



The Harbinger

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Newsletter of the
Illinois Native Plant Society

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



New England aster, *Aster novae-angliae*, spontaneous color form, one of many in old-fields. Photo by Henry Eilers.

Editorial

This issue announces the long-awaited fifth edition of *Plants of the Chicago Region*, now renamed *Flora of the Chicago Region*. In a press release, the co-authors (Gerould Wilhelm and Laura Rericha) state that 100,000 hours of work went into the new volume, but it does not seem possible that the co-authors each put 50,000 hours into the project. What they apparently include in this total is all the time that numerous naturalists across the Chicago region contributed by looking for plants, recording what they saw, and sending data to the authors. There's a huge Acknowledgments page in *Plants of the Chicago Region* and we expect an even larger one in the new edition.

This is typical of the way that our world works. Everyone cooperates to advance the cause — and all keep open minds because they want to learn. Naturalists have much to teach — and it isn't just about the environment.

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Message from the President



It is late January as I write this, my first President's message to the Illinois Native Plant Society (INPS) membership. I am humbled and honored to represent you in promoting the study, appreciation, and conservation of Illinois' native flora and natural communities. Join me in thanking outgoing President, Christopher David Benda, for his service to our

organization. Chris' passion, energy, and dedication to the mission of INPS has driven our organization forward. I hope to continue the advance initiated by Chris, our past presidents, and all of our dedicated board members.

For those that don't know me I am a native Ohioan, transplanted to Illinois after graduate school. When I first arrived I never imagined I would make this my home. As I first flew and later drove to my new home in Illinois all I could think of was the amazing amount of corn. Soon I would see that Illinois is much more than corn. Joining INPS many years ago was a large part of my introduction to what Illinois has to offer. Illinois is truly a crossroads of North American floristic elements with northern fens, bogs, and boreal relicts, southern swamps and coastal plain species, western Great Plains and prairie species, eastern deciduous forest, as well as Ozark and Appalachian origins to our flora. Despite past habitat loss Illinois is the most diverse state in the Midwest, something to be proud of and to protect. For nearly 17 years I have worked at the Illinois Natural History Survey on campus at the University of Illinois, Urbana - Champaign. During this time I have conducted environmental surveys for wetlands, rare plant surveys, and vegetation sampling throughout the state. I have truly grown to appreciate what Illinois has to offer and I'm pleased to now be leading you in discovering this for yourselves.

INPS has a lot planned for the coming year. Pending approval of the membership we welcome Jim Payne as our new treasurer. Also Dr. John Taft, Plant Ecologist from the Illinois Natural History Survey, has agreed to be our new *Erigenia* editor. We thank interim editor and board member Jean Sellar for filling that void. Because of Jean's efforts a new volume of *Erigenia* is expected soon. Watch the website, <https://www.ill-inps.org> or follow us on Facebook (Illinois Native Plant Society) to join in on upcoming hikes, workshops, and native plant sales held throughout Illinois. Also be a part of the conversation at the revived Illinois plants listserv. To subscribe just send an email to lists@lists.illinois.edu with the subject line: SUBSCRIBE illinoisplants. Leave the body of the message blank. Lastly, save the date for the 2017 Annual Gathering which will be hosted by the Quad Cities Chapter, June 2 to 4. More information on this important event to follow.

Hope to see you all out on the trails,
Paul B. Marcum
President

INPS CHAPTER NEWS

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CENTRAL: We will meet in February at Adams Wildlife Sanctuary. Current chapter Vice President Jim Struebing will talk about his work with the New Holland Prairie Patch.

For the March meeting and quarterly potluck, we will welcome Illinois Stories host Mark McDonald and will view the Illinois Stories segment filmed at last year's plant sale.

The annual Central Chapter plant sale is slated for Saturday, April 29th. Planning for the sale is getting underway soon with the first organizational meeting later this month. Dates for plant sale dig days and specifics on the need for volunteers will be shared via the chapter newsletter and email.

SOUTHERN: The Southern chapter has a full schedule of programs lined up for 2017!

In February, we will welcome INPS member and Missouri Natural History Biologist Bruce Henry for a talk about Missouri's Fens and the Hines Emerald Dragonfly.

In March, Southern Chapter Vice President Chris Evans will present on the Illinois State Champion Tree program through the University of Illinois Forestry Extension.

March 31 - April 2 is the annual Indigenous Plants Symposium at John A. Logan College in Carterville, Illinois. The theme is plant and animal interactions and will feature Jim Wiker, co-author of the *Butterflies of Illinois*, as keynote speaker.

FOREST GLEN: The Forest Glen Chapter plans four workshops in 2017.

- April 22 - Mushroom Identification Workshop (Andy Miller)
- Date TBD - Going Ape for Apiaceae Workshop (Mary Ann Feist)
- Date TBD - “First Detectors” Workshop (Kelly Estes)
- Date TBD - Oak Workshop (will be in fall)

KANKAKEE TORRENT: On January 7th, we participated in a workday at Camp Shaw-Waw-Nas-See (www.campshaw.org) clearing honeysuckle from the steep rock creek banks. There will be more days like this over the winter season.

