Illinois Wildlife Preservation Fund Small Project Final Report, FY '04, Grant Agreement #04-013W

Introduction

Communication of ideas between scientists, land managers and educators is important to conserve and restore tallgrass prairie in central Illinois. To accomplish this task, Grand Prairie Friends of Illinois periodically organizes a conference to gather scientists, land managers, educators and other prairie enthusiasts. Grand Prairie Friends (GPF) is an all-volunteer, not-for-profit, conservation organization headquartered in Urbana, Illinois. GPF organized the first Central Illinois Prairie Conference in 1985, and this report will detail the results of the Sixth Central Illinois Prairie Conference held at Parkland College on September 20 and 21, 2003 funded in part by a grant from the Illinois Wildlife Preservation Fund.

The objectives stated for the conference were as follows:

a) Educate participants on the importance of preserving and restoring prairie and other natural areas in Illinois;
a) Educate participants about native flora, fauna and ecological processes of the prairie;
a) Provide a forum for students, land managers, scientists and educators to ask questions and exchange ideas about prairie management and preservation;
a) Provide information to landowners and managers in central Illinois on methods of ecological management and restoration of prairie and savanna;
a) Provide participants an opportunity to visit a prairie remnant or restoration in east-central Illinois via planned field trips.

Materials and Methods

A conference committee of twelve volunteers was formed in December 2002 to start planning for the 2003 conference. Heidi Leuszler and Jamie Ellis volunteered as committee co-chairs. The Champaign County Forest Preserve District partnered with GPF to provide administrative services for the conference including preparation of conference materials, registration, and management of participant lists. Parkland College also partnered with GPF to provide physical space for the conference.

The committee selected a conference theme, *What Makes a Prairie*, and we elected to invite speakers covering a range of topics including prairie flora and fauna, education, prairie ecology, prairie restoration, and people in the prairie. A schedule was also made which featured a keynote speaker, concurrent sessions, exhibitors, and an evening banquet with program on Saturday and field trips on Sunday. The committee decided to set the registration fee at $30 and charge extra for lunch and the banquet. The registration fee was waived and lunch provided to all invited speakers. In addition, the committee voted to pay an honorarium to the keynote speaker. The committee was also responsible for raising money for the event. We formed sub-committees to seek sponsors and

advertising, organize a silent auction, hire caterers, and organize field trips. Erin Taylor from the Champaign County Forest Preserve District was responsible for keeping track of registrants including speakers, participants, and exhibitors. Debbie Cassels, webmaster for Grand Prairie Friends, volunteered to create a web page for the conference.

Dr. Roger Anderson, distinguished professor of ecology from Illinois State University, was invited as the Saturday morning keynote speaker, and Dr. Michael Jeffords and Sue Post, naturalists and educators from the Illinois Natural History Survey, were asked to put together the Saturday evening banquet program.

Four field trips were planned for the second day of the conference. One trip was planned to feature the prairies and savannas at the Iroquois County Conservation Area and Hooper Branch Savanna. Another trip was planned to feature our local prairie remnants including Prospect Cemetery Prairie Nature Preserve, Loda Cemetery Prairie Nature Preserve, and Shortline Railroad Prairie owned by GPF. Another trip was planned to feature our local prairie reconstructions including Buffalo Trace Prairie near Mahomet, Parkland College Prairie, Meadowbrook Park Prairie in Urbana, and the Barnhart Prairie south of Urbana. The last trip was planned to feature prairie and savanna restoration sites owned and managed by the Parklands Foundation in McLean County.

In addition to the field trips, a concurrent event was planned for Sunday morning called the Steward's Roundtable. This roundtable was organized by the Volunteer Stewardship Network Statewide Steering Committee to bring together natural area stewards to discuss management ideas and needs.

Results

A total of about 150 people participated in the Sixth Central Illinois Prairie Conference. There were 37 speakers including Dr. Anderson. A range of topics were covered. Please see the attached conference participant folder for a complete listing of speaker names and topics. Dr. Anderson's keynote talk titled "Pondering tallgrass prairie ecology: fire and grazing effects" was well attended by participants. In addition to the speakers, we had about 24 people who volunteered at the event to help with the registration desk, as session moderators, and other setup or organizational needs.

Grand Prairie Friends mainly organized the conference. Parkland College, the Champaign County Forest Preserve District, and the Urbana Park District partnered with GPF to help organize and sponsor the event. Parkland provided the physical space and AV equipment; the Champaign County Forest Preserve District provided staff to perform administrative duties, and the Urbana Park District provided staff to help with the registration packets and the registration table the day of the event. Nine other organizations and businesses provided sponsorship for the event with monetary donations. These organizations are the Champaign County Design and Conservation Foundation (CCDC), The Iowa Prairie Network, Kinkos, Meijer Foods, Strawberry Fields, and these departments at the University of Illinois: Entomology, Leisure Studies, Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences, and Plant Biology.

A website was created to provide information to potential participants. The site may be accessed by at http://www.prairienet.org/gpf/conference/index.html. The site includes contact information, directions to Parkland College, a schedule for the conference, a list of sponsors, and descriptions of the field trips. A .pdf document of the speaker abstracts is also available on the website.

A total of seventeen exhibitors set up informational tables at the conference. Exhibitors included both for-profit and not-for-profit organizations with direct prairie or conservation interests. Exhibitors included Champaign Count Audubon Society, Champaign County Forest Preserve District, Earthskin Nursery, Educational Resources in Environmental Sciences, Environmental Education Association of Illinois, Grand Prairie Friends of Illinois, Illinois Natural History Survey, Illinois Nature Preserves Commission, Illinois Steward Magazine, Melissa Pierson Fine Art, Pizzo and Associates, Ltd., The Prairie Patch, Prairie Moon Nursery, Shoal Creek Volunteers, Spence Restoration Nursery, Urbana Park District, and Prairie Grove Volunteers.

Fifteen donors provided 84 items for the Saturday silent auction. Items ranged from pottery and art prints to books and even services donated by an ecological consultant. Forty-nine items were actually purchased by participants which netted GPF $1594 to be used specifically for stewardship of prairie remnants.

An article featuring Grand Prairie Friends and the work of that organization appears in the Fall edition of the Illinois Steward Magazine. Reprints of this article were purchased by GPF and distributed to all participants as part of the conference materials. The article reprint is included with this report.

Michael's Catering from Champaign was hired to provide box lunches to the speakers and conference participants. Shaw's Catering from Decatur was hired to cater the Saturday evening banquet. Fifty conference participants stayed for the banquet to see a program by Mike Jeffords and Sue Post. The program was mostly a visual one featuring the stunning photographic images taken by Mike and Sue in their travels through the prairies of Illinois. After the close of the banquet, GPF gave away pots of live prairie plants left over from its spring plant sale to participants.

The VSN Roundtable event was well attended on Sunday morning with some conference participants and others who came solely for that event. Attendees representing six different private landowners, seven not-for-profit volunteer groups, and five government agencies were present.

The four field trips offered were less well attended than the main sessions on Saturday. About 40 people participated in the field trips. The trip to Iroquois County Conservation Area led by Eric Smith was one of the most popular with about fifteen participants. The trip to local prairie reconstructions led by Derek Liebert also had about 15 people. The trip to local prairie remnants led by Mary Kay Solecki and Bob Reber had about eight participants, and finally the trip to the Parklands Foundation properties had about four participants.

Discussion

The Sixth Central Illinois Prairie Conference held on September 20 and 21, 2003 was considered a success in achieving the objectives set forth. During and after the conference we received positive comments about the quality of the speakers and the informative content of the sessions.

The ability of the Champaign County Forest Preserve District to provide a staff member for administrative services was extremely valuable in organizing this conference. All of the committee staff were volunteers with limited time attend to these types of duties.

GPF is indebted to Derek Liebert for finding sponsors for the event. The monies raised, which were $1125, covered expenses including waiving the registration fees for speakers and providing them box lunches. The silent auction was organized by Gail Snowdon to raise money for GPF's' prairie conservation efforts, and thanks to her hard work, gracious donors, and conference participants, GPF raised over $1500. This money will be used for stewardship equipment or other stewardship activities including salaries for the summer internship.

The committee was hoping for over 200 participants at this conference, which was not achieved. Advertising was focused on the internet, over email, and sending notices to newsletters of like-minded conservation organizations. The event could have been better advertised which was a shortcoming of the committee. We may have also been competing with events by other conservation organizations across the state. We know we lost some people who were preparing for the Natural Areas Association Conference, which was in Madison, WI during the week following the Prairie Conference.

Grand Prairie Friends feels this is a worthwhile conference to occasionally gather prairie enthusiasts to share information and ideas. We recommend that this conference be organized again in the future for 2007 or 2008 when there's enough need and enthusiasm from members.

GPF would like to thank the IDNR for this grant. With the funds anticipated from the grant, our major conference expenses were covered, and the money raised from the silent auction has already allowed GPF to purchase a new site. Thanks again!

Budget

INCOME:	$6,339.00

(Income includes registration fees, box lunch fees, banquet fees, and silent auction receipts; this amount does not include the anticipated $1000 from the Wildlife Preservation Fund Grant.)

EXPENSES	
Labor	$0 (approximately 500 person hours donated by volunteers)
Equipment	0
Contractual	
Photocopying	322.96
Phone calls	40.00
Postage	111.00
Linen rental @ Parkland	20.00
Catering	2680.00
Travel (keynote honorarium)	100.00
Commodities	
Paper	30.21
Folders	20.00
Name badges	16.85
Illinois Steward article reprint	1500.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	$4,841.02
NET INCOME	$1,497.98

Sixth Central Illinois Prairie Conference

September 20 – 21, 2003 Hosted by Parkland College

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Grand Prairie Friends Receives Grant Money from IDNR

Grand Prairie Friends of Illinois, a local not-for-profit conservation organization in Urbana was the recipient of a small grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Preservation Grand Fund. The grant, for $1000, will be used to defray the costs incurred from organizing and hosting the Sixth Central Illinois Prairie Conference. The conference was held on September 20 and 21, 2003 at Parkland College.

The conference, which is periodically organized by GPF, brings together scientists, land managers, students, educators, and other prairie enthusiasts to learn how to conserve and manage our dwindling and small remnants of prairie in central Illinois. It provides a forum for communication and discussion about tallgrass prairie ecology and stewardship.

Dr. Roger Anderson from Illinois State University was the keynote speaker along with 36 other speakers with expertise in prairie flora and fauna, prairie ecology, education, community involvement and prairie restoration and management. Dr. Michael Jeffords and Sue Post from the Illinois Natural History Survey gave a visual program about Illinois prairie for the evening banquet. Four different field trips were offered on Sunday September 21 to local prairie remnants and restorations.

Besides the money from the IDNR, other sponsors and partners included Parkland College, the Champaign County Forest Preserve District, the Urbana Park District, Champaign County Design and Conservation Foundation (CCDC), The Iowa Prairie Network, Kinkos, Meijer Foods, Strawberry Fields, and these departments at the University of Illinois: Entomology, Leisure Studies, Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences, and Plant Biology.

Sixth Central Illinois Prairie Conference
September 20 and 21, 2003
Parkland College
Champaign, Illinois

Prairie Blazing Star

Conference schedule, speaker abstracts, and field trip descriptions

Grand Prairie Friends of Illinois

Grand Prairie Friends and the Central Illinois Prairie Conference Committee would like to sincerely thank our sponsors, speakers and volunteers for making this conference happen. Thanks!

Champaign County Forest Preserve District
Parkland College
Urbana Park District
Champaign County Design and Conservation Foundation
Illinois Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Preservation Fund Grant
Department of Plant Biology, UIUC
Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences, UIUC
Department of Leisure Studies, UIUC
Department of Entomology, UIUC
The Iowa Prairie Network
Gary Beland, Volunteer Stewardship Network
Jackie Warden, Earthstar Creations
Billy Morrow Jackson, landscape artist
Prairie Gardens
The Illinois Steward
Lynn Hawkinson Smith, graphic designer
Chicago Wilderness
Mike Jeffords, Susan Post, and Ken Robertson, Illinois Natural History Survey
Roger Kirkwood,Prairie Rose Pottery Studio
Marilyn Leuszler, artist
Kathy Pizzo, Pizzo and Associates, Ltd.
Gail Snowdon, artist
Strawberry Fields
Kinkos
Meijers
Prairie Grove Volunteers

Conference planning committee—
Jamie Ellis, co-chair
Heidi Leuszler, co-chair
Erin Taylor
Gary Beland
Donna Beland
Judy Miller
Derek Liebert
Mary Hruska
Gail Snowdon
Brenda Molano-Flores
Joyce Hofmann
Debbie Cassels
Wendy Israel
Ken Robertson

Other volunteers—
Sharon Dorsey
Mark Uchanski
Lori Kae Schwab
Valerie Sivicek
Jaclyn Zawaki
Phil Hult
Don Barnhart
Kristina Hubert
Dan Busemeyer
Eric Smith
Mary Kay Solecki
Bob Reber
Francine Clark
Andrea Appleton
Cathy Ruesken
Nick Owens
Lynne Elrick
Andy Coyle
Hongyan Sun
Lin Yang

Please excuse any omissions. Your time and effort is valued by Grand Prairie Friends!

Want to know more about Grand Prairie Friends and what we do? Visit our website at http://www.prairienet.org/gpf.

Sixth Central Illinois Prairie Conference Schedule

Saturday September 20, 2003

8:00am Registration begins; silent auction open for bidding; exhibitor set-up—D wing of Parkland College
9:00 Welcome and Keynote address by Dr. Roger Anderson, "Pondering tallgrass prairie ecology: fire and grazing effects."—Parkland College Theatre
10:00-12:15 Concurrent Sessions
12:15-1:30pm Lunch Break
1:30-3:45 Concurrent Sessions
4:00-5:00 Workshop sessions
5:00 Silent auction closes!
6:00 Banquet and presentation of prairie images by Mike Jeffords

Looking at all of the pieces—Prairie biology and Ecology

10:00 Conservation efforts for *Agalinis auriculata* (Orobanchaceae) a prairie parasitic plant. Brenda Molano-Flores, Illinois Natural History Survey
10:45 Comparison of habitat quality indices and applications for monitoring and evaluating tallgrass prairie. John Taft, Illinois Natural History Survey.
11:30 An entomological perspective on what makes a prairie. Chris Dietrich, Illinois Natural History Survey
1:30 Prairie restoration at Fermilab, what's there, what else could be there. William J. Sluis, The Wetlands Initiative
2:15 Site quality evaluation: more than just plants. William J. Sluis, The Wetlands Initiative
3:00 When is an ecological restoration successful? Lessons from Green Oaks. Stuart Allison, Knox College

People in the landscape—The human component of prairie

10:00 The Volunteer Stewardship Network - A Glance at Stewardship in Illinois. Karen Billo, The Nature Conservancy
10:45 Landscapes tell the truth: A contemporary prairie as the target for restoration. Bill Stewart, University of Illinois.
11:30 Prairie preservation and the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory. Patti Reilly, Illinois Department of Natural Resources
1:30 Designing prairies and savannas which meet human needs. Rob Scott, Urbana Permaculture Project
2:15 PrairieWatch: Volunteers Monitoring Illinois' Prairie. Pete Jackson, Illinois EcoWatch Network/IL Dept. of Natural Resources
3:00 Prairie Restoration: Heritage or Outrage?. Craig Miller, Illinois Natural History Survey

Healing the land—Ecological restoration of prairie

10:00 "Win some—lose some," Jim Maddox, The Prairie Patch
10:45 Practical Aspects: Development and Implementation of Site Management Plans. Sally Prunty and Kristina Hubert, Champaign County Forest Preserve District
11:30 Restoration/Reconstruction of Woodland/Prairie Edge Communities. Ken Schaal and Henry Eilers, Bluestem Nursery/Shoal Creek Volunteers
1:30 Building a prairie and a concept. Don Gardner, Kempton, IL

2:15 Steps to restoring a natural area. Cory Ritterbusch and Jack Pizzo, Pizzo and Associates, Ltd.
3:00 Improving plant and animal diversity in a restoration. Chip O'Leary, Indiana Chapter of The Nature Conservancy

The animal component—Prairie fauna

10:00 Biology And Management Of A Unique Sand Prairie In Northwest Illinois. Dan Wenny, Illinois Natural History Survey
10:45 An ecological portrait of an imperiled species: the Eastern Massasauga (*Sistrurus catenatus catenatus*) in Illinois. Mike Dreslik, Illinois Natural History Survey
11:30 Franklin's ground squirrel in Illinois: an increasingly rare prairie animal? Joyce Hofmann, Illinois Natural History Survey
1:30 Butterflies of Illinois. Jim Sternburg and John Bouseman, University of Illinois and Illinois Natural History Survey
2:15 Expansion of the Illinois Butterfly Monitoring Network. Mel Manner, Illinois Butterfly Monitoring Network
3:00 Recolonization of reptiles onto newly established grasslands. Dan Olsen, Champaign County Forest Preserve District

The plant component—Prairie flora

10:00 Prairie plants close-up: The hidden world of flowers and fruits. Ken Robertson, Illinois Natural History Survey
10:45 Function of a herbarium. Rick Phillipe, Illinois Natural History Survey
11:30 Vascular flora of the Pembroke Savannas, Kankakee County, Illinois. Mary Ann Feist, Illinois Natural History Survey
1:30 Propagating common woodland wildflowers. John Marlin, Waste Management and Research Center

Teaching the next generation—Education

10:00 The Prairie School Project. Mike Miller, Forest Park Nature Center
10:45 The citizen's flora and fauna. Bryan Heidorn, University of Illinois
11:30 Play in the prairie: Activities for teachers. Wendy Israel, Champaign County Forest Preserve District
1:30 Prairie Ecology in Champaign Classrooms. Kevin Kuppler, Champaign Unit 4 School District
2:15 Water, everyday Issues: Interactive learning at the watershed park. Robbie Berg, Earth Partners
3:00 Title TBA. Belinda Beccue

Workshops—4-5pm
1. From pipecleaners to Prairies—Mandi Whitener, Wildlife Prairie State Park
2. Sketching the prairie—Carie Nixon, Illinois Natural History Survey
3. INHS Mobile Science Center—Mike Jeffords, Illinois Natural History Survey

Sunday September 21, 2003

8:00am Field trips to Iroquois County SWA and the Parklands Foundation sites depart
8:30-10:30 VSN Roundtable—state stewards meeting
10:30am Field trips to local prairie remnants (Loda, Prospect) and local prairie plantings depart

Conference speaker abstracts organized alphabetically by author.

