



QUARTERLY

SPRING • 1982

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APRIL 24

Northern Indiana Natural Area Conference

In conjunction with the Spring meeting of the Indiana Academy of Science, ACRES, as co-sponsor, invites you to broaden your understanding of rare plants, animals and natural communities and what can be done to preserve them.

and

Field

Day

TO BE HELD AT GALVIN LIFE SCIENCE CENTER
UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME
SOUTH BEND, INDIANA

REGISTRATION AT 8:30 AM EST

The morning program starts at 9:00 AM EST and will include ten presentations including papers on PRAIRIE AND SAVANNA COMMUNITIES OF NORTHWEST INDIANA, FENS, RARE PLANTS, NON-GAME WILDLIFE PROGRAM and more.

AFTERNOON FIELD TRIPS Each person to choose one.

- A** BENDIX WOODS NATURE PRESERVE AND SPICER LAKE NATURE PRESERVE IN SOUTH BEND AREA.
- B** INDIANA DUNES NATIONAL LAKESHORE, PINHOOK BOG, MT. BALDY AND THE INLAND MARSH.
- C** MERRY LEA NATURAL AREA AT MERRY LEA ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER NEAR WOLF LAKE, NOBLE COUNTY.

ACRES members planning to attend should meet at Fortmeyer's (By-Pass 30 and I-69) at 6:15 AM to car-pool for this trip.

BRING: Your lunch, boots, rain gear and warm clothes.

There is no charge for this event, but you must pre-register no later than April 15. USE THE FORM BELOW AND MAIL TO ACRES.

PRE-REGISTRATION FORM

Name _____ Field Trip Preference:
Address _____ A. _____ B. _____ C. _____
Phone _____

- ☐ Check if you will car-pool.
☐ Check if you want overnight or camping information.

Mail to: ACRES, Inc.
1802 Chapman Road
Huntertown, IN 46748

Spring Calendar '82



SUNDAY MAY 2

LONIDAW "Spirit of the Woods" will be formally dedicated as a State Nature Preserve.

The ceremony will begin at 2:00 PM. Meet at the Reserve entrance off Lonidaw Road (1000E) - follow arrows for parking cars.

Tours of Lonidaw will follow the dedication.

Robert Orr, Governor of Indiana; James Ridenour, Director, Dept. of Natural Resources and John Bacone, Director, Division of Nature Preserves have been asked to participate in the celebration.

The Lonidaw Purchase Project Committee of ACRES will host the day. Join them in celebration.

SATURDAY MAY 15 WORK DAY THE ROPCHAN WILDLIFE REFUGE Steuben County

Meet: at the Golden Dome Bank on Coliseum Blvd. at 8:30 AM or go directly to the Refuge.

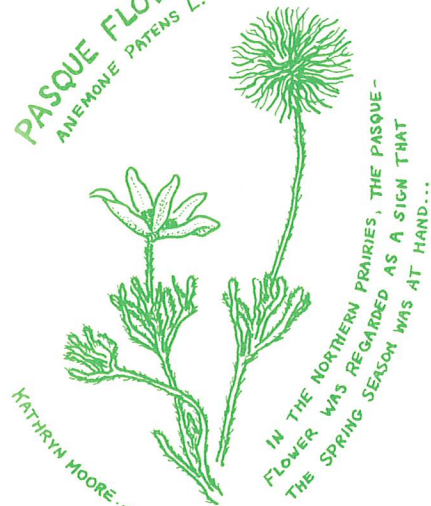
BRING: Your lunch, loppers, rakes, work gloves, boots.

Field trip following in afternoon for those wishing to participate.

Questions: Call ACRES office 637-6264

QUARTERLY COVER ARTIST is Janet Carol Stiles, an Elementary Education Instructor at Indiana State University, Terre Haute. This copper etching, given to Bob Weber when Janet was a South Side student, is an especially fitting Spring cover. Janet's grandmother, Myrtle G. Hines, and husband, John Stiles are long time ACRES activists.

PASQUE FLOWER
ANEMONE PATENS L.



IN THE NORTHERN PRAIRIES, THE PASQUE-FLOWER WAS REGARDED AS A SIGN THAT THE SPRING SEASON WAS AT HAND...

KATHRYN MOORE...

PRAIRIE BEGINNINGS

Written & illustrated by Kathryn Moore

Along U.S.20 in Indiana, there is a town called "Brushy Prairie". Somewhere close by there is a High School named "Prairie Heights". Further down the road in Springfield, Ill., there is a "Prairie Capitol Convention Center". A small town nearby is simply called "Bell-flower", and PRAIRIE FARMER is a newspaper for area farmers. Prairie surrounds us, in names, in thoughts of times past . . . and present.

