

**Continuing Public Education about Native Plants Through the
Addition of a Summer “Wildflower Walk” Guide**

Project Final Report (#14-013W)

Submitted to IDNR by Chris Benda, INPS Southern Chapter President

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public lands and will be easily accessible. The guide gives details about the trails in the areas, maps of how to get there, and which native species can be viewed. In addition, this guide gives a brief picture-guide to 15 common summer wildflower species.

Approximately 3,000 copies of this guide were printed and are being made available for free at INPS events and meetings, local nature centers, extension offices, and other locations. A pdf version has been created and will be shared online.

Previously this information was not readily available, limiting people's ability to locate and utilize these valuable recreation opportunities. By providing this guide for free, we will enhance the educational and recreational opportunities for viewing summer wildflowers in southern Illinois, increasing public interest in natural resources and native species. Having printed copies of this resource is important to allow us to easily disseminate the information at meetings and to allow people to take the guide with them to the viewing areas.

Summary of Project Activities

Introduction

Increasing the public's knowledge and appreciation of native species can greatly benefit native plant and wildlife species in Illinois. Access to places to hike and enjoy native species is critical to enhancing one's knowledge and appreciation. However, many Illinois citizens do not know where the best places to go to view natural areas and native species. Having a guide that informs readers about the best places to view summer wildflowers can serve as an important tool to allow people to better experience nature and learn about native species.

Materials and Methods

The SINPS chose seven sites to highlight in this guide:

1. Bell Smith Springs, Shawnee National Forest
2. Cave Creek Glade, Cache River State Natural Area, IDNR
3. Garden of the Gods Wilderness, Shawnee National Forest
4. Indian Kitchen Trail, Lusk Creek Wilderness, Shawnee National Forest
5. Piney Creek Ravine Trail, Piney Creek Ravine State Nature Preserve, IDNR
6. Simpson Township Barrens Area, Shawnee National Forest
7. Stoneface Trail, Shawnee National Forest
- 8.

Each trail was visited and photos were taken and species list developed. The guide was drafted using Scribus Publishing Software. This guide included an introduction, that talks about the ecology and importance of summer wildflowers, give information on how to use the guide, thanks the WPF program, and gives a note on invasive plants.

Each trail includes a map, GPS coordinates for the trail head, difficulty rating, total mileage, a list of notable wildflower species, driving directions, and a written description of the trail. Pictures of the trail

- Rend Lake Visitor's Center, Benton, IL

University of Illinois

- Williamson County Extension Office, Marion, IL
- Jackson County Extension Office, Murphysboro, IL
- Illinois Forest Resource Center, Dixon Springs Ag Center, Simpson, IL
- Master Naturalist Training Program

Other Locations

- INPS Meeting, Carbondale, IL
- Marion Public Library, Marion, IL
- Carbondale Public Library, Carbondale, IL
- Clifftop Alliance, Maeystown, IL

In addition, in May, the authors plan to give a presentation on this wildflower guide in Carbondale.

Discussion

The SINPS is very pleased with the final booklet. This guide will definitely increase public awareness and knowledge about native summer wildflowers and will contribute to an increased appreciation of southern Illinois natural areas and an increased desire by the public to preserve and protect our native species and natural areas. Together with last year's Spring Wildflower Hike Guide, SINPS is provided the citizens of southern Illinois with great information about native species and natural areas in southern Illinois.

Budget Details

Budget Summary/Category	Funds Expended	Grant Funds Requested	Cost Share
Personnel	\$800.00		\$800
Travel			
Equipment			
Materials/Supplies			
Contractual Services			
Other (printing costs)	\$1541.32	\$1500.00	\$41.32
Subtotals		\$1500.00	\$841.32
Total	\$2,341.32		

The project went slightly over budget due to the cost of printing. The SINPS made up this extra cost by increasing through a cash contributions to the project of \$41.32. In addition, though we estimated \$800 in in-kind contributions (40 hours time to develop the guide), in actuality the SINPS board volunteered much more time to develop this guide. Actual WPF grant funds expended match the amount requested form WPF.