WHEN IS AN ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION SUCCESSFUL? LESSONS FROM GREEN OAKS

Stuart K. Allison, Knox College, Galesburg, IL 61401. email: sallison@mail.knox.edu

ABSTRACT: Tallgrass prairie restoration and reconstruction was begun at Knox College's Green Oaks Field Station in 1954. The initial goal of the restoration project was to recreate prairies as similar as possible to the original native tallgrass prairies in western Illinois. In the summer of 1999 I compared species richness, mean plant conservatism, and floristic quality of the Green Oaks restored prairies to three nearby remnant tallgrass prairies. Species richness was significantly lower in the restored prairies when compared to the remnant prairies. Mean plant conservatism was significantly greater in the restored prairies. There was no significant difference in floristic quality between restored and remnant prairies. However, Brownlee Prairie, one of the remnant prairies, had significantly greater floristic quality than the other prairies. The restored prairies at Green Oaks are usually considered to be a success by the Knox College community because they are lush, attractive grasslands, and examples of habitat that is almost completely lost in western Illinois. However, the restored prairies do not appear to have met the initial goal of recreating the original tallgrass prairie. Thus even 45 years of restoration may not be enough to achieve complete success.

PONDERING TALLGRASS PRAIRIE ECOLOGY: FIRE AND GRAZING EFFECTS

Roger C. Anderson, Illinois State University, 4120 Biology Dept. Normal, IL 61790 email: rcander@ilstu.edu

ABSTRACT: Fire has been a major factor in the ecology of prairies, and in the Midwest, historically the frequency of fire on the landscape, which was controlled by topography and occurrence of waterways, produced a shifting vegetational mosaic of prairie, forest, and savanna. For over three decades, tallgrass prairies have been routinely managed with fire with relatively few objections to this management technique. More recently, there has been concern that fire as a sole management tool does not achieve some desired management or restoration goals. Studies of bison grazing and fire effects on tallgrass prairie indicate that frequent fires favors dominant warm season (C4) prairie grasses (e.g., big and little bluestem and Indian grass) to the detriment of prairie forbs, which provide most of the species richness to the prairie. Bison diet consists almost entirely (90-95%) of C4 grasses and they consume relatively little forb biomass. This selective grazing pattern offsets the effects of frequent fires by favoring forbs over grasses, and as a result, it enhances plant diversity. In contrast, white-tailed deer consume little, if any, warm season prairie grass, but they selectively browse the forbs. Our recent study indicates that moderate levels of deer browsing enhance forb diversity more than high levels of browsing or the absence of browsing. Nevertheless, deer browsing tends to reduce floristic quality and appears to favor the less conservative prairie forbs. Collectively, the available information on the effect of these two large herbivores indicates that grazing and browsing could be used to maintain biodiversity in tallgrass prairie. Browsers may also have a role to play in the control of woody invaders, which are not always controlled by fire management.

WATER, EVERDAY ISSUES: INTERACTIVE LEARNING AT THE WATERSHED PARK

Robbie C. Berg, Earth Partners 801 N. Country Fair Drive, Suite A Champaign, IL 61821 email: earthpartners@hotmail.com

ABSTRACT: Earth Partners was instrumental in replicating the Agriculture Literacy Program now in 49 other counties in the state, which provide teachers with environmental education materials, kits, and workshop training. Watershed Park is a hands-on and display area located next to the Illinois Department of Agriculture. Teachers whom attend workshops with regards as to how to use the activities will receive a curriculum CD for use with their students in the classroom and while they are at the park. Tours are available for students and teachers by contacting the Illinois Department of Agriculture.

THE VOLUNTEER STEWARDSHIP NETWORK—A GLANCE AT STEWARDSHIP IN ILLINOIS

Karen L. Billo, Volunteer Stewardship Network Coordinator, The Nature Conservancy, Peoria, IL email: billo@tnc.org

ABSTRACT: Stewardship of our natural areas is critical to preserving our environment. Illinois' woodlands, wetlands, and prairies exist today only as patchy remnants, ever vulnerable to disturbance from the vast agricultural and urban landscapes now surrounding them. The processes that once sustained these places- animal migrations, freely flowing water, and periodic wildfires- have long been suppressed or restricted allowing aggressive non-native plants the ability to move in and crowd out many of the native plants. Stewardship volunteers work to reverse these negative trends. Without their work, much of Illinois' rich communities of plants and wildlife would gradually fade away.

In 1983, The Nature Conservancy and the Illinois Nature Preserve Commission formed the Volunteer Stewardship Network (VSN) designed to enlist volunteers to carry out vital land stewardship activities that private and governmental organizations had neither the funding nor resources to perform. Today, the VSN is a vibrant, active network, comprised of groups and/or individuals across the state performing crucial work towards preserving our natural heritage. Many of the groups within the network are independent volunteer organizations that enjoy the affiliation of the VSN as a central

place to share ideas, and to obtain stewardship information and additional training and financial support. Today, the network supports more than 5,000 volunteers helping public and private landowners maintain and restore more than 300 high-quality natural habitats throughout Illinois. This presentation will focus on the heart of the VSN...the volunteers and the places they are protecting. It will take you on a visual journey across the state and will introduce you to a few of these special places and the people who have dedicated their lives to protecting them.

AN ENTOMOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON WHAT MAKES A PRAIRIE

Chris Dietrich, Center for Biodiversity, Illinois Natural History Survey, 607 E. Peabody Dr., Champaign, IL 61820, email: dietrich@inhs.uiuc.edu

ABSTRACT: Insects make up the vast majority of prairie inhabiting species and are crucial to the functioning of prairie ecosystems through their roles as pollinators, herbivores, detritivores, and food for insectivorous vertebrates. Thus, insects should be a major focus of prairie conservation. The tremendous diversity of insects, both in terms of the number of species and the variety of ecological niches that they occupy makes them excellent indicators of ecosystem health. Even very small prairie remnants, less than an acre, may harbor several hundred insect species, each of which tells us something unique about the prairie, its vegetation, microhabitat diversity, disturbance history, and the interactions of its biota with those of other habitats. Thus, the potential for gathering ecological information and monitoring ecosystem function through the study of insects is enormous. Completely documenting the insect fauna of even a small site can be a monumental task not only because there are so many species, but also because insects are often difficult to identify. Fortunately, it is not necessary to do this in order to gain a reasonable understanding of the health of the ecosystem. For monitoring purposes, one or more of a variety of indicator groups (bees, leafhoppers, moths, etc.) may be selected based on their relative diversity in the habitats of interest and the availability of taxonomic expertise. Identification of the species in such groups present at a site indicates the proportion of prairie-specialist vs. generalist/invasive species present and facilitates comparison of species composition among sites. A morphospecies-based approach to the estimation of diversity in other insect groups may also be used. These methods complement each other to paint a detailed picture of the prairie and inform conservation planners regarding the importance of a particular site for conservation of species diversity and the effects of management on the biota.

AN ECOLOGICAL PORTRAIT OF AN IMPERILED SPECIES: THE EASTERN MASSASUAGA (*SISTRURUS CATENATUS CATENATUS*) IN ILLINOIS

Michael J. Dreslik[1], Christopher A. Phillips[1], Donald B. Shepard[1,2], and Benjamin C. Jellen[1,3] [1] Illinois Natural History Survey, Center for Biodiversity, 607 East Peabody Drive, Champaign, IL 61820 [2] Current Address: Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History, University of Oklahoma, 2410 Chautauqua Avenue, Norman, OK 73072 [3] Current Address: Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, 209 Fourth Avenue, Pittsburgh PA 15222

ABSTRACT: At the time of European settlement, the eastern massasauga (*Sistrurus catenatus catenatus*) ranged throughout the prairies of Illinois. It was commonplace for early travelers and farmers to encounter 20 or more of these reclusive snakes in a single season however, as early as 1866 *S. c. catenatus* was declining. Within the ensuing years, habitat alteration and persecution gradual fragmented the range of the massasauga to a few widely scattered populations. Of the 24 localities reported in 1961, only five may remain extant and census estimates at all but one of these are less than 20 individuals. This decline is not only restricted to Illinois but is present across the wide-range of *S. c. catenatus* with declines being noted throughout North America. Many states have retained at least one relatively large population of *S. c. catenatus* and in Illinois that population is at Carlyle Lake. In 1999, we initiated a long-term study focusing on demographics, spatial ecology, thermal biology, and reproduction and we also investigated the use of this data for implementing an effective conservation plan for *S. c. catenatus*. We have documented the population size of the largest hibernacula at approximately 100 individuals. Adult sex ratios and non-gravid to gravid female ratios were in equality. *S. c. catenatus* emerges from winter dormancy in late March – early May and during this transition period remains close to their hibernacula often shuttling below ground. Once temperatures stabilize, snakes move away from winter retreats and commence foraging in primarily open grassland habitats. In late July – August gravid females birth offspring and males engaged in mate-searching forays often traversing relatively large distances. In the fall snakes again return to suitable dormancy sites in open, mesic microhabitats. Throughout the activity season, we have observed numerous instances of mortality but mortality was overwhelmingly due to vehicular traffic.

VASCULAR FLORA OF THE PEMBROKE SAVANNAS, KANKAKEE COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

Mary Ann Feist, Connie J. Carroll, Paul B. Marcum, L. Rick Phillippe, and Dan T. Busemeyer. Illinois Natural History Survey, 607 E. Peabody Dr., Champaign, IL, USA, 61820. email: mfeist@inhs.uiuc.edu.

ABSTRACT: The Pembroke Savannas of northeast Illinois encompass an area of approximately 20,000 acres and contain much good quality sand savanna. This community type is rare in Illinois and so the IDNR and the Nature Conservancy have been working together to acquire and protect as much of what remains as possible. During the 2002

growing season the vascular flora of five sites within the Pembroke Savannas were studied in order to document the composition and structure of the vegetation and assess the quality of the natural communities. A total of 574 plant species were found at all sites combined including six state endangered species and three species thought to have been extirpated from Illinois. A number of other rare and conservative species were also found. In addition to sand savanna, sand prairie, shrub prairie, and sedge meadow occur at these sites. The quality of these natural communities ranges from high to low. Many of the sites will require intense management to retain or regain their natural quality. The results of our study will provide land managers with useful information for making management decisions and baseline data for future monitoring.

BUILDING A PRAIRIE AND A CONCEPT

Don Gardner, Kempton, IL 60946. email: gardo@frontiernet.net

ABSTRACT: The portion of a prairie development site to be discussed is a seven-acre former pasture in Ford County. The U.S. public lands survey in 1834 described it as "first rate prairie". Settlement of the region was after 1860. The site was pastureland from before 1900 until 1965. In 1974 hand collected regional ecotype prairie seed was broadcast on a plot within the field. Additional areas were seeded yearly with the final plots added in 1990. Tillage methods evolved from moldboard plowing to minimum tillage with herbicide treatment. The intent of the project is to establish a healthy mix of prairie species that probably grew in the area in pre-settlement times. A floral survey published in 1995 identified 138 species of native plants plus 51 species of aliens. Experiences with various species such as hemiparasites are discussed.

A long-term consideration of prairie leads to forming a prairie concept. We have learned to assist development of prairie. However, nature imposes an ordered scenario. There are inter-dependencies, inter-relationships and orders of successional change that must be respected if the system is to survive. If that disciplined scenario is interrupted the system can fail as happened with native prairies. There comes the realization that prairie can be a metaphor for our own lives. We too are part of a natural order in which we must interact with respect for and equality with the species around us. However, there is the perception, encouraged by religious dogma, that humans are above the restrictions imposed on others and that other species are here for the benefit of humans. At best this promotes a condescending attitude toward other species. At worst it leads to species destruction. Eventually failure to heed this prairie concept can cause interruptions in the ordered scenario and place our own species at risk.

THE CITIZEN'S FLORA AND FAUNA

P. Bryan Heidorn, Associate Professor Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois, Urbana, IL 61801 email: pheidorn@uiuc.edu

ABSTRACT: Imagine being able to go to a nature area that is new to you with a searchable collection of species pages, with just those plants and animals that you might encounter. There would be as many photographs, drawings, sounds and text as you desired, when you wanted it. No unnecessary information would be included. No pages of blooms for plant you will not see or warblers that are not in your neck of the woods. It would be like having a personally tailored high quality field guide for each location you might want to visit. Internet technology can bring this vision to us if we harness and focus the skills of the millions of nature enthusiasts across the country. In this workshop we will learn two methods for creating species pages for the web. We will first examine professional floras and faunas and field guides that approach this vision. "Flora" and "fauna" are traditionally books that describe the plants and animals of some region, such as a country, state or park. For us in Central Illinois a prime example is "*The Flora of North America*" Floras and faunas as written by botanists, zoologists and other scientists are going on line (e.g. http://hua.huh.harvard.edu/FNA/). Unfortunately, there are too few taxonomists and other "professionals" to produce them.

The field guides that we are all familiar with are close relatives to the scholarly floras and faunas but more geared toward the amateur naturalists. There are significant limitations to paper field guides. Paper field guides are expensive to produce so they must be published with too few photographs for broad geographic regions to be economically viable. Few field guides are available on the Internet to print out on demand. Digital publications can get around many of these problems.

In this presentation we will look at the tools that are currently available on the Internet for achieving the goal of the Citizen's Flora and Fauna, for the people and by the people. In the recent past only professionals could publish floras, faunas or field guides but that was not always the case. In the past, the natural sciences were dominated by citizen naturalists who traveled the globe collecting and documenting life. We can return to this model. We will look at several projects that have begun the process that you can use now. We will examine how all citizens, amateur naturalists, teachers, and students, can participate in the creation of this Citizen's Flora and Fauna helping to document life on earth. There are hundreds of millions of species on earth and only a few thousands of professional naturalists to document their existence and behavior. It is imperative that the citizen scientist again play a critical role in biology.

FRANKLIN'S GROUND SQUIRREL, *SPERMOPHILUS FRANKLINII*, IN ILLINOIS: A DECLINING PRAIRIE MAMMAL?

Joyce E. Hofmann, Jason M. Martin*, and Edward J. Heske, Illinois Natural History Survey, Champaign, IL, 61820
email: jhofmann@inhs.uiuc.edu
* current address: University of Florida, Gainesville

ABSTRACT: Franklin's ground squirrel, *Spermophilus franklinii*, is primarily an inhabitant of the northern Great Plains from east-central Alberta and southern Saskatchewan to Kansas and Missouri, but its range extends eastward through Illinois to northwestern Indiana. It is considered a characteristic mammal of tallgrass and mid-grass prairie. Some biologists have speculated that this species is becoming increasingly uncommon in the eastern portion of its range, presumably because of habitat loss. Accordingly, Franklin's ground squirrel is listed as an endangered species in Indiana and considered a "species of special concern" in Wisconsin. Prairie covered 60% of Illinois (mainly in the northern two-thirds of the state) at the time of European settlement, but more than 99% of the native prairie has been lost to agriculture and urbanization. Although there are historical records of Franklin's ground squirrel from numerous locations in northern and central Illinois, recent information about its distribution and abundance in the state was limited. Therefore we conducted a mail and live-trapping survey during 2000-2002. We sent a questionnaire to 166 natural-resource professionals throughout the northern two-thirds of Illinois. Nine of the 77 respondents knew of extant populations. We selected 26 sites for trapping. Franklin's ground squirrels were captured at only 3 of these sites, although they were detected in two additional areas. Clearly this species has declined in Illinois, but the actual magnitude of the decline is uncertain.

PLAY IN THE PRAIRIE: ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHERS

Wendy Israel, Environmental Education Program Specialist, Champaign County Forest Preserve District, 2573 S. Homer Lake Rd. Homer, IL 61849. email: nature2@net66.com

ABSTRACT: Play in the Prairie is aimed at K-12 classroom teachers who want to take a multi-disciplinary approach to teaching about the prairie. This session will incorporate history, science, literature and art as we learn what a prairie is as well as the history and current conditions of the prairie in Illinois. Classroom activities will include dramatic readings of pioneer journals, an interactive story time, and a prairie quilt art project. We will also explore the prairie restoration at Parkland College through various outdoor activities including a game to learn about what animals currently and historically lived in the prairie, and a hike to identify prairie plants and animals. Teachers will have copies of all the materials used in this session to take back to their classroom and will be encouraged to take field trips to the various prairie restorations in our area to give their students a first-hand learning experience.

