

MANAGER'S NOTEBOOK

by Bill Kleiman, Preserve Manager
and Susan Kleiman, Restoration Specialist

The Nachusa Grasslands preserve is owned and operated by The Nature Conservancy, a not-for-profit organization. At Nachusa Grasslands the large open prairies (wet and dry) and open woodland (savanna) enable rare species to thrive. We are known for our high quality gravel hill prairies, dry/mesic prairies, and fen/sedge meadows. The remnants have many rare plants, insects, birds, and even the Blanding's turtle.

We are also known for the volunteers who intensively steward and restore the land here. Volunteers gave over 10,000 hours of time in 2002. Volunteers come from far and wide—Dixon, Wheaton, Hinsdale, Bloomington.... Many hours are spent in the field using muscles and gray matter. There are also hours spent doing indoor tasks, from fund raising and conservation planning to pressing and identifying plants to cleaning and organizing the Headquarters Barn. Volunteers help because they enjoy the empowerment of adopting a portion of land and determining what is needed for its restoration. We also enjoy being together and sharing ideas, food, and fun.

New Volunteers: We want to thank the following folks for contributing their time and talents: Laura Carnes of Franklin Grove, Cassie and Jim Krueger of Beloit, Alan Meier of Bloomington, Mary Scott of Mt. Morris, Nelly Sizgoric of Wheaton, and Carol Brown of Dixon.

Seasonal Crew: We hired another great seasonal crew this year, Russ Brunner, Becky Flack, Jeff Horn and Rebecca Ely. They hand collected over 600 pounds of seed from 146 species and machine harvested 520 pounds of four grass species. (See Seed Report article). They also burned an impressive number of brush piles (200!) created from last winter's forestry-sized, tree cutting machine at the Sand Farm Unit and the Tellabs Savanna Unit. Also, we can notice the results of their labors in the brush work along Wade Creek. They bore up under heat, scratches, wet feet, and tired shoulders.

New Plant Species: At least 46 new species were added to the preserve list this year, many by Gerry Wilhelm (co-author of [Plants of the Chicago Region](#)) and others by volunteers Chris Hauser, Jan Grainger and Dwight Heckert. Some of the more interesting plants are: green dragon, marsh St. John's wort, two-flowered Cynthia, *Carex buxbaumii*, dinky duckweed, water heartsease, yellow water crowfoot, mullein foxglove,



The mission of The Nature Conservancy is **to preserve** the plants, animals and natural communities that represent **the diversity of life on Earth** by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.

lance-leaved violet, Canada violet and a succulent fern (*Botrichium dissectum* var. *dissectum*).

Fire: Nearly 50 volunteers participated in our burns last fall and this spring. In the spring of 2002 we burned 808 acres at Nachusa. In April we were proud to have burned 145 of the 160 acres at a savanna we purchased 5 months earlier. Burn crews from Nachusa Grasslands aided the Illinois Department of Natural Resources at Foley Sand Prairie in southern Lee County and the Temperance Hill Cemetery Prairie. Also we burned the 100-acre native grass planting at the Nichols property adjacent to Nachusa Grasslands.

Wetlands: We have finished up the water control structures and pothole sculpting in Prairie Potholes and Bluestem Bottoms. This should increase the soil wetness of these units and slow the sediment entering Wade Creek. A thank you goes to the C2000 Grant acquired through the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

Work at other sites:

Pine Rock Nature Preserve

Pine Rock Nature Preserve is 60 acres of diverse native communities from dry, upland oak savanna on bluffs overlooking flat wet-mesic prairie. Pine Rock itself is a large 40 foot high St. Peter Sandstone outcrop. Pine Rock became a Nature Preserve in 1964. It is owned by Northern Illinois University and is open to the public for hiking and nature study.

In the year 2000, The Nature Conservancy purchased 11-acres of habitat adjacent to the west boundary of the Pine Rock Nature Preserve in Ogle County, a few miles north of Nachusa Grasslands. This buffer tract was recently sold to the Illinois DNR. A prescribed fire was done on this tract and the Nature Preserve in April of 2002 by our preserve crew with assistance from Byron Forest Preserve. A C2000 grant has been awarded to clear some of the brush at Pine Rock. This grant is being administered by the Prairie Preservation Society of Ogle County.

According to Dot Wade, Pine Rock was preserved largely through the efforts of Dr. Margery C. Carlson, Emeritus Professor of Botany, Northwestern University. Dot and Doug Wade made a comprehensive plant list for the preserve in 1971 and this list includes some very rare plants. The land was burned occasionally by Doug Wade and the Prairie Preservation Society of Ogle County from the 1960's through the 1980's. The DNR did a prescribed burn there in 1988.

Hanover Bluffs: Working with various partners, Bill Kleiman is helping create a management plan and implement stewardship at this site on the Mississippi River.

The Natural Land Institute has been active in the Rock River area helping protect about 300-acres in the area.



New prairie pothole habitat created

Events:

We hosted our Illinois Board of Trustees at the preserve in May of 2002. To recognize the volunteers of Nachusa Grasslands, the Board hosted a barbecue dinner and bluegrass band at the barn. About 150 were in attendance.

The new Preserve Headquarters barn has been used and booked for various functions of The Nature Conservancy, including some coming up this spring and summer. We also have been giving tours of our work to various land managers and conservation staff.



Seasonal Crew:

**Russ Brunner,
Rebecca Ely,
Becky Flack
Not Pictured,
Jeff Horn**

Science:

A controlled study of the effects grazing has on our rare prairie bush clover was continued this year. Two more years of data to go before we talk.

Carbon Sequestration: Mike Konen of N.I.U. continued his sampling of soils to study how prairies capture carbon in the soil.

