



The Shooting Star **September 2021**

Newsletter

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

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Stewardship Workday October, TBA Pleasant Valley

Stay tuned for more details

Located at transition zone of the greater and lesser Shawnee Hills in Pope county Illinois, Pleasant Valley Barrens is a remnant, Category I natural area containing dry-upland forest and limestone glade community. The site is managed by the US Forest Service and is recognized as an Illinois Natural Areas Inventory Site for its high-quality barrens. The forest service has recognized this as an area in need of management and have provided similar recommendations for 6 natural areas total.

The intentions of the Illinois Native Plant Society are to assist in the management of the high-quality glades that have become degraded. Woody encroachment and invasive species threaten these communities. INPS intentions are to cut and remove undesirable woody species from the glades in order to restore light to these areas.

Stay tuned to see how you can contribute to this effort next month.



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Message from the Southern Chapter President

September is the month of the asters. It seems we get an explosion of flowering this time of year from plants in the Asteraceae family. I enjoy seeing goldenrods, asters, sunflowers, bonesets, ironweeds, and other members of this family all in bloom as fall sets in. Of course these plants are much more than just a pretty site. They are vital to our ecosystems as they provide an abundance of floral resources (nectar and pollen) for pollinators in the fall. As a beekeeper (and I know honeybees are not native, but still a good thing to have around), I greatly value these asters as it allows my bees to build up food reserves for the winter. Availability of blooming asters could mean the difference between survival and starvation for an entire hive.

Photos courtesy, Jennifer Behnken

We established a pollinator prairie on our property about 8 years ago and included many native species in the aster family. It has been fun watching that prairie develop over time. Some species, like the coneflowers, started blooming in the first year or two. Other species, like the Silphiums, took upwards of five years to start blooming. And other asters, like the ironweeds, were not planted at all but found their way into the site on their own.

As you drive around or recreate this fall, keep an eye out for blooming asters. If you can, stop and admire the incredible diversity of insects that use these species! ~ Chris Evans



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Feature Plant of the Month

Sawtooth sunflower,
Helianthus grosseserratus

Members of the aster family are "composites." The familiar shape of a sunflower is actually a conglomeration. The part that bears the seeds is actually a compilation of many smaller flowers in the "disc," which typically rotates with the sun. The petals on a sunflower are called the "rays." This sunflower is no different. It can be identified from its smooth, red to purple-colored stems. The leaves have very short petioles and are coarsely toothed, hence the species name, *grosseserratus*. They bloom from late summer to early fall, found in more moist and sandy environments in full sun. They serve a host of insects and feed a variety of song birds, game birds, and mammals.



Photo courtesy, Illinois Wildflowers

2021



Southern Chapter

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Calendar of Events

October	INPS	Workday	Pleasant Valley
Nov. 16	Lauren Pile	Pollinator Research	Virtual

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>

Don't forget to check out the INPS YouTube channel, including recorded seminars from guest speakers from around the country! Check it out at <https://bit.ly/2SIHs2B>.

Nominate a Mascot for the Illinois Native Plant Society

The Illinois Native Plant Society is seeking to “re-plant” with an updated logo. The beloved French’s Shooting Star, on INPS’s current logo, is best suited to its native Southern Illinois where it will live on as the logo of the Southern Chapter. Please consider nominating a plant that has mostly

statewide distribution and would make a good mascot for the INPS. To make a nomination, please visit:

<https://illinoisplants.org/nominate-a-mascot-for-the-illinois-native-plant-society/>



Chicago Living Corridors <https://chicagolivingcorridors.org/>

Webinar Series: <https://tinyurl.com/4djhbb3x>

This organization promotes the idea that private landowners can be vectors for change by restoring wildlife habitat and creating habitat corridors to support pollinator populations, increase biodiversity, conserve clean water, and restore soil. Check out their YouTube channel of presentations, including how to collect and sow your own native seed, native plants for shade gardens, native shrubs for the home landscape, and backyard native trees.





Local Events & Announcements

<https://extension.illinois.edu/events/2021-09-18-southern-illinois-conservation-workshop>



Southern Illinois Conservation Workshop

Saturday, September 18 | 9am - 2:45pm
Shawnee Community College

Illinois Extension

The fourth annual Southern Illinois Conservation Workshop is back as an in-person workshop at Shawnee Community College in Ullin, IL. This workshop brings together professionals with expertise on different aspects of landowner conservation to offer an opportunity for local land managers and landowners to learn, make connections, and ask questions.

The registration fee for the event is \$20. Lunch will be provided (Roast beef sandwiches, spinach/strawberry salad, pasta salad, dessert, drinks. Coffee provided in the morning).

Concurrent session topics include native and invasive woodland plant identification and management, how to take care of tree plantings, preparing your land for a burn, erosion control in agricultural lands, bats of southern Illinois, and the latest research on ticks. This year's workshop includes a panel of landowners sharing their experiences converting lawns and/or old agricultural fields into pollinator habitat.