PRAIRIEWATCH: VOLUNTEERS MONITORING ILLINOIS' PRAIRIE

Pete Jackson, Illinois EcoWatch Network/IDNR, Chicago, IL email: PJACKSON@dnrmail.state.il.us

ABSTRACT: In 2000 the Illinois EcoWatch Network implemented its newest statewide volunteer monitoring program, PrairieWatch. EcoWatch is a part of the Critical Trends Assessment Program (CTAP), a partnership of various state agencies created to characterize conditions and track trends in Illinois ecosystems. Under PrairieWatch, volunteers are trained to conduct scientific monitoring of the state's prairies in order to identify long-term changes in prairie health. PrairieWatch volunteers measure the amount and type of vegetation present, including a survey of selected native prairie plant "indicator" species, determine the extent to which invasive species are present in the prairie, and conduct a census of 19 butterfly species. Other information collected includes measuring the size, shape, and human uses of the prairie, and documenting the surrounding land cover.

Whereas many monitoring efforts are designed to focus on the collection of detailed information about a natural community, either by collecting comprehensive data or by focusing on site-specific issues such as rare plant population monitoring, PrairieWatch is designed to collect standardized information on a limited set of indicator species, whose presence and extent provide an indication of prairie condition, and broad indicators of prairie health, such as the extent of woody plant encroachment. These key parameters, collected over a large number of sites, will provide scientists with the data they need to assess ecological trends in prairies. Trends in prairie conditions will have important implications for management strategies, and may not be detected in site-specific monitoring efforts.

PRAIRIE ECOLOGY IN CHAMPAIGN CLASSROOMS

Kevin Kuppler, K-12 Science Coordinator Champaign Schools Science Center, email: kuppleke@cmi.k12.il.us

ABSTRACT: Every student in the Champaign Unit 4 Schools studies a science unit on prairie at third grade and again, at a higher level, in eighth grade. Kevin Kuppler, PreK-12 Science Coordinator, will share the basics about these inquiry-based science units as well as thoughts on how to satisfy State Learning Standards through a study of the prairie.

"WIN SOME—LOSE SOME"

James R. Maddox, The Prairie Patch, Niantic, IL

ABSTRACT: Various philosophies and methods of recreating prairies will be discussed. Differing techniques can be used on various sized plots. A large part of the session will be devoted to questions and discussion.

EXPANSION OF THE ILLINOIS BUTTERFLY MONITORING NETWORK

Mel Manner, IBMN Administrator, Illinois Butterfly Monitoring Network, c/o Mel Manner, 41W039 Bowes Bend Dr, Elgin, IL 60123-8325, 847-464-4426, manner@foxvalley.net, Website information: www.bfly.org

ABSTRACT: In 1987, The Nature Conservancy of Illinois decided to explore the effects of restoration management on animals by creating the Illinois Butterfly Monitoring Network (IBMN). The network began monitoring at 7 sites in the Chicagoland area. Since then, citizen scientists from all walks of life have been monitoring the health of butterfly populations throughout northeastern and central Illinois. In 2003, more than 130 sites are being monitored, and the program continues to expand every year.

Mel Manner will start with a brief overview of the monitoring protocols. She will then cover the type of data collected and its usages, the new online database, and the current status of the network. The main amount of the time will be spent covering the future goals of the network and the opportunities for expansion throughout the state.

This talk is intended for land managers and individual volunteers who are willing to help find and explore new sites for monitoring, and volunteers who would like to become butterfly monitors themselves. The main limitation for expansion of the IBMN is the lack of knowledge of sites outside the Chicagoland area and the lack of connections with local volunteer groups and land management agencies within each county.

PROPAGATING COMMON WOODLAND WILDFLOWERS

John C. Marlin, Waste Management and Research Center, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, One Hazelwood Dr., Champaign, IL 61820. email: jmarlin@wmrc.uiuc.edu

ABSTRACT: Native plant propagation makes it possible to provide large amounts of plants for ecological restoration and landscaping uses without unduly disturbing natural habitats. This presentation will cover techniques for growing woodland wildflowers from seeds and cuttings in an urban setting with limited space. Seed collection and preparation, over wintering, containers, and protection of plants and beds from squirrels and other animals will be discussed. Numerous slides depicting whole plants from seedlings through several years of growth will be presented. The speaker has grown woodland wildflowers in Urbana yards for over ten years.

HABITAT USE AND JUVENILE DISPERSAL OF FRANKLIN'S GROUND SQUIRREL IN CENTRAL ILLINOIS.

Jason M. Martin*, University of Illinois and Illinois Natural History Survey, Champaign, IL 61820.
* current address: University of Florida, Gainesville

ABSTRACT: A population of Franklin's ground squirrels (*Spermophilus franklinii*) was studied in a 12-ha tallgrass prairie restoration (Barnhart Prairie) in Champaign County, Illinois. Burrow systems were located most often in areas of cool-season grasses with well-drained and moderately well-drained soils. Burrow systems also were often associated with trees, trash heaps, and buildings; such locations may offer a degree of protection from predators, conspecifics, or weather. Fourteen juvenile Franklin's ground squirrels (7 males and 7 females) were radio-tracked during dispersal to determine how far dispersers traveled, the timing of dispersal, if dispersal distance differed between sexes, and if the agricultural matrix surrounding the study site was a barrier to dispersal. Males dispersed farther than females, but individuals of both sexes moved ≥ 1 km from the study site. The farthest movement recorded was by a male who traveled 3.6 km. Dispersal was age-dependent for both sexes, occurring at 7-9 weeks of age. Agricultural fields did not seem to hinder movement, probably because dispersal occurred before row crops were harvested. Open areas such as roadways, however, may be barriers to some individuals.

SKETCHING THE PRAIRIE

Carolyn Nixon, Illinois Natural History Survey, Champaign, IL 61820 email: **cnixon@uiuc.edu**

ABSTRACT: Part 1: What is scientific illustration? It is the production of accurate drawings to help scientists communicate. While the drawings must be accurate, the amount of detail varies. Any drawing medium is used, including digital.

Part 2: Field Sketching: Field sketching is the drawing of a subject within its habitat for later use, such as verification of siting, later identification, or for reference for a later illustration. After a short instruction on field sketching techniques, participants will sketch a prairie plant from life. The goal is to produce a drawing and description accurate enough that the plant can be identified later without removing it from its habitat.

IMPROVING PLANT AND ANIMAL DIVERSITY IN A RESTORATION

Chip O'Leary, Kankakee Sands Project, Indiana Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, 3294 N US-41 Morocco, IN 47963. Email: co'leary@tnc.org

ABSTRACT: The Efroymson Restoration at Kankakee Sands, owned and managed by The Nature Conservancy, is a 7200 acre project located in northern Newton County, Indiana. The project was initiated in 1997 and is scheduled for completion in 2011. The vision for the project is to restore the entire property to a mosaic of prairie and wetlands. The goal is to maximize both botanic and faunal bio-diversity on the site. In the first six years of the project, we have been wrestling not only with the issues surrounding increasing diversity in botanic restoration, but also those issues specific to each faunal group likely to occur in a large prairie/wetland system. In this presentation, we will cover the issues we encountered, some of our applied and intended solutions, and where we have seen success to date.

RECOLONIZATION OF REPTILES ONTO NEWLY ESTABLISHED GRASSLANDS

Dan Olsen, Champaign County Forest Preserve Disrict

FUNCTION OF A HERBARIUM

Rick Phillipe, Illinois Natural History Survey, 607 E. Peabody Dr., Champaign, IL, USA, 61820 email: rickp@inhs.uiuc.edu

ABSTRACT: A herbarium is a collection of plants preserved through drying and arranged systematically. The first herbaria, early 16th. century, were developed by medical doctors preoccupied with medicinal plants, generally termed herbs. These herbaria originated in a part of the world where much of the flora were composed of grasses and other herbs, as opposed to shrubs and trees. The modern herbarium is a great filing system for information about plants, both in the form of actual specimens and in the form of published information, pictures, recorded notes, and data bases. An important part of the herbarium is the staff of botanist and other workers who use it. The herbarium functions as a gathering place for botanical knowledge where a continual influx of plants, photos, and information of all sorts is stored, it is not postage stamp collecting where the goal is just to have an individual of each species within the collection. It is also a site of preservation of historical materials, most important of which are the type specimens, a stimulation to research, a documented record on the vegetation of the earth, an important meeting place for botanist, and a valuable teaching aid. The potential of an herbarium is vast and its individual function is a reflection of its staff activities.

PRACTICAL ASPECTS: DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF SITE MANAGEMENT PLANS.

Sally Prunty and Kristina Hubert, Champaign County Forest Preserve District, Mahomet, IL

RESTORING NATURAL AREAS ON YOUR PROPERTY.

Cory Ritterbusch and Jack Pizzo, Pizzo and Associates, Ltd. 10729 Pine Road, Leland, IL 60531 email: jack@pizzo1.com

ABSTRACT: Any natural area restoration project requires three major aspects: thoughtful planning, proper implementation, and long-term stewardship. Planning consists of soil surveys, historical research, biotic inventories, and consideration of the current and surrounding land uses, financial resources, and the expected outcomes. Implementation of a successful restoration project includes the proper use of herbicides, selection of appropriate plant materials, planting at a sufficient rate, selection of contractors, and often the use of educational signs. No restoration is successful without proper stewardship, which includes carefully selecting the appropriate types and timing of herbicides, burning in a safe and effective manner, and balancing the use of professionals and volunteers. Failed projects are bad for everyone, but unsuccessful projects can be avoided through proper planning, implementation, and stewardship.

PRAIRIE PLANTS CLOSE-UP: THE HIDDEN WORLD OF FLOWERS AND FRUITS.

Kenneth R. Robertson, Illinois Natural History Survey, 607 E. Peabody Dr. Champaign, IL 61820 email: krrobert@uiuc.edu

ABSTRACT: "Everyone has many associations with a flower, the idea of flowers. You put out your hand to touch the flower, lean forward to smell it, maybe touch it with your lips almost without thinking, or give it to someone to please them...." — Georgia O'Keeffe, 1939. Flowers are indeed special to humans, yet why do plants make flowers in the first place and why the tremendous variation in size, shape, color, and fragrance? Basically to reproduce. Flowers are pollinated and become fruits. Inside the fruits are seeds, which ensures future generations. Much of the diversity of flowers and fruits is the result of adaptations to pollination or dispersal, usually to attract some kind of animal to either visit the flowers to carry out pollination or to carry away the seeds. In this presentation, I use close-up and detailed macro photographs of flowers and fruits of prairie plants showing their beauty and structure. These are then used as examples of how flowers are pollinated and how fruits are dispersed. Examples to be used in this talk include Fragaria virginiana, Potentilla arguta, Rosa carolina, Amorpha canescens, Baptisia leucantha, Dalea purpurea, Desmodium illinoense,

Asclepias tuberosa, Echinacea pallida, Helianthus grosseserratus, Ratibida pinnata, Liatris aspera, Prenanthes aspera, and Gentiana puberulenta.

RESTORATION/RECONSTRUCTION OF WOODLAND/PRAIRIE EDGE COMMUNITIES.

Ken Schaal and Henry Eilers, Bluestem Nursery and Shoal Creek Volunteers 13197 E. 13th Rd., Hillsboro, IL 62049. email: bluestemnursery@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: This presentation will focus on the upland woodland/prairie edge community located on the east side of Shoal Creek (west-facing slope). The Shoal Creek watershed is located in the Effingham Section of the Southern Till Plain. The highly eroded clay soils are located over glacial till composed of gravels, sands, and silt. A few areas also have sandstone out-croppings. The plant component of this community is composed of a canopy of oak/hickory species with a prairie (or prairie-like) understory. The shrub component is diminished or highly reduced.

This presentation discusses two sites. Shoal Creek Conservation Area (Litchfield, IL) on the west fork of Shoal Creek contains several natural areas, as indicated by the original Natural Areas Inventory. Restoration in the Conservation Area has involved prescribed burning, thinning of the canopy, maple tree removal (eradication), and some reintroduction of appropriate species.

The second site, Bluestem Prairie Nursery Woodland (Hillsboro, IL), located on the east side of the middle fork of Shoal Creek, is a highly disturbed woodland. Besides removal of non-upland trees (elm, ash, maple) annual fall burning and reintroduction of appropriate species has resulted in a successful reconstruction of a woodland/prairie edge community.

DESIGNING PRAIRIES AND SAVANNAS WHICH MEET HUMAN NEEDS.

Rob Scott, Urbana Permaculture Project 210 S. Grove St., Urbana, IL 61802 email: robscott@sdf.lonestar.org

ABSTRACT: Fossil fuel production will peak in the first half of the 21st century, and humans will begin to live in the age of energy descent. Prairie restoration, in the age of energy descent, will take place in the context of a society which must design new strategies for meeting human needs while reducing fossil fuel use. This is an opportunity.

Obviously, prairie ecosystems are not currently being used to meet human needs (food, shelter, etc.) The prairie bioregion is cropped in grain and soybean monocultures, mainly to feed livestock, and human needs are met with goods and services from the global economy based on fossil fuel production and transportation.

What then is proposed is a new use-ethic for native ecosystems, whereby human society could maintain its existence in a desirable way in the age of energy descent. Functional prairies could provide descent with decency. This is a design project which requires an understanding of "what makes a prairie".

This presentation will cover some basic proposals for meeting human needs while restoring the species native to this land. Productive prairies, savannah orchards, alcohol fuel stills, oak copses, and pasture possibilities will be discussed at length. Functional prairies are compatible with restoration and conservation. To ween a bioregion off the petroleum teat of globalization, and transition to a self-reliant, ecosystem-balenced society has been called "localization". This shift would bring drastic social change to the prairie bioregion, and the social relationships are just as much a design project as is prairie restoration. Ecological change is interdependent with social change. In particular the values in the language we speak must be noted and their contradictions called out and accused of being insufficient to satisfy the desires of any person that wants peaceful coexistence of human society and prairie ecosystems in the 22nd century.

Methods, suggestions, successes/failures, etc. will be discussed during the presentation. Questions will be answered. Time permitting, information will be given on prairie (full sun) restoration/reconstruction.

PRAIRIE RESTORATIONATION AT FERMILAB: WHAT'S THERE, WHAT ELSE COULD BE THERE.

William J Sluis, The Wetlands Initiative, 53 W Jackson Blvd., Chicago, IL., 60603 630-369-2723 wsluis@juno.com

ABSTRACT: A quantitative evaluation of current conditions in terms of species richness and composition at the Fermilab prairie restoration. Trends over 15 annually planted restorations show declines in richness and increased differentiation among samples. An experiment is presented on the affects of mowing and supplemental seeding. Richness was increased more by mowing than by seeding. Both mowing and seeding increased richness of both planted and non-planted species.

SITE QUALITY EVALUATION: MORE THAN JUST PLANTS

William J Sluis, The Wetlands Initiative, 53 W Jackson Blvd., Chicago, IL., 60603 630-369-2723 email: wsluis@juno.com

ABSTRACT: A presentation of the preliminary stages of a site quality index. It is based on widely accepted ecological concepts and parameters, yet is still simple enough for anyone to use. The term "quality" is divided into diversity, stability and function, which are broken down into quantifiable parameters such as species richness, indicators of population health, genetic diversity, and community stability and diversity. It can also include classes of organisms such as mammals, birds, etc. A demonstration is provided.

COMPARISON OF HABITAT QUALITY INDICES AND APPLICATIONS FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATING TALLGRASS PRAIRIE

John Taft, Illinois Natural History Survey, 607 E. Peabody Dr. Champaign, IL 61820 email: taft@inhs.uiuc.edu

ABSTRACT: Rapid, repeatable, and ecologically sensitive methods are needed for evaluating natural quality of vegetation for purposes of environmental planning and ecological monitoring. Tests were conducted using data collected from permanent vegetation sampling transects at Nachusa Grasslands to compare several community-level indices of habitat quality and diversity. A primary goal was to determine if subjectively weighted measures of species diversity such as the Floristic Quality Index (FQI) and average Coefficient of Conservatism (Mean C) yield novel information compared with more objective indices based strictly on patterns of species richness. The transects also were used to evaluate a proposed new method of rapid assessment based on density of functional plant groups (Functional Group Density). Results indicated that the weighted indices Mean C and FQI were the most sensitive at detecting differences between remnants and plantings and among sites within the remnant and planting sample groups. With these data the Mean C was an area-independent metric. Evaluation of Functional Group Density indicated that it has promise as a monitoring tool to evaluate trends in reconstruction and restoration efforts in tallgrass prairie, particularly when combined periodically with more detailed quantitative data. Additional applications of the Mean C and FQI in restoration monitoring programs will be described.

BIOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT OF A UNIQUE SAND PRAIRIE IN NORTHWEST ILLINOIS

Dan Wenny, Illinois Natural History Survey, Lost Mound Field Station, Savanna, IL 61074 email: dwenny@inhs.uiuc.edu

ABSTRACT: The former Savanna Army Depot (SVAD) encompasses over 13,000 acres adjacent to the Mississippi River in northwestern Illinois. The site contains 5,500 acres of forest and wetlands in the floodplain. The uplands include about 5,000 acres of sand prairie and sand savanna - the largest remnant prairie in the state and one of the largest in the eastern portion of the prairie peninsula. The base was established in 1917 and since that time most of it has been used for grazing (rather than cultivation). As a result, much of the area remains true prairie dominated by native plant species, many of which occur as isolated populations. The site includes 47 endangered and threatened species. The prairie has large populations of many regionally declining grassland bird species, including at least 10 bird species on the USFWS's 2002 list of Birds of Conservation Concern for the Midwest Region. A 12-mile dune formation along the transition from bottomland forest to upland prairie and savanna is another unique feature of the site and is the longest stretch of undeveloped Mississippi River shoreline in Illinois.

The base closed in March 2000 and 9400 acres are to be transferred eventually to the US Fish and Wildlife Service as a management unit of the Upper Mississippi National Wildlife Refuge. I will discuss the natural resources at SVAD, land transfer issues, and the prospects and challenges for restoration at this unique sand prairie/sand savanna ecosystem.

A TAST OF ENTICE

Mandi Whitener, Wildlife Prairie State Park, Hanna City, IL 61536 email: wppnat@aol.com

ABSTRACT: The ENTICE (Environment and Nature Training Institute for Conservation Education) program is designed to provide the resources and activities to build a strong foundation of knowledge for students and teachers. Each year, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources hosts a series of biodiversity workshops throughout the state in an effort to expand the classroom into the out-of-doors. In today's session we will explore crafty prairie activities that are a great addition to any instructional setting. (All materials provided).

Sunday Field Trip Descriptions

What Makes a Prairie: Our Local Prairie Remnants
Leaders: Mary Kay Solecki and Bob Reber

Participants in this field trip will visit some of the finest prairie remnants in east-central Illinois including Prospect Cemetery Prairie Nature Preserve, a 5-acre high-quality black-soil prairie, and Loda Cemetery Prairie Nature Preserve, a 3.4 acre prairie harboring over 130 species of native plants. The Illinois Nature Preserves system is celebrating its 40th Anniversary this year and participants will learn how these prairies came to be protected forever as nature preserves.

We will also visit Paxton Railroad Prairie, Pellville Cemetery Prairie, and Ten-mile Grove, a historic prairie grove. Participants will learn to recognize and identify many native prairie grasses and wildflowers such as asters, blazing star, and prairie gentian. We will also focus on the protection history of these sites and management efforts such as exotic species control, brush control and the use of prescribed fire.

Depart at 10:30 AM from Parkland College; return approximately 4:30 PM
Total time for trip: about 6 hours
Sites to visit: Loda Cemetery Prairie, Prospect Cemetery Prairie, Paxton Railroad Prairie, Ten-Mile Grove, Pelleville Cemetery Prairie

What Makes a Prairie: Iroquois County State Wildlife Area Land and Water Reserve/Hooper Branch Savanna Nature Preserve
Leaders: Dan Busemeyer, Eric Smith, and Angela Smith

An opportunity to view 2400 acres that is nearly the same as it was when the pioneers arrived. High quality community complex includes a 1,000 acre sedge meadow, marsh, mesic prairie, shrub prairie, pin oak sand flatwoods, and some of the finest black oak sand savanna anywhere.
Tour will include the history of the Kankakee Sands Ecosystem, vegetation of the site, and current management practices.

Depart Parkland College by carpool (parking is limited at Iroquois SWA) at 8:00AM. Get to Iroquois at 10:00am. Stop in Ashkum for bathroom and snacks.
10:00-10:15 Intro to the Iroquois SWA and Kankakee Sands Ecosystem
10:15 -12 noon Tour and talk
12-1 - Lunch (bring your own)
1-3 Tour and talk.
3 pm* Leave for Parkland
5 pm* Arrive at Parkland
Dress appropriately - wear long sleeve shirts as the mosquitoes are plentiful, and hip boots or extra shoes to experience the sedge meadow. Otherwise comfortable shoes for hiking on relatively flat terrain, water, etc.

What Makes a Prairie: Parkland Foundation Remnants and Restorations
Leader: Roger Anderson

Travel to McLean County to experience the stewardship and restoration of lands owned by the Parklands Foundation. Visit the Foundation's Lexington Preserve then travel to the 730 acre Merwin Nature Preserve along the Mackinaw River. It has several miles of trails and harbors a variety of habitats ranging from floodplain forest to upland open woodlands and savanna. At the Merwin Preserve, see a restored prairie that was started in 1979. There are other possible sites to look at at the Merwin including a native grass pasture that is being managed by grazing.

Depart Parkland College by carpool at 8am on Sunday morning or you can meet Roger at the Lexington exit off of Interstate 55 northeast of Normal at 9:30am. Please meet at the Amoco gas station.

What Makes a Prairie: Our Local Prairie Plantings and Restorations
Leaders: Phillip Hult, Don Barnhart, Bob Vaiden, and Derek Liebert

Visit local prairie reconstructions and learn about the successes and failures of various approaches to restoration on varying aged reconstructions. The tour will visit four different sites: The Parkland College Prairies, the Champaign County Forest Preserve District's Buffalo Trace Prairie, the Barnhart Prairie, and the Urbana Park District's Meadowbrook Prairie. We will depart following the VSN roundtable and will carpool from site to site.

Schedule:
10:30 Depart
10:45 Arrive at Buffalo Trace Prairie
12:00 Lunch (bring your own)
1:00 Meadowbrook Prairie
2:00 Barnhart Prairie
3:30 Return to Parkland

Buffalo Trace Prairie
Phillip Holt

"Buffalo Trace Prairie is a prairie reconstruction project begun in 2000 with Grand Prairie Friends and Champaign County Forest Preserve District as partners. Three separate seedings have been done so far. See the success and problems in process."

Meadowbrook Prairie
Bob Vaiden and Derek Liebert

"Initiated in 1976 with the assistance of the Champaign County Audubon Society, the Urbana Park District's Meadowbrook Prairie features several differently planted sections, each representative of varying approaches, each telling a different story. At roughly 80 acres and still growing, this site is a favored destination among local walkers, birders, roller-bladers, and bikers. It offers the public a chance to glimpse a re-established slice of Illinois' natural history"

Barnhart Prairie
Don Barnhart

"There are a number of important elements to see on our project. I will provide a more detailed list later, but in short there are ten separate areas on our site that have different histories and different methods of restoration. Perhaps the most exciting area is the 16 acres that was planted last fall. In particular, as a result of the excellent planting conditions and rainfall, this new restoration exceeded all of our expectations and many plants are already flowering! With this last restoration, I think that we have hit upon a combination of factors that work remarkably well!"

About your keynote speaker...

Dr. Roger Anderson
Distinguished University Professor of Ecology
Illinois State University, Normal, IL

Our keynote speaker is well known to many prairie enthusiasts across Illinois for his many years of research and interest in tallgrass prairie in Illinois. Dr. Anderson has vastly increased our knowledge about prairie ecology during his professional career at Illinois State University. He is also a volunteer for the Parklands Foundation (http://www.parklands.org/), a not-for-profit conservation organization in the Bloomington-Normal area. Please give Dr. Anderson a warm welcome to the Sixth Central Illinois Prairie Conference.

From the Department of Biological Sciences at ISU webpage: "Research interests: I am a restoration ecologist. In our laboratory we work on a wide range of topics including ecology of garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) an invasive plant, impact of deer browsing on prairie plants, historic vegetation, prairie restoration, and the effect of fire on a variety of vegetation types including savanna and prairies. We are housed in the Science Laboratory Building that includes a greenhouse devoted to research, a set of growth chambers, controlled environmental rooms, and a spacious research area." http://www.bio.ilstu.edu/anderson/default.htm

Sixth Central Illinois Prairie Conference
Exhibitors

Champaign County Audubon Society

Champaign County Forest Preserve District

Earthskin Nursery

Educational Resources in Environmental Science

Environmental Education Association of IL

Grand Prairie Friends

Illinois Native Plant Society

Illinois Natural History Survey

Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

Illinois Steward Magazine

Volunteer Stewardship Network/Prairie Grove Volunteers

Pizzo & Associates, Ltd.

Prairie Moon Nursery

The Prairie Patch

Shoal Creek Volunteers

Spence Restoration Nursery

Urbana Park District

Prairie Blazing Star

Volunteer Stewards Network Roundtable

Sunday, September 21, 2003
Parkland College,

8:30 -9:00

- Coffee, juice, Krispy Kreme rolls will be available
- Take time to mix and mingle and put faces to the names on the VSN listserve or newsletter "Gatherings."

9:00 ~10:15

- Randy Heidorn, Deputy Director for Stewardship, Illinois Nature Preserves Commission and chair of the Statewide VSN (volunteer stewardship network) Steering Committee, will give a short VSN report. This will include an overview of the VSN SC 5-year plan.
- Open discussion on topics of interest to the stewards. You are encouraged to bring questions, concerns, ideas, success stories to share, etc.
- If time allows discussion about specific items on the 5-year plan will ensue.

Bid at the silent auction to support GPF

To enhance the volunteer efforts, proceeds from the silent auction will be used to assist with the purchase of the following:

- Equipment
- Native species seed to increase the diversity of plant species in prairie reconstructions
- Summer internships for students interested in prairie ecology

Location: Conference Center, Room D244
Time: 8:30 AM – 5 PM, Saturday, September 20, 2003

Donations

Local artists and craftspersons have donated their work to support prairie preservation efforts in central Illinois. You can support the volunteer efforts to restore and preserve the prairie areas of Illinois by bidding on the items.

Gary Beland, Volunteer Coordinator for the Volunteer Steward Network has built **three orchard mason bee boxes** for the auction. Encourage native pollinators by giving them a place to lay their eggs.

Gary Beland also sends **two bluebird houses**. Enjoy the beauty of bluebirds nesting in your yard.

Jackie Warden owner of Earthstar Creations has made a stoneware **vase** specifically for the auction. Beautifully decorated with native grass impressions, *Walk When the Moon is Full* will remind you of the prairie every time you see it.

Billy Morrow Jackson, one of the leading landscape artists of the Midwest sends *Aurora*, a **numbered and signed print** of a fall Illinois landscape. Enjoy the rich color of the season when you bid last on this print. In addition to landscapes, Billy Morrow Jackson is also known for his cityscapes, works with social and political themes and murals. **Prairie Gardens** has donated the **framing** to enhance this fine print.

The publisher of ***The Illinois Steward*** donates a **one-year subscription and a 2004 calendar** containing spectacular photographs of Illinois' flora and fauna. The quarterly magazine focuses on the native areas of Illinois and the people who help restore and protect the state's natural habitats.

Lynn Hawkinson Smith, graphic designer for *The Illinois Steward* sends **two sets of note cards** of her original designs. One set depicts birds native to Illinois. Smith has drawn the delightful purple coneflower on the other set. Show your family and friends the wonder of the Illinois flora and fauna when you send them a card from these sets.

David Zahrt sends a gift certificate for a **one-night stay at the Country Homestead Bed and Breakfast in the Loess Hills**, Turin, Iowa.

Chicago Wilderness donates a **one-year subscription** to its quarterly magazine. It celebrates the rich natural heritage of the region and tells the inspiring stories of the people and organizations working to heal and protect local nature. Order a great magazine and support GPF.

Mary Hruska contributes a copy of ***Illinois Wilds*** to the silent auction. One hundred and sixty-five stunning photographs display elements of Illinois' natural history in *Illinois Wilds*, a book that is both a historical depiction of what the state was like before Europeans settled it and a showcase of its remaining natural heritage.

Roger Kirkwood, owner of Prairie Rose Pottery Studio has designed **several ceramic items** using old English and mocha techniques. Roger Kirkwood, longtime supporter of prairie restoration efforts made the pieces specifically for the GPF silent auction. Treat yourself or someone you love to one of these beautifully made artworks.

Marilyn Leuszler sends **two boxes of greeting cards** with bison images, a **print** (Grazing #17), and an **original painting** of purple coneflowers for the silent auction. She describes her work as "Asian Arts with a Western Point of View." After studying traditional arts in Japan for ten years, Trinidad, Colorado artist Marilyn Leuszler now combines East and West in her work. While using tools, materials, and techniques learned in Japan, her subject matter is most often made up of plants, animals, and scenes observed near her southern Colorado home or during her travels. In Japan, her work was shown in the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Art, several Ginza galleries, and in numerous shows. Her award-winning paintings are now shown in galleries in the US, and can be found in corporate and private collections around the world.

Kathy Pizzo of Pizzo Consulting supports the silent auction with a **half-day of consultation** with ecologist, Jack Pizzo.

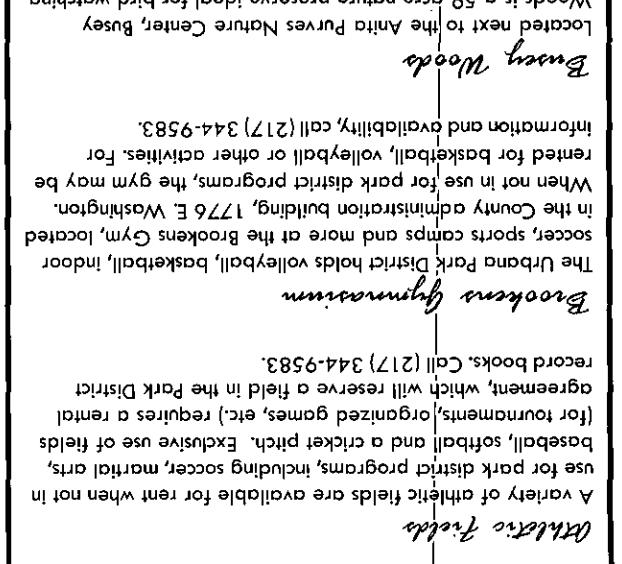
Gail Snowdon gives a handmade concrete **garden stone** inlaid with prairie plants and a butterfly in stained glass. Enjoy images of the prairie in your own backyard.

Silent Auction Protocol

1. A minimum bid jump is posted for each item.
2. No bids less than a previous bid.
3. Changed, or lined-out bids must be initialed by the bidder.
4. No bids accepted after 5 PM. No excuses and no exceptions.
5. If an item has a minimum bid, it is posted on the bid sheet.
6. Bids must be entered in ink, no pencil please.
7. All items are cash or check and carry. No payment, no item.

Bid often. Bid Last. Bid to support GPF's education and restoration efforts.

Urbana Park District



Guide to Facilities, Features and Parks

Visit us at www.urbanaparks.org

Facilities

Anita Purves Nature Center
1505 N. Broadway, Urbana, IL 61801
Phone: (217) 384-4062 Fax: (217) 384-1052
Office Hours: M-Sa 8 a.m.–5 p.m., Su 12–4 p.m.
Summer Office Hours: M-Sa 8 a.m.–6 p.m., Su 12–4 p.m.

Brookens Gymnasium/Athletics Office)
Mailing Address: 901 N. Broadway, Urbana, IL 61801
Office Address: 1776 E. Washington Ave., Urbana
Phone: (217) 344-9583 Fax: (217) 255-8603

C-U Special Recreation
Hays Center – 1311 W. Church St., Champaign, IL 61821
Office Hours: M-F 8 a.m.–5 p.m.
Phone: (217) 398-2374
TTY: (217) 398-2586

Crystal Lake Pool
1501 N. Broadway, Urbana, IL 61801
Hours: Memorial Day weekend-Labor Day
Weekdays 12-7 p.m. Sa 11 a.m.–7 p.m. Su 11 a.m.–6 p.m.

Darius E. Phelps Administration Building
303 W. University Ave., Urbana, IL 61801
Office Hours: M-F 8 a.m.–5 p.m.
Phone: (217) 367-1536 Fax: (217) 367-1391

Field of Greens Miniature Golf
Lincoln Square Mall, Urbana, IL 61801
Hours: M-F 3:30–8 p.m.
Sa 10 a.m.–8 p.m., Su 12–6 p.m.
Phone: (217) 255-5170 Fax: (217) 344-9585

Lake House, Crystal Lake Park
Rental Information: (217) 367-1544
For seasonal hours: (217) 328-1069

Maintenance/Operations
901 N. Broadway, Urbana, IL 61801
Office Hours: M-F 8 a.m.–4 p.m.
Phone: (217) 344-9583 Fax: (217) 344-9585

Phillips Recreation Center
505 W. Stoughton, Urbana, IL 61801
Office Hours: M-Th 8 a.m.–6 p.m. F 8 a.m.–5 p.m.
Sa 8 a.m.–12 p.m.
Phone: (217) 367-1544 Fax: (217) 367-1592

Picnic Shelters and Pavilions
Urbana Park District pavilions are available for rental in the spring, summer and fall during the following time slots: 7-11 a.m., 12-4 p.m. and 5-9 p.m. Reserving your space well in advance of your event offers you a wider choice of dates, times and locations. For rental information and availability, please call (217) 367-1544.