In Memory:

Debra L. Petro - Natural areas in Illinois lost a fine steward this February when Deb Petro died after a prolonged illness. Deb was the volunteer steward of several sites in the Chicago area and worked for The Nature Conservancy at Indian Boundary Prairies. She enjoyed nature photography, working with children and practicing and instructing Tai Chi. Deb was an inspiration to those who knew her.

Raymond F. Schulenberg (1920-2003) - Long time prairie steward, Ray Schulenberg died in January. Ray had been with the Morton Arboretum for 32 years. An arboretum prairie bears his name. Ray was a pioneer in understanding the need to preserve native prairie plants, insects, and other animals. He influenced Midwest conservationists over the years with his extensive and holistic understanding of prairie ecosystems. Always humble, many will miss Ray's knowledge and gentle ways.

Volunteers put their *Time and Talents* to work on behalf of the *Diverse Native Species* at Nachusa Grasslands.

STEWARDS' REPORTS

Edith and Anna Heinkel Savanna West Unit

By Mary Vieregg

The stewards of the West Heinkel unit worked in several areas during 2002. During the winter, selective clearing of brush and trees continued with the goal of breaking down the artificial agricultural borders from the past and making more natural connections between the woodland, savanna, and prairie areas. There was also a concentrated effort made to remove multiflora rose and invasive willows along John's Creek.

As early spring arrived, attention turned to weed management. Red clover and reed canary grass were attacked first using Garlon and Poast herbicides. In the plantings by Naylor Road, Queen Anne's lace flower heads were cut. In summer, wild parsnip, Canada thistle, and other weeds bore the wrath of the West Heinkel stewards' efforts. Borders of over abundant Rubus (raspberry and blackberry) species were sprayed with Krenite (kills next year's buds on woody plants) in early autumn to give other natives a competitive edge.

An ambitious effort was made to collect seed throughout the growing season. Enough seed was collected to overseed nearly all of the West Heinkel plantings. Special emphasis was placed on seed mixes for the most recent farm ground planted in 2001 where there was still a great deal of bare soil to receive the seed. Mixes were also used to overseed the older Naylor Road plantings, the hidden upper prairie (planted to red-top grass a decade ago), selected areas along John's Creek, the upper and lower plantings north of John's Creek, and an area being newly cleared of brush this winter at the west end of John's Creek. When 2002 came to an end, approximately 200 pounds of nearly 150 species had been collected and planted in the West Heinkel unit.

Special thanks and recognition should go to the following stewards who made it a very productive year: Jay Stacy, Don Homer, Mary Scott, Gene Miller, Nelly Sizgoric, Sue and Brent Coulter, Kay and Greg McKeen, and Mary and Jim Vieregg.



Mary Vieregg



Jay Stacy

Herbarium

By Dwight Heckert

Just like the prairie, the herbarium continues to grow. Forty plant species were added in 2002 bringing the total collected in the last four years to 447. With the addition of new tracts the opportunity for finding new species is exciting. Several new species, *Onosmodium hispidissimum* and *Ranunculus flabellaris*, were found on the Tellabs Savanna. Several other species were found on the older units. They are *Laportea canadensis*, *Urtica dioica* and *Polygonum cepitosum*. Many thanks go out to those who helped me locate and identify the plants that were collected and preserved.

Schafer Prairie

By David Edelbach

Several weedy plants continue to be a problem including parsnip, sweet clover, honey suckle, multiflora rose (MFR), phragmites grass and others. During the weed control season these plants were pulled, cut, sweat upon, and/or sprayed. There are several areas on Schafer's unit where small woody plants including European honey suckle, MFR, Rubus, and sumac were mowed. Two of the areas mowed include our budding savanna on the south side of Southeast knob and a brushy area on the north slope of Schafer's knob. We also did brush clearing along the boundaries. Our neighbor Mr. Bivins has been spraying reed canary grass in the wet areas. And, of course, Schafer's knob has produced an abundance of seed shared by many.



David Edelbach

Tellabs Savanna

By Ron Ingraham

(editors note: this unit has road access on Lost Nation Road)

The first full year of restoration work on this 160-acre unit was a success. The highlight was a rented forestry-sized, tree cutting machine used to establish a wide fire break on the perimeter of the unit. It accomplished this task in days compared to what would have taken months of hand work. To watch the machine grasp a tree in its hydraulic claw, position a large chainsaw at the base, cut and then stack the trees was an amazing sight.



Ron Ingraham



Tree Removal Machine

However, we still spent 4 months of daily cutting of the small diameter brush on the fire breaks. With nearly 2 miles of fire breaks established in 5 months the majority of the property was burned in the spring! It may have been 100 years since the site was burned. Accumulated oak leaves were the primary fuel for a successful burn over 3/4ths of the site setting back the garlic mustard, honeysuckle and clearing some under-story brush. The tree/brush piles on the fire breaks caused some delays during the burn. These piles were then mostly burned during the summer and fall so as to not have them on fire when we have our hands full during the next prescribed burn.

Many species of flowers and sedges began their rebound in the warm, blackened soil this spring. One of the most dramatic displays was hundreds of lupines, few of which were seen before. In the wetlands the result was lush, green growth and a profusion of blooms. Many times, as we made a record of the species in this “garden,” noted botanist, Gerry Wilhelm, was heard to say rather breathlessly, “Oh, isn’t this marvelous, we don’t deserve this.” And “Oh, could this be...? Yes, it is.”

In addition to fire, a big goal for the unit is to clear the invasive woody species to restore the more open structure of the woodlands and wetlands. There have been many days and there are many more to come of using the chainsaw and the Birchmeier backpack sprayer. Native seed will be spread in these opened areas.



Hank Hartman

Big Woods

By Hank and Becky Hartman

Beginning in 2001 we decided to start with the two big oaks, one on the north knob and one on “which-way” knob (the oak on this hill has two large limbs pointing like crossed arms), and clear around them to let them “breathe”. We have completely cleared the north knob of invasive

brush. The Rubus (raspberry and blackberry) around the which-way oak on the south knob is much reduced and we seeded in bottlebrush and dropseed grass this year.