At our meeting on February 6th we will have a presentation on starting seed and will do some planting for our May plant sale. At our March meeting, members will bring in plants from home that can be divided.

Our Native Plant Sale is scheduled for May 21st. We have moved it from Camp Shaw to the Kankakee Rhubarb Festival where several thousand people are expected to attend. We felt this would help with sales and community exposure. We are also planning a trip to Vermont Cemetery, but no date has been set.

Welcome New Members

Central Chapter

Carol Anderson
Carolynn & Sam Benninghoff
Donna Dworak
John Ebry
Rick Fiddymment & Susan
Nelson
Ash Hamilton
Paul Nickel
Grace Norris

Forest Glen Chapter

Janesse Colon-Ruiz
Bridget & Kevin Frerichs
Germaine Light

Grand Prairie Chapter

Amanda Fox
John Paul McGreal

Southern Chapter

John & Ronda Dively
Mary Dresser*
David Gibson
Barbara Klein
Christina Lueking
David Paddock
Laura Schaefer
Lyle White

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Northeast Chapter

Nicholas Fuller
Monika Kastle
Tom Keane
Sallie Krebs
Clare Longfellow
Monica Mueller

* *New Life Member*

How Henry Eilers Protects 700+ Plant Species at Shoal Creek Site

By Victor M. Cassidy

All photos by Henry Eilers

“Our 260-acre site has well over 700 plant species identified and vouchered,” says Henry Eilers, steward since 1990 of the Henry Eilers Shoal Creek Conservation Area (HESCCA) that’s named in his honor. “More than 600 of the species are natives and several are state-listed.” In addition, the site has 65 fungal species that were collected and vouchered early on, as well as over 70 species of butterflies. Seventy-five bird species have been recorded, at least ten snake species, and many amphibians.

The site is near Litchfield, Illinois — about halfway between Springfield and St. Louis. This long, odd-shaped piece of land is a strongly-dissected southern Illinois till plain segment located on the east side of Lake Lou Yeager, an impoundment that was built in the early 1960s by damming the West Fork of Shoal Creek.

How??

But how do you get 700-plus plant species in 260 acres? As Eilers tells it, the diversity “is due in large part to the many elements of southern and Ozarkian flora, as well as to the variety of terrain and topography.” Extensive barrens and recovering old fields contain a lot of species with savanna/grassland affinities, he explains.

There are steep slopes next to Lake Lou Yeager and in the complex interior ravine systems, he continues. These grade into gently sloping or relatively level broad ridge tops. Also, the site is in “a former forest-prairie transition zone and at the juncture of three different natural divisions.” This geographic position has “undoubtedly contributed to its exceptional diversity. Many of the plants are at the edge of their range. We’re really surprised at how richly the site represents the ecosystems to the south of us.”

In researching the site’s history, Eilers learned that arrowheads and stone axes and hoes have been found there, suggesting that Native Americans farmed the area long before Litchfield was settled. Once settlement began, the prairie was plowed up and native plants disappeared. Immigrants from Europe followed Old Country practice and grazed their cattle and pigs in the woods where they porked up on hickory nuts, acorns, pecans, and walnuts. Parts of the site were farmed during the 1930s and much of the area was heavily grazed. Native species and invasives moved in when the farm fields were abandoned.

Six Plant Communities

Eilers counts six plant communities at HESCCA: upland forest, floodplain, flatwoods, barrens, old fields, and wetlands (seep and sedge meadow). He calls the upland forest “a microcosm of several woodland categories that are representative of the Central Hardwood Region.”

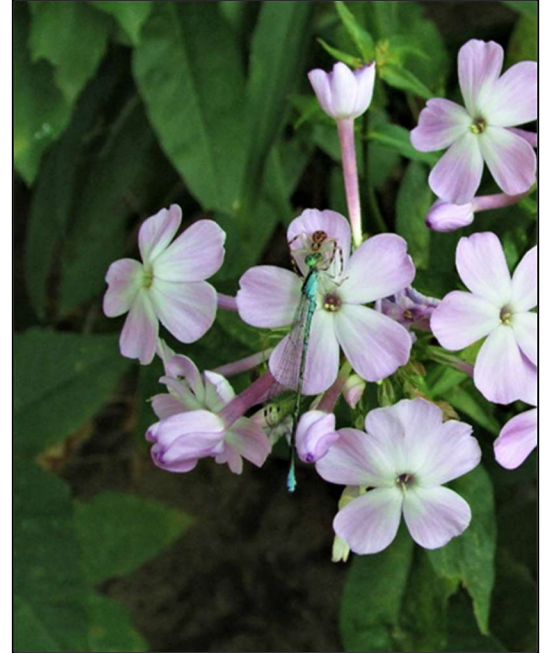


Melanthium virginicum, state-threatened Virginia bunchflower lily, with purple coneflower.

