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Comments

As I read Congress' Office of Technology Assessment report "Harmful Non-indigenous Species in the United States" I was struck by their advisory panel's fears and hopes for what might lie ahead. If we continue as we are now, their visions include "by the mid-21st century, biological invasions become one of the most prominent ecological issues on Earth...One place looks like the next and no one cares". But if we address the issue now, they see "An appropriate respect for preserving indigenous species becomes a national goal by consensus...Invasions slow to a trickle and fade away like smallpox...Native species are still there in protected reserves". Which shall it be?

Another point made by the report that cries out for immediate Congressional action is the list of federal activities that are categorically excluded from the National Environmental Policy Act. These include all activities of the Soil Conservation Service's Plant Materials Centers. Without assessing environmental impact, these Centers have developed and promoted plants that are now among the most serious threats to Illinois' native plants and natural communities. Amur honeysuckle and autumn olive are prominent examples of problems we have today because of this categorical exclusion. The report suggests that this problem will likely not be corrected without explicit direction from Congress. I think it is time for a change in this policy.

John Schwegman

George Fell Retires

George B. Fell has retired as Director of the Natural Land Institute in Rockford. George's career in nature preservation spans 44 years including such landmark accomplishments as founding The Nature Conservancy and writing and successfully guiding to passage the Illinois Nature Preserves System Act. His conservation legacy is indeed national in scope. He continues to reside in Rockford.

Bob Henry Retires

Dr. Robert Henry, Botanist and Curator of the Herbarium at Western Illinois University has retired. He continues to reside in the Macomb area.

Warren Dewalt to Retire

Warren Dewalt, Executive Director of the Illinois Audubon Society, is retiring effective March 31, 1994. Warren has been an active

proponent of nature conservation in Illinois and has served on the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission. A search is underway for his replacement, who should be on board before April 1.

Staff Changes at TNC

Al Pyot is leaving as Director of the Illinois Chapter of The Nature Conservancy effective December 31, 1993. At this time a replacement for him has not been announced. Deputy Director Paul Dye departed early last summer for another TNC position in the Florida Keys. John Tenberthy was employed last summer as Director of TNC's Cache River project, Bill Kleiman was recently hired as Project Director for Nachusa Grasslands and Dr. Cynthia Olmstead has accepted the position of Science Director for Central Illinois effective January, 1994.

New Personnel at McHenry County Defenders

Jerry Paulson has left the position of Executive Director of the McHenry County Defenders, a post he held since 1985. He is succeeded at the Defenders by Cindy Skrudrud. Paulson is now a consultant.

New Botanists at WIU

Dr. Greg Dieringer and his wife Dr. Leticia Cabrera have joined the staff of Western Illinois University. Both received their PhD degrees from the University of Texas at Austin. Greg is a reproductive biologist/ecologist interested in working on endangered species and Leticia is a taxonomist.

New Staff at Lake County

Jim Anderson has joined the staff of the Lake County Forest Preserve District as Natural Resource Manager. He will coordinate their ecological management and community restoration effort. He indicates he will be adding additional professional staff for the program in the near future.

New Botanist at Survey

Dr. Geoffrey Levin joins the staff of the Illinois Natural History Survey as Systematist in January 1994. A graduate of the University of California at Davis, he comes to Illinois from the San Diego Natural History Museum. His interests include the Euphorbiaceae and cladistics.

New Nature Preserves Staff

The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission has added Randy Heidorn and Carolyn Grosboll to their central staff in Springfield. Randy is heading up preserve management and Carolyn is dealing with protection and defense.

DOC Begins Residency Program

The Department of Conservation's Natural Heritage Division began a new "residency" program December 16, 1993. On that date, three master's degree candidates from the U of I began one year paid internships in nature conservation under the supervision of District Heritage Biologists. Bruce MacAlister will work with Bob Lindsay at Dixon Springs, Anne Mankowski will work with Ed Anderson at Mt. Carroll and Nelson Chueng will work with Bill Glass out of Chicago Heights.

Botanist Heads Academy

At its annual meeting in Carbondale last October, Dr. Bohdan Dziadyk of Augustana College assumed the presidency of the Illinois State Academy of Science. "Bo" is a plant ecologist with a special interest in prairie ecology.

