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Comments

Garlic mustard appeared with a vengeance this spring continuing its spread across the northern half of Illinois. The abundance of this white-flowered menace in woodland after woodland led some conservationists to speculate that we should take our children out to see the spring wildflowers next year in the few places where they have not been replaced with the mustard because such places will soon cease to exist. While chemical and hand control measures and landscape scale burning will help at specific managed areas, the only hope for most areas is the development of a biological control for the weed. Work by Dr. Weidong Chen at the Illinois Natural History Survey with indigenous diseases that attack garlic mustard has not proved fruitful yet. Unfortunately, there are no plans or funding at present for a program to identify control agents in its native range in Europe.

The biocontrol program for purple loosestrife has progressed well this spring thanks to funding from the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Corps is funding research into rearing and release of control insects at the Illinois Natural History Survey. Together with a coalition of cooperating County Agencies and the Department of Natural Resources, five supplemental and two new leaf beetle (Galerucella) releases have been made this summer as well as the first seven releases of the root feeding weevil Hylobius. Even though six of the seven 1994 leaf beetle releases were confirmed to have overwintered, emerged and reproduced this spring, it is clear that the effectiveness of this program will be a long time in coming. Predation on the control insects was high at some sites and it appears that large scale rearing and releases will be needed to reach densities that can overcome predators and control this weed.

Dogwood anthracnose, the introduced, fatal fungal disease that has decimated flowering dogwood populations throughout the eastern states, has arrived in Illinois. While doing a floral survey of Dean Hills in Fayette County this spring I noted many dead and dying dogwoods. Dr. Weidong Chen of the Illinois Natural History Survey identified the culprit as dogwood anthracnose. Casual observation indicates that by late June about a third of the trees were already dead, another third were dying and the final third still seemed somewhat healthy. Many smaller trees seemed to die first, apparently because they were closer to the ground where humidities are higher. One can only hope that the damage from the disease was high this year because of the cool wet spring we had and that it will be less virulent in future years. I

have seen similar symptoms in dogwoods in Hardin and St. Clair Counties and elsewhere in the state this spring, but only the St. Clair specimen was also confirmed as dogwood anthracnose. It seems likely, however, that the disease has already spread throughout much of the range of dogwood in Illinois as it was found to be widespread in both Missouri and Indiana in 1994. Lets keep an eye out for this pest and hope for the best.

Dr. Faith Campbell, lobbyist for the Exotic Pest Plant Councils in Washington DC, advises that on April 6 Senators Akaka (D-HI), Dorgen (D-ND) and Campbell (R-CO) introduced S. 690, the Federal Noxious Weed Control and State Terminal Inspection Improvement Act of 1995. If enacted, this bill would expand the federal definition of noxious weeds to include wildland (natural area) weeds and would tighten controls on their introduction into the U. S. and their interstate movement within the country. Given all the threats to our native flora from exotic weeds and plant diseases, everyone concerned with native plant conservation should support this measure with their Congressional delegation.

John Schwegman

New Department of Natural Resources

Effective July 1, the Illinois Department of Conservation ceased to exist as it merged with various state resource agencies into a new Illinois Department of Natural Resources. In addition to the IDOC the new agency includes regulatory programs in mining and mineral resources, water resources and abandoned mine reclamation. It also includes the state scientific surveys in geology, natural history, water and hazardous waste as well as the State Museum system. Brent Manning, past Director of the Conservation Department, is Director of the new agency.

Todd Fink Dies

District Heritage Biologist Todd Fink of the DNR Natural Heritage Division died July 11. Fink, who was 36, was biologist for the western half of southernmost Illinois from his office at Ferne Clyffe State Park. Todd was a zoology graduate of SIU at Carbondale and was an accomplished ornithologist and bird photographer. Our natural heritage has lost an effective champion of its cause.

Deanna Glosser Promoted

Deanna Glosser has left the DNR Endangered Species program in the Division of Natural Heritage to accept the position of Division Head at the DNR Division Natural Resources Review and Coordination.