Oak-Hickory woodland is by far the most common community type with considerable diversity, often varying from one ridge or ravine to the next. Among the most dominant trees are bitternut hickory (*Carya cordiformis*), shagbark hickory (*C. ovata*), and mockernut hickory (*C. tomentosa*). White oak (*Quercus alba*) is the most widespread of the ten oak species here.

The remnant floodplain forest below the dam stretches along the low-gradient Shoal Creek. In the early 1960s, much of the area was severely disturbed during construction of the earthen dam and creek channelization. Early successional tree species still dominate today including large numbers of shingle oak (*Q. imbricaria*) and box elder (*Acer negundo*). There are many other woody species including bur oak (*Q. macrocarpa*) and a few swamp white oaks (*Q. bicolor*). The recovering understory flora is surprisingly rich, especially in early spring flowers.

The flatwoods with their poorly-drained hard pan soils are seasonally wet and even inundated in spring, but very dry during the hot summer months. As a result, the ground flora includes both wetland and drought-tolerant species. Among these is a whole suite of annual species which are often overlooked by amateur botanists. Pin oak (*Q. palustris*) dominates here along with black oak (*Q. velutina*), post oak (*Q. stellata*), and blackjack oak (*Q. marilandica*). The post oak and blackjack oak in HESCCA are at the northern limits of their range.



Fall phlox, *Phlox paniculata*, color form, one of many in Shoal Creek floodplain forest.

The barrens are dry ridge tops above the Shoal Creek valley that are covered with a shallow layer of soil over Pennsylvanian sandstone, which is much exposed on the steeper slopes. Large trees are sparse, but the ground layer is rich in prairie and savanna grasses, other graminoids, and forbs, and especially oak and hickory grubs.

Two barrens areas at HESCCA were recognized as some of the best remaining samples of this community type by the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory in the 1970s. Additional barrens communities were revealed after years of fire management and are currently being connected.

The old fields are today dominated by shrubs including prairie willow (*Salix humilis*), American hazelnut (*Corylus americana*), smooth sumac (*Rhus glabra*), winged sumac (*R. copallina*), blackhaw viburnum (*Viburnum prunifolium*), Canada plum (*Prunus nigra*), white sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*), roughleaf dogwood (*Cornus drummondii*), vines, and brambles. Invasive and listed native species often grow here side by side. One of the latter is the savanna blazing star (*Liatris scariosa* var. *nieuwlandii*) whose discovery triggered the protection effort for the site in the 1980s.

A small treeless seep on a south-facing slope supports a unique assembly of wetland species but also the endangered swamp metalmark butterfly (*Calaphelis mutica*). A sedge meadow is dominated by a coarse rhizomatous sedge (*Carex hyalinolepis*), blue-joint grass (*Calamagrostis canadensis*), and huge pin oaks.

Prime Mover



Henry Eilers was born in Germany, came to the United States as a young man, served in the Armed Forces, and then settled in Litchfield where he founded a nursery business. He discovered the HESCCA site, recognized its importance, and started campaigning to protect it. At first, he tried to get the public excited about preserving rare plant species.

When this did not work, he changed tactics and ‘sold’ the project to the local community by emphasizing recreation, tourism, and nature education. The Litchfield Rotary Club became a big backer as did both local newspapers. The land was set aside by council resolution in 1990 as a conservation area and Eilers was appointed its steward. The Rotary Club still sponsors a trail through a part of the site.

With help and guidance from The Nature Conservancy and the Volunteer Stewardship Network the site has been managed since then by reintroducing appropriate species, invasive species control, canopy reduction, and burns. In 1992 the Shoal Creek Volunteers (SCV), a local support group, became a non-profit corporation.

“The most effective restoration activity was reintroducing fire,” says Eilers. “We burned parts of the woods and adjacent old-field grassland most years, always leaving some patches untouched to protect plants and insects.”

The results were spectacular. “Flowering plants of the beautiful purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*) and shooting star (*Dodecatheon meadia*) increased 1,000-fold,” Eilers recalls. Among the many other plants that benefited from the burns were purple milkweed (*Asclepias purpurascens*), yellow coneflower (*Ratibita pinnata*), false boneset (*Brickellia eupatoroides*), and many, many more. The showy orchid (*Galearis spectabilis*), once scarce, is common today at HESCCA.

Along the way, the volunteers have salvaged endangered plants that were threatened by road building or other development and replanted in the preserve. Among these are the Illinois state-threatened Virginia bunchflower lily (*Melanthium virginicum*), the state-endangered green trillium (*Trillium viride*), and royal catchfly (*Silene regia*). Fire has been particularly beneficial to the green trillium. In an area that had recently been burned, Eilers once counted over 1,000 plants.

Absence of fire in the years before restoration allowed sugar maples (*Acer saccharum*) to invade the woodlands, where they began to dominate. Sugar maples grow fast and create a dense shade when mature. Maple seedlings are shade tolerant while oaks and hickories, which grow slowly, are not. When we visited the site, Eilers pointed out stands of sugar maples with hardly any ground layer beneath them, while tree seedlings and wildflowers thrived under the oaks and hickories.