Vast areas of overgrown willow and Rubus remain a problem in other areas. The Rubus are native shrubs that are super abundant due to their ability to survive the shade that came on as fire was ceased a century ago.

We have begun the willow assault which will eventually open up the wetland in Big Woods. Previous mechanical mowing and herbiciding with Krenite didn’t stop these young black willow whips, so we have been taking them out one by one with hand loppers or the gas powered brush saw and herbiciding the stumps.



Becky Hartman

We are happy to have Alan Meier of Bloomington agree to be our co-steward. Alan has been driving up to volunteer at the preserve frequently in the last year.

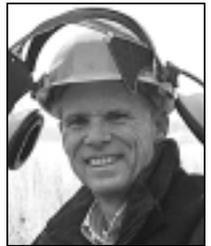
Big Woods had turkeys all spring; we often heard them “talking” back in the woods. We walked down the fire break on the western boundary behind 5 or 6 of them one day in April.

We tripled our seed collected this year. You could become our designated seed collector and help us triple the score again next year!

Kittentail Savanna

By Stephen Sentoff

This has been a year of working on the boundary adjacent to the Fen unit. The West Chicago Prairie Stewardship Group, which has adopted the unit, had crews out twice this year as usual. In February, five members of the stewardship group were joined by three other regular Nachusa volunteers. With about six inches of snow on the ground we were able to burn our brush piles without any worry. The fire and the work kept us warm. In October we were greeted by one of those fall days that just can’t be beat — perfect weather with the wind playing in the grasses-reminding us why we love this place. We cut and burned more brush along the north boundary. A couple more work days should finish up the boundary work. Come on out and join us.



Stephen Sentoff

Prairie Potholes

By Chris and Jennifer Hauser

(Editor’s note: The Hausers have been volunteering at the preserve for the past three years and Chris’ Masters Study and Thesis was to help decide the merits of various plant monitoring techniques. Chris has also developed quite a collection of insects from the preserve, which you can see in the gathering room at the Headquarters Barn.)



Chris Hauser

This fall we moved from Urbana to DeKalb, and being so close to Nachusa, we decided to adopt the Prairie Potholes Unit. Nearly all of the 80-acre parcel was farmed until about 10 years ago, when it was planted with native plantings. Now the area is a nice mixture of wetlands, prairies, and some woodland.

We have two main goals for this unit. Our first goal is to improve the unit’s overall health by adding native



Jennifer Hauser

plants and by battling invasive species. Although the unit was originally planted with diverse seed mixes, many species are now rare or missing. This fall we collected seed from almost 60 species to add to the unit.

Our second goal is to provide habitat for rare species. We've started by adding plant species that are used as nectar sources or caterpillar hosts for rare butterflies such as the regal fritillary and the gorgone checkerspot. Next we'll reintroduce species of rare plants, including Hill's thistle, yellow monkey flower, and eventually the prairie bushclover. Meanwhile, the unit is being managed as habitat for rare grassland birds like Henslow's sparrow and sedge wren.

Roadsides

By Tom Mitchell

Weeds, seeds and trash were the roadside management tasks for this past year. Every few weeks we make a trash run of the 6 miles of roadsides: Stone Barn, Carthage, Lowden, Naylor, and Robbins Roads. We bag up everything discarded in the ditches on both sides of the roads. We fill several plastic bags with what can mostly be classified as rubbish, trash or refuse (inorganic mixed waste) such as beer cans, fast food containers, and lottery tickets. Large metallic car parts are kept separate for recycling purposes. We also bag what can be classified as garbage (organic waste such as food). Animal carcass are left for the scavengers. Lost items - hubcaps to stocking caps - are advertised on fence posts for two weeks.

Clear Creek Prairie

By Mary Blackmore

The Nachusa burn team burned the northwest field in late April. In early May quantities of over 50 species of seed were hand scattered on the area. The following day over an inch of rain fell so we have high hopes for this seeding. We've needed an equally high degree of patience in waiting for positive results from previous overseedings. For example, a light overseeding of part of the same northwest field was done in 1996 but good results were not evident until 2001. To date it's our most diverse re-created prairie. Summer workdays were highlighted by very mild weather (for once!). Work groups lopped white sweet clover, saplings of Siberian elm, and multiflora rose.



Sally Baumgardner

Rolling Thunder Prairie

by Sally Baumgardner

Early observations of our eradication efforts of reed canary grass (RCG) here indicate hopeful signs. The area was burned and then seeded to a wide variety of non-grass native plant seeds. The RCG was intensely herbicided three times, and more native plant seeds were raked in. The RCG seems to

be much reduced. Angelica and Cacalia, conservative forbs, sprang up. These efforts will be repeated.

In our ongoing effort to recruit new volunteers who will eventually replace us, 4th and/or 5th grade students from area schools visited the preserve. Small groups went for long walks with seasoned leaders. The schools were: Oregon, Chana, Rochelle, Dixon's Reagan School, Chicago City Day School (Taft Campus, Oregon), and the Youth Stewards classes from Ashton and Franklin Grove.

Each group took part in hands-on restoration activities such as seed head collecting or seed dispersal, and spent more than two hours in the fields.

Thanks to our adult stewards/leaders, about 530 people had meaningful field trips in 2002.

Eight Oaks Savanna

By Jan Grainger

I'm pleased that Chris and Jennifer Hauser are now the stewards of Prairie Potholes, the unit adjacent to Eight Oaks Savanna. We have been doing some work together with a goal of making the transition between our units less abrupt. For instance, we plan to encourage the young oaks that are scattered east of the old fence/tree line. Chris and Jennifer spread mulch around some young oaks to protect them from fire. Several large cherry trees have been girdled in the old tree line.