Glen Kruse Promoted

Glen Kruse has been promoted to the Position of Endangered Species Program Manager within the DNR Division of Natural Heritage. Glen has a long history of resources conservation with the Department in the fields of fisheries biology and endangered species conservation.

New Regional Administrator

Todd Strole, DNR District Heritage Biologist in the Springfield area, has assumed the role of Acting Regional Administrator for Region IV in southwestern Illinois.

Resident Changes at DNR

The Division of Natural Heritage's one year residency program saw the completion of service for Jack Rozdilsky in Springfield, Todd Bittner at the Oregon office, Dean Corgiat at Pittsfield and the resignation of Jeanna Prather at Ferne Clyffe. New Residents are Kim Roman at Springfield, Michelle Woodby in Mt. Carroll and Diane Tecic in Alton.

New Ecologist at Survey

Dr. Catherine Kramer recently joined the Illinois Natural History Survey in Urbana. Dr. Kramer is a plant ecologist whose Dissertation at Texas A & M dealt with the ecology of post oak savannas. She also has 5 years' experience with the National Wildflower Research Center at Austin, Texas. She replaces Dr. Mark Schwartz who resigned last year.

Mark Schwartz

Dr. Mark Schwartz of the University of California at Davis returned to the Illinois Natural History Survey this summer to work on a book on fragmented habitats in the Midwest.

New Geneticist at ISU

Dr. Jeffrey Dole, a graduate of the University of California at Davis, has joined the faculty of the Department of Biological Sciences at Illinois State University, Normal. Dr. Dole's interest is in plant population genetics.

Shawnee Forest News

Eric Ulaszek and Mark Baysinger joined the forest service this summer to conduct plant surveys on the Shawnee.

Botanic Garden Expands

The Chicago Botanic Garden expanded its research program this

spring by adding a plant conservation initiative. Dr. James R. Ault has joined the staff to launch this effort aimed at protecting endangered plant species of Illinois and the Midwest.

Native Plant Society

A very interesting annual meeting of the Illinois Native Plant Society was held June 2-4 in the Rock River valley at Byron. Glen Kruse of the DNR took over the presidency of the group from George Johnson of Harvard, IL. The new native plant postcards were distributed to the various Chapters of the Society and are available for purchase from them. It was announced that the 1996 annual meeting will be a joint meeting with the Missouri Native Plant Society to be headquartered at Trail of Tears State Park in Missouri near Cape Girardeau.

Invasion of the Earthworm Eater

A large predatory flatworm from New Zealand (Artioposthia triangulata) has invaded Scotland and Northern Ireland. It feeds on earthworms with devastating impact on the native earthworm fauna. It was apparently introduced in soil with imported plant materials. Northern Ireland estimates that its agricultural production will fall at least one third as its earthworms are destroyed by the pest.

Conservation 2000

Conservation 2000, a state program that commits \$100 million over the next six years for natural resources stewardship in Illinois, passed the legislature and was signed into law by Governor Edgar. The programs to be funded were recommended by the Governor's Water Resources and Land Use Priorities Task Force and the Conservation Congress. A major help to native plant conservation will be aspects of the program aimed at the establishment of large natural ecosystem areas (macrosites).

Prairie Plant Genetics

The DNR and Illinois Nature Preserves Commission are funding a study of the genetics of prairie grasses from various regions and of various selected ecotypes. The goal is to determine which seed sources are safe for restoration efforts in Illinois as regards alteration and preservation of native gene pools and damage to existing native prairie remnants.

New Prairie Plant Book

Russell Kirt has a new publication out entitled "Prairie Plants of the Midwest". Each of 110 treated species is illustrated by a line drawing by Henrietta Tweedie or Roberta Simonds and includes notes on identification and ecology of the species as

well as a phenology table. It is intended as a guide to the novice in identification of tallgrass prairie plants of the region. It is available from Stipes Publishing, 10-12 Chester St., Champaign, IL 61824. It sells for \$13.95.