Trillium viride, state-endangered green trillium, originally from adjacent Macoupin Co., some 12 miles west.



Buffalo clover, *Trifolium reflexum*, an annual species of barrens and flat-woods communities.

Fire is no cure-all. Even after fire, many native species were slow to recover. Restoration is a process. But some natives like the buffalo clover (*Trifolium reflexum*) came out of the seed bank after fire scarified its hard seeds.

Henry Eilers needs help in the form of a successor. “We’d like to burn more than we have done recently,” he states, “but to get it done you need the blessing of the city and the fire department — and then you must line up volunteers. That’s a big job for a man of 82.” Eilers is hoping that he will meet someone soon who will take up the burden that he has carried so long and so capably. Meanwhile there is a very active SCV

board and other community supporters.

SOURCES: This article combines information provided by Henry Eilers during a site visit and Eilers’ article “Managing Change in an Illinois Wetland,” *International Oaks* Spring 2011 No. 22.

“Land Nobody Wants”

“It’s land that nobody wants,” says Henry Eilers. “It’s just ten acres that you can’t farm or build on. But it’s a high quality area, a seasonally wet southern Illinois till-plain prairie with prairie crayfish, numerous native prairie and wetland species, butterflies, moths, snakes, and prairie cicadas. As an example, more than ten species of katydids and grasshoppers were found there recently in one short foray.”

Owned by the Illinois Department of Transportation, the high-quality trapezoid-shaped site is located near Litchfield, wedged between highway I-55 and old Route 66. “The Montgomery County Natural Areas Guardians (NAGS) are working toward permanent protection of what we call the Route 66 Prairie,” says Eilers. <http://rt66prairie.com/>

Illinois Botanists Big Year 2016

By Cassi Saari

The results are in! And the winner is...Evan Barker with 877 species!

1st: Evan Barker (evan8): 877 species, 1,249 observations

2nd: Erin Faulkner (elfaulkner): 749 species, 863 observations

3rd: Mark Kluge (sanguinaria33): 737 species, 1,037 observations

4th: Corey Lange (coreyjlange): 646 species, 1,162 observations

5th: Jason Miller (hikebikerun13): 322 species, 399 observations (Research Grade observations only)

It was a close race between the top four; Evan, Erin, Mark, and Corey were each in 1st place at some point during the year. Many thanks to all who participated in this friendly competition. We had 11,203 observations

added by 395 people. Of those, 9,360 observations reached Research Grade. That is, they were wild or naturalized, had a photo/date/GPS point, and were verified by at least one other person.

A total of 1,365 species were identified, including subspecies. At least one, *Stellaria corei* (Tennessee starwort), was the first documentation of that species growing in Illinois. The most-observed native plants were *Polystichum acrostichoides* (Christmas fern, 67 observations), *Asclepias syriaca* (common milkweed, 63), *Trillium recurvatum* (prairie trillium, 61), *Claytonia virginica* (Virginia spring beauty, 61), and *Podophyllum peltatum* (mayapple, 57).

The most-observed non-native plants were *Taraxacum officinale* (dandelion, 71 observations), *Lotus corniculatus* (birdsfoot trefoil, 48), *Trifolium repens* (white clover, 40), *Trifolium pratense* (red clover, 39), and *Securigera varia* (crown vetch, 36). Thank you to all who helped to identify plants for others throughout the year, especially Evan Barker/evan8 (a whopping 3,715 identifications!), Corey Lange/coreyjlange (1,816), Mark Kluge/sanguinaria33 (1,717), Erin Faulkner/elfaulkner (873), and Cassi Saari/bouteloua (696).



Stellaria corei, Tennessee starwort. Photo by Corey Lange.

These statistics were pulled from research grade observations of plants in Illinois in 2016 as of 1/23/2017. You can still help the community by identifying unknown plants or confirming them to help reach Research Grade. Help identify on iNaturalist at www.inaturalist.org! Join the conversation on the Illinois Botanists Big Year Facebook group.

Want to participate in 2017?

It's easy. Simply add your observations to the [iNaturalist website](http://www.inaturalist.org) or iPhone/Android app and it will automatically count toward the contest if it meets the rules:

- Must be a plant (bryophytes and vascular plants – native and non-native species are accepted)
- Observation must be within Illinois
- Must be observed between the dates of January 1st, 2017 and December 31st, 2017
- Observation must be “research grade.” That means it must be “wild/naturalized” and that you need a photo, date, species identification, location, and for someone else to confirm your observation!

Nature newbie? No worries – we will help identify any plants you see. Don't have a smartphone? You can upload photos through the website without need for a smartphone. Snap a photo and upload it to iNaturalist.org and identify it as best as you can, even if that's just “plant.”

Can you help promote the Illinois Botanists Big Year in 2017? Know a nearby state or region that should set one up? Have a great idea? Contact me: cassisaari@gmail.com

Illinois Botanists Big Year 2016 #2

Article and Photos by Evan Barker

I screamed. As loud and low as I've ever screamed in my life. My hands, clenching my sweat-soaked hat swung quickly towards my back, my shoulder lowered so to make my neck fully exposed to the strike.