The word "prairie" was French, meaning meadow. The first Europeans to see large grasslands near Chicago were French explorers. They had no other experience of such expanses of grassland, so they used their word

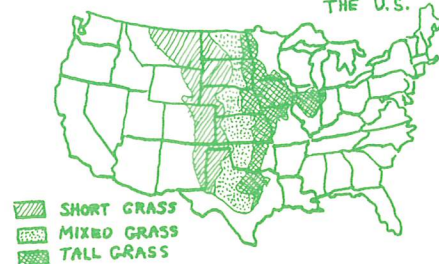
for 'meadow', which was PRAIRIE. Starting in the year 1632, Jesuit missionaries were to report each year describing their activities and territory in which the mission was situated. On one of Pere Marquette's expeditions in 1673, there was the first written account of the prairie in Illinois. As seen from the Illinois River, he writes:

"We have seen nothing like this river that we enter as regards its fertility of soil, its prairies and woods, its cattle, elk, deer, wild cats, bustards, swans, ducks, perroquets and even beaver."

What are some facts about the prairies? A Virgin Prairie is a prairie untouched by plowing and overgrazing and in a pristine state. A Degraded Prairie is modified in some way by man or domestic animals and contains both prairie plants and introduced, weedy plants. There are many types of prairies in North America and throughout the world. The simplest way to remember the major areas in the United States are the SHORT GRASS, MIXED GRASS and TALL GRASS areas. And as the areas suggest, the prairie vegetation is taller in the more moist soil conditions of the eastern part, and very short low plants exist on the dry areas of the western high plains. Each of these types vary according to soil types and moisture. We, here in Indiana, are in the TALL Grass area.

What keeps a prairie a prairie is not solely, as one would assume, the climate or the soil. Fire was the key to perpetuating the prairie. Indians set many of these fires, and some were caused naturally. Fire does not injure the true prairie plants, but tree seedlings and woody plants can not survive the prairie fires.

* ORIGINAL RANGE OF MAJOR PRAIRIE TYPES IN THE U.S.



SHORT GRASS
MIXED GRASS
TALL GRASS



PRAIRIE CONEFLOWER
ECHINACEA PALLIDA

There are over 200 different species of plants found in the midwestern prairies and more than 45 different plant families are represented. Most of the plants are relatively long-lived perennials. There are five types of soils in prairie areas. Most of these areas are relatively flat, mesic prairies with good drainage. There are the sand prairies, the dry prairies of rocky and gravelly knolls; and the wet prairies or swales or poorly drained areas. Last is the wet alkaline fen prairie found in low areas.

A virgin prairie remnant might have 14 to 18 inches of top soil while surrounding cultivated fields might have less than 10 inches. Not until the invention of the steel-moldboard plow could farmers plow through the virgin prairie with ease. Before that, a special plow was needed, so large that it took 8 to 10 yoke of oxen to drag it through the unbroken sod.

Once the prairie was turned into farmland, the beauty, diversity and vast expanse of the prairie lands were destroyed forever!

INDIANA PRAIRIES

There might be a prairie remnant near you. There are several in my county. One, a hill prairie where Indian Paintbrush, Prairie Dock, Grass-of-Parnassus, Golden Gromwell, Lady-Slipper-Orchids and Big Blue Stem grass abound! Springs flow out of the hillside....rare mosses skrit the top. There is another place, quite different, along an abandoned railroad right-of-way. In the fall, I found Culver's Root, Big Bluestem, Blazingstars, Thimbleweed, Knapweed and others. The hill prairie remains because the high bluff makes it impossible to cultivate; and the railroad area retained the prairie plants because of frequent burnings. Many summer roadside flowers are prairie plants. Butterfly Milkweed, goldenrods and all types of sunflowers are examples. Will wonders never end....prairies still remain all around us!

The following is a list of four Indiana prairies preserved by the state. The best example, and the largest, is the Hoosier Prairie.

- * Little Blue Stem Prairie - Vigo County near Terre Haute. A degraded prairie type.
- * Donaldson Cave State Nature Preserve - Within Spring Mill State Park near Mitchell. Six acres, above a cave on a high, dry slope.
- * Hoosier Prairie - Lake Co. near Merrillville. This sandy type prairie contains 304 acres.
- * German Methodist Cemetery - Lake Co. This one acre is a black silt-loam prairie.

The Division of Nature Preserves is keeping records of any prairie remnants within 'settlers' cemeteries and railroad right-of-ways. This has been most success-



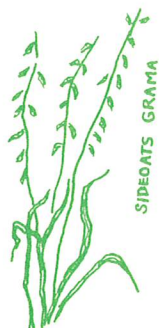
PRAIRIE DOCK
SILPHIUM
TEREBINTHINACEUM



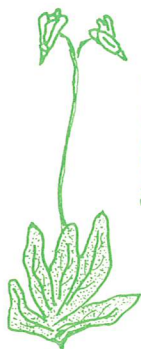
BIG BLUESTEM



SWITCH GRASS



SIDEOTS GRAMA



SHOOTING STAR
DODECATHEON MEDIA L.