Chris and I built three check dams with very large rocks, in an effort to slow the water movement into Wade Creek along what we've been calling Rocky Creek. We used rocks that had been piled up long ago, likely cleared from nearby former crop fields.

Many willows and elms have been girdled along Wade Creek. More light will now be available to encourage growth of the species characteristic of the sedge meadow, streamside and open savanna. Also, due to tree thinning last winter, much more light is reaching the ground at the south end near Rocky Creek and signs of the return of savanna are emerging. The most obvious indication is the growth of grasses that were sown here such as nodding wild rye, native fescue and bottlebrush. Savanna forbs are being established as well such as wingstem and hyssop. This November we planted many species of seed, especially figwort, Indian plantain and tall coreopsis.

Main Unit

By Mike Adolph

In our unit we're making real progress against the big trio of invasives: honeysuckle, multiflora rose, and black cherry. Wild parsnip has been taken from the "urgent" list, and we've gained some ground on white sweet clover on Isabel's Knob. Reed canary grass, Canada thistle, and garlic mustard are diminishing. Bird'sfoot trefoil has shown up. One new invasive is a willow with thick leaves and



Jan Grainger



Mike Adolph

many stems. It's busy in the '91 planting and the NW corner. We're going after it. We'll be cutting down the trees & brush on the fence along Pussytoes Lane. Bill Kleiman had a new "pothole" created in the NW corner in order to get material for the dike that is intended to raise the water level in the '91 planting and the Prairie Potholes. We'll want to get that bare earth in good natives.

Thelma Carpenter Prairie

By Tom Mitchell



Tom Mitchell

Seven acres of soybean stubble on the southwest side of the remnant has been removed from agriculture and planted with over 240 pounds of 64 species of forb seed and 35 pounds of little bluestem grass seed. Twenty three acres will be leased to our neighbors in 2003 for agriculture with a tentative two year plan to plant these to prairie. This would complete the planting of the 30 agricultural acres on this 65-acre parcel purchased in 1999.

Mary Scott of Mt. Morris brought a pair of capable hands to the seed collecting season. She joined fellow steward, Jay Stacy, who has generously shared his knowledge of the best spots on the preserve for so many species with so many of us, in helping to gather 55 forbs and 8 grasses, all on the list of plants known to occur at Carpenter Prairie. The seed slinger on the back of the Gator was used to plant fluffy seeds and the culti-packer was used to ensure seed-soil contact. Much hand planting was done with lead plant, dropseed, and shooting star.



Jenny Mitchell

Good news: grass-leaved goldenrod and mountain mint are leading the invasion of the fallow field (5 acres) south of the pond and shooting stars bloomed in patches on sunny ground where cedars stood a year earlier in the 30 acres of our good quality remnant. Bad news: yellow and white sweet clover and wild carrot flourished in the degraded areas; a hot humid summer made weed removal difficult; cool season, non-native grasses are evident everywhere. But as we have seen over the years in the Main unit of the preserve; high quality prairie does emerge from the ashes of the frequent burns of formerly intensely grazed prairie.

From the Visitor's Book

"Thanks for preserving this wonderful site"

"Great changes since the beginning."

"Visiting here is always part of coming home."

Thank You

to the following people for their generous donations:

Dorothy Wade, Alan and Emma Wade in loving memory of Lilla Wade Batchelder.

Jeannie and Tom Lawson in memory of Russell Lawson.

Brent and Sue Coulter in honor of Mary Viereggs on her birthday.

Liz Keeler in honor of Sue Coulter on her birthday.

Alice L. Buyers, Dorothy M. Haberer, and Dwight Harms in memory of Charles W. Buyers.

Gerald McDermott for creating additional signs for Autumn On The Prairie.

Chris Hauser for collection of insects of Nachusa Grasslands.

Jenny Mitchell for feeding us so well on several occasions.

Howard Fox and Ron Ingraham for beautiful, outdoor wood signs and a sweet out-house.

Nathan Hill for using some of his days off to service our vehicles and do other repairs.

Dean Weidman for office supplies and obtaining matching donations through his employer.

Eric Brubaker for continued expert assistance on various Headquarters improvements.

Special thanks to the following for donations towards our new Kawasaki Mule vehicle:

Mike and Connie Adolph, Jan Grainger, Dwight and Tess Heckert, James Hoyt, Bob and Fui Lian Inger, Ron and Pat Ingraham, John and Agnes Kleiman, Gerald McDermott, Alan Meier, John and Cindy Schmadeke, and Jim and Mary Viereggs



A Seed Planting Crew

TIM KELLER HONORED



Bill Kleiman (right) presents Tim Keller with a painting of Nachusa Grasslands by artist, Pat Lathe

At our Seed Mixing Day this autumn we honored Tim Keller, a stellar Illinois conservationist. Tim has worked tirelessly on the behalf of native Illinois. He helped, along with Doug and Dot Wade, Isabel Johnston, and others to protect the prairie remnants at what is now Nachusa Grasslands.

Tim aided in the preservation of the following prairies: Lyndon-Agnew Railroad Prairie Nature Preserve, Agnew Triangle Prairie, Clyde and Heaton Cemetery Prairies, Smack Prairie, Doug Wade Nature Preserve, Spring Slough, Temperance Hill, DeWolfe, Munson Township, and Beach Cemetery prairies, and the L & M

Prairie. He still stewards several of these sites.

Tim helped the Franklin Creek Natural Area and the Byron Forest Preserve District early on in their inception. He was also involved in the establishment of several county Natural Areas Guardians, citizen groups that work with the Soil and Water Conservation Districts, to care for natural areas. Tim was associated early on with Doug Wade and the Prairie Preservation Society of Ogle County. He is still a member. Tim is on the C2000 conservation committee for the Lower Rock River, and participates in the Conservation Congress which is made up of citizen groups that help enact legislation.