"Finally got you!" I yelled, rubbing a tiny divot along the hairline on my neck.

A biting fly, probably a black fly, at least an inch long, lay twitching in the mud of the path. I finished it off with my foot. The pain of a black fly bite has been described as being hit by lightning, but for me it was much more like hot pepper sauce on an open wound than an electrical mishap.

Of the insects that have consumed my blood, this was the most unpleasant. There was an important reason for my being in an area with such awful beings, a reason for continuing on this awful downhill path that I would later have to ascend.

This year, the Illinois Native Plant Society began an annual competition called the "Illinois Botanists Big Year." The entire competition is this: Photograph and identify as many plant species known to grow outside of cultivation within Illinois during the calendar year, and have someone confirm your identifications. It's very simple, but that's what makes it so hard.

In February of 2016, just as the competition was being launched, my grandfather, Clayton "Bark" Barker, became very ill. A lifelong botanist and friend of Floyd Swink, his influence on my life and career choice can't be understated.

I had been toying with the idea of participating in the Big Year, and one morning I stopped by a local Forest Preserve and saw the first skunk cabbage leaves poking through the ground. Later that day, while visiting with my grandfather for what would be the last time, I mentioned the competition and showed him a picture of the skunk cabbage on my phone. He identified it right away, and told me to take on the challenge. When he passed away the following week, I decided that I would dedicate my Big Year to his memory.

From then on, every weekend included a plant hike or three. Every day at work I was watching plant phenology for hints of flowering. Vacations were re-scheduled, and nights became a time for strategizing and research. Early in the year I watched the Illinois Botany Facebook group for hints of where things would be flowering and when. I made a few trips to the Morton Arboretum to try and find butterbur (*Petasites hybridus*) which someone had posted with pictures and a location. How easy! Then came snow trillium (*Trillium nivale*) and rattlesnake plantain (*Goodyera pubescens*). Soon after that I was able to join a camping trip to southern Illinois; a whole different flora to capture, and an absolutely magical introduction to the area.



Cypripedium candidum, small white lady's slipper.

By May it was clear that there were several people actively participating in the Competition. May-June are peak flowering for many species and many early ephemerals are still up. In June, I had uploaded a picture of small white lady's slipper, *Cypripedium candidum*, which elicited some somewhat serious ribbing from an acquaintance along the lines of "you couldn't have taken that picture, it's way too nice." Aside from the



flattery, this was a little troubling, since the competition relies on the honor system (how would anyone really know if you took a picture out of state or in another year?).

One afternoon my daughter painted my fingernails blue. I scraped most of it off after it dried, but it was still apparent in a few pictures the next day. I realized that if I kept my thumbnail painted and it ended up in each picture, it would serve as an indication that I myself had taken the picture during 2016. I considered it a bonus that if I was willing to walk around with a blue thumbnail all year, it would show serious commitment and dedication. Well, it accomplished neither objective.

Everyone was just confused.

Calopogon tuberosus, grass pink orchid.

It was in late July in southern Illinois that I was bitten by the black fly. I've always been irrationally afraid of biting flies, and now I don't know if it's irrational or not. It's torture having them buzz by your head for hours, tensing up every time they get close. The bite is painful, yes, but not a lasting or satisfying pain, just a sickly smoldering slice, an annoyance at a higher threshold than is warranted by a stupid bug.

My purpose for being at that spot at that time was to find pigeonwings (*Clitoria mariana*), but I had missed it in flower and instead captured it just before seed set without recognizing it.

Not 90 seconds after the loudest scream of my life, I screamed again. This time in joy. *Passiflora*? In Illinois? In full glorious flower? Yes, an unexpected sight for a Chicagoan, we have passion flower as a native species in the state. An observation of a species in flower seems much more likely to be confirmed as Research Grade in iNaturalist, the system used by INPS for the Big Year competition. So for the purposes of the competition, a unique species in flower is likely more valuable than a species before, after, or just not flowering.

By late August, I had over five thousand pictures to sort through, and August still has plenty of species in bloom, so it's not like I could take a break from taking new pictures. However, by the time December rolls around, there's basically nothing left to find that you haven't already gotten earlier in the year.

As of this writing, I've photographed and identified over 960 Illinois species encountered in 2016, of which 877 will be included in the final count. That may not sound like too many, especially since there are over 3,400 species found in Illinois, but actually getting around to each one is much harder than you'd think. You'd think that the site you know really well that has 150 species is going to help you win. Not really. Of those 150 species, 145 are found elsewhere fairly regularly. Oh, and weed species? Yeah, they count just as much as the super rare orchids. This is why photography skills are so important.

I'm really proud of the year as a whole, but it should be said that the benefits of participating in the competition far outweigh the accomplishment of winning. I've improved my photography and photo editing skills greatly. I've recognized my weak spots in plant identification, and the goal of winning helped motivate me to eliminate

them. That sedge might be something special, but it might be the same thing I spent an hour photographing last week. This alone is worth the price of admission (committing to win).