Purple Loosestrife Biocontrol

Illinois is joining many other Midwestern states in funding the culture of two species of leaf beetles that have been approved for release as control agents for purple loosestrife in North America. The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service initiated and is coordinating the program. John Schwegman at DOC is coordinating Illinois' effort. Illinois should receive enough insects for at least 2 releases in northeastern Illinois during the spring of 1994.

Dr. David Voegtlin of the Illinois Natural History Survey is investigating the purple loosestrife biocontrol potential of the exotic aphid Myzus lythri. Long established in North America, this insect periodically does severe damage to loosestrife here, but its annual life cycle requiring alternate host plant species for overwintering seems to limit its control effectiveness in nature. Using funds from the DOC's Nongame Wildlife Conservation Fund, Voegtlin is investigating culture and release of this insect as a control agent.

Biological Pollution

This book contains 21 papers presented at the Indianapolis conference "Biological Pollution: The Control and Impact of Invasive Exotic Species" held in October 1991. A must for those interested in the exotics problem. The hard cover volume costs \$30.00 plus \$2.50 for shipping. Make checks payable to Indiana Academy of Science. Order from Bill McKnight, IAS Publications, 1102 North Butler Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46219.

OTA Exotics Study

Congress' Office of Technology Assessment issued its very informative report "Harmful Non-indigenous Species in the United States" in September, 1993. The 57 page Summary Report is free and

postpaid on request to the OTA Publications Office, U. S. Congress, Washington, DC 20510-8025 (Phone 202/224-8996). The complete 300 page report is \$21.00. Make checks payable to Superintendent of Documents.

Exotic Weed Position Statement

The Weed Science Society of America, Natural Resources Defense Council and Natural Areas Association have adopted a joint position statement titled "Addressing Non-indigenous Invasive Plants in the United States. It makes specific recommendations for amendment of the Federal Noxious Weed Act and encourages weed scientists to become involved in the issue of nonindigenous invasive plants. Copies are free on request to Illinoensis.

Flora of North America

The first two volumes of the Flora of North America are now available. Volume 1 presents introductory essays on the background of the continent north of Mexico such as paleo botany, climatology, vegetation and history of botanical exploration. Volume 2 gives treatments of the pteridophytes and gymnosperms including range maps for each taxon and line drawings of typical species of each genus. Totally new taxonomic treatments of many familiar genera are included. This valuable work is available from Oxford University Press, Biological Sciences Marketing Dept., 200 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016. Cost is \$75.00 plus \$2.50 shipping per volume.

Orchids of Indiana

The long awaited "Orchids of Indiana" has just been published by the University of Indiana Press. Authored by native Illinoisan Mike Homoya, this 7" X 10" clothbound book contains 275 pages, 95 color plates and 45 maps. The price is \$35.00 plus \$3.00 for the first volume and \$1.00 for each additional volume for shipping. Address mail orders to Bill McKnight, Indiana Academy of Science Publications, 1102 North Butler Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46219.

Endangered Plant Status Report

The "Illinois 1993 Endangered & Threatened Plant Status" report is available on request from Illinoensis. It includes updates on species numbers, research findings, recovery progress and flood impacts on the 10 federally listed and 18 candidates for federal listing. Statements on the 5 species dropped from the candidate list on 9-30-93 are also included.

Tallgrass Prairie Book

A new "coffee table book" titled Tallgrass Prairie has recently been published by Falcon Press Publishing of Helena, MT. Authored

by John Madson, it contains many beautiful and striking photographs by Frank Oberle. It is worth a look and is available at most local bookstores.

Federal Candidate List

The Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board has prepared a revised list of plants that are candidates for listing under the federal endangered species act. The list reflects the changes published in the Federal Register of September 30, 1993. Copies are free on request to Illinoensis.

Illinois Endangered Plant List Update

The Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board has approved proposed changes in the list of endangered and threatened plants of Illinois. These changes are working their way through the administrative rules procedures and should be finalized in early January. To get a copy when they become available send a request to the Board at 524 South 2nd St., Springfield, IL 62701.

DOC Gets Award

The Department of Conservation's Natural Heritage Division was awarded the "Good Government Award" by the Illinois Environmental Council at its October 16 annual meeting. It was given in recognition of the Division's efforts to protect, manage and restore Illinois' natural heritage.

TNC Volunteer Stewards Grow

The Nature Conservancy's volunteer stewardship network continues to grow. In 1992 3,827 volunteers spent 41,720 hours doing ecological management work on 27,364 acres under management.

