



Illinois Native Plant Society — Southern Chapter

The Shooting Star

September 2017

Newsletter

“Dedicated to the study, appreciation, and conservation of the native flora and natural communities in Illinois.”

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Mysterious Stone Fortifications of Southern Illinois

Tuesday, September 19th at 6:30 p.m.

Carbondale Township Hall, 217 E. Main St.

A phenomenon that is unique to southern Illinois stretches across southern Illinois, forming a jagged line between the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. While mounds and earthworks exist throughout the Ohio and Mississippi Valley, what makes southern Illinois unique is the number of confirmed pre-Columbian stonewalls that can be found stretching east to west across the southern tip of the state.

The study of these walls has become an obsession for Carrier Mills/Stonefort History teacher, Mark Motsinger. The program will look at his research and explore the mystery surrounding this unique part of our area's history. You don't want to miss this!

When Motsinger began teaching history at Carrier Mills/Stonefort High School, he wanted to add some local history to his curriculum, especially the origin of one of the town names in the district. Motsinger's research morphed into an obsession that has included speaking engagements at the Illinois Archeological Survey, Eastern States Rock Art Research Association and the Illinois History Symposium. In 2014, he was awarded the Olive Foster Illinois History Teacher of the Year by the Illinois State Historical Society.

This program is free and open to the public!



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Message from the Southern Chapter President

Getting outdoors in August in southern Illinois is a hot endeavor that many choose to avoid. However, if you like observing plants in the wild, this is the time to go! A whole new assortment of plants seem to bloom in the late summer/early fall and I have been enjoying looking at them. Favorites are cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*), orange jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis*), mistflower (*Conoclinium coelestinum*), and ladies' tresses orchids (*Spiranthes* spp.).

Last month, we sponsored a canoe trip to see ancient Cypress trees and the swamp ecosystem of the Cache River watershed. This event was coupled with a program by IDNR biologist Mark Guetersloh about the restoration efforts underway in the Cache. Read more about it on page 4.

Our next program will feature Mark Motsinger who will speak about "The Mysterious Stone Fortifications of Southern Illinois." There appears to be quite an interest in this program on Facebook, so you might want to come a little early for this one. The program starts at 6:30PM and is free and open to the public. More information about the presentation is on the cover page.

"If you like observing plants in the wild, this is the time to go!"

We have begun planning programs for 2018! The annual Indigenous Plants Symposium will be held on April 6-8 and the Annual Statewide Gathering will be on June 8-10, hosted by the Kankakee Torrent Chapter. If you have any suggestions for programs for 2018, please let us know by writing southernillinoisplants@gmail.com.

I hope to see you soon at one of our many events! ~Christopher David Benda



Orange Jewelweed
Impatiens capensis



Purple Mistflower
Conoclinium coelestinum



Cardinal Flower
Lobelia cardinalis

Feature Plant of the Month

Indian Grass, *Sorghastrum nutans*

Fall is around the corner, and the golden hues of the season can be viewed with the blooming of this species. Indian grass (a warm season grass) once covered the prairies of Illinois and is still a common site around the state. Habitats include a wide spectrum of prairie types, limestone glades, grassy fens, and other open areas. It grows generally 3-5 feet tall and is notable for its upright, erect form. The foliage consists of slender blue-green leaves that turn golden yellow in the fall. Several species of grasshoppers feed on this species which in turn, provide a food source for insect-eating songbirds and gamebirds. Other birds, such as quail, mourning doves, and field sparrows, use this grass as a cover.



Photo courtesy,
Dustin Hillis

2017



Southern Chapter

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www.facebook.com/southernillinoisplants

Calendar of Events

Sept. 19	Mark Motsinger	Mysterious Stoneforts of Southern Illinois	CTH
Oct. 17	Dr. Sedonia Sipes	Southern Illinois Pollinator Inventory	CTH
Nov. 7	Kevin Rohling, Matt Mangan	Managing Forests for Bats	CTH
Dec 5	TBD	Holiday Dinner	TBD

CTH = Carbondale Township Hall, 217 E. Main St., Carbondale IL at 6:30 pm; TBD = To Be Determined
For more information visit <http://www.ill-inps.org/index.php/southern-chapter>

Invasive Species Corner Please look at the following resources for the latest in Invasive Species news.

Invasive Species Pull (Perilla plant), Shawnee Chapter of the Sierra Club

Location: La Rue Pine Hills Ecological Area

Date: Sunday, September 10th

Time: 1pm—4pm

(meet at the Forest Service Ranger Station on Walnut Street in Murphysboro before 1 pm)

Please wear appropriate clothing and shoes, bring gloves and water.