The screenshot shows the iNaturalist.org interface for an observation of a Downy Gentian. The main content includes a large photo of a blue flower, a map of the location in Dupage County, IL, and a list of comments and identifications. The observation was made by Evan Barker on September 3, 2016. The location is identified as Dupage County, IL, USA, with coordinates 41.8134026448, -88.0899560452. The observation is marked as 'Research' quality grade and 'Obscured' geoprivacy. The comments section shows two identifications: one by Evan Barker and one by sanguinaria33, both identifying the plant as Downy Gentian (Gentiana puberulenta).

One of Evan Barker's observations recorded on iNaturalist.

I will never forget some of the people I met this year, and the plants were pretty cool too. I can only hope that my number is beaten quickly and thoroughly. It'll give me a reason to participate again in the future, just not for another few years. If you have the least inkling of wanting to try, start now! I can promise that the work that you put into participating will pay off more than you expect.

If you're thinking about trying it, I can't recommend it enough. Here are a few things to consider:

1. **Winter ID.** Particularly for woodies, this is totally achievable, just take a ton of pictures and focus on the characters that are salient at the time. Don't assume you'll be able to find something again in November or December. Get it now.

2. **Macro photography.** Get a good macro lens and learn how to use it, or go cheap and get a set of macro filters (like me). Start early.
3. **Tracking.** Get the early stuff out of the way now so you don't have to worry about taking pictures of it later. Track what you've gotten in a spreadsheet you can bring with you. It's not just woodies in the winter — there are plenty of herbaceous species available, you can find them in the observations from 2016.
4. **Swink & Wilhelm.** If you're in the Chicago region, read your Swink & Wilhelm like a novel. Whenever they say “Marly flat” it really seems to me like they're talking about one spot in particular and you'll figure that one out really quickly. There are other keywords that have the same effect for different spots. There aren't that many good spots left, and most natives can be found by visiting those spots a few times over the course of the year. Weeds and non-natives are a little more...variable.
5. **Jo Daviess County.** This county was nearly completely ignored in 2016. Whoever can take advantage of that county in 2017 in addition to what was explored in 2016 will be at an immediate advantage.

Rare Plant a Stateless Refugee: Where Should It Go?

By Steve Packard and Victor M. Cassidy

For more than thirty years, Steve Packard has been brooding over something that he did as a young conservationist. Matters came to a head recently and now the restoration community is debating what Steve should do. Here is the story in his own words (<http://woodsandprairie.blogspot.com/2014/10/funny-story.html>).

“In the late ‘70s,” he writes, “I worked for the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission and was thrilled to be part of the conservation revolution. Always an amateur lover of nature, I had no college botany training but was hired for my communications and political skills.”

Packard was also steward of Somme Prairie Grove, a forest preserve in Northbrook. He regularly refused offered gifts of native seed or plants, because “we of the North Branch Prairie Project had a rule (officially approved by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, that owns Somme) that we'd get our seeds from spontaneous natural populations within 15 miles.”

Packard made an exception for the American burnet (*Sanguisorba canadensis*) which he thought “deserved help.” At that time, there were only two known populations in Illinois, both on railroad edges and both threatened. Indeed, all the southwestern populations may need help; the species is threatened or endangered in Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Georgia.

In the 1970s, Ray Schulenburg and John Kolar rescued seeds from a population west of Rockdale along a railroad. Kolar raised plant plugs and gave one to Packard who “had to wrestle what to do with it...I was new to conservation and later wouldn't have planted it at Somme but would have wanted a more limey area.”

The radius rule was “originally 15 miles for prairie species, then 25 miles for savanna species, because they were generally harder to find,” he explains. “But we also made exceptions for species that were once found nearby, but now were gone. In those cases, we went to the closest spontaneous sources. Examples included white prairie clover (*Dalea candida*), Robin’s plantain (*Erigeron pulchellus*), and fringed gentian (*Gentianopsis crinita*).

In all those cases, we found ample records that they once occurred (and often were plentiful) along the North Branch. We found no such records for *Sanguisorba*. Might it still be welcome as an experiment? Or is it better to stick to the larger experiment — to restore the full, documented natural diversity of the site — and then let nature proceed. “I just don’t know. I’m interested in many perspectives on it.”

“Somewhat Limey, Seepy Place”

The *Sanguisorba canadensis* seemed to like limey seepage water, so “after agonizing over the ethics of it,” around 1980, Packard planted his plug of *Sanguisorba* with plugs of New Jersey tea and some other species that the group was trying to restore in a “somewhat limey, seepy place” at Somme.

Precious little happened for many years. From time to time, Packard saw “a very few of the burnett’s distinctive leaves, there by the New Jersey tea. After decades of this, wondering if deer browse might be the problem, Packard and Lisa Culp put exclusion cages over the plants. By the end of summer 2014, the *Sanguisorba canadensis* was “bushy, the size of a large cabbage, at least ten times bigger than I’d ever seen it before.” Packard caged it again in spring of 2015, forgot about the plant, but rushed over to Somme when three friends e-mailed that they’d found an oddity.