While attending Skinner College Tim heard President Kennedy's famous inaugural line, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but rather ask what you can do for your country." Shortly thereafter Tim quit school, to serve in Bolivia for the Peace Corps. In 1965 he returned and enrolled at the University of Illinois in Champaign to study Agronomy. After he received his degree he worked on the teams that mapped the soils of DeKalb County and Lee County. At this time he became acquainted with Bob Betz and Ray Schulenberg and "got bit by the prairie bug." He also served on the Board of the Whiteside County Soil and Water Conservation District for over ten years.

Last but, not least, Tim is also a farmer in Whiteside County. He has a supportive wife, Carolyn, a daughter who is a teacher, and another who is a nurse.

Thank you, Tim, for mentoring so many people and saving all those prairies.

Wish List

- Each management unit would welcome additional team members. Volunteers are empowered to do as much stewardship as they want—everything from hand collecting seed to prescribed fire.
- Equipment Maintenance Steward - we need a volunteer about one day a week to do maintenance on our chainsaws, hand tools, small engines, trucks, and tractor.
- Youth Stewards Leaders - volunteers needed to increase our pool of field trip leaders for the unique Nachusa Grasslands Youth Stewards Program. This would be four mornings a year leading a small group of children (5-6) in enjoying the native plants and birds.

Equipment Needs:

- Power Point Projector and Lap Top Computer
- Snow plow for truck



Wild Lupine (*Lupinus perennis*)

Seed Report 2002

By Susan Kleiman

Top: Mike Crowe and Cassie Krueger hand processing seeds from pods



Right: Todd Bittner processing seed heads through the hammermill and seed/dust separator



This year, seed collected for the preserve measures (including chaff) nearly 2,000 pounds, but we believe the actual weight was closer to 2,500 pounds. Twenty-two regular volunteers, 30 occasional volunteers, plus 4 seasonal staff, collected seed from May through November. The seasonal staff collected about 1,120 pounds, more than half of which (146 species) was collected by hand. The market value of the seed is estimated to be at least \$136,000.

The bulk of the harvest was planted in November on 30-acres of dry/mesic habitat: twenty-six acres at the Sand Farm, and four acres around the Headquarters Barn. Planting was 30 pounds bulk weight to an acre, about half forb and half grass. This is approximately 15 pounds per acre of clean seed. The seed was planted with a fertilizer truck that used forced air to spread the seed (mixed with potash as a carrier). A seed to soil contact was secured by rolling over the land with an agricultural "culti-packer."

Volunteers harvested 200 species and at least 800 pounds, however many pounds were planted without being weighed. Most of the volunteer seed was hand planted this autumn over many acres, most as overseeding into older plantings or degraded remnants of prairie, woodland, and wetland. The stewards continue the upward trend of harvesting more pounds and more species. The result of all this planting produces high quality habitat that supports rare species.



Volunteers at our annual Seed Mixing Day

STEWARDS OF NACHUSA GRASSLANDS

Bruce Boyd
Bill Kleiman
Susan Kleiman

State Director
Preserve Manager
Resotration Specialist

STEWARDS

Big Woods

Hank & Becky Hartman

Alan Meier

Clear Creek Prairie

Prairie Preservation Society
of Ogle County

Mary Blackmore
Terri Clarke

Dot & Doug Wade Prairie

Gene St. Louis

Barb Regan

Edith & Anna Heinkel Savanna

East Unit

Mike Crowe

Cassie Krueger

West Unit

Jay Stacy

Mary Vieregg, Don Homer
Gene Miller

Eight Oaks Savanna

Jan Grainger

Fen Unit

Kevin Kaltenbach

Todd Bittner

Hook Larson Prairie

Dave Breen

Kittentail Savanna

West Chicago

Steve Sentoff

Prairie Stewardship Group

Main Unit

Mike Adolph

Bob Shone

Prairie Potholes

Chris Hauser

Jennifer Hauser

Roadsides & Jay Meiners Wetlands

Tom Mitchell

Jenny Mitchell

Rolling Thunder & Harold Walkup Prairies

Sally Baumgardner

Max Baumgardner
Emily Tilsy, Earl Thomas

Schafer Prairie

David Edelbach

Gerald McDermott
Ray Derksen

Tellabs Savanna

Ron Ingraham

Jan Grainger, Bob Shone

Thelma Carpenter Prairie

Tom Mitchell

Jenny Mitchell, Bob Bartles

Barn Steward:

Jenny Mitchell

Autumn On The Prairie 2003 Chair:

Tonya Bittner

Science Stewards:

Bird Monitoring

Ann Haverstock

Butterfly Monitoring

Jan Grainger

Herbarium Steward

Dwight Heckert

Insect Collector

Chris Hauser

Lespedeza leptostachya monitor

Todd Bittner

Photo Monitor

Gerald McDermott

Outreach Volunteers:

Publicist/Educator/Presenters

Sally Baumgardner, Gene Miller

Youth Stewards Leaders

Mike Adolph, Carol Bartles,
Sally Baumgardner, Howard
Fox, Ron Ingraham, Hazel
Reuter, Barb Rutherford

Donations

By Bill Kleiman

Albert Kircher

We are delighted to announce a neighboring land owner, Albert Kircher, with the support and concurrence of Clete and Karen Fair, donated a conservation easement to The Nature Conservancy, thereby granting the development rights of 390-acres to TNC. The easement covers ground that is currently in tillable row crops and pasture. The easement ensures the farm will stay a farm, and not become a residential subdivision. The Kircher farm is on the east side of Lowden Road, across from the Main Prairie of the preserve. Albert Kircher summed up his feelings at a casual signing ceremony held at the preserve: "I am pleased to support The Nature Conservancy's efforts to preserve the Rock River Valley and its rich natural and agricultural heritage". This easement donation underlines the importance of planning for the future—thank you again Mr. Kircher.

