



Missouri Native Plant Society Hawthorn Chapter Newsletter

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July 2006

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The Hawthorn Chapter of the Missouri Native Plant Society Newsletter is published monthly. To be included in future publications, please send your submissions to:

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Future Activities

July 10: Regular meeting. 7:00 pm at the Unitarian Church, 2615 Shepard Blvd. Frank Gordon, Storm Water Outreach Coordinator, will discuss the Show-me Yards and Neighborhoods program. Randal Clark will receive the Erna R. Eisendrath Memorial Education award. *See Awards section of annual meeting report.*

July 16: Trip to Prairie Garden Trust in Callaway Co to see the prairie and wetland restoration. Meet at MDC on College Ave at 8:00 am, or 8:45 am at PGT. A map is available. Bring a sack lunch.

July 22: Newsletter items are due.

July 23, 24, 25: North American Prairie Conference – Kearney, Neb.

July 27: Lunch with Native Plant Enthusiasts! 11:30 am at the Uprise Bakery, 816 Broadway. All are invited.

August: Trip to Otto Fajens

September 16: Evening Walk in Rocheport and picnic on Marge McDermott's deck.

September 22-24: State Board Meeting – Dexter, MO

October 1: Wreath making and Hawthorn Chapter cookout on Cedar Creek.

October 14: Chestnut Festival at Franklin Farm. 10 – 4 Please plan to help with our booth.

October 15: Painted Rock Hike and lunch at a local Winery.

December 2: State Board Meeting. Dunn-Palmer Herbarium, Columbia, MO.

For more information contact Paula at 573-474-4225

Point of view

Upcoming issue on August 8th ballot

Amendment 1: Parks-and-Soil Sales Tax Renewal Ballot

By Jim Gast

For those of you who do not know me, I am the superintendent at Rock Bridge Memorial State Park. So I have a bias in favor of renewal. And *renewal* is the key word because this is not a tax increase, but rather a vote to extend the current tax another 10 years. The current tax expires in 2008.

The dedicated Parks-and-Soil sales tax is one-tenth of one percent and is split evenly between state parks and soil and water conservation. Seventy-five percent of state parks' operating funds come from the sales tax. It is the main reason why the 83 parks and historic sites do not charge an admission fee to anyone from anywhere. The other 25% of funding comes from user fees such as camping, shelter house rental and tours as well as grants. State parks do not receive any general revenue funds.

State Parks help Missouri's economy. It is estimated that the 17 million annual visitors generate an economic impact of \$538 million. That's money spent not only at state parks, but also in nearby cities and towns at restaurants, hotels, gas stations and other businesses.

Since the tax was first approved in 1984--it has been renewed twice. As a result, over 148 million tons of soil have been protected--cutting erosion in half and thus protecting Missouri's streams and rivers. Sediment is a major pollutant of streams.

Approving the amendment will not only secure funding for these two programs for the next ten years, but will also automatically place the tax on the ballot every 10 years.

The Parks-and-Soil sales tax should not be confused with the 1/8th percent conservation sales tax. That money goes to help fund the efforts of the Conservation Department.

MONPS Annual Meeting and Quarterly State Board Meeting: *Field Trips* June 16-18, 2006; MDC Peck Ranch

The setting for the Annual Meeting and Quarterly State Board Meeting on *June 16-18, 2006* was Peck Ranch, Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) land located in northwest Carter County adjacent to Shannon County. Peck Ranch measure approximately 6 miles by 6 miles (ca. 23,000 acres) and is in the Current River Watershed. Shannon County is one of largest counties but only about 8000 people live there. There is however, large amount of public lands including National Park Service land along the Current River and Jack's Fork. Dan Drees, MDC Wildlife Management Biologist, hosted our stay at Peck Ranch.

On Friday evening, Dan described the human and natural history of the Peck Ranch area. Early on, Peck Ranch was managed as a "turkey factory," around the 1940's many non-native plant species were introduced, today Bachman's Sparrow management is a primary focus. The Peck Ranch area supported areas with black oak and shortleaf pine with little bluestem understory complex prior to early management practices. The area was heavily logged from 1880 to 1920 resulting in a shift from black oak to scarlet oak. Today fire and harvesting practices are employed in the area for restoration of the original complex (Missouri Conservationist Online, 1999).