“When I got there,” Packard writes, “not only did the 34-year-old *Sanguisorba* turn out to be the mystery plant, but it was now taller than I was. Amazing. Thirty-four years later.”

The story doesn’t end there. Packard put the history on his blog, asking whether the *Sanguisorba* should “stay in this oak savanna where a curious history has lodged it? I wonder what the various contributors to the decision-making process will decide.”

Roughly half the respondents said “let it stay,” while the other half said “it must go.” According to James McGee, “the introduced *Sanguisorba canadensis* should be returned to the place from which it originated. This might be best done by breeding it with other individuals in the restoration program and returning the resulting seed to areas where it is being restored.” Carol Freeman writes: “With changing climate, less habitat. I think



American burnet, *Sanguisorba canadensis*, at Somme Prairie Grove Nature Preserve. Photo by Tina Onderdonk. Source: Steve Packard.

any place a rare species can survive, and possibly thrive, is reason to let it be. Even in small preserves, I've seen populations of plants move around. Maybe Somme will become the better place for this species.”

Is there a resolution? Packard says, it's technically up to the Forest Preserve staff to make the final decision, but they take our stewards' recommendations seriously. So far, there's been no compelling conclusion one way or the other.” In 2016, another *Sanguisorba* plant showed up nearby, apparently resulting from seed from the belated flowering of that aging transplant. For now, it seems to be on its own.

News

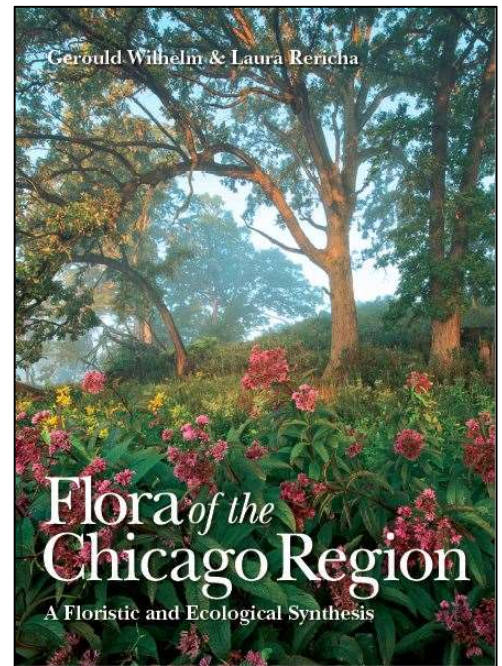
STAY TUNED! *Flora of the Chicago Region* Coming Soon

Flora of the Chicago Region, A Floristic and Ecological Synthesis will be published in spring of 2017 and available arrive in early- to mid-April. This book succeeds and greatly amplifies *Plants of the Chicago Region* (4th Edition, 1994) which is now out of print.

Floyd Swink and Gerould Wilhelm wrote all four editions of *Plants of the Chicago Region*, but Swink died in 2000, so Wilhelm has written the new edition with Laura Rericha, wildlife biologist for the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. Bill McKnight, publications chair of the Indiana Academy of Science, coordinated the project while Margot Mazur, principal with the Caerulean Collaborative, made the illustrations.

According to the authors, *Flora of the Chicago Region* will include most of the information and all of the innovations in previous editions plus:

- Etymology of generic and specific names.
- Morphological descriptions of each family, genus, and species.
- Re-evaluations of many problematic genera, including *Amelanchier*, *Chenopodium*, *Crataegus*, *Echinochloa*, *Panicum*, *Rubus*, and *Salix*. In most cases, a return to the original works of these genera is critical and necessary to understand them.
- A whole new section of associates that account for all the insects, birds, and mammals that have intimate relationships with our vascular plants: nectaring or pollen or extrafloral nectarines, gall formation, herbivory, seed or fruit utilization, and myrmecochory.
- Where vascular plants or their communities have characteristic associations with bryophytes and lichens, these cryptogams are mentioned.
- Lists of associated vascular plants have been revised to create additional space.
- Nomenclatural alignments, while still conservative, are much more “current” than in any of the previous editions.
- The authors have fine-tuned the coefficients of conservatism.
- Abstruse, but important, aspects of local surface geology are integrated into plant community understandings and the natural communities section is expanded.
- The authors have updated dot distribution maps.
- There are 900 illustrations of the key floral features for each genus (occasionally fruits and/or leaves).



Flora of the Chicago Region will be available as a printed or e-book, which means that long-suffering botanists won't have to lug a 900-page tome into the field. The Indiana Academy of Science has made the *Flora of the Chicago Region* available to the Illinois Native Plant Society at a discounted rate. INPS members will be able to purchase copies, through INPS, for \$90, discounted 28% off the retail price of \$125. To pre-order your copy, go to <http://www.ill-inps.org/flora-chicago-region-offer/>.