North Woods Pavilion
A shaded outdoor site in Crystal Lake Park that offers barbecue facilities, restrooms, seating for up to 50 and nearby parking.
Fee: $40 per time slot

Large Pavilion
The Large Pavilion is an open-air facility in Crystal Lake Park. It is accessible from Park Street and overlooks Crystal Lake. The pavilion seats up to 176 and offers easily accessible parking, playground and grill.
Fee: $50 per time slot

PrairiePlay Pavilion
Located adjacent to PrairiePlay playground in Meadowbrook Park, this pavilion is the perfect spot for a child's birthday party, family reunion or other group gathering as large as 50 people.
Fee: $50 per time slot

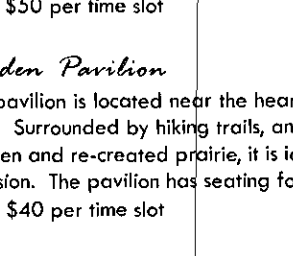
Garden Pavilion
This pavilion is located near the heart of Meadowbrook Park. Surrounded by hiking trails, an organic and herb garden and re-created prairie, it is ideal for any special occasion. The pavilion has seating for up to 48 people.
Fee: $40 per time slot

Jean Driscoll Pavilion
The Jean Driscoll Pavilion is an open-air facility located in AMBUCS Park (formerly Woodland) on University Avenue. It can accommodate up to 120 people and amenities include a playground, restrooms, grill and accessible parking.
Fee: $50 per time slot

Nick Santi Pavilion
This pavilion in AMBUCS Park (formerly Woodland) offers barbecue facilities and seating for up to 64. Adjacent handicapped accessible play features and playground.
Fee: $35 per time slot

We're Working So You Can Play!

Meadowbrook Park
Located in south Urbana along Windsor Road and Race Street, Meadowbrook Park covers 130 acres. It features an historic farmstead, a variety of gardens, hard and soft walking trails through re-created prairie, picnic shelters, PrairiePlay playground and the Wandell Sculpture Garden.



Since 1978, the Urbana Park District, Champaign County Audubon Society and other volunteers have worked to re-create a piece of Illinois' native landscape. The prairie restoration project has grown to approximately 80 acres, enabling visitors to explore and enjoy a part of Illinois' natural history. Please respect the plants and animals that have returned to this natural landscape. Take only memories and leave only footprints.

Phillips Recreation Center
Located at 505 W. Stoughton, Urbana, this community center is home to the district's fitness, dance and fine arts programs, as well as senior programs, special events, preschool and youth programs and more. Pick up a Leisure Guide for a complete list of offerings and register for any Urbana Park District program. Telephone registration is also available with your credit card. Call (217) 367-1544 for rental information.

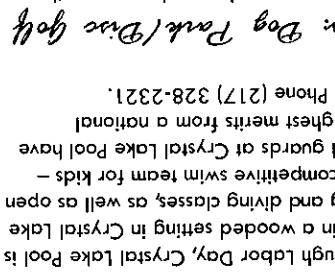
Urbana Indoor Aquatic Center
The Urbana Indoor Aquatic Center celebrated its grand opening in January 2003. This joint project with the Urbana School District is home to both districts' swim lesson programs, is a place for area swim and diving teams to practice, and complete and a place for families to enjoy recreational swimming. It features two waterslides, water spray features and beach-like entry. Quarterly, semi-annual and annual passes are available by calling (217) 367-1544. Birthday parties and private rentals care also available. For open swim hours or other information, call (217) 384-POOL.

Wandell Sculpture Garden
Since 1998, pieces in the Wandell Sculpture Garden have dotted the pathways that wind through Meadowbrook Park's re-created tall grass prairie. Works on display are on loan to the Urbana Park District from the artist, or have been purchased by the district from commissioned, and are now part of the garden's permanent collection. This dynamic outdoor gallery will continue to change with new pieces being added regularly. For more information call (217) 367-1536.

Special Features: Dog Park/Disc golf
The Urbana Park District has created new play spaces that are unique to the area. The dog park at the Judge Webber Park Site is a 10-acre space for dogs to run off leash. Membership is required. See www.urbanadogpark.org for more information. Our nine-hole disc golf course at Lohmann Park was designed by local disc golf pro, Ted Nowlin, and is a great place to play with the whole family.

Crystal Lake Pool
Open Memorial Day through Labor Day, Crystal Lake Pool is an outdoor pool located in a wooded setting in Crystal Lake Park. We offer swimming and diving classes, as well as open swim time and a summer competitive swim team for kids – The Nadiators. Staff and guards at Crystal Lake Pool have repeatedly earned the highest merits from a national certification organization. Phone (217) 328-2321.

Lake House in Crystal Lake Park
In the summer months, the Lake House is your headquarters for boat rentals and summer snacks like lemonade and ice cream bars. Take a ride in a canoe, paddleboat or rowboat. Groups can call ahead to reserve boats at a discounted rate. Whether you're looking for a place to hold a business meeting or your next holiday party, the Lake House has a rental package that's just right for your needs. Call (217) 367-1544 for rates and times.



Anita Purves Nature Center
Located at 1505 N. Broadway, the Anita Purves Nature Center is an environmental education facility open daily to the public that offers environmental programs for all ages. A Wildlife Observation Room, Field Station/Exhibit Hall, the Audubon Nature Gift Shop and Educator Resource Room, and proximity to Busey Woods make this a valuable place to come for information or for a natural retreat. For program and service information, call (217) 384-4062.

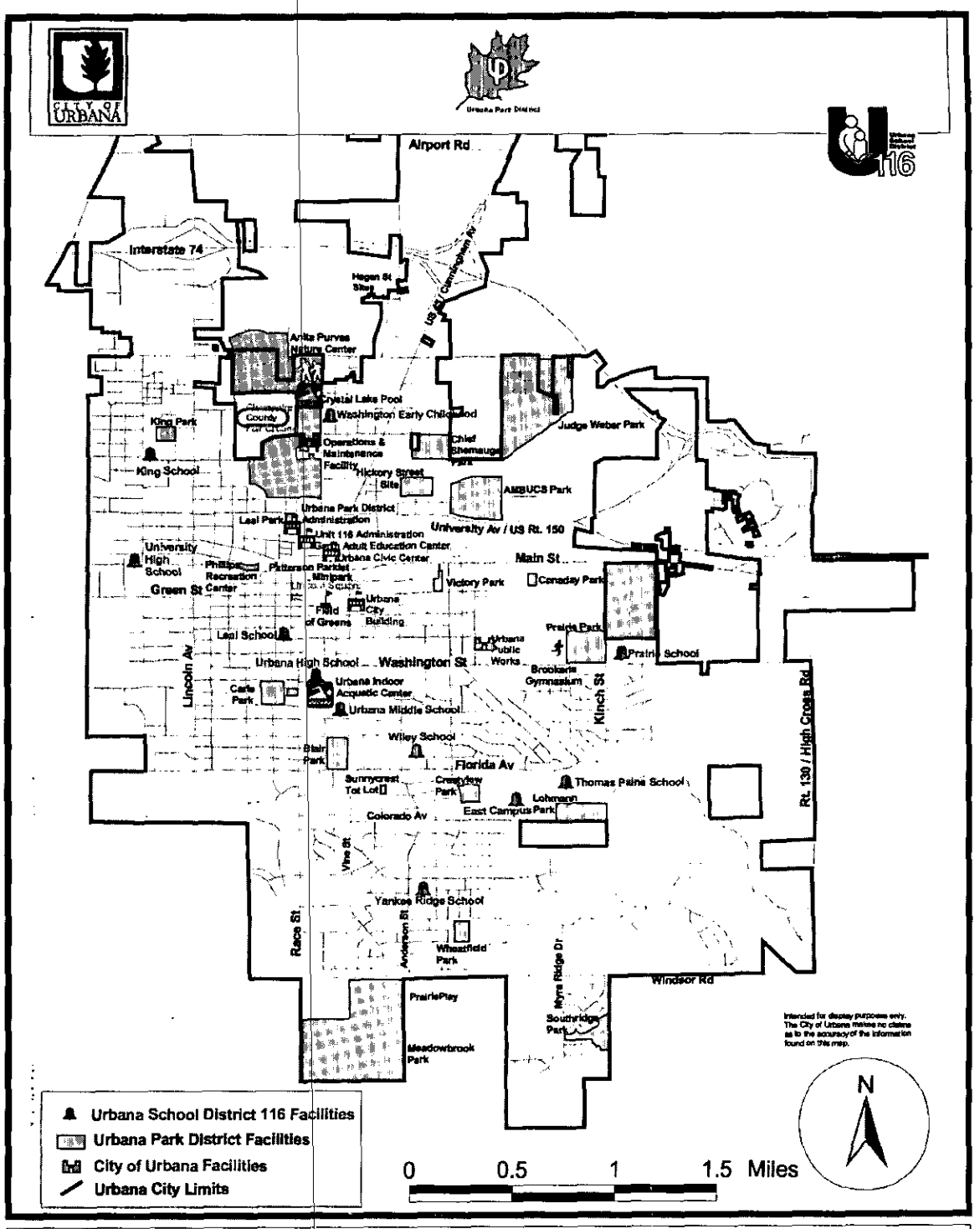
Athletic fields
A variety of athletic fields are available for rent when not in use for park district programs, including soccer, martial arts, baseball, softball and a cricket pitch. Exclusive use of fields (for tournaments, organized games, etc.) requires a rental agreement, which will reserve a field in the Park District record books. Call (217) 344-9583.

Brookens Gymnasium
The Urbana Park District holds volleyball, basketball, indoor soccer, sports camps and more at the Brookens Gym, located in the County administration building, 1776 E. Washington. When not in use for park district programs, the gym may be rented for basketball, volleyball or other activities. For information and availability, call (217) 344-9583.

Busey Woods
Located next to the Anita Purves Nature Center, Busey Woods is a 59-acre nature preserve ideal for bird watching or a relaxing walk. Nearly three miles of natural trails are available for hiking. Seasonal ponds allow for additional natural observation. Please, no collecting, dog walking or bicycles. For information, call (217) 384-4062.

Crystal Lake Park
Dedicated in 1907, this 90-acre park is located on North Broadway Avenue. Crystal Lake Park is a wooded area with playgrounds, a sledding hill, picnic shelters, paths and Crystal Lake. *Seasonal activities include: Sounds of Summer*--an annual July concert event, fishing, boating and skating. Fishing instruction for children from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, boat rentals and more are available at the Lake House during operating hours.

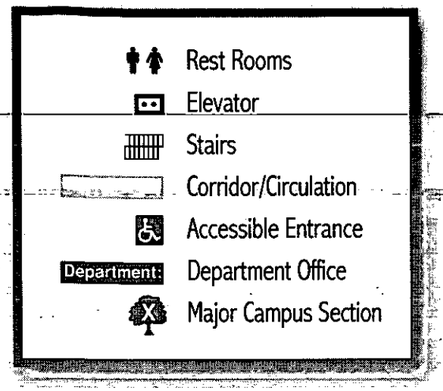
Parks & Features

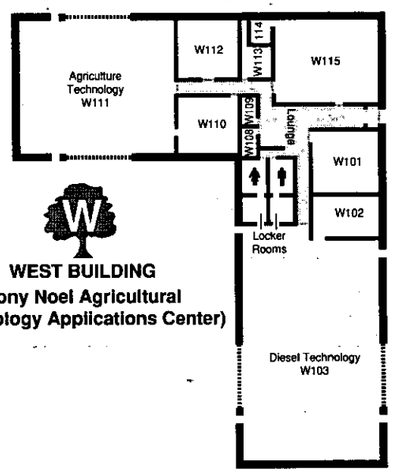


City of Urbana, School District 116 and Park District Facilities

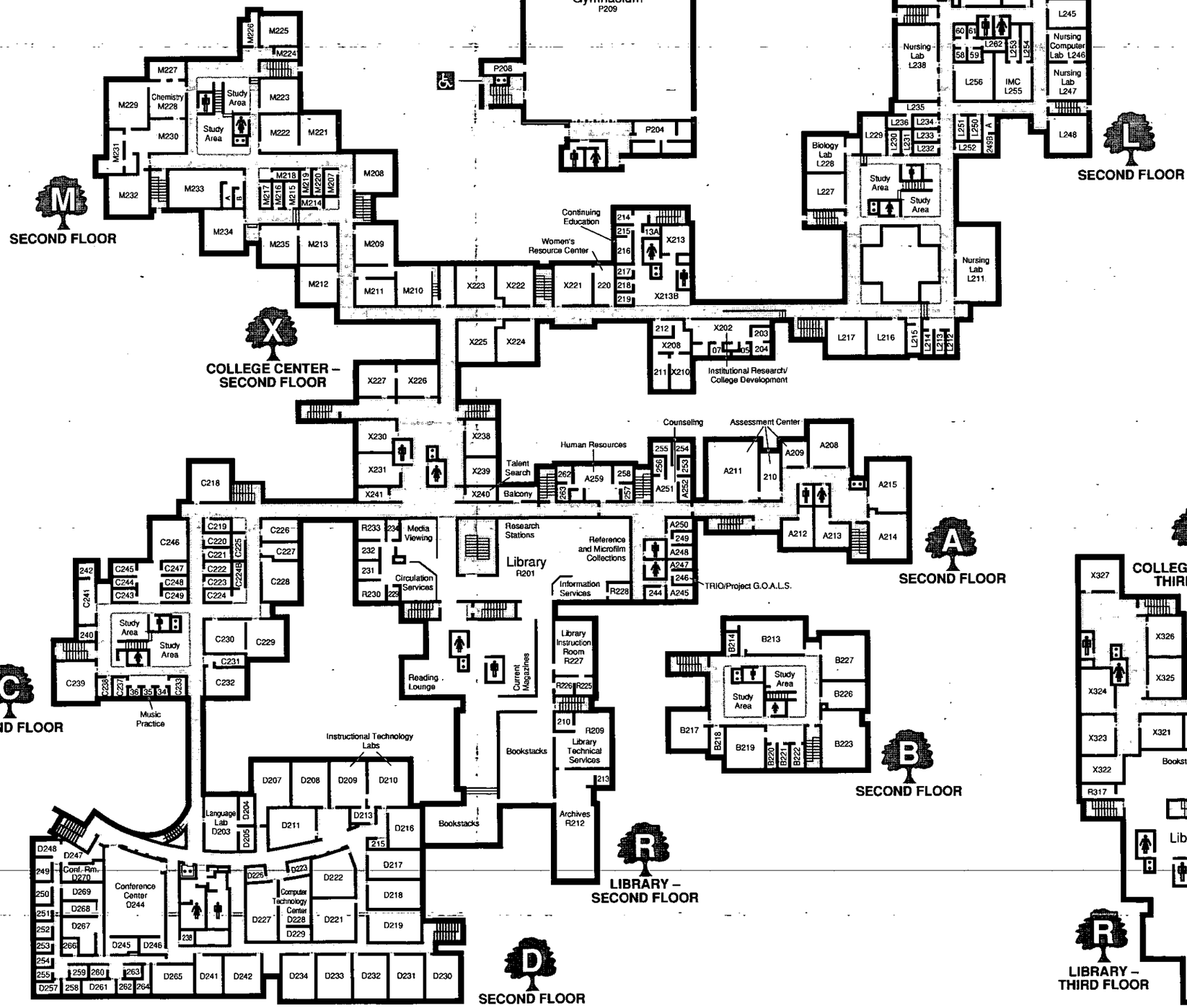
City of Urbana, Dept. of Community Development (217) 384-2444
Urbana School District 116, Administration (217) 384-3600
Urbana Park District, Recreation (217) 367-1544

Park/ Facility	MTD Bus	Accessible Playground	Archery	Ball Fields	Basketball	Cricket Field	Boating (seasonal)	Disc Golf	Fishing	Flower Beds	Garden Plots (organic)	Herb Garden	Historic Marker	Horseshoes	Ice Skating	Open Fields	Paths/Trails	Picnic Shelters	Playground	Restrooms (April - Oct.)	Sculpture	Shuffleboard	Sledding Hill	Soccer Field	Swimming Pool	Tennis Courts	Tennis Courts - lighted	Volleyball	Water Feature, Lake, Stream	Acreage (owned & leased)
AMBUCS (formerly Woodland)	Grey	X		X						X						X	X	X	X	X										22
Anita Purves Nature Center	Gold/Silver									X						X	X	X			X								X	59
Blair	Red/Orchard			X						X			X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X			11
Brookens Gym/Fields	Green			X	X					X						X				X			X	X				X		8.3 (lease)
Canaday	Green			X												X								X	X					5 (lease)
Carle	Orchard									X						X	X	X	X		X			X				X		8.3
Chief Shemauger	Gold			X	X											X	X													13.5
Crestview	Red									X			X	X		X	X	X	X									X	X	5.43
Crystal Lake	Gold	X		X			X		X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X			X	X	90.4
East Main Street																														
Hagen Blvd. (undeveloped)																														0.25
Hickory St. Storage/ Nursery																														14
Judge Webber	Gold		X													X	X													86.2
King	Orange									X				X		X	X	X	X	X										6
Leal	Orange									X			X			X	X								X					1.97
Lohmann	Red					X		X								X									X					15
Meadowbrook	Orchard	X								X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X								X	130
Mini-park	Gold/Green									X			X																X	0.1
Patterson Parklett	Gold									X																				0.1
Phillips Recreation Center	Gold	X			X					X						X	X	X	X		X									2.6
Prairie	Green			X						X						X			X				X	X						20
South Ridge	Green															X	X	X	X											11.2
Sunnycrest Tot Lot	Orange															X		X	X											1.4
Victory	Orange	X			X					X						X	X	X	X						X		X			5
Wheatfield	Orange									X						X		X	X					X		X				5





WEST BUILDING
(Tony Noel Agricultural Technology Applications Center)



