

**ILLINOENSIS, SUMMER 1989** Vol 5 (1)  
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Illinois Department of Conservation

DOC Heritage Districts Changed

The Department of Conservation's Natural Heritage Division has revised its District Biologist boundaries. Be sure to check the new map on the back of this newsletter to determine in which districts you and your areas of concern are now located.

Personnel Changes at DOC

Margaret Cole has been promoted to District Heritage Biologist for the newly created District 5 (see map) in the northern part of the Chicago area upon her return from maternity leave. Todd Strole has been employed to fill the Biologist position for District 3 in Pekin. However, he will be working out of the Champaign office during an interim training period. Biologist Bob Szafoni has transferred from District 2 at Oregon to the new District 7 at Charleston. Biologist Jim Heim transferred from District 3 at Pekin to District 2 at Oregon. Jeane Karnes has transferred from The Nature Conservancy to the Department's payroll and continues to have responsibility for entering plant data into the Heritage Data Base.

New Nature Preserves Staff

The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission has added two new Natural Area Preservation Specialists. They are John Alesandrini in Rockford and Mary Kay Solecki in Champaign (see map).

SIU Carbondale Botany Department News

Dr. John Voigt, grassland ecologist and Chairman of the SIU Botany Department, retires this August after a distinguished career in teaching and administration with the University.

Dr. Lawrence Matten will assume the Chairmanship of the Department for the coming academic year. Dr. Matten has served the SIU Botany faculty as paleobotanist and plant anatomist for many years. He has announced that the Botany Department will be renamed the Department of Plant Biology.

Dr. Robert Mohlenbrock, Distinguished Professor of Botany, has announced he will retire effective May 15, 1990. In his more than

30 years on the SIU faculty, he has published many books and has guided many students into careers in plant taxonomy and field biology. He has had a great impact on our knowledge of the Illinois flora as well as its conservation.

#### Natural History Survey Reorganizes

The Illinois Natural History Survey reorganized into 5 branches effective July 1. The old Section of Botany and Plant Pathology joins Faunistic Surveys and Insect Identification to form the Center for Biodiversity headed by Dr. Lawrence Page. Staff botanists working primarily on transportation corridor environmental impacts are in the new Center for Biogeographic Information headed by Dr. Warren Brigham. Their offices will remain in the Herbarium. Other "centers" include Wildlife Ecology, Aquatic Ecology and Economic Entomology.

#### New Shawnee Forest Botanist

Dr. Lawrence Stritch has been employed as Botanist for the Shawnee National Forest. Larry had served as a District Heritage Biologist for the DOC in the recent past. In this former position he advised and assisted the Forest in community and plant conservation on the east half of the Forest.

#### Natural Land Institute Staff Changes

Brian Pruka has left the Natural Land Institute of Rockford to pursue an advanced degree at the University of Wisconsin. His responsibilities for the Outreach Newsletter have been assumed by new staffer Laurie Harshbarger. Ed Stirling has also joined the staff and is working on land protection in Winnebago County.

#### Ginseng Conservation Program Transferred

Effective July 1, the Illinois Ginseng Conservation program was transferred from the DOC's Division of Natural Heritage to its Division of Forestry. Ginseng was delisted as a threatened species in April.

#### Native Plant Society Reorganizing

The Presidents of the various Chapters of the Illinois Native Plant Society are working to develop revised bylaws that will allow for statewide officers and other changes. Editorship of the Society's journal *Erigenia* has been changed from Mark Mohlenbrock

to Larry Stritch and an editorial committee is being established. Larry is actively soliciting manuscripts with hopes of an issue of *Erigenia* coming out this fall. Larry's address is Shawnee National Forest, Harrisburg 62946.

#### New Endangered Species List

The Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board has a new publication listing the endangered and threatened species of Illinois as of April 1989. It contains major changes in the plant list. For your free copy write the Board at the Illinois address or see your District Heritage Biologist. Public hearings are now underway that will lead to further modification of the plant list by early next year.

#### Prairie Wildflower Poster Available

The DOC Botany Program has produced a 22" X 34" full color poster of Summer Prairie Wildflowers and Grasses of Illinois. It depicts 35 plants and 5 animals in a habitat setting. For your unfolded copy send a \$3.00 donation (make checks payable to Nongame Wildlife Conservation Fund) to the Illinois address or see your District Heritage Biologist.

#### Endangered Species Poster Being Revised

The "These Precious Few" endangered species poster is being completely revised and reprinted by the Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board. The new poster is expected to be available by mid August 1989.

#### Aster Publication Available

"Aster and Brachyactis in Illinois" by Dr. Almut Jones has been published as Bulletin 34, Article 2 by the Illinois Natural History Survey. This 59 page booklet includes accounts of 35 taxa, keys and distribution maps. It is available from the Survey at 607 East Peabody, Champaign 61820.