Argemone mexicana L. SHORT-HORNED PRICKLY POPPY [Mexican] Introduced from tropical America. Evidently escaped from cultivation, our earliest record is a collection made in 1875 from Evanston in Cook County (Shipman *s.n.*, F: annotated as subsp. *mexicana* in 1996 by A. E. Schwarzbach). There is an old record from a field border at the Morton Arboretum, in DuPage County, which specimen is similar to the preceding species, except that the petals and sepal horns are much smaller, and it is not at all glaucous.

~ (C,M,U,V; Argemone alba, F,Pp,S) *Leaves glaucous, the veins with tinctures of blue; proximal leaves lobed half or more the distance to the midvein, the distal leaves less so; cortex of the capsule visible among the spines.* UPL



ARGENTINA Hill [L. = little silver one] **Rosaceae**

~ Perennial herbs with alternate, pinnately 5-31 foliolate leaves, the leaflets generally serrate or dentate, the abaxial surfaces silvery-tomentose; flowers solitary at the ends of elongate axillary peduncles; calyx deeply 5-lobed, with an involucre of 5 bractlets at the sinuses; petals 5, obtuse; stamens more than 10; styles emerging from the side of the carpel; achenes aggregated in a head, the receptacle dry.

Argentina anserina (L.) Rydb. SILVERWEED [L. = of goose greens] This species of sandy soils occurs primarily near Lake Michigan in the dune region. Inland, it occurs along railroads and in other waste places, except in DuPage County, on the margin of a prairie marsh at West Chicago, and in DeKalb County, on gravel bars along the Kishwaukee River. On the storm beach along Lake Michigan it associates with *Ammophila breviligulata*, *Cakile lacustris*, *Chamaesyce polygonifolia*, *Corispermum pallasii*, and *Lathyrus japonicus glaber*. Farther inland in the dune region, it associates with *Artemisia campestris caudata*, *Calamovilfa longifolia magna*, *Elymus canadensis*, *Koeleria macrantha*, *Oenothera clelandii*, and *Salix interior*. On marly shores of interdunal sloughs and pannes, associates include *Agalinis purpurea*, *Carex viridula*, *Dasiphora fruticosa*, *Gentianopsis crinita*, *Hypericum kalmianum*, *Juncus balticus*, *Lobelia kalmii*, *Rhynchospora capillacea*, *Sabatia angularis*, and *Triglochin maritima*.



~ (M,U; Potentilla anserina, C,D,F,H,J,Pp,S,V; P. anserina sericea, Pt) *Stoloniferous, repent perennial, the stems, peduncles, and leaf rachides at least thinly pilose, the peduncles arising from nodes with much reduced leaves; principal leaves pinnately compound, with 11-21 sharply and deeply dentate principal leaflets, at least the middle and distal pairs interrupted by a much reduced pair, all the abaxial surfaces tightly silky-tomentose; adaxial surfaces glabrate or rarely loosely silky in var. sericea (Hayne) Piper [L. = silky]; bractlets commonly 3-lobed; petals yellow.* 12 MAY – 1 OCT. FACW. C = 4



ARISAEMA Mart. (Gr. = bloody arum; an allusion to the deep tinctures of red in some species) **Araceae**

~ Cormose, glabrous, acaulescent, spathiform perennials with compound leaves; monoecious, with staminate flowers above the pistillate on the spadix, or facultatively dioecious, with a plant at one year bearing fertile pistillate flowers, then emerging the next year with only staminate flowers; ovaries 1-locular, each a 1-few seeded bright-red berry.

- 1. Leaflets mostly 7-13; spadix exerted from the spathe **Arisaema dracontium**
- 1. Leaflets 3 or rarely 5; spadix included, the spathe arching over it.
 - 2. Hood of spathe commonly more than 5 cm long and 3 cm wide, the flange along the rim more than 4 mm wide. **Arisaema triphyllum**
 - 2. Hood of spathe to 5 cm long and to 3 cm wide, the flange along the rim less than 4 mm wide.
 - Fresh spathe strongly fluted and white-ridged, the inner surface striped dark-purple and white **Arisaema triphyllum stewardsonii**
 - Fresh spathe terete, without white and green corrugations, the inner surface solidly infused with dark-purple. **Arisaema triphyllum pusillum**

Arisaema dracontium (L.) Schott GREEN DRAGON [L. = with the likeness of a snake, perhaps from the exertion of the spadix from the elongate spathe] This plant occurs in wet to mesic woodlands, especially on floodplains and in wooded seeps. Associates include *Amphicarpaea bracteata comosa*, *Arisaema triphyllum*, *Athyrium filix-femina*, *Carex grisea*, *Cryptotaenia canadensis*, *Dentaria laciniata*, *Dioscorea villosa*, *Fraxinus lanceolata*, *Galium aparine*, *Hydrophyllum virginianum*, *Impatiens capensis*, *Laportea canadensis*, *Leersia virginica*, *Lonicera reticulata*, *Osmorhiza claytonii*, *Phlox divaricata*, *Quercus macrocarpa*, