENINGS

by Bill Kleiman



Ray Derksen processing seed at the annual Stone Soup party

Schafer Unit: We have completed the excavation work at Schafer Knob. The smaller west facing borrow pit was carefully "sculpted" to a natural looking contour. The various spoil piles located in the pit from the gravel mining days were buried and the smaller rocks, gravel and soil were put on top. From Naylor Road, you can see the erosion fabrics and silt fence we installed to keep the loose soil in place. We also did some sculpting to lessen the steepness of one side of the giant sized south borrow pit. A great deal of seed was harvested from the remnant prairie and planted on this disturbed ground. No remnant prairie was disturbed, of course.

Below Schafer Knob, we excavated three shallow wetland potholes that mimic what we think may have been there pre-settlement. Due to the drainage tile pipe we removed in this area in 1997, the water table is now only about half a foot below the ground, so the potholes have held water since a day after their creation. Neighbor, John Bivins used the same excavator company to create a large wetland just south of our potholes, so this entire former soybean field is looking very different.

Also, David Edelbach, Gerald McDermott, Ray Derksen, and Rob Wise have harvested seed and thinned brush from Southeast Knob.

Hook Larson Prairie: The new steward for our newest addition to the preserve is Dave Breen, who will be ably assisted by co-steward, Jay Friberg. Dave and Jay both are community college botany and biology instructors. Dave's graduate dissertation was on the "Medicinal Plants of the Markets of Monterey, Mexico." Jay wrote the "Flora of Ogle County" during his graduate work. On their first official workday we had a bunch of people out clearing brush from the edge of a beautiful prairie known for bird's foot violet displays in May. Two large brush pile fires kept us warm and the cookies and coffee were abundant.

Jay Meiners Wetlands: We are about to plant several acres of prairie on the west uplands by the parking area. This September we used herbicide to kill the thick brome grass sod so that the new seedlings will have plenty of light and space to grow. This Spring we will rake in a rich mix of seed. Watch this area over the next few years as it changes from weeds to perennial prairie.

West Boundary: Bill McCarthy, a senior at Northern Illinois University, has taken on stewardship of the west boundary and is presently thinning along the fence line to make room for the oaks and savanna plants that someday will again dominate the area. Bill is a philosophy major and the following key words were heard on our last workday as we hauled cut wood to a warm fire: Heideger, Nietche, vegan, Thoreau, "epistemological map."



A Youth Steward from Ashton Elementary planting seed this spring

logical map."

Rolling Thunder Unit: Sally Baumgardner harvested a lot of seed for her unit. Sally often has groups of students or families out to help and learn. She continues to write natural history articles in area newspapers.

West Heinkel Unit: This area continues to receive the good care of Jay Stacy, Gene Miller, Ron Ingraham, John Schmadeke, and recently, Mike Adolph. Very large areas of former oak savanna have been thinned of box elder, cherry, buckthorn, honeysuckle, and multiflora rose. The effort of these folks is impressive. It's worth the long walk back there to take a look.

East Heinkel Unit: Mike Crowe planted more savanna and prairie seed this fall. We have been clearing boundaries there this winter. We have found that clearing the boundary of brush makes fire management safe and efficient, allows access to new areas for stewardship, and makes fence repairs possible.

In September two classes of fourth graders from Franklin Center and Ashton Elementary Schools again participated in our Youth Stewards Program. In November we enjoyed each others company during our annual seed processing party, Stone Soup. And that seed has been divided up to plant in various areas in each unit. We accomplished several prescribed burns this warm fall which you can see accentuated with this cover of snow. We also held a one day prescribed fire workshop. An immature golden eagle was seen by John Bivens flying over Nachusa Grasslands in December. Photographs of Nachusa Grasslands have been in several 1999 calendars. The Nature Conservancy sent one to many members and July shows the beautiful coneflowers on Dot's Knob. Which reminds me to close with telling you that Gene St. Louis, Barb Regan, and others again harvested a large quantity of seed for that unit.



Kevin Kaltenbach lighting prescribed fire on the Main Unit.

NACHUSA GRASSLANDS DATABASE

By Mike Adolph



[Editor's note: Mike Adolph has produced an amazing database for our use. He started the database in 1996 and updates it regularly. While the volunteer stewards know and utilize this resource, I thought it would be nice for Mike to share how it came into being.]