Nancy Hotchkiss

We are pleased to announce the donation of 40-acres of land from Nancy Hotchkiss. Nancy lives closer to Chicago but bought this farm in rural Ogle county in 1973. The purchase was for a country retreat. She fixed up an old 1900's home, leased the land to a good farmer and planted a huge garden of vegetables and flowers. Nancy continues to come out during many summers days to plant, weed, and harvest. It is a small world of coincidences that we started this preserve across the road from Nancy's farm, and her husband, Jim, ended up on The Nature Conservancy's Board of Trustees. This December Nancy donated 40-acres of her farm to The Nature Conservancy. These acres are directly across Lowden Road and the Headquarters Barn. Also, these acres have been planted to prairie, over the last few years, using local seed harvested with full financial support from Nancy. Nancy, thank you for donating this important land. This spring grassland birds will be singing your praise.

Corwith Hamill and Nancy Hamill Winter

A very generous donation was given to The Nature Conservancy by Corwith Hamill and his daughter Nancy Hamill Winter. The much appreciated monies will be used to protect and enhance wildlife habitat at Nachusa Grasslands. Nancy Hamill Winter has been on The Nature Conservancy's Board of Trustees for Illinois for over a decade. Nancy has been a frequent visitor, friend, and supporter of Nachusa Grasslands since its inception. Corwith Hamill has supported many charitable organizations including The Nature Conservancy's Emiquon project and various projects at the Brookfield Zoo. We, again, thank them both for their generosity. In celebration of their gifts the little bluestem prairie in the Main Unit will be named in their honor.

Tellabs Foundation

A substantial grant to Nachusa Grasslands from Tellabs Foundation will help protect more habitat at Nachusa Grasslands. In honor of the grant the Conservancy will name the new savanna after the Tellabs Foundation. Tellabs Foundation was established by Tellabs, which is a telecommunications equipment manufacturer based in Naperville. Michael Birck, founder and CEO of Tellabs, began hearing good things about the preserve from Board of Trustee members, John Santucci and Connie Keller. Meredith Hilt, Tellabs Foundation Director, reported to the board how she was very impressed with the volunteer program at the preserve. Thank you Michael Birck for your interest and Tellabs Foundation for the financial support.

ComEd, an Exelon Company

We finished our third year of a substantial multi-year project supported by a grant from ComEd, an Exelon Company. This grant is enabling us to plant over 200-acres of habitat at the preserve. As a measure to offset global carbon emissions, ComEd supports the planting of prairie because prairie takes carbon out of the atmosphere and stores it in the soil. We hired a great crew this summer and fall to manage weeds, pick an amazing amount of seed, create fire breaks on the boundaries and other high energy stewardship. This grant also purchased an old combine to harvest prairie seeds, and other new equipment to make the plantings possible. This grant also is supporting, Mike Konen, a Northern Illinois University soil scientist who is measuring the carbon capture in the soils over time. If we can demonstrate that prairies are good for the planet we may spark many more such prairie restorations. Thank you ComEd.

From the Visitor's Book

"Thank you for the beautiful subdivision of Eden."

"Nachusa is serenity and solitude."

"Our two young children will enjoy this land in the future."

"Each visit we see something new."

"Good to walk among native prairie at last."



Red-headed Woodpecker

SUMMARY EVALUATION OF **AUTUMN ON THE PRAIRIE 2002**

This was one of our best celebration of the 13 so far. Our attendance was around 900 (738 signed in at the welcome tent and we know a bunch did not sign in). The parking area was full all day. It did not hurt that the weather was perfect. Thank you to the 85 volunteers who made the event go.

Tours left every 20 minutes with most leaders having 8 to 15 people on their tour. The tours are the focus of the day and the best way to connect people to the preserve and our work here. Thanks, Mike Adolph, for coordinating the tours. Thanks, Tom Mitchell, for hosting the Ray Wiggers tours. Ray is the author of Geology Underfoot in Illinois.

Educational displays were coordinated by Mary Viereggs and were well attended. Highlights included Illinois State Museum's nice display of Ice Age Illinois and the fine display of butterflies by scientists John K. Bouseman and James G. Sternburg, authors of Field Guide to Butterflies of Illinois. Thanks also to Issac Stewart for his display and for leading families on several catch and release butterfly hunts.

Three landscape painters worked all day with curious onlookers stopping by. Thank you Dan Latourneau, Pat Lathe, and Sue Shedowski.

Thank you Mike Crowe and friends for the sweet music that blended with the light breeze.

The self guided plant ID tour seemed well attended and handsomely signed this year with laminated photos and descriptions on little sign boards. Thanks Mike Adolph and Dwight Heckert.

The children's tent was more popular then ever and kept kids engaged for long periods. Thanks Susan Kleiman.

The site was organized well, put up and taken down fast. Thanks to Bill Kleiman and Carol Bartles for site coordination, and Carol for the barbecue dinner for 30 of us on the clean up crew. Thanks, Gerald McDermott, for all those signs that kept us from getting lost. Byron Forest Preserve donated the use of the big tent. Thank you.

The raffle tent looked like a fun place to be—\$473 raised. Thank you Beth Wiltshire. The sales tent brought in \$420 of profit—thanks Ron Ingraham. The welcome tent had a good aura about it and the display by Gene St. Louis was well received, donations totaled \$650. Thank you Gerald McDermott and Barb Baker. Total expenses were \$2,403. Total income was \$2,143. We almost broke even.

Gerald's exit survey showed a similar pattern as previous years. About half attended for the first time. Many attending were local. Members of The Nature Conservancy came from all over the northern half of the state. Folks heard about the festival through various venues. About half went on a tour. Ranking, from 1 to 10 on overall impression, showed "10" as our most frequent rank.