#### Illustrated Flora of Illinois

Dr. Mohlenbrock has announced that the next volume of this series will be "Nightshades to Mistletoes" scheduled for publication in January 1990. He also reports that work on the Carex volume has resumed with hopes of publication in late 1990.

#### Directory of Ecologists

The revised "Directory of Illinois Systematists, Ecologists and Field Biologists" is now available from the Illinois Natural History Survey in Champaign. If you contributed a biographic sketch for this publication you will get a copy when the general mailing is made.

#### Illinois Wildflower T Shirt

The Illinois Department of Conservation has produced a beautiful T Shirt depicting common and endangered Illinois Wildflowers. The shirts are \$7.00 each plus \$1.50 for shipping and handling per order. They are available from Department of Conservation, Division of Marketing, 524 South 2nd St., Springfield, IL 62701-1787. If in Springfield, you can purchase them direct from their office on the 5th floor at 524 South 2nd.

#### Exotic Weed Crisis

Garlic Mustard (Alliaria petiolata) is spreading at an alarming rate in the northern three fifths of Illinois. It is rapidly replacing our native woodland flora in such revered natural areas as Mississippi Palisades State Park and Allerton Park. Many other parks and Nature Preserves such as Castle Rock and Spitler Woods are also severely infested. Being used to exotic perennial weeds that spread persistently but somewhat slowly, it is shocking to be blitzed by a rapidly spreading biennial that seems to move through virgin forest as rapidly as disturbed stands. Nature conservation in Illinois faces a challenge unlike any in its history.

Observations by Vicki Nuzzo of Rockford and other natural area managers indicate that fire and herbicides can be used to control this pest on managed lands, however most managers are not burning moist and mesic forests and the vast majority of Illinois forests are not managed for nature conservation at all. The future for our woodland wildflowers is very shaky. The Illinois Nongame Wildlife Conservation Fund is making \$11,000 available for research into the control and ecology of this weed during the current fiscal year. The ultimate solution, if there is to be one, is the development of a biological control. Unfortunately, biological controls are expensive and are best developed at the Federal level. There is no national program of nature conservation to address this problem outside of National Parks. A current effort at biological control of purple loosestrife is funded by the USFWS, but only because it threatens waterfowl habitat. A federal funding source for nature conservation by the states is badly needed.

At present severe garlic mustard infestations are known from the upper Mississippi, Rock, Des Plaines, Mackinaw, Sangamon, Middle Illinois and Upper Embarrass drainages. Illinoensis readers are urged to report infested natural areas, watersheds or regions to the Editor in writing. At present there are no reports from west-central Illinois, the southern till plain or the Shawnee Hills.

#### Exotics Control Paper

I gave a paper at the Northern Illinois Prairie Conference last April on a proposed program at the State level to combat exotic weeds in natural communities. It covers needed laws, policies, research and management in outline form. Copies are available upon request from Illinoensis.

#### Conference Session on Exotics Problems

A major conference session on exotics problems will be an important part of the 16th Annual Natural Areas Conference to be held October 17-20, 1989 at Knoxville TN. The session will be all day on October 18 and will cover politics, statutory regulation, biological control of weeds, control by management and includes a discussion session on actions to be taken by conservationists. Contact J. Ralph Jordan, Tennessee Valley Authority, 228 Natural Resources Building, Norris, TN 37828 for more information and preregistration materials.

#### Nongame Checkoff Projects

Small grant (\$1,000 or less) projects of interest to botanists that are being funded by the Nongame Wildlife Conservation Fund this fiscal year include: "Status and Distribution of Schreber's Aster in Illinois, Dr. John Ebinger; Management Control Experiment for Garlic Mustard, Victoria Nuzzo; Vegetational Analysis of the Barrens in Southern Illinois, Alice Long; Inventory of Remnant Prairie Sites in Knox County, Prairie-Woods Environmental Coalition; and Exotic Control and Herbicide Effectiveness, The Nature Institute of Alton. Larger projects approved for expenditure by the DOC are \$10,000 for garlic mustard research and \$8,000 for a wetland wildflower and habitat poster. \$5,000 for research into vegetative propagation of Meads Milkweed is on the contingency list should additional funds become available.

#### Recent DOC Land Acquisition

Recent land acquisitions by the DOC of special interest to

botanists include 1,749 acres at Heron Pond-Little Black Slough in Johnson County, 391 acres at Momence Wetlands in Kankakee County, the 28 acre Brown's Barrens in Union County, the 37 acre Grigsby Marsh in McDonough County and the 14 acre Gooseberry Island in Kankakee County. Forty acres of Sipple Slough Woods in Washington County are under option.