LITTLE BLUESTEM

ful in northwestern Indiana, but record keeping has been extended to eastern and southern Indiana also. Any locations along abandoned railroad right-of-ways and old cemeteries, with known prairie plants should be reported to:

The Division of Nature Preserves
Indiana Department of Natural Resources
601 State Office Building
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Report the exact location, size, and types of plants represented. Any locations within the ACRES radius (nine northeastern Indiana counties) should be reported to ACRES, Inc.

No known prairie reconstruction projects are in the making, although one is being planned at Merry Lea Environmental Center for the future. Allen County's Fox Island Natural Area Park has dreams of having a man-made prairie. Any donations of seed would be appreciated.

Perhaps the most rewarding activity is learning to recognize the prairie plants that survive along our roads. Try transplanting a few of these native plants into your own back yard, and make the prairie live for you and others. Remember, these flowers love sunlight and open spaces. Autumn is their favorite season, with yellow and purples stealing the show. You will soon discover more birds and butterflies.

The prairies seem to be explained so often in terms of plants only. Of course, this is the easiest and most obvious. Books have been written about the insect, bird and animal life, fast disappearing, that only a prairie can support. Starting with the buffalo and ending with the tiniest insectit all exists on the prairies - one supporting the other as is true in all nature. Many of these animals, birds and insects have disappeared forever. These five are endangered: Prairie Falcon, Kit Fox, Black-footed Ferret, Attwater's Prairie Chicken and Tule Elk.

The growing interest in prairie preservation and the success of prairie reconstruction projects gives us hope for tomorrow's prairie.

PRAIRIE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Hopefully you have identified a few prairie plants by now. Butterfly Milkweed, goldenrods, sunflowers are everyday! For your future reading about the prairie, here are a few ideas:

* THE LIFE OF PRAIRIES AND PLAINS - Durward L. Allen 1967, McGraw Hill. Note: Durward Allen is a Fort Wayne native. He writes a beautiful background of plants and animals in the prairie. Filled with photographs.

The next two books can be found in the Fort Wayne Public Library.

* THE PRAIRIE - SWELL AND SWALE - Torkel Korling 1972

* TALLGRASS PRAIRIE - THE INLAND SEA - Patricia Duncan 1978

Identification Guides:

* PRAIRIE PRIMER - Stan Nichols and Lynn Entine

* PRAIRIE PLANTS OF ILLINOIS - John Voigt and Robert Mohlenbrock - Illinois Dept. of Conservation

* THE PRAIRIE WORLD - David Costello - 1980 University of Minn. Press

* THE PRAIRIE GARDEN - J.R. and B.S. Smith 1980 University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, Wisc. Note: This book can be found in local book stores. It is especially good for those planting prairie plants in their own garden or for larger restorations.

Also, Willa Cather's novels show her love of the prairie.

* O PIONEERS, MY ANTONIA, ONE OF OURS are a few.

The following are prairie information sources:

Save the Tallgrass Prairie, Inc.

Elaine Shea

4101 W. 54th Terrace

Shawnee Mission, Kansas 66205

Note: Educational & political information.

Prairie Restorations, Inc.

Ron Bowen

807 S. Third St.

Princeton, Minn. 55371

Note: Wildflowers, native grass seeds. Prairie management & restoration planner.

ELKHART RIVER UP-DATE Noble County Commissioners and Surveyor are meeting with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources to work out a memorandum of agreement on a management plan to maintain the natural, free-flowing river resource of the Elkhart River South Branch. It is hoped a draft plan will be available for review yet this spring. This plan will affect the river segment as it flows through the Lloyd W. Bender Nature Preserve and the new 55 acre addition by bequest.

Whether or not the river segment (from River Road to Route 6) will become a designated segment under Indiana's Natural, Scenic and Recreational Rivers Act, depends on the current negotiations and successful agreement.

HB 1192, the Fox/Augsberger Bill to prohibit designation of the South Branch Elkhart River as a segment of Indiana's river preservation system died in conference in the 1982 General Assembly. There has been no move to dismiss the law suit filed October, 1981 against IDNR by the Noble County Commissioners, Noble County Plan Director and several Noble County citizens. The suit asked the scenic river study be enjoined and legal drain status of the river be determined. Legal drain status and jurisdiction of the Commissioners & Surveyor over the river remains questionable.

SPRING membership time

Your membership card is attached. Select the membership category and remit to:

join!

ACRES, INC.
1802 Chapman Road
Huntertown, Indiana 46748

renew!

You fill in the membership card and keep it. Return the address portion with your remittance in the return envelope provided.

Patron \$100; Sustaining \$50; Share-the-Expense \$25; Family \$10; Regular \$5; Senior Citizen \$2; Student \$1.

Be sure and check if you want a receipt or an ACRES brochure. Also available is our wetland guide entitled "Valuing Your Wetlands". If you would like a copy, write "Wetlands" on your return .



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