The committee gives a big thanks to Chairperson Carol Bartles and co-chair Tonya Bittner. Tonya is next year's chairperson, and we are looking for a co-chair. Interested? Call: (815) 456-2340.

Keeping a Photo Trail



By Gerald McDermott

In the Spring of 1999 Bill Kleiman, Preserve Manager, developed the **Photo Point Protocols** and established permanent photopoints throughout the preserve. The first photopoints numbered 1 through 50. To-date they number 1 through 85. As new properties were acquired additional photopoints had to be established - keep those photopoints coming!

For each of the past four years, during the last two weeks of June and first two of July, approximately 20 photopoints have been shot. At every photopoint, 4 shots are taken, one in each direction (N,S,E,W). At a given photopoint a range pole with an attached sign, indicating the photopoint number, date, and direction, is placed 20 feet along the prescribed compass direction. The sign allows for easy identification of the photopoint without obstructing the view. And, the photo trail begins.

There are approximately 300+ slides in a binder at the Headquarters Barn. Despite the clarity of the protocol and

enjoyment of a fun project, human error tread upon this trail. Some photopoints do not have slides from all four directions. What? As time went on accuracy/productivity improved. To be sure! Without doubt, enhanced enjoyment continued. This summer, the five-year re-shots will be taken of the 1999 selected photopoints. And, the trail continues.

Be certain to look through the "Photo Point" binders, at the Headquarters Barn, with these most current permanent slides. A Preserve Map is available with photopoint numbers indicated. Check out the photo trails of your Unit and/or another area of interest. Within a few years, on a rainy day, you will be able to relive the pleasures of your labor—sans sweat.

Also available are "Historical" slides that can be found in the binder "Management Units". These are slides taken by folks who have been around longer than the rest of us—it's possible. Some of these slides may be re-shot and included in the binder (Management Units) of permanent photopoints. In this same binder you will find temporary photopoints—usually before and after shots. These may be a record of a workday effort or a more extended project.

All shots should be taken as stated in the protocol, as they too may become part of the permanent photopoint collection. The photo trail helps to show others part of the how and why of our most important function—stewardship.

NACHUSA GRASSLANDS CALENDAR FOR STEWARDSHIP WORKDAYS 2003

Workdays are led by Volunteer Stewards and Co-stewards. New volunteers are always welcome to come learn and have fun with us. Start time is 9:00 A.M. Meet at the Preserve Headquarters (Barn) at 8772 S. Lowden Road. Volunteers break for lunch at the Barn and then sometimes continue stewardship or go for a hike in the afternoon as the group desires or weather permits. We also have stewardship during the week (give us a call at 815 456-2340).

March - Brush and Planting Season

- 1 Big Woods and Fen
- 8 Thelma Carpenter Prairie & Hook Larson Prairie
- 15 Schafer Prairie and Tellabs Savanna
- 22 Prairie Potholes and Eight Oaks Savanna **Vernal Equinox**
- 29 East Heinkel Savanna and Rolling Thunder Prairie

April - Brush, Planting and Fire Season

- 5 Main Unit and Tellabs Savanna and **ANNUAL SKUNK CABBAGE TOUR with Tim Keller (at 2 P.M.)**
- 12 Dot & Doug Wade Prairie and Prairie Potholes
- 19 Thelma Carpenter Prairie and Big Woods
- 26 Schafer Prairie and Hook Larson Prairie
Autumn On The Prairie (AOTP) Committee Meeting at noon

May - Weed Season

- 3 Main Unit and Tellabs Savanna
- 10 Hook Larson Prairie and Rolling Thunder Prairie
- 17 Prairie Potholes and East Heinkel Savanna and **Potluck Gathering (meal-12:30)**
- 24 Thelma Carpenter Prairie
- 31 Schafer Prairie and Dot & Doug Wade Prairie

June - Weed and Seed Collecting Season

- 7 Main Unit and Thelma Carpenter Prairie
- 14 Eight Oaks Savanna and Schafer Prairie
- 21 Big Woods
(AOTP Committee Meeting at noon) Summer Solstice
- 28 West Heinkel Savanna
- 29 Sun. Clear Creek Prairie

July - Weeds and Seeds

- 5 Thelma Carpenter Prairie
- 12 Prairie Potholes and Dot & Doug Wade Prairie
- 19 Schafer Prairie and Big Woods
(AOTP Committee Meeting at noon)
- 26 Clear Creek Prairie and East Heinkel Savanna

August - Seeds

- 2 Main Unit
- 9 Tellabs Savanna and Thelma Carpenter Prairie
- 16 Eight Oaks Savanna and Rolling Thunder Prairie
- 23 Schafer Prairie and East Heinkel Savanna
(AOTP Committee Meeting at noon)
- 30 Big Woods

September - Seeds

- 6 Hook Larson Prairie and Prairie Potholes
- 13 AOTP Preparation Workday
- 20 **Autumn On The Prairie Celebration - 10 A.M. to 5 P.M.**
Autumnal Equinox on the 23
- 27 Schafer Prairie and Dot & Doug Wade Prairie

October - Seeds

- 4 Main Unit and Hook Larson Prairie
- 11 Eight Oaks Savanna and Tellabs Savanna
- 18 West Heinkel Unit and Kittentail Savanna
- 25 Rolling Thunder Prairie and Schafer Prairie

November - Brush, Planting and Fire Season

- 1 Fen and Eight Oaks Savanna
- 8 Hook Larson Prairie and Dot & Doug Wade Prairie
- 15 **Seed Mixing Celebration and Potluck Gathering**
- 22 Schafer Prairie and Prairie Potholes
- 29 Thelma Carpenter Prairie and Big Woods

December - Brush and Planting Season

- 6 Schafer Prairie and Main Unit
- 13 Hook Larson Prairie and Tellabs Savanna
- 20 Thelma Carpenter Prairie and East Heinkel Savanna
Winter Solstice on the 22