UPPER LEVEL

SECOND FLOOR

COLLEGE CENTER – SECOND FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

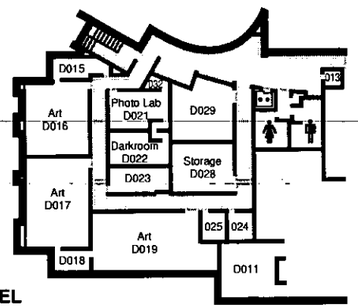
LIBRARY – SECOND FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

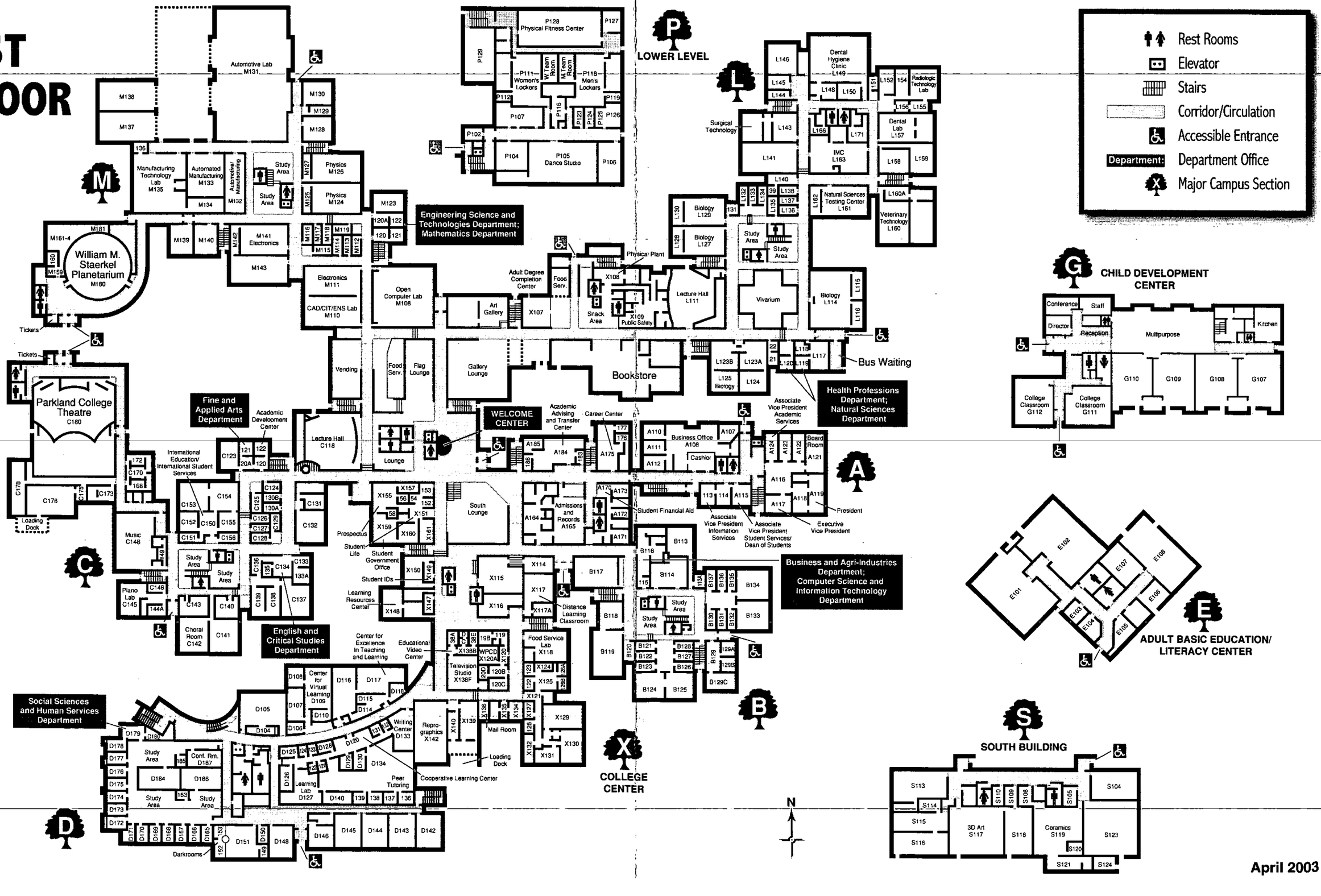
COLLEGE CENTER – THIRD FLOOR

LIBRARY – THIRD FLOOR



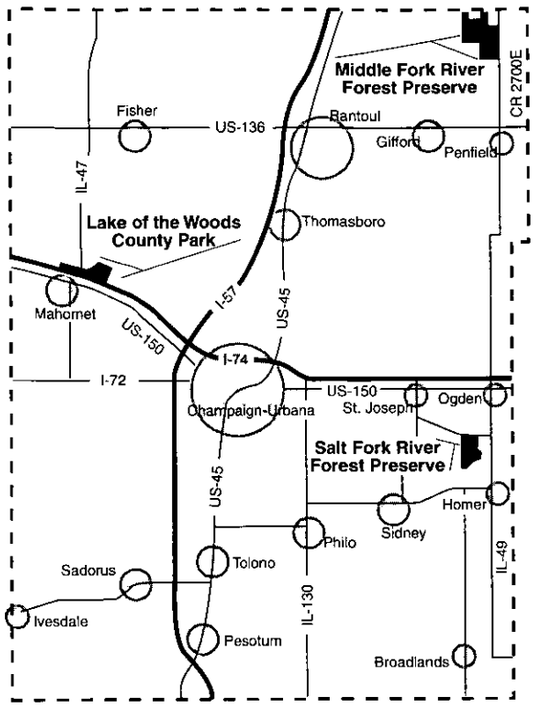
LOWER LEVEL

1ST FLOOR



April 2003

Map of Champaign County



Lake of the Woods, ten miles west of Champaign-Urbana on I-74 at Mahomet, may be reached by exit #172 or #174.

Salt Fork River Forest Preserve at Homer Lake is 15 miles southeast of Champaign-Urbana. From I-74, take the Ogden exit, go south on Route 49 about two miles and follow the signs.

Middle Fork River Forest Preserve is located on County Road 2700E, approximately five miles north of Penfield and U.S. Route 136 in northeast Champaign County.

Champaign County Forest Preserve District

Champaign County Forest Preserve District
P.O. Box 1040
Mahomet, Illinois 61853
(217) 586-3360

Welcome to the Champaign County Forest Preserve District. We operate three preserves that cover more than 3,000 acres and serve you with a wide range of offerings.

- **Lake of the Woods County Park** is a large, recreational site located in a rolling wooded area near Mahomet, Illinois. This popular gathering spot occupies almost 900 acres along the corridor of the Sangamon River.

- **Salt Fork River Forest Preserve** provides 798 acres set aside for the purpose of recreation and protection of wildlife and natural habitat surrounding Homer Lake. The county highway bordering the north end of the preserve was the path Abraham Lincoln traveled when he served on the judicial circuit.

  From sledding when the snow falls to fishing and boating in the summer months, Salt Fork is a beautiful setting for visitors to get away for some relaxation. Trails abound for hiking, nature study and bird-watching, and picnicking areas are plentiful.

- **Middle Fork River Forest Preserve** contains 1,530 acres of land composed of old hardwood timber, reforested lowlands and grassy meadows. The lands of Middle Fork were set aside for the promotion and protection of wildlife as well as recreation. Reforestation projects, marsh reclamation and prairie restoration projects demonstrate a commitment to restore habitat typical of presettlement periods.

  All lands, waters, plants and animals are protected by law under the stewardship of the Forest Preserve District. We hope you enjoy your stay as a visitor in the preserves and ask for your help in protecting these valuable resources for generations to come.

The Champaign County Forest Preserve District encourages its disabled visitors to utilize its facilities and to participate in its programs, and is committed to providing facilities and programs which meet the needs of both disabled and nondisabled visitors. Persons anticipating having reasonable special needs should contact District Headquarters in advance of their visit at (217) 586-3360.

You'll find plenty to do in the Champaign County Forest Preserves!

	Lake of the Woods	Salt Fork	Middle Fork
Bicycle/Pedestrian Path (3.3 miles)	★		
Boating (trolling motors only)	★	★	★
Boat Rentals: Paddleboats			★
Boat Rentals: Canoes		★	
Boat Rentals: Rowboats		★	
Botanical Gardens	★		
Campground			★
Cross-Country Skiing	★	★	★
Education Programs	★	★	★
Environmental Education Center		★	
Fishing	★	★	★
Golf: 18-Hole Course	★		
Golf: 9-Hole Par 3 Course/Practice Range	★		
HI-Tower Bell Carillon & Observation Area	★		
Hiking Trails	★	★	★
Historical Museum	★		
Open-Air Amphitheater		★	★
Open-Air Shelters	★	★	★
Pavilion Rentals	★	★	★
Picnicking	★	★	★
Sledding	★	★	
Swimming Beach			★
Waterfowl Management Area			★

Highlighting Lake of the Woods Park are several well-known attractions. The **Early American Museum** has an extensive collection interpreting 19th- and early 20th-century life in east-central Illinois. Two floors of exhibits present architecture, agriculture, trades and occupations, decorative arts, and childhood and domestic life of the time. The Discovery Room offers hands-on opportunities for children, and educational programs are offered for all ages throughout the year.

Located just off State Route 47 is the **Mabery Gelvin Botanical Gardens**, which boasts some of the most beautiful and diverse flora in east-central Illinois. Many a couple have exchanged their wedding vows in this colorful setting. Its All-America Selections Display Garden features the newest and best bedding plants and vegetables.

A favorite location for golfers is the **Hartwell C. Howard Lake of the Woods Golf Course**. Besides the award-winning 18-hole regulation course, there is a 9-hole par-3 course and a practice range. These courses were designed with every age and ability level in mind.

Rich in hiking and nature trails, the Middle Fork Preserve also contains one of the region's premier **Waterfowl Management Areas**. More than 130 acres of prime nesting habitat for migratory waterfowl are located here. An easily accessible viewing area allows visitors the opportunity to observe a wetland teeming with life. Please note, however, that visitors are not able to enter the wetland area itself between March and June to allow waterfowl to nest.

Also at the Middle Fork is the **Harry L. Swartz Campground**, which contains 65 sites suitable for all types of camping, including groups. Each site is a quiet retreat shaded by large trees and surrounded by an abundance of wildflowers. All the campsites are near the swim beach and shower facilities, and most sites provide electricity.

DISTRICT DIRECTORY

(Area Code 217)

Headquarters, Lake of the Woods 586-3360
For general District information, program schedules, newsletters & pavilion rentals

FAX/TDD Line.....586-5724
Lake of the Woods Superintendent....586-6264
Botanical Gardens 586-4630
Early American Museum 586-2612
Golf Course 586-2183
Natural Resources 586-4630
Public Relations 586-3360
Volunteers.....586-2612
Salt Fork Superintendent.....896-2733
Environmental Education.....896-2455
Middle Fork Superintendent 595-5432
Campground.....595-5692

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 1040, Mahomet, IL 61853

E-Mail Address: HQ@ccfpd.org

Website Address:
http://www.ccfpd.org

What is prairie and why preserve it?

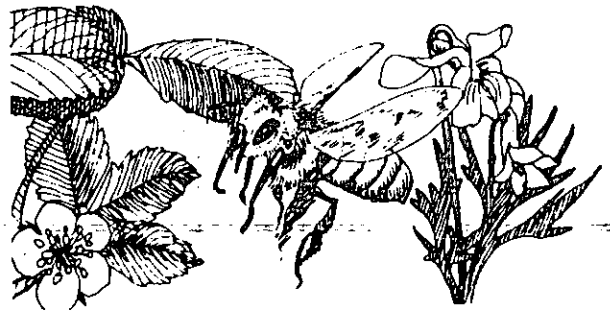
Prairie is the name given by European settlers to the rolling grasslands that once stretched across a . million square miles of America's midsection. Illinois was at the easternmost reach of the prairie in the region known as the tallgrass prairie, so named because of the grasses that grew from 2 to 8 feet in height.

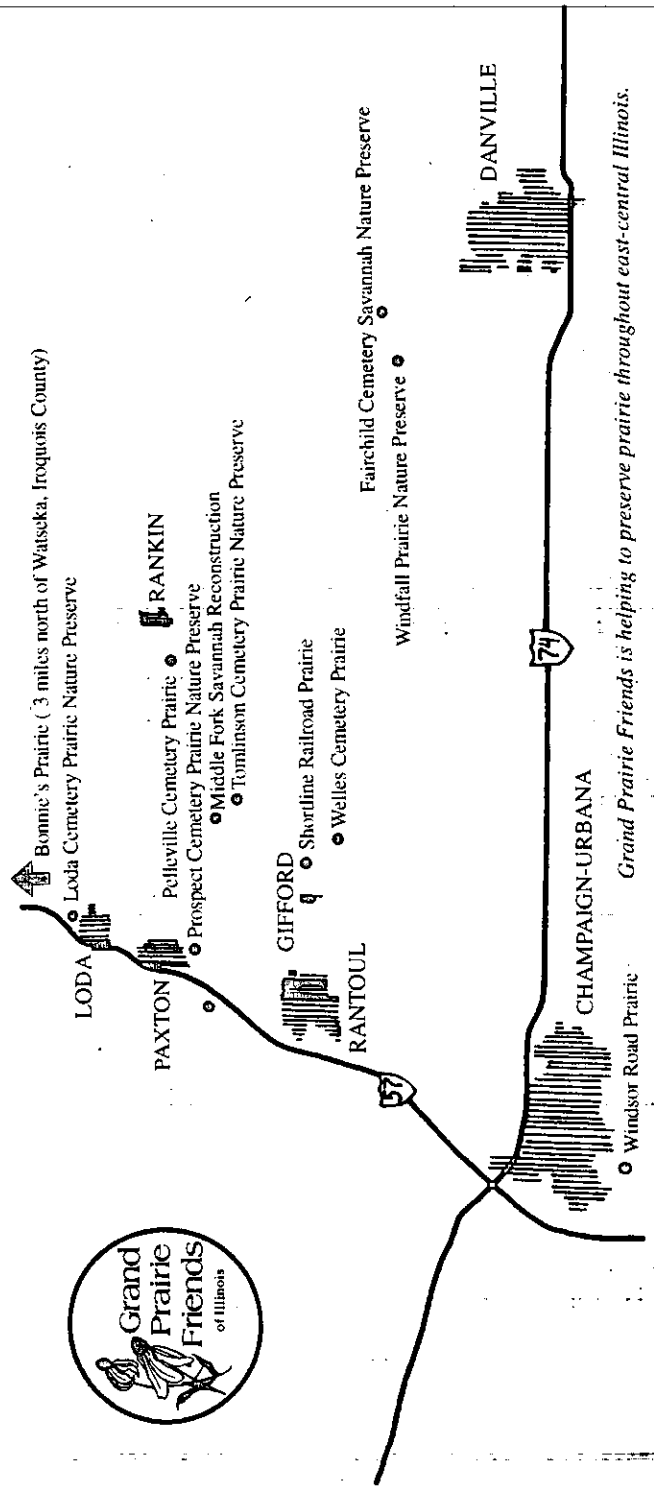
The lush prairie that covered central Illinois was called the Grand Prairie. At its peak, it sustained more than 300 species of plants, 60 species of mammals, 300 species of birds, and well over 1,000 kinds of insects. Among swaying grasses grew wildflowers that bloomed from spring until fall in a succession of brilliant colors.

The Grand Prairie thrived for 8,000 years and adapted to survive steaming summers, bitter winters, drought, and fire. In the process it helped to create some of the most fertile soils in the world. With the advent of settlers and the invention of the steel plow, the grasslands were plowed under and transformed into farm fields.

As recently as the 1820s, prairie covered about 22 million acres in Illinois. Today, less than 2,500 acres of high-quality prairie remain. Illinois' once vast prairie exists now mainly in scattered remnants, often found in pioneer cemeteries, along railroad rights-of-way, and on bluffs high above rivers.