Biodiversity Action Plan

The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission is funding a Biodiversity Action Plan to provide a comprehensive strategy for protecting and restoring the native biodiversity of the state. The plan will address all scales of diversity from genetic through species and community to landscape. Public input will be a big part of the planning effort so look for notices of workshops and seminars this winter and spring.

No Poster Planned

Unlike recent years, no habitat poster is being prepared this winter by the DOC. Donations to the Illinois income tax checkoff Nongame Wildlife Fund were insufficient to fund a poster of the sand prairie-dune-scrub oak community that was proposed by staff. Do not forget to donate this year!

Nongame Name Change

A new law enacted this past legislative session changes the name of the Nongame Wildlife Conservation Fund to the Wildlife Preservation Fund. Look for this fund among the "checkoff" options on your 1993 Illinois Income Tax form. Your donations help native plants through a small grants program and support for specific natural heritage projects.

Railroad Prairie Purchased

The McHenry County Conservation District accomplished a first for nature preservation in Illinois when it purchased part of the right-of-way of an operating railroad for prairie preservation this fall. The District purchased 25' wide strips in from the outside edge of each side of the right-of-way of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad along its entire route in the County.

Ecological Restoration Defined

The Society for Ecological Restoration has adopted the following definition of ecological restoration: "The process of intentionally altering a site to produce a specified historic ecosystem. The intent of the work is to emulate the natural structure, function, diversity, and dynamics of a defined, indigenous ecological system".

Survey Construction

The Illinois Natural History Survey herbarium will be undergoing installation of compactors beginning about May 1. Since access to specimens will be very difficult for several months during construction, persons planning to use the herbarium are urged to do so before May.

Another Armadillo

Springhouse Magazine reports yet another road killed armadillo from the Golconda area of Illinois. This one was found several miles southwest of town in May of 1993. The others were found 3 miles north of town in the fall of 1992 and at the north edge of town in the fall of 1991. All have been adults.

Missouri Protects Plants

New legislation in Missouri protects plants from removal from highways, county roadways and rights-of-ways without permission. Violations are class B misdemeanors punishable by a fine of up to \$500.00 and/or imprisonment up to 6 months in jail.

Native Plant Society Meeting

The 1994 annual meeting of the Illinois Native Plant Society is tentatively set for May 20-21 at Forest Glen Preserve in Vermilion County.

National Savanna Conference

Dr. Roger Anderson is heading a group planning a North American Savanna and Barrens Conference at Illinois State University, Normal. The Conference is scheduled for October 15-16, 1994. More details will be released as planning progresses.

North American Prairie Conference

The 14th North American Prairie Conference is planned for July 12-16, 1994 at Kansas State University. To receive registration materials write the Division of Biology, Ackert Hall, KSU, Manhattan, KS. 66506 or phone 913/532-5575.

Species News

Boltonia decurrens was severely impacted by flooding along the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers this summer. Essentially all plants downriver from Peoria were killed save 1 plant seen at Rice Lake and 4 plants behind the levee at East St. Louis. The number of Illinois populations declined from 28 in 1992 to just 10 this year. Dr. Marian Smith and colleagues at SIU Edwardsville are planning a study of the genetic effects of the event and how the species recovers. Seeds are in storage from throughout the species range at DOC but will not be used for recovery until studies are completed.

Platanthera leucophaea is the subject of major recovery efforts by TNC and DOC. TNC efforts center on producing seed with volunteer hand pollinators and dispersing it to suitable habitat in northeastern Illinois. They also are working on habitat rehabilitation at one corporate owned population also with volunteers. The DOC has contracted a landowner contact program with owners of habitat and will contract habitat rehabilitation based on results of the contacts. Both activities are funded by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Scirpus hallii was searched for this fall by botanists of the Illinois Natural History Survey who also prepared a state of Illinois Status Report for the species. Twenty populations in 4 counties were confirmed, including the first report from Kankakee County. The work was contracted by the DOC with funds provided by the USFWS.

Talinum rugospermum was searched for last spring by the Illinois

Natural History Survey which also prepared a state status report on the species. Some 39 populations in 12 counties were documented. This work was contracted by the DOC with funds provided by USFWS.

Thismia americana was searched for by volunteers and contractors this past summer and fall with none found. Volunteers gathered on July 31 for the third annual "Great Thismia Hunt" and botanists of the Morton Arboretum under contract by the DOC with U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service funds searched throughout August and September. While new populations for other endangered species were found, no Thismia were seen.

Written December 16, 1993