Help save native plants in a high quality natural area!

For more information, please call Barb McKasson at (618) 529-4824.

FRST & SIPBA Members: Chainsaw Safety and Timber Stand Improvement Training

Date: Tuesday, September 19th

Time: 9am—3pm

Location: Jim and Mary Maginel's Farm (Alexander County, Olive Branch area)

Training is free, lunch is provided. Wear long pants and sturdy leather boots. Bring chainsaws and PPE if you have them. For more information and to RSVP, e-mail Chris Evans at cwevans@illinois.edu by September 17th.





Summary of Past Events

August Program, Ecosystem Restoration of the Cache River, by Mark Guetersloh



Our last month's program was a double whammy! At 3:00PM, a group of 14 launched canoes into Buttonland Swamp from the boat access in the Lower Cache River. It was warm and sunny, but not too unpleasant as we maneuvered our way through the buttonbush and cypress to Eagle Pond, then to Longreach, to the Cache River channel, and then back to the boat landing. It's so wonderful to be able to paddle a canoe through ancient cypress trees in a swamp without current on a loop that takes one back to the starting point. We saw the state champion cypress tree, many state threatened water elms (*Planera aquatica*), and swamp rose (*Rosa palustris*), among many other plants. Check out our Facebook page for photos of the canoe outing.

Shortly after the canoe trip, we sponsored a talk by IDNR natural heritage biologist Mark Guetersloh at the Wetlands Center. It's nice to move around some for our programming, and although attendance is sometimes low at locations outside of



Carbondale, there are always new people that attend. It's nice to reach a different audience and thanks to those from the Carbondale area who made the trek to Cypress.

Mark has been working in the Cache River watershed for 25 years. He has a wealth of knowledge of the area and we are very fortunate to have him in this role. While listening to him speak, it was clear to me that despite the Cache River area being "saved" over 30 years ago and being recognized as a RAMSAR wetland of international importance, it has almost been ruined several times since then and is still now on the verge of catastrophe. It's all about water retention and Mark was frank with us. He called the current management of the hydrology of the Cache River watershed "obscene."

For example, the true lower Cache Region, the last 220 miles of river, has been channelized into 20 miles. All the sinuosity has been straightened, in order to drain water quickly and maximize farmland. And that's been the case for decades. There are major problems that threaten the sustainability of the entire area. However, the plants and animals continue as they have for centuries, adapting to the conditions, or at least trying. Almost 100 species of threatened and endangered plants and animals live in this ecosystem and Mark is proud to be a steward over them. The effort to save the Cache is tough and long, but it is an important one that we all must keep our eyes on and do what we can to help.

By the way, Mark told us that the extensive buttonbush that we paddled through in the Lower Cache Access area is probably not how it was historically and that the water used to



be much deeper. These days, it's all about keeping water in the Lower Cache system and many years it has been feared there would be none at all. So far, that has not happened. I should also mention that there have been major successes, and the existence of the amazing resource that is the Cache River Wetlands Center is one. Plus the Cache River Nature Fest, now part of Cache River Days, is going on this weekend (September 9th). I hope to you make a visit soon to this area and see what far southern Illinois has to offer!





An Ode to Chiggers

Chigger Poem



By Illinois Botanizer (also known as Chris Benda)

*Oh why oh why do there have to be chiggers
For a reaction in me they sure do trigger
The many little red bites feel like Braille
And when they itch they make me want to wail!*

*If you like evolution, then you must love the chigger
For they would not be as bad if they happened to be bigger
But an invisible invertebrate has all the advantage
And leaves me with little else than to put a bandage.*

*I guess I could prevent them by staying on the trail
Or if I took more time to scratch them with my nail
I could spray myself with nasty chemicals and deet
Or stay inside all together and beat the summer heat!*

*But that is not my style, I was born to explore
To see the nature and learn from it more
Plus if there were less chiggers there'd be more tourists
And it would be impossible to be a nature purist.*

Local Events

Shawnee National Forest, Ozark Tour

Saturday, September 30th, 8 am — 5pm

Ozark Tours are guided expeditions to special areas of southern Illinois to explore and learn about the region's history, visiting places of natural beauty that you may not know existed. The fall tour includes historic sites in Pulaski and Johnson counties and the Cache River Wetlands near Cypress, IL. Cost is \$40 per person and includes transportation, lunch, tour guides, and a t-shirt. The tour will begin and end in Anna, IL. There will be a moderate amount of hiking. Participants should wear comfortable shoes and dress for the weather. For more information and to register, visit www.illinoisozarks.com, e-mail info@illinoisozarks.com or call (618) 264-5854.



Friends of the Shawnee, Trash Blast

Panther Den Wilderness

Sunday, September 17th, 10 am—1 pm

For more information, visit www.shawneefriends.org



Cache River Wetlands Center

Monarch Phenomenon, Saturday September 23rd, 10 am—3pm

The magnificent monarch butterfly migrates up to 2,500 miles from North America to central Mexico for the winter. The Monarch Watch Association has been tagging and monitoring migrating monarchs since 1992. Join us for a program from 10-11am to learn all about monarchs, and then spend the rest of the day capturing, tagging, and releasing butterflies. For questions, call the Wetlands Center at (618) 657-2064.



Cache River Wetlands Center & Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge

Cache River Days AND Nature Fest

Saturday, September 9th, all day

For the first time ever, Nature Fest and Cache River Days will be joining forces! Festivities will be headquartered at the Ullin Ball Park, but will also include special displays at the Cache River Wetlands Center and guided tours at various points of interest throughout the Cache River Wetlands. Celebrate the Cache with live wildlife exhibits, nature activities, arts & crafts, live music, food, and more.



Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge will provide free canoe tours throughout the day. **Limited space on tours**, register in advance by calling the Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge at (618) 634-2231.

Hiking Tour of Glass Hill, 10am—12pm, sign up at the information table at Ullin Ball Park

Birds of Prey Show, 1pm—3pm

Asian Carp Fry— FREE tasting all day!

Other displays/activities include the Cold-Blooded Creatures of the Cache, Kidz Corner, IDNR Conservation trailer, Partners for Wildlife, Duck I.D., Take the Cache Challenge, University of Illinois Extension Forestry

Local Events

Shrub Hike

Saturday, September 23rd

1-3pm

Giant City State Park



Blueberries, delicate lantern like seeds, and wonderfully fragrant leaves are all things that belong to shrubs found at Giant City! If you have ever hiked in the park and wondered, "what is that shrub?" now is your chance to find out! Join Extension Forester, Chris Evans, for a fun and informative hike on the two mile Trillium Trail. This is a moderately difficult trail with some steep stair climbing.



To register please call the Giant City Visitors Center at 618-457-4836.

Giant City State Park

Journey of the Monarch

Saturday, September 16th 1 pm—2:30 pm

Every fall, thousands of Monarch butterflies migrate south to Central Mexico! Come out and help the University of Kansas track these insects by participating in tagging program. There will be a short introduction, then heading out to the field to catch and tag as many migrating Monarchs as we can find. This program is free and open to the public. For more information and to register, call the visitor center at (618) 457-4836.

Amazing Mosses

Saturday, September 23rd 1 pm—4 pm

Do mosses grow only on the north side of trees? Join Abel Kinser, moss enthusiast, to learn about the ecology, biology, and diversity of Giant City State Park mosses. A short presentation will be followed by a moderate hike to observe some of the many mosses of the park. Please call the visitor center for more information.



Guided Hike at **CAVE CREEK GLADE NATURE PRESERVE**

with Conservation Education Rep Erin Medvecz

Saturday, September 9th | 1:30pm - 3:30pm

Join us for an afternoon hike to identify prairie glade species by their flowers and fruits at Cave Creek Glade. Please note that the glade is very steep and in the sun; wear sturdy boots and bring water. Meet at the base of the glade.

Erin is a graduate of SIU with her M.S. degree in Plant Biology. She specializes in prairie plant identification and ecology.

Questions? Call the Cache River Wetlands Center at 618-657-2064.



Natural Beekeeping Workshop

Michael Bush, World Renowned Beekeeper



*October
6-8*



*3-Day
Workshop*

pre-reg by Sept 29

\$100

day of registration

\$120

Friday, 6pm-9pm
Saturday, 9am-5pm
Presentations Held At:



Dayemi Community Center
218 N Illinois
Carbondale, IL 62901

Sunday, 10am-3pm
In the Bee Yard, At:



Center for Sustainable Living
Dayempur Farm
35 Nubbin Ridge Lane
Anna, Illinois 62906

*Lunches
Included*

*Daily Rates
Available*



For More Information

Contact:

(618)559.2768

markfletter@gmail.com

Register at Eventbrite.com

The
**Practical
Beekeeper**
Beekeeping
Naturally



by Michael Bush

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Dodecatheon frenchii –
French's Shooting Star

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Forest Glen (Westville) | <input type="checkbox"/> Quad Cities (Rock Island) |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Kankakee Torrent | |

I would like to help with:

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