On Saturday morning we visited a dolomite glade on the ranch and observed a diversity of glade plants. That afternoon, we visited Nancy B. Altvater Shut-In Mountain Fens owned by The Nature Conservancy in adjacent Shannon County. There, we were treated to the rare grass pink and rose pogonia orchids (see pictures in this issue). These orchids appear to be specialist in the dolomite fen, which is a unique plant community formed by a perched water table resulting from an impermeable igneous layer overlaid by a shallow dolomite layer. Minor microtopographic differences (less than 2 feet) in the surface result in a sharp moisture gradient in which glade plants occurred on the higher drier areas of hummocks, the orchids occurred on the slopes with intermediate moisture and the lowest wet areas were mostly bare. This complex of microtopography and moisture created a fascinating community especially for one like myself who had never previously observed a fen.

On Saturday evening, we enjoyed an excellent barbeque careful organized by Sue Hollis. Many thanks to Sue for her skillful choreographing of this event. The Annual Meeting and State Board meeting followed (reports in this issue). A smaller group of people visited a short-leaf pine restoration site on Mark Twain National Forest on Sunday morning. *—Judy Ward*

Missouri Conservationist Online. (1999). Forest community restoration planned at Peck Ranch. Accessed on June 30, 2006 from:

<http://www.mdc.mo.gov/conmag/1999/10/almanac.htm>

Annual Meeting—MONPS June 17, 2006: Peck Ranch, MO

Awards

Jack Harris, chair of the awards committee, announced and read the nomination letter for the two awards given this year. Randal Clark won the Erna R. Eisendrath Memorial Education award for his leadership skills and creative style in sharing the lore of Missouri's flora and natural heritage for over two decades. Nels Homburg won the Arthur Christ Research Award 2006 for his initiative and resourcefulness in conducting botanical surveys, writing studies and raising awareness of the Missouri flora in academic, public and private venues. Thanks to the awards committee: Jack Harris, Larry Morrison, and Judy Turner.

Summary of past year's activities

- Since our last annual meeting, we've visited Prairie State Park (Fall) and Roaring River State Park (Spring). Our current meeting is at MDC's Peck Ranch (Summer).
- The local chapters have been involved in a diversity of native plant educational and advocacy projects.
- We've sent Jack Harris and Rex Hill as representatives to serve on the Wild Areas Advisor Committee.
- We continue to produce the *Petal Pusher* (thanks to Betty Walters); website (Robin Kennedy), and *Missouriensis* (George Yatskievych).

Treasurer's Report

For the previous year, total income was \$6,175.15 and expenses were \$6,301.89, resulting in a net change of -\$126.74. The current total assets are \$26,325.65, approximately half of which is the Hudson Fund for scholarships.

Election

Sherry Leis (Clinton, MDC) replaced Max Towler as a board member.

Upcoming Events

During, our September 22-24 meeting, we will visit Mingo NWR and other areas in SE Missouri. The 2007 trips will be planned at the December meeting in Columbia. Ask your representatives to send ideas for locations, as well as, dates for other events that may conflict with state meetings.

--Judy Ward

MONPS Quarterly State Board Meeting June 17, 2006 Peck Ranch, MO

Membership

Ann Early provided membership stats. We have 11 new members making a total of 325 members.

Chapter Reports

All chapters: Hawthorn, Kansas City, St. Louis, Osage Plains, and Ozark were represented. The chapters have had a busy spring with plant sales and educational events, as well as collaborations and some restoration efforts.

Society Business and Announcements

- We decided to bypass the partnership with Great Rivers Habitat Alliance.
- We are considering a possible donation for seed money to Tom Aley's Ozark Underground Laboratory; Paul McKenzie will gather more information about their project and needs.
- The next state board meeting will be in SE Missouri from September 22-24. We will stay in Dexter. Tim Smith is working on ideas of where to visit.
- Rex Hill is continuing to talk to Seeds of Success folks in Chicago
- An individual in Springfield has contacted the state about starting a new chapter. Rex Hill has provided her with local contacts and offer of help.
- Four fact sheets are now available from the State website: they are (1) Native Plants, (2) Responsible Buying, (3) Butterfly Gardening, and (4) Native Shrubs and Small Trees. An additional fact sheet about Invasive Plants is still in the works.
- Graham Cave State Park is working on a conceptual development plan for which they will be seeking input. Contact Bruce Schuette for more information. His contact info is provided on back of Petal Pusher.
- We thank Dan Drees and Susan Ferrington for hosting our stay at Peck Ranch

--Judy Ward

Is an electronic newsletter for you?

For those of you who haven't yet signed up for the electronic newsletter. Let me know if you are interested in receiving the newsletter electronically as a PDF file in an email attachment. This option saves paper, funds, and effort.

--Judy Ward, 529-6669; wardjud@gmail.com



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From left to right: Butterfly weed, Grass pink orchid, and Rose pogonia. Photos by Judy Ward

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