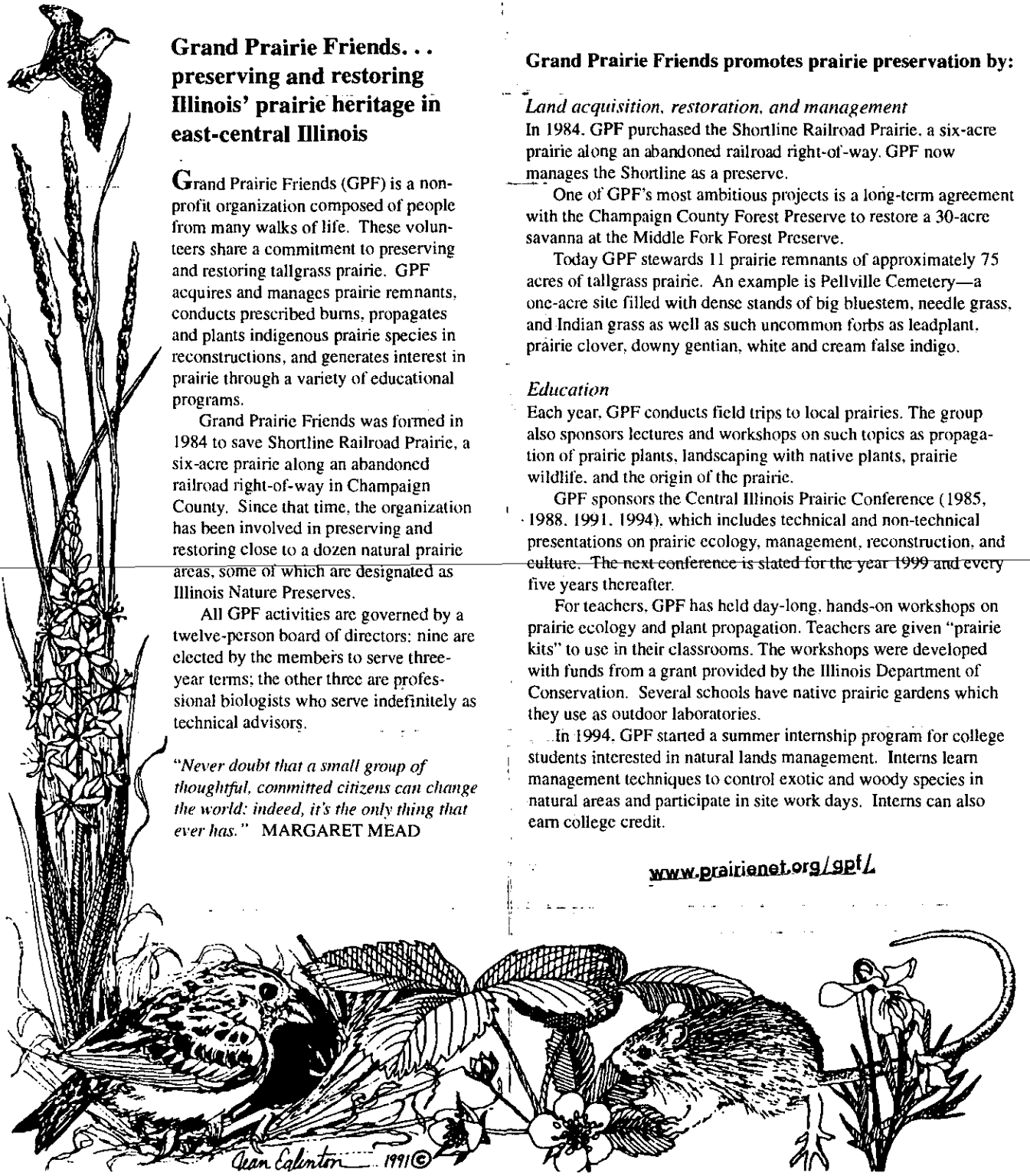
Grand Prairie Friends preserves these prairie remnants as a way of maintaining a link with Illinois' natural heritage. Within each parcel are the resources that gave Illinois its natural beauty and strength. We hope to assure that these treasures will be available for future generations. May they, too, enjoy walking through oceans of big bluestem and Indian grass while the compass plant points the way to the sun.





Grand Prairie Friends

of Illinois



Grand Prairie Friends. . . preserving and restoring Illinois' prairie heritage in east-central Illinois

Grand Prairie Friends (GPF) is a non-profit organization composed of people from many walks of life. These volunteers share a commitment to preserving and restoring tallgrass prairie. GPF acquires and manages prairie remnants, conducts prescribed burns, propagates and plants indigenous prairie species in reconstructions, and generates interest in prairie through a variety of educational programs.

Grand Prairie Friends was formed in 1984 to save Shortline Railroad Prairie, a six-acre prairie along an abandoned railroad right-of-way in Champaign County. Since that time, the organization has been involved in preserving and restoring close to a dozen natural prairie areas, some of which are designated as Illinois Nature Preserves.

All GPF activities are governed by a twelve-person board of directors: nine are elected by the members to serve three-year terms; the other three are professional biologists who serve indefinitely as technical advisors.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world: indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." MARGARET MEAD

Grand Prairie Friends promotes prairie preservation by:

Land acquisition, restoration, and management

In 1984, GPF purchased the Shortline Railroad Prairie, a six-acre prairie along an abandoned railroad right-of-way. GPF now manages the Shortline as a preserve.

One of GPF's most ambitious projects is a long-term agreement with the Champaign County Forest Preserve to restore a 30-acre savanna at the Middle Fork Forest Preserve.

Today GPF stewards 11 prairie remnants of approximately 75 acres of tallgrass prairie. An example is Pellville Cemetery—a one-acre site filled with dense stands of big bluestem, needle grass, and Indian grass as well as such uncommon forbs as leadplant, prairie clover, downy gentian, white and cream false indigo.

Education

Each year, GPF conducts field trips to local prairies. The group also sponsors lectures and workshops on such topics as propagation of prairie plants, landscaping with native plants, prairie wildlife, and the origin of the prairie.

GPF sponsors the Central Illinois Prairie Conference (1985, 1988, 1991, 1994), which includes technical and non-technical presentations on prairie ecology, management, reconstruction, and culture. The next conference is slated for the year 1999 and every five years thereafter.

For teachers, GPF has held day-long, hands-on workshops on prairie ecology and plant propagation. Teachers are given "prairie kits" to use in their classrooms. The workshops were developed with funds from a grant provided by the Illinois Department of Conservation. Several schools have native prairie gardens which they use as outdoor laboratories.

In 1994, GPF started a summer internship program for college students interested in natural lands management. Interns learn management techniques to control exotic and woody species in natural areas and participate in site work days. Interns can also earn college credit.

www.prairienet.org/gpf/

How can you help preserve Illinois' prairie heritage?

By joining Grand Prairie Friends you will be supporting efforts to protect and restore prairie in east-central Illinois. You will meet others who are working to ensure that Illinois' prairie heritage will be enjoyed for generations to come.

Also, as a member you will receive GPF's newsletter, which is filled with notices of tours, lectures, meetings, work dates for the prairie sites, and announcements of legislation or other developments that affect prairie preservation efforts.

Yes! I want to join Grand Prairie Friends and preserve Illinois tallgrass prairie!

I have enclosed my tax deductible donation indicated below:

___$15 Student/low income ___$ 50 Patron
___$20 Individual ___$100 Benefactor
___$25 Family ___~~$200~~ Lifetime $500
___$35 Sustaining ___Other donation amount

Please make your check payable to Grand Prairie Friends or GPF. Grand Prairie Friends is an Illinois non-profit organization. Your gift is tax deductible.

Name_____

Adress_____

City_____State_____Zip_____

Phone (home)_____ (work) _____

E-mail address_____

Mail to: Grand Prairie Friends of Illinois, P.O. Box 36, Urbana, IL 61803-0036

You may also remember GPF in your will. Your gift will be used to carry out the mission of preserving and restoring tallgrass prairie in east-central Illinois.

Your involvement is needed!

Volunteers are needed to guarantee that prairies in east-central Illinois will survive. A few hours of your time can make a tremendous difference. Please indicate how you could participate.

- ☐ Plant identification and seed collection
- ☐ Seed cleaning and seed stratification
- ☐ Seeding and transplanting for annual plant sales
- ☐ Spring and fall burns
- ☐ Plant sales in May and June
- ☐ School prairie gardens
- ☐ Legal counsel on real estate
- ☐ Business management skills
- ☐ Graphic arts and photography skills
- ☐ Educational programs
- ☐ Publicity and fund-raising skills
- ☐ Scrapbook and quilt

Please note the following:

- Dogs must be leashed at all times.
- Hiking is permitted only on the temporary road encircling Sunset Lake until further notice.
- Alcohol, camping and hunting are all prohibited.

Fishing:

- Fishing with minnows or other live bait is prohibited. Worms are allowed.
- Bank fishing is allowed in designated areas only.
- Only two poles and lines with no more than two hooks or lures attached to each are allowed.

Boating:

- Until a permanent parking area is constructed, it is necessary to carry boats from the temporary lot to the lake, a distance of about 1/4 mile.
- Electric trolling motors, kayaks and canoes are allowed. Sailboats & motorized boats are not.

To Protect the Water From Exotic Species:

- Boats with gasoline engines mounted on them are not allowed.
- Boats with built-in livewells are not allowed.
- Boaters are requested not to launch any boat that has been in the Illinois River, the Wabash River, or the Great Lakes within five days prior to their visit to River Bend.
- Boaters are requested to check their boats, trailers, trolling motors, etc. to make sure no vegetative matter is clinging to them before placing their boats in the lake.

Important Information About Gates:

Weather conditions may affect the daily opening of the gates. The general rule for opening the gates until a permanent road can be constructed is the gates will not be opened on days when snow is on the ground and when the preserve road is too wet for traffic.

Because the current, temporary road is basically dirt, it rcannot be plowed. Also, during wet conditions, the road may be too soft for vehicles. During these conditions, the gates will not be open to traffic. The preserve will still be open, but for pedestrians only. This will be in effect until the District has a permanent road, which is in the development plans over the next two years. People with questions should call District Headquarters at 217-586-3360 prior to their visit.

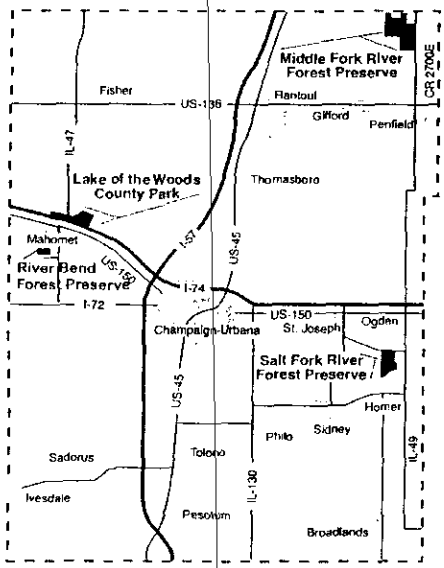
Now Open...

River Bend Forest Preserve

Champaign County's fourth forest preserve!

This beautiful 275-acre preserve in south Mahomet contains approximately 130 acres of clear water in two lakes, one of which is now the largest public lake in Champaign County, and 2.5 miles of forest along the Sangamon River.

Outdoor enthusiasts can fish, bird-watch, hike and canoe on the property, which is now open on a limited basis. Thanks to a grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, we are currently developing the property to include several miles of educational hiking and bicycle trails with interpretive signage; a boat ramp, accessible dock and fishing pier; picnic shelter and restrooms; and an access road and parking area.



Directions

From Champaign-Urbana, take I-72 west to Route 47. Go north on Route 47 for 3-1/2 miles to Mid America Road (look for brown River Bend sign). Turn left (west) and follow road past Mid America Sand & Gravel entrance to River Bend entrance.

Champaign County Forest Preserve District
www.ccfpd.org

ROOM SCHEDULE

Keynote Speaker

Theatre	Roger Anderson

Concurrent Sessions

D151	Looking at All of the Pieces
D145	People in the Landscape
D144	Healing the Land
D218	The Plant Component
D230	The Animal Component
D231	Teaching the Next Gen.

Workshops

D218	Nancy Freehafer
D145	Mandi Whitener
D105	Carrie Nixon
D144	Michael Jeffords

Other

D244	Art, Auction, Exhibits, Food

Isn't It Grand!

by Mary Kay Solecki

EARLY IN THE MORNING, THE SUN SLOWLY ASCENDS A HILL CREST, REVEALING SEVERAL WOOD DUCKS PADDLING IN A BROAD, SHALLOW POND RIMMED BY LOW HILLS OF GENTLY ROLLING PRAIRIE. The sun's glow illuminates flowers of purple and gold scattered like gemstones in the grass. This is Bonnie's Prairie, one of the prairie lands protected or cared for by the Grand Prairie Friends of Illinois, a nonprofit organization composed of volunteers who share a commitment to preserving and restoring tallgrass prairie in east-central Illinois.

PREVIOUS PAGE: WESTERN SUNFLOWER AT BONNIE'S PRAIRIE. LEFT: PICKERELWEED AT THE EDGE OF THE SAND POND AT BONNIE'S PRAIRIE.

Looking out at the beauty and tranquillity of Bonnie's Prairie, you can understand the passion stirred by native prairies, a passion for the life and beauty found in these special places. You could not name all the types of life found here if you tried. But you can enjoy the rustle of native grasses as they bob in the wind, the bright purple blooms of spiderwort, the trill of frogs, the whir of katydids, and the flight of wood ducks as they lift off the pond. You can do this, thanks to Grand Prairie Friends.

Grand Prairie Friends (GPF) was founded in 1984 when a group of dedicated people from the Champaign-Urbana area banded together to protect and restore native prairie in east-central Illinois. The group takes its name from the central part of Illinois known as the Grand Prairie. This is the heart of Illinois that was cloaked with a prairie so vast, rich, and luxuriant that it became known as nothing less than the "Grand Prairie." GPF saves prairies through acquisition and management, organizes prescribed burns, grows and plants native tallgrass prairie species, and generates interest in prairies through a variety of educational programs.

Saving and Restoring East-central Illinois Prairies

Grand Prairie Friends is actively involved in preserving and managing over a dozen prairie remnants that total about 70 acres. For most of these sites, GPF provides a volunteer steward who cares for the site. The site stewards take primary responsibility for site-management activities and lead volunteer work parties. Controlling invasive plants is an ongoing focus at most sites; and the more hands involved, the more effective the control efforts. Site stewards are rewarded with an in-depth knowledge and appreciation of "their" prairies and a deep sense of satisfaction for their accomplishments. For the past 5 years, GPF has hired two summer interns, who also provide vital stewardship work while gaining an education in tallgrass prairie conservation and management.

Grand Prairie Friends acquired its first prairie in 1984 when prairie along an abandoned railroad right-of-way in Champaign County came up for sale. GPF bought the abandoned railroad, now known as Shortline Railroad Prairie, to protect and restore the prairie. Shortline Railroad Prairie

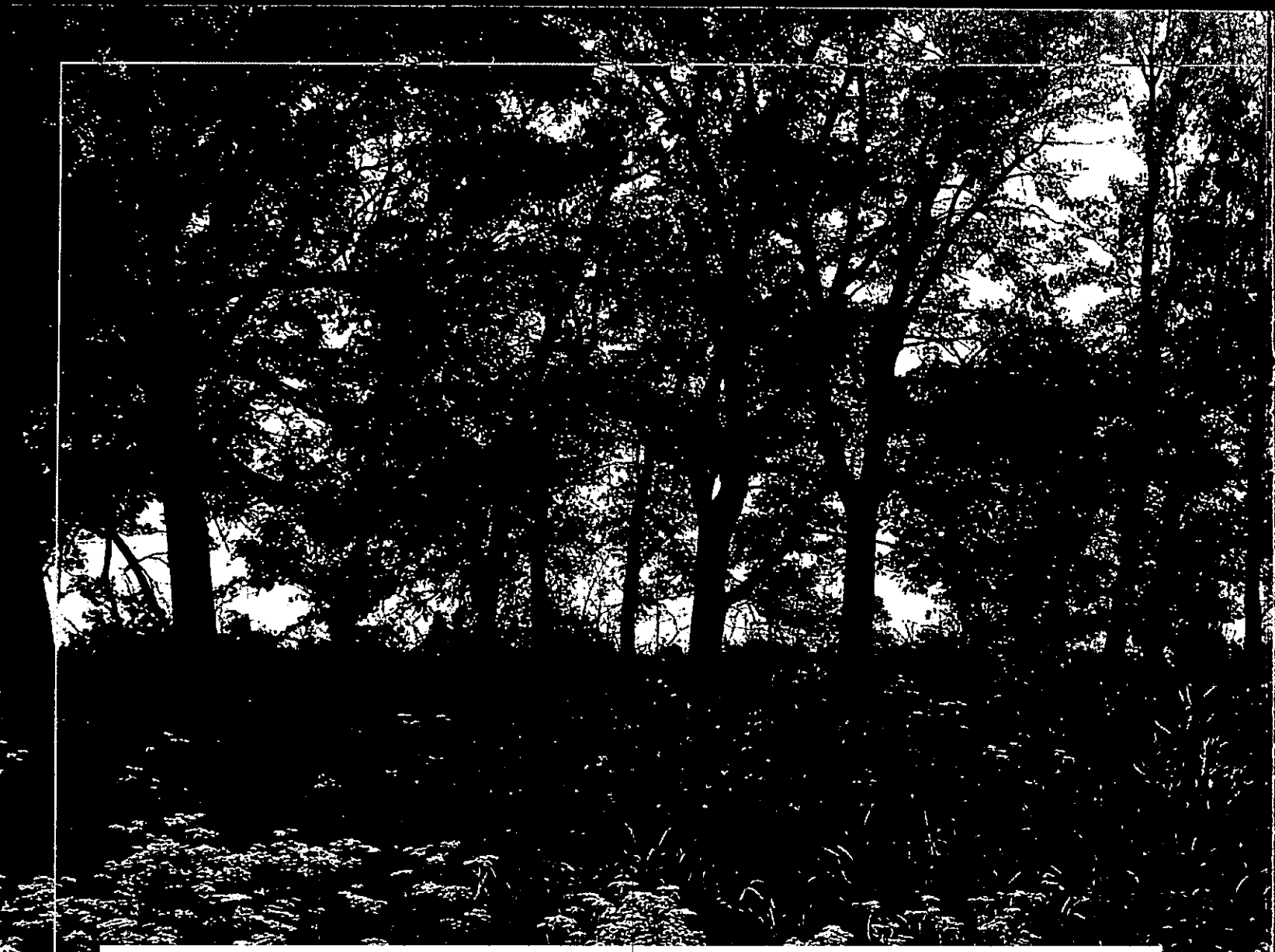
BACKGROUND PHOTO: PRAIRIE BLAZING-STAR. INSETS, STARTING AT UPPER LEFT, CLOCKWISE: ROUGH BLAZING-STAR, NEW JERSEY TEA, SPIDERWORT, PRAIRIE WHITE-FRINGED ORCHID, AND COMPASS PLANT.

harbors 6 acres of prairie along a 1-mile walking trail that is open for hiking and nature observation year round.