January 2004 - Brush Season

- 3 Schafer Prairie and Thelma Carpenter Prairie
- 10 Hook Larson Prairie and Tellabs Savanna
- 17 Big Woods and Main Unit
- 24 Prairie Potholes and Eight Oaks Savanna
- 31 East Heinkel Savanna and Rolling Thunder Prairie

February 2004 - Brush Season

- 7 Fen and Kittentail Savanna
- 14 Schafer Prairie and Thelma Carpenter Prairie
- 21 Hook Larson Prairie and Rolling Thunder Prairie
- 28 West Heinkel Savanna and Tellabs Savanna

“The valley of the Rock River, if indeed the high rolling prairie on either side can be called a valley, in fertility and beauty of prairie land, is perhaps unequalled in the West. The river itself—swift flowing, broad, clear as crystal—affords one of the most magnificent water powers in the world.”

A portion of a tribute written by James Shaw for Volume V of the Geological Survey of Illinois (1873).

Issue 40, March 2003

Editor Susan Kleiman
Associate Editors Gerald McDermott,
Bill Kleiman, Thelma Dahlberg, Dot Wade

REACHING NACHUSA GRASSLANDS

The preserve is open to the public. The main trail head to the preserve is at the Visitor Entrance with the kiosk. All volunteer workdays meet at the Preserve Headquarters red barn (located 1/2 mile north of Visitor Entrance) at 8772 S. Lowden Road up a long driveway.

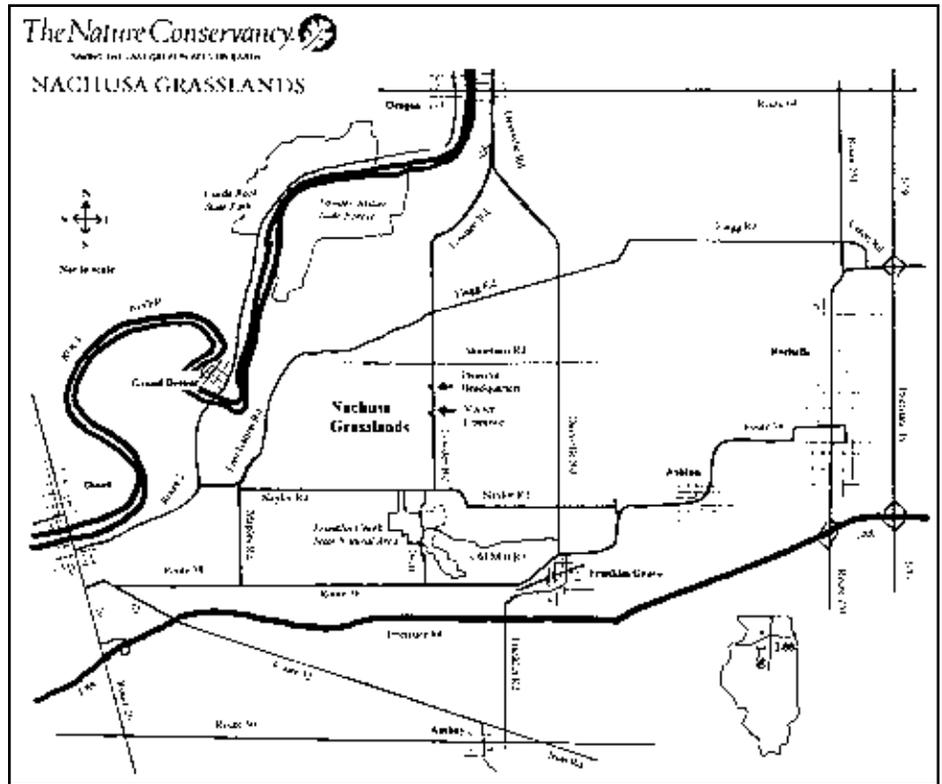
From I-88 (East-West Tollway): Exit at Rt. 251 North (Rochelle), to Rt. 38 West. Travel through Ashton and into Franklin Grove (approx. 16 miles), turn right (north) on Daysville Rd./1700E. Travel 1.5 miles north to Naylor Rd./1950N, turn left (west) and go 2.2 miles to Lowden Rd./1500E, turn right (north) and go 1 mile to Visitor Entrance (on the left with kiosk).

From Route 64: Just east of the Rock River in Oregon, turn south on Daysville Rd./1700E. Travel approx. 2.5 miles and turn right (45 angle) on Lowden Rd./1500E (Lowden-Miller State Forest). Travel south 5 miles to a 4-way stop at Flagg Rd. Continue south another 2 miles to the Visitor Entrance (on the right with kiosk).

From Dixon:

Option 1: Take Rt. 38 East into Franklin Grove then turn left (north) on Daysville Rd./1700E. Travel 1.5 miles north to Naylor Rd./1950N, turn left (west) and go 2.2 miles to Lowden Rd./1500E, turn right (north) and go 1 mile to Visitor Entrance (on the left with kiosk).

Option 2: From downtown (Rt. 26/Galena Ave.) take Rt. 2 North two miles, then turn right (east) on Lost Nation Rd. Go one mile to Maples Rd./1150E, turn right, then left immediately onto Naylor Rd./1950N. Go east for 3.5 miles to Lowden Rd./1500E. Turn left (north) and go one mile to Visitor Entrance (on the left with kiosk).



Nachusa Grasslands is owned and operated by The Nature Conservancy, a private, non-profit group whose mission is to preserve plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.

The Nature Conservancy 
SAVING THE LAST GREAT PLACES ON EARTH

The Nature Conservancy

Nachusa Grasslands Preserve
8772 S. Lowden Road
Franklin Grove, IL 61031
(815) 456-2340
www.nature.org/illinois

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
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Permit No. 6632
Franklin Grove,
Illinois 61031