New Prairie Wildflower Book

A Nature Conservancy Book "Tallgrass Prairie Wildflowers" has been published by the Falcon Press of Helena, MT. This 262 page soft cover book is authored by Doug Ladd with over 320 striking color photographs mostly by Frank Oberle. It includes 295 species and a directory of tallgrass prairies in 13 states. It sells for \$19.95.

New Poster Available

The DNR Division of Natural Heritage has produced a full color habitat poster titled "Inland Sand Areas of Illinois". It measures 34 X 22 inches and contains 56 named species of plants and animals of sand forests, prairies, dunes and ponds. Each is identified in a key line drawing and the poster itself is interpreted further in a booklet produced by the DNRs Education Program. Copies are available for \$3.00 postpaid from the IDNR Division of Natural Heritage, 524 South 2nd St., Springfield, IL 62701. Checks should be payable to the Wildlife Preservation Fund.

Chestnuts Reintroduced

This past March, 16 native American chestnut seedlings derived from a blight resistant Ohio tree were planted at and near Chestnut Hills Nature Preserve near Olmsted, IL. This is the only site where the species was native in Illinois before eliminated by the chestnut blight. Four of the seedlings were planted near the Corps of Engineers observation shelter overlooking the construction site of the new Olmsted Lock and Dam. All of the plants on Corps land and six or those on the preserve survived. Fifty additional seedlings will be planted on the preserve this fall.

Teaming With Wildlife

The International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies is promoting a "Teaming With Wildlife" program that would tax passive wildlife related products like field guides, outdoor equipment and bird seed to raise funds for broad scale non-consumptive wildlife programs. Based on the concept that finances game management through taxes on hunting and fishing equipment, these funds would be collected by the Federal Government and allocated by them to the states. They are seeking nature enthusiasts to contact manufacturers and retailers of the proposed taxed items urging that they not oppose the legislation. Without

their support, lobbyists for these industries will kill the legislation when introduced. A leaflet on the program is available from Illinoensis.

Natural Areas Conference

The 1995 National Natural Areas Conference will be held at Fayetteville, Arkansas October 25-28. The conference theme is Exploring the Power of Collaboration. Concurrent meetings on ancient forests, biodiversity information and bottomland hardwood forests are scheduled. For registration information write Shellie Melson, University of Arkansas, Division of Continuing Education, #2 University Center, Fayetteville, AR 72701.

Wildlife Diversity Symposium

A Upper Mississippi River Wildlife Diversity Symposium will be held September 6-8, 1995 at East Dubuque, IL. Wildlife diversity includes plant diversity for purposes of this meeting. For registration materials, write Glen Kruse, IDNR Division of Natural Heritage, 524 South 2nd Street, Springfield, IL 62701 or call 217/785-8774.

Ecological Restoration Meeting

The annual meeting of the Society for Ecological Restoration is being held at the University of Washington, Seattle, September 14-16, 1995. For registration information call or write the Society at 1207 Seminole Highway, Madison WI 53711 (608/262-9547).

Oak Savanna Conference

A Midwest Oak Savanna and Woodland Ecosystems Conference is scheduled for September 26-29, 1995 in Springfield, MO. For registration information write Carl Hauser, P. O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO or call him at 314/751-4115.

Species News

I discovered alligator weed (Alternanthera philoxeroides), a terrible weed in the southern states on the banks of the Ohio River in Pulaski County this summer. It remains to be seen if it becomes a problem weed in Illinois, but natural area managers should be on the alert for it.

Douglas Goldman of the University of Texas described a new species of grass pink orchid (Calopogon oklahomensis) from the Midwest and Midsouth prairies this spring (Lindleyana 10[1] 1995). Presently known from southwest Missouri and southeastern Kansas south to Texas and Louisiana, this species may occur in prairie regions of Illinois. Grooved and reflexed lateral sepals and a

forked corm are among its key characters.

The small whorled pogonia orchid (Isotria medeoloides) failed to appear at its only known Illinois locality this past spring. Except for a small sterile plant in 1991 this species has not been seen in Illinois since the drought of 1988. Evidence is growing that it may be extirpated from the state.

Written August 4, 1995