#### Official State Prairie Grass

The DOC and Southwestern High School of Piasa conducted a contest to determine Illinoisan's favorite prairie grass this past winter (see last Illinoisian). Of 4,316 votes cast, big bluestem got 1,334, Indiangrass 1,258, prairie dropseed 967 and little bluestem 757. Based on these results, Rep. Tom Ryder introduced a bill in the Legislature to designate Big Bluestem as Illinois' official prairie grass. This bill has been approved and will become law when signed by Governor Thompson.

#### Legislation Report

New legislation that passed in the recent session includes bills that: provide up to 4 million dollars per year to DOC for natural area acquisition, provide \$300,000 to establish an endangered species program in the DOC, provide open space grants to local governments, provide for development of an expanded trail system on abandoned railroads by the DOC, expand opportunities to donate to the non-game wildlife conservation (checkoff) fund and expand the state nursery system. At press time the Governor had not signed these into law. A proposed bill that would have banned sale and planting of 3 additional exotic invading weeds of natural areas was defeated due to opposition from the Illinois State Nurserymen's Association.

#### Federal Recovery Teams

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service has appointed interstate recovery teams to develop recovery plans for two federally threatened plant species. Dr. Robert Betz represents Illinois on the Meads milkweed recovery team and John Schwegman on the decurrent false aster team.

#### Flowering Dogwood Doomed?

Flowering dogwood anthracnose, a fatal fungal disease, is killing flowering dogwoods throughout the east and Pacific northwest.

Tests on dogwoods from throughout the range of Cornus florida indicate that all dogwoods, except those in yards that can be sprayed with fungicides, will be killed. Flowering dogwood is one of the most beautiful and common plants in the southern half of Illinois. It is of great value as wildlife food in addition to its aesthetic value. Its loss will be a severe blow to Illinois'

natural heritage. We can only hope that somewhere out there flowering dogwoods exist with the genes necessary to resist this disease.

#### Deer Grazing/Browsing Study

Dr. Roger Anderson of Illinois State University is studying the impact of deer on the shrubs and herbaceous flora of Ryerson Woods Conservation area in Lake County. The three year project is funded by the Lake County Forest Preserve District. Given the severe impact that deer are having on the Illinois flora in many areas, this is a very timely study.

#### Flatwoods Flora Study

John Taft of the Illinois Natural History Survey, is conducting a study of the flora of the southern flatwoods natural community. Located mainly on the Southern Till Plain Natural Division, this community is especially interesting because of its extreme hardpan soil conditions.

#### Endangered Species Recovery Conference

A 2 day conference session on Endangered Species Recovery is being planned as a part of the annual meeting of the Society for Ecological Restoration and Management to be held at the O'Hare Sheraton April 29 to May 4, 1990. Contact Marlin Bowles at the Morton Arboretum, Lisle 60532 for details.

#### Drought Effects on Endangered Plants

DOC monitoring is revealing a mixed response of Illinois endangered plants to drought conditions of 1988 and early 1989.

Small whorled pogonia orchid has disappeared at its only Illinois site for the first time since it was discovered here in 1974. This disappearance appears drought related.

One of 4 stands of Meads Milkweed disappeared and 2 other populations declined apparently due to the drought.

Tennessee milk vetch is down to 14 flowering plants from 116 in 1987 due mainly to drought-related reproductive failure.

No flowering prairie white fringed orchids were seen at any of our monitoring sites, apparently because of drought. Some marked plants did send up sterile leaves indication that the lack of flowering does not necessarily indicate mortality.

Hart-leaved plantain is prospering under drought conditions. The lack of flash floods which kills many plants has allowed one monitored population to double annually in the past 2 years.

Decurrent false aster, which suffers from summer flooding and siltation of its Illinois River bottomland habitats, is increasing its numbers under the drought induced more stable river levels.

#### Other Species News

Randy Nyboer, Jean Karnes and Don McFall report finding a new population of Mimulus glabratus in Woodford County and of confirming its continued survival in Putnam County.

Fran Harty, Bill Glass and Todd Strole discovered populations of swamp cottonwood and pumpkin ash at the Momence Wetlands in Kankakee County.

Bob Betz and Dick Young discovered a surviving population of Hart-leaved plantain in Kendall County.

John Taft and Eric Ulaszek report finding new populations of buffalo clover in Washington and Shelby counties respectively.

The 300 lakeside daisies introduced into Manito Prairie, Tazewell County last fall suffered only 22% mortality. Of the 235 surviving plants 182 flowered. This appears to be a successful reintroduction.

Of 105 leafy prairie clover plants reintroduced to Kankakee River Nature Preserve in June of 1988, none were surviving this July.

Written August 3, 1989