Event speakers include:

- Ryan Pankau, Chris Evans, Talon Becker, Kevin Rohling, and Holly Tuten (University of Illinois)
- Christina Feng (Illinois Department of Natural Resources)
- Jen Behnken (Missouri Department of Conservation)
- Mark Vukovich (Shawnee National Forest)
- Nick Seaton (River to River Cooperative Weed Management Area)

Anne Parmley (Illinois Master Naturalist)

If you need reasonable accommodations to attend this program, please contact Erin Garrett at emedvecz@illinois.edu or 618-524-2270.

Please note that we will be following the current COVID-19 policies at the time of the event.



The Southern Illinois Prescribed Burn Association and the University of Illinois Extension Forestry Program invite you to a free prescribed fire training day on September 25th, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM, at the Dixon Springs Agricultural Center - 354 State Highway 145 N, Simpson, IL 62985.

The focus on this training will be preparing for a prescribed fire. The training will cover firebreak design and creation, pre-fire walk-throughs, and hazard trees and snag assessments. If the weather cooperates, we will have a live fire demonstration.

Event is FREE to attend.

This program will be outdoors and attendees should dress for the weather, bring snacks and a drink, and maintain proper social distancing.

To RSVP for this event, contact Extension Forester Chris Evans at cwevans@illinois.edu.



If you need reasonable accommodation to participate, please contact Chris Evans (cwevans@illinois.edu or 618-695-3383) as soon as possible.

Local Events & Announcements

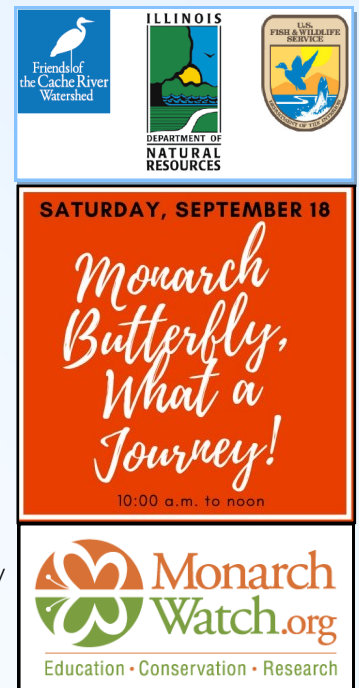
Mowing for Butterflies

This is the time of year some of you may be ready to mow/ bushhog the fallow fields, field edges, and pastures. Hopefully, you can put this off for a month or so especially if the area has a good growth of milkweed. Why? To help perpetuate butterflies especially monarch butterflies. They are coming to the peak of their fall reproduction cycle for the fourth generation of monarchs in 2021. In southern Illinois, the spring peak for monarchs is about April 15-May 30 or so which is the second generation of monarchs. The summer has some here and there then beginning about July 15 to the end of September the greatest number of monarchs are hatched to mature into an adult monarch in 20 to 30 days. This is the fourth generation which will migrate to Mexico for the winter then fly back to Texas where the female lays eggs for the first generation of 2022.

At the Barkhasuen-Cache River Wetlands Center there are numerous black/yellow-green/white striped monarch caterpillars/larvae feasting on the milkweed; common milkweed, butterfly weed, swamp milkweed, etc., which is their only food source. I began seeing them in late July but now they are everywhere. The monarch eggs will hatch in two to four days after being laid, the larva will eat-eat-eat-eat for ten to twenty days then form a chrysalis. It stays in the chrysalis stage for ten to fifteen days to emerge as an adult orange and black with a little bit of white monarch butterfly. Almost as soon as its wings are dry, it will begin its journey south.

Sometimes one can not put off cutting the shaggy looking field, but if there is an option to wait until mid-October to cut the field this will allow more of the monarchs to complete their cycle from egg to adult, and then journey on.

If you want to learn more about monarchs, stop by Cache River State Natural Area, Barkhasuen-Cache River Wetlands Center. Through September, one may catch butterflies, insect collection nets and holding cage provided, learn how to identify the butterflies caught, and if you have caught a monarch, place a Monarch Watch tag on it before releasing to continue its journey. On **Saturday, September 18, 10 - 11:00 a.m.** there will be a presentation on this remarkable creature. For more information on Monarch Watch go to www.monarchwatch.org.



Native Plant Sale

Green Earth will be hosting a native plant sale on **Saturday, October 2**, from **8:30am - 2pm** at the Town Square Pavilion in Carbondale (www.greeneearthinc.org). Trees and shrubs will be for sale from Keep Carbondale Beautiful starting at 9am. Pre-sales available at www.keepcb.org.



Local Events & Announcements

Floristic Quality Assessment— An Extended Synthesis Approach Saturday, October 2, 2021 8:00 AM 5:00 PM

NatureCITE
Center for Integrative Taxonomy and Ecology

What is Floristic Quality Assessment? Why do restorations and recreations of natural systems fail or otherwise hit a successional wall? Why, once a natural remnant is degraded, is it unlikely to recover its full quality? How do nitrogen and carbon drive ecological complexity and functionality? Why are qualitative attributes important and underappreciated?

After five decades of using Floristic Quality Assessment methodologies, we have learned that there is a much larger and prescient dynamism at play – a dynamism that clearly transcends the rote application of C-values to species and sites. For any place on Earth, ecological degradation is the degradation of a site's functional history. This history is the interwoven relationships within organisms and their home over vast stretches of time and evolutionary categorization (niches), in most cases including a Holocene-aged co-evolved relationship with human culture. It is the experience of living things codified into the very fabric of their existence – genetic and beyond – as reflected by place. In this history lies the best hope for us to understand the magnitude and amplitude to which life can aspire when life is allowed to function within its own dynamic stability and singular local geography.

Only when we fully engage with the experiential relationship of place and biology, this modern analog of indigenous knowledge, can we move forward in the efficacious monitoring and rebuilding of it – and thus in the monitoring and rebuilding of ourselves as healthful contributors to the system. Why else do we study ecology or organisms? Why else do we acknowledge and celebrate their dynamism? Join Jerry Wilhelm and Justin Thomas for a day of exploring the fuller potential of Floristic Quality Assessment and how to use it as a tool for understanding and explaining ecological function beyond the illusions we have prescribed to it.

Justin Thomas is the co-founder and Science Director of NatureCITE, a non-profit, field-based, research and education organization that focuses on the interrelatedness of evolution and ecology, especially as they pertain to natural systems management. He conducts ecological and taxonomic research and teaches field-based plant identification workshops throughout central and eastern North America. An authority of Floristic Quality Assessment, he is the co-author of the Ecological Checklist of the Missouri Flora, holds a research associateship at Missouri Botanical Garden, and serves as a scientific advisor to several conservation groups.

Gerould Wilhelm, Research Director for the Conservation Research Institute, received his Ph.D. in botany in 1984 at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. His dissertation focused on the vascular flora of the Pensacola Region in Florida and southwestern Alabama. He has co-authored with Laura Rericha, the definitive compendium on local plants, the "Flora of the Chicago Region: a Floristic and Ecological Synthesis." He is also an authority on the lichens of the Chicago region. He is also noted for his development of the Floristic Quality Assessment (FQA) methodology, which has become widely adapted for use in at many states and provinces. His research efforts include explorations in our understanding and awareness of the critical cultural relationships involved in the evolution of North American landscapes and ecosystems.

This is a one day event. Held on October 2 and repeated on October 3.

Cost is \$300; to register, please visit

<https://conservationresearchinstitute.org/educational-offerings>



Invasive Species Corner

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

<http://www.rtrcwma.org>
<https://www.frstillinois.com>
www.sipba.org

Japanese Chaff Flower Summit Presentations on YouTube

<https://bit.ly/3EdQzW6>

For those who missed it, visit the link above to check out all presentations. This summit focused on ecology, impacts, and management of the invasive Japanese chaff flower (*Achyranthes japonica*).

Laurel Wilt

While not currently known in Illinois, laurel wilt has been found in western Kentucky and Tennessee. This invasive, tree-killing disease poses a serious threat to a common and widespread understory tree—**sassafras**—as well as its close relatives, **spicebush**.

Laurel wilt is a lethal vascular wilt disease that rapidly kills entire clumps of sassafras. The disease is spread to new areas when the tiny, wood-boring redbay ambrosia beetle deposits spores of the fungus *Raffaelea lauricola* in healthy trees. Symptoms of laurel wilt include:

- Leaves rapidly wilt, turn reddish-brown, and drop from the tree in mid to late summer.
- Entire clumps of wilted or dead sassafras trees, as the disease spreads through roots.
- Dark staining in the sapwood, exposed by removing bark.
- Tiny ambrosia beetle exit holes in the bark.
- Frass ‘toothpicks’ may protrude from beetle exit holes.

Please be on the lookout!



**Laurel wilt has the potential to serious impact
sassafras trees and spicebush shrubs.**



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Dodecatheon frenchii –
French's Shooting Star

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Life Science II—Mailcode 6509 Southern Illinois University 1125 Lincoln Dr. Carbondale, IL 62901

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Chapter Affiliation

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I would like to help with:

- ☐ Leadership & Organization (serving on board at State or Chapter level)
☐ Leading Field Trips & Tours
☐ Organizing Workshops &/or Seminars

- ☐ Giving Workshops &/or Seminars
☐ Public Speaking
☐ Fund Raising
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My area of expertise: _____