We decided to create a database of all the plants in the region so that we could determine what species should be restored to the Nachusa Grasslands preserve. The list is useful for aiding identification, for checking family relationships, for providing suggestions about likely habitat (especially savanna), and for providing custom lists such as the Seed Harvest Species, which can be used to keep track of seeds coming in and going out each season. The database will also keep track of seed planting as far back as we have records.

The source I used to note the species presence in our local counties was Mohlenbrock & Ladd's *Distribution of Illinois Plants* (1978). For each species, this book has a map of Illinois with the county boundaries, with a dot in each county where the plant species is known to occur. I searched through the book and noted the plants known for our counties (Lee and Ogle) and the nine counties that border them, the total came to about 1,540 species. If the species is already located at Nachusa I noted this in the database by cross referencing with the Nachusa plant list done by Lubbs, Haverstock, and others.

The authority used for their list and for the database is Swink and Wilhelm's *Plants of the Chicago Region*, which provides scientific names, common names, whether the species is native or adventive (weedy), and the coefficient of conservatism (conservation value) --which is their estimate of the likelihood of a species existing in an undisturbed native habitat. Last year, The Illinois Native Plant Society published a plant list for the state (developed by

John Taft, Gerould Wilhelm, Douglas Ladd, and Linda Masters) which has a coefficient of conservatism with a perspective for the state, rather than the Chicago region. Some of the numbers differ significantly. These have now been added to the database.

Early on I noted Savanna species in the database, as well as the National Wetlands designation for each species. Todd Bittner researched, for Nachusa, the literature on possible savanna plants. That is now being included.

When Wilhelm and Masters cataloged some 150 new species for Nachusa in the summers of '96 and '97, a column was added noting their contribution. The same column is used to note plants identified by Wayne Lampa and his colleagues on a trip to the preserve last summer.

Columns have been added for the plants physiognomy (annual, biennial, or perennial; flower, grass, shrub or tree). Most species in the database have a habitat description, date of first bloom, color, plant family, and location of plant to be filled in over time.



Summer Crew 1998 - Cristina Canales, Bill Kleiman, Mike Engel, Tina Fonger

EditorSusan Kleiman
Associate EditorThelma Dahlberg
Associate EditorDot Wade
Associate EditorBill Kleiman
Manager of MailingEllen Baker
Mailing List ManagerChris Pfoutz (Crest Foods, Inc.)

NACHUSA GRASSLANDS UNIT STEWARDS

STEWARDS

Clear Creek Unit

Prairie Preservation
Society of Ogle County

Dot & Doug Unit

Gene St. Louis

East Heinkel Unit

Mike Crowe

Fen Unit

Kevin Kaltenbach

Hook Larson Prairie Unit

Dave Breen

Jay Meiners Wetland Unit

Jeff Meiners

Kittentail Unit

West Chicago

Prairie Stewards

Main Unit

Mike Adolph

Roadside Stewards

Tom Mitchell

Rolling Thunder Unit

Sally Baumgardner

Schafer Unit

David Edelbach

West Heinkel Unit

Jay Stacy

West Boundary Steward

Bill McCarthy

Science Stewards:

Bird Monitoring

Butterfly Monitoring

Project Ecologist

Herbarium Steward

CO-STEWARDS

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Barb Regan

Todd Bittner

Jay Friberg

Steve Meiners

Mel Hoff

Bob Shone

Jenny Mitchell

Max Baumgardner

Gerald McDermott

Gene Miller, Ron Ingraham

Ann Haverstock

Mike Adolph

Dennis Lubbs

Dwight Heckert

NACHUSA GRASSLANDS SUPPORT

Thank you to:

Cristina Canales - for her fabulous spirit and work ethic during her 7-months with us (May-Dec.'98). *Note: Cristina is writing an article about her experiences at Nachusa Grasslands for our April issue!*

Mel Hoff - file cabinets

John Schmadeke - beautiful photos and a video he produced ("A Prairie Snapshot" about Nachusa)

Gerald McDermott - for designing, organizing, donating Nachusa Grasslands mugs and Autumn On The Prairie festival banners for annual displaying in Franklin Grove

Clyde Gelderloos (Lee County Disposal Service) - use of and hauling a large dumpster

Gene St. Louis - twelve new fire extinguishers

P.E.O. Sisterhood - donation

Chelsea Group, Ltd. - Canon Copier

Sally Baumgardner - continued articles in area newspapers about Nachusa Grasslands

Judith & Michael Hughes - donation in honor of the Price Family and another donation in memory of Mayo "Hook" Larson.