The group also owns Bonnie's Prairie, a 10.5-acre high-quality sand prairie and pond just north of Watseka. The prairie was purchased from Bud Peters of Watseka in 1992 and named in honor of his late wife Bonnie, who enjoyed the prairie immensely and wanted it preserved. Bonnie's Prairie contains a wide variety of wildflowers and grasses common in sand prairies, such as hairy puccoon, goat's rue, prairie phlox, and little bluestem. The pond hosts numerous wetland species, including some uncommon examples like pickerelweed and a bur reed. Here, you also can find several rare insect species that are found in only a few other places in Illinois.

Grand Prairie Friends is actively involved in several prairie restorations. The group partnered with the Champaign County Forest Preserve District to restore a 30-acre complex of prairie, savanna, and wetlands at Middle Fork Forest Preserve in northeast Champaign County. Underground field tiles were broken in 1990, allowing the return of natural water flow and wetland vegetation. GPF members planted surrounding upland areas with locally collected seed of native prairie and savanna plants.

In 1999, GPF and the Champaign County Forest Preserve District teamed again to begin creation of the Buffalo Trace Prairie, located in the Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve near Mahomet. There, the Forest Preserve District owns 279 acres of open space with a popular 3.5-mile hiking and biking trail winding through it. Forest Preserve District staff conduct controlled burns to encourage growth of native plants on the former cropland and pasture. They have planted 4 acres of prairie, using a diverse mix of native seed donated by GPF. The planting is along the bike path for maximum visibility, and the Forest Preserve District will place interpretive signs along the path to educate people who might not otherwise visit a prairie. Phil Hult and Gail Snowdon of Mahomet, two long-time prairie enthusiasts and GPF members, have been a driving force behind GPF involvement and activity at this site (see sidebar). Plans are to plant more prairie each year until the entire 279 acres is awash again with its former prairie splendor.



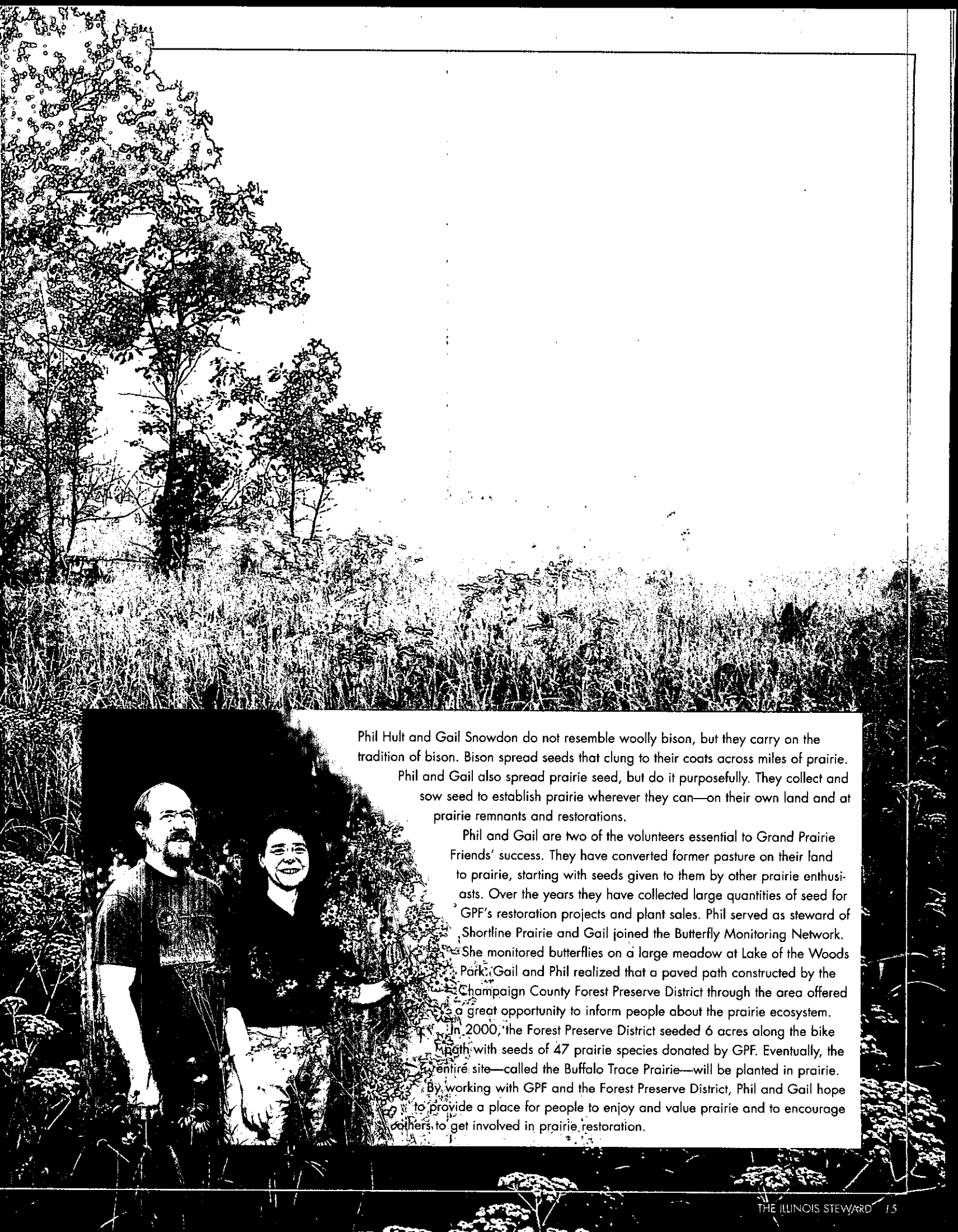
American feverfew in bloom at Prospect Cemetery Prairie Nature Preserve

For many years, GPF has helped with stewardship at other prairies as well. The group provides volunteers for stewardship at a large prairie restoration owned by the Urbana Park District in Meadowbrook Park, Urbana. GPF volunteers also help manage Loda and Prospect Cemetery prairies, two of the finest tallgrass prairie remnants in Illinois. These prairies were originally set aside as parts of pioneer cemeteries and survived the plow as a result. Today they are protected as Illinois Nature Preserves.

Spreading the Word

Teaching others about prairies is one of the most important activities of GPF. Volunteers lead field trips to prairie preserves and sponsor workshops or talks on topics such as gardening with prairie plants, growing prairie plants, wildlife of the prairies, and prairie ecology. For schoolteachers, GPF has offered hands-on workshops on prairie ecology and plant propagation, sponsored in part by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

An unusual means of spreading the word about our prairie heritage is an extraordinarily beautiful quilt created by GPF members that is filled with images of prairie flowers, animals, and scenes. The prairie quilt is a traveling exhibit and educational tool that has been displayed at museums and libraries throughout Illinois. Sharon Monday-Dorsey, a GPF member from Urbana, coordinated the quilt project; and Jackie Worden, an artist, librarian, and GPF member from Charleston, designed the quilt. The two women were joined by over 40 other people who cut quilt blocks, sewed images, and pieced the quilt together. The quilt contains a cornucopia of prairie life, such as badger, bobolink, buffalo, dragonfly, Indian grass, royal catchfly, and spiderwort, rendered with a variety of techniques, including beadwork, applique, and embroidery. Begun in 1994, the quilt took thousands of hours to complete. The Indian grass block alone took over 80 hours of intricate embroidery, and the careful observer can find at least one bloodstain caused by a pinprick to a sewer's finger.



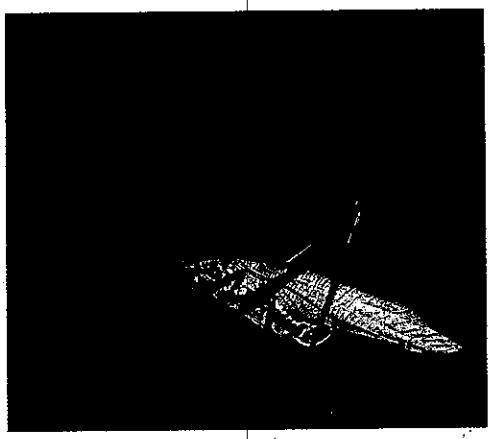
Phil Hult and Gail Snowdon do not resemble woolly bison, but they carry on the tradition of bison. Bison spread seeds that clung to their coats across miles of prairie. Phil and Gail also spread prairie seed, but do it purposefully. They collect and sow seed to establish prairie wherever they can—on their own land and at prairie remnants and restorations.

Phil and Gail are two of the volunteers essential to Grand Prairie Friends' success. They have converted former pasture on their land to prairie, starting with seeds given to them by other prairie enthusiasts. Over the years they have collected large quantities of seed for GPF's restoration projects and plant sales. Phil served as steward of Shortline Prairie and Gail joined the Butterfly Monitoring Network. She monitored butterflies on a large meadow at Lake of the Woods Park. Gail and Phil realized that a paved path constructed by the Champaign County Forest Preserve District through the area offered a great opportunity to inform people about the prairie ecosystem.

In 2000, the Forest Preserve District seeded 6 acres along the bike path with seeds of 47 prairie species donated by GPF. Eventually, the entire site—called the Buffalo Trace Prairie—will be planted in prairie.

By working with GPF and the Forest Preserve District, Phil and Gail hope to provide a place for people to enjoy and value prairie and to encourage others to get involved in prairie restoration.

WILD HYACINTH



ANGULAR-WINGED KATYDID

FLOWERING SPURGE

PICKERELWEED

Places Grand Prairie Friends Protects or Manages

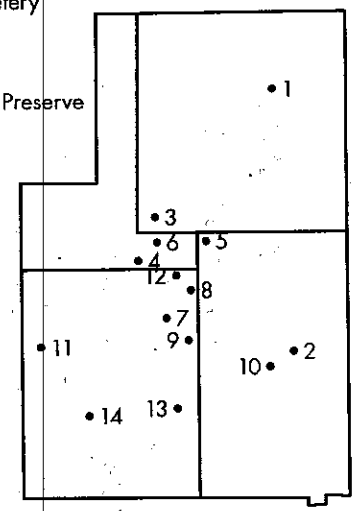
Grand Prairie Friends preserves or manages more than a dozen prairies in Champaign, Ford, Iroquois, and Vermilion counties.

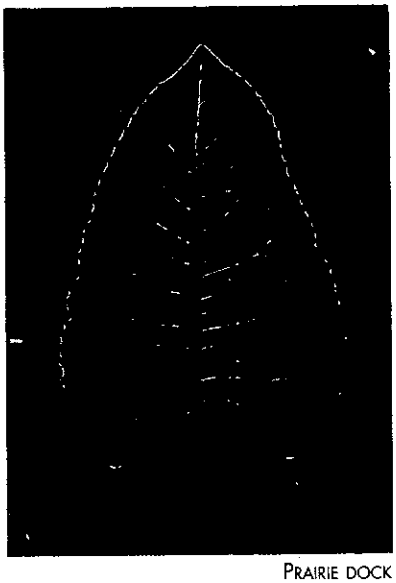
Native Prairie Remnants

1. Bonnie's Prairie Nature Preserve
2. Fairchild Cemetery Savanna Nature Preserve
3. Loda Cemetery Prairie Nature Preserve
4. Paxton Railroad Prairie
5. Pellville Cemetery Prairie
6. Prospect Cemetery Prairie Nature Preserve
7. Shortline Railroad Prairie
8. Tomlinson Pioneer Cemetery Prairie Nature Preserve
9. Welles Cemetery Prairie
10. Windfall Prairie Nature Preserve

Prairie Reconstructions and Plantings

11. Buffalo Trace Prairie Reconstruction
12. Middle Fork Wetland Restoration
13. Prairie Propagation Garden
14. Windsor Road Prairie Reconstruction



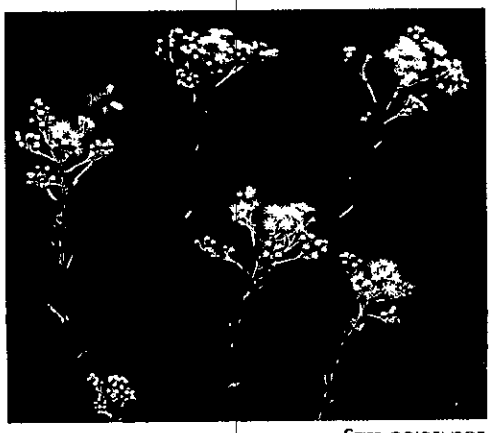


PRAIRIE DOCK

ROSINWEED

WILD BERGAMOT

BUTTERFLY MILKWEED



STIFF GOLDENROD

BLACK-EYED SUSAN

BACKGROUND PHOTO: PRAIRIE PHLOX. INSETS, STARTING AT UPPER LEFT, CLOCKWISE: PALE PURPLE CONEFLOWER, SHOOTING-STAR, OBEDIENT PLANT, AND SPOTTED BEE BALM.

A popular and important educational and fund-raising activity is the prairie plant sale held in spring and summer each year in Urbana. Group members grow hundreds of native prairie plants from locally collected seed and sell plants to the community. Prairie plants are quite popular for home gardens. The plant sales provide many native wildflowers and grasses that are not readily available, while promoting landscaping with native plants. Better yet, funds from the plant sales are used to hire summer interns who work closely with volunteer stewards to manage prairie remnants and reconstructions. Plant buyers walk away with native plants for their yards and the knowledge that they have invested in the upkeep of native prairie remnants.

Perhaps the crown of the educational programs established by GPF is the Central Illinois Prairie Conference held every few years. This conference is geared for people interested in learning more about prairies, whether they are novices, experts, or somewhere in between. The conference features a day of talks on topics such as prairie ecology, management, reconstruction, and culture, followed by a day of field trips to various prairies. The 6th Central Illinois Prairie Conference will be held at Parkland College, Champaign, on September 20 and 21, 2003.

Volunteers—the Roots of Action

Grand Prairie Friends is composed of and run entirely by volunteers, with an elected board. Three professional biologists serve as advisors to the board on conservation and scientific issues.

Each board member contributes abundant time, energy, and expertise. Jim Payne was a founding member of GPF in 1984 and returned as a board member several years ago, currently serving as the group's treasurer. He has a deep sense of the need to conserve natural areas. A business owner, Jim uses that background to help manage group finances and acquire prairie land. He is keenly interested in the history of surveying and has learned useful skills while participating in surveys of historically important tracts of land. These skills are put to use in the nuts and bolts of saving prairies by purchasing them and then carefully and accurately marking boundaries, an important step in preventing adverse intrusions onto prairie preserves.

BACKGROUND PHOTO: RATTLESNAKE MASTER. INSETS, LEFT TO RIGHT: LEADPLANT, WILD BLUE IRIS, AND DOWNY GENTIAN.

The tallgrass prairie, a jewel of the North American continent, once covered millions of acres, but in less than 200 years in Illinois it has been reduced to scattered parcels—mere acres along derelict railroad rights-of-way and almost forgotten pioneer cemeteries.

However, these relicts are incredibly important. They remind us of what once was, and they serve as our best benchmarks to measure the successes and failures of our restoration and reconstruction efforts. Many of these remnants are now in the hands of volunteer stewards such as Grand Prairie Friends. May the sun, wind, and rain that once washed these prairies of the past bless their efforts.

Mary Kay Solecki is a field representative with the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission. Photos were taken by Michael R. Jeffords, Robert J. Reber, Ryan T. Reber, and Mary Kay Solecki on lands managed by Grand Prairie Friends.

Reprinted by permission of The Illinois Steward *magazine.*

How can you help this preservation effort? By becoming a Grand Prairie Friend, you will join over 120 other members who work to protect and restore tallgrass prairie in east-central Illinois. GPF welcomes all types of support, whether it is a financial contribution or the gift of time and energy to help these critically important remnants of our natural heritage. Memberships vary from $10 per year for a student or fixed-income individual to $500 for a life member; but most people become individual or family members, at $20 and $25, respectively. Membership provides a subscription to the quarterly newsletter, *A Prairie Rendezvous*, with articles on prairie issues, upcoming events and work dates, and legislative or political developments that affect prairies. To join GPF, visit the group's Web site at http://www.prairienet.org/gpf, e-mail them at gpf@prairienet.org, or write to Grand Prairie Friends, P.O. Box 36, Urbana, IL 61803-0036. Working together, a dedicated group of "friends" can ensure that future generations will be able to experience Illinois' rich prairie heritage.


Prairie Restoration:
Heritage or outrage?
Craig A. Miller
Illinois Natural History Survey


Prairie Insects


Prairie Moon
Nursery


Bid at the silent
auction to support GPI


CHAMPAIGN COUNTY
AUDUBON SOCIETY
CURRENT EVENTS
FRAGIL


Lake Edge Enhancement System
• Alleviates waterfowl problems
• Reduces shoreline erosion
Seasons of

Silent Auction