Dwight Heckert - cabinet for herbarium

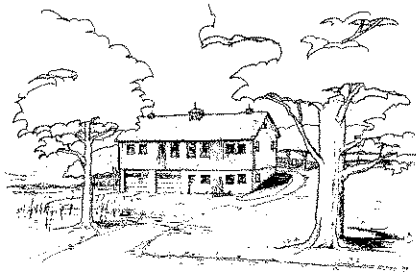
Dot Wade - books for the library (Shrubs and Woody Vines of Missouri, Peterson's Field Guide to Butterflies, Peterson First Guides to Butterflies and Moths and to Caterpillars).

Thank you to all of our volunteers and donors.

THANK YOU! DONATIONS TO BARN FUND-RAISER

The following are additional donors to the Barn Fund-raiser (names with an asterisk have promised volunteer labor).

David Hougan
Eric & Sandy Brubaker *
Dave Derwent
Cliff Knapp in memory of Ryan E. Knapp
Kathryn L. Neumann in memory of Jack C. Neumann
Wayne & Marion Archer
Margaret Knight in memory of Clinton Strang
John Huck family
Rich Hrynkow * in memory of Robert A. Hrynkow
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Tom & Ann Haverstock
Marjorie M. Asplund
Chuck & Belle Rosenberry
Mary Wagner & Mark Klein
two anonymous

NACHUSA GRASSLANDS STEWARDSHIP CALENDAR 1999

February

6 Sat: Roadsides and Kittentail Unit
7 Sun: West Boundary Woods
13 Sat: Fen Unit brush clearing
20 Sat: Dot & Doug Wade Unit
21 Sun: Hook Larson Prairie Unit
27 Sat: East Heinkel Unit
28 Sun: Schafer Unit

March

6 Sat: Fen Unit brush clearing
7 Sun: West Boundary Woods
13 Sat: Hook Larson Prairie Unit & **POTLUCK GATHERING**
20 Sat: Main Unit
21 Sun: Schafer Unit
27 Sat: East Heinkel Unit and *Northern Illinois Prairie Workshop in Rockford*

April

9-10 *Spring Symposium (Field Museum) "Ecology of the Chicago Region"*
10 Sat: Hook Larson Prairie Unit
17 Sat: Rolling Thunder Prairie Unit
18 Sun: Dot & Doug Wade Unit
24 Sat: Schafer Unit
18-24 is National Volunteer Week - Thank you to all our volunteers!

May

1 Sat: Main Unit
2 Sun: East Heinkel Unit
8 Sat: West Heinkel Unit garlic mustard removal and **POTLUCK GATHERING**
15 Sat: Roadsides
16 Sun: Schafer Unit
22 Sat: Dot & Doug Wade Unit
23 Sun: West Boundary Woods
29 Sat: Hook Larson Prairie Unit

June

5 Sat: East Heinkel Unit
6 Sun: West Boundary Woods
12 Sat: **POTLUCK GATHERING at Genesis Nursery** (emphasis on sedges), meet at 9:30 at Stewards' Barn to carpool.
13 Sun: Dot & Doug Wade Unit
19 Sat: Main Unit
26 Sat: Schafer Unit

July

3 Sat: East Heinkel Unit
10 Sat: Clear Creek Unit and from **5:30 PM to dark, ANNUAL ICE CREAM SOCIAL AND POTLUCK**
17 Sat: West Boundary Woods
24 Sat: Schafer Unit
25 Sun: Clear Creek Unit
31 Sat: Dot & Doug Wade Unit

August

7 Sat: West Boundary Woods
14 Sat: Rolling Thunder Prairie Unit
21 Sat: West Heinkel Unit seed gathering
28 Sat: Dot & Doug Wade Unit
29 Sun: Schafer Unit

September

4 Sat: Roadsides and West Heinkel Unit seed collecting
5 Sun: West Boundary Woods
11 Sat: Preparation for Autumn On The Prairie and **POTLUCK GATHERING 9:30 AM - 4 PM**
18 Sat: AUTUMN ON THE PRAIRIE - 10 AM TO 5 PM
25 Sat: Schafer Unit
26 Sun: Hook Larson Prairie Unit

October

2 Sat: East Heinkel Unit
9 Sat: Hook Larson Prairie Unit
16 Sat: West Heinkel Unit seed collecting
17 Sun: Main Unit
23 Sat: National "Make A Difference Day" - Rolling Thunder Unit (seed collecting) and Kittentail Unit
24 Sun: Schafer Unit
30 Sat: Dot & Doug Wade Unit

November

6 Sat: Roadsides
7 Sun: West Boundary Woods
13 Sat: Schafer Unit
14 Sun: Hook Larson Prairie Unit
20 Sat: **STONE SOUP SEED PROCESSEING PARTY AND POTLUCK GATHERING 9:30 AM - 4 PM**
27 Sat: Dot & Doug Wade Unit

December

4 Sat: Main Unit
11 Sat: Dot & Doug Wade Unit
12 Sun: Schafer Unit
18 Sat: Hook Larson Prairie Unit

January 2000 !!

8 Sat: Dot & Doug Wade Unit
15 Sat: East Heinkel Unit and **POTLUCK GATHERING**
22 Sat: Hook Larson Prairie
29 Sat: Schafer Unit

Stewardship workdays mainly INVOLVE brush clearing, weed removal, and seed collecting and planting. Often there is a hike afterwards.

All workdays and events start at 9:30 and end about 1:30 unless otherwise noted. Bring a lunch or snack. Meet at the Stewards' Barn at 2055 Lowden Rd. Extreme weather conditions will sometimes cause a steward to cancel a workday.

POTLUCK GATHERINGS start at 9:30 with stewardship or learning and then food is shared at noon.

We have on-going stewardship crews DURING THE WEEK throughout the year (usually Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays). Also every weekday in the SUMMER. These all start at 8 am.

To arrange to start volunteering with us call Bill or Susan Kleiman at the preserve office at (815) 456-2340.



by Mary Phelan

SUCCESSFUL PLANTING FROM SEED OF A RARE SAVANNA PLANT

by Mike Adolph

[Editor's note: Mike has submitted this article to *Restoration and Management Notes*, a scientific journal. Chris Bronny provided the information regarding the planting.]

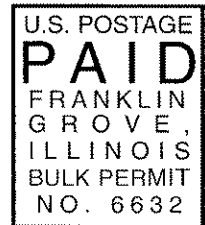
In 1986 the first purchase of what would become Nachusa Grasslands was made. This piece is an area of sandy hills with sandstone outcrops, which had been heavily grazed for over a century. About 500 yards west (now also part of Nachusa) is a patch of kittentails (*Wulfenia bullii*), an Illinois Endangered Species and a candidate for the Federal Endangered Species List, which provided volunteers with an estimated one to two ounces of seed. This was planted in 1988 and 1989 in the vicinity of several large bur oaks (*Quercus macrocarpa*). The area has been burned two or three times since. In 1998 fifteen plants were observed about seven feet from one tree trunk, deep in shade. This was an increase of seven over 1997. Another tree had eight plants (up from five in '97) just outside the drip line. Another had fourteen plants (unchanged) again just outside the drip line. The latter two were distinctly down slope. Three hundred yards east and far from any tree there is a single plant. In another area three plants are similarly located.

Nachusa Grasslands


The Nature Conservancy
2055 Lowden Road
Franklin Grove, IL 61031
(815) 456-2340

Wish List

- Volunteers - weekdays or weekends (call 815- 456-2340)
- Research Projects (graduate research opportunities!)
- Donation for a walk-behind, heavy duty mower
- Another John Deere "Gator"
- Donations for 2 more Motorola radios
- Illustrations and photos of native plants and animals
- Chest of drawers/dressers and twin bed frames for intern housing
- Donate your old vehicle for trade-in
- Snowmobile (1990 or newer)
- Reference Books for stewards library --
 - the following Peterson Field Guides would be useful: Eastern/Central Wildflowers, Trees & Shrubs, Insects, Moths, Mammals, Tracks
 - the following Audubon Guides would be useful: Reptiles and Amphibians, and North American Birds
 - Newcomb's Wildflower Guide
 - or any other books you feel would be useful



To Our Friend Below or the Current Resident:



Nachusa Grasslands is owned and operated by The Nature Conservancy, a private non-profit group whose mission is to protect plants and animals by protecting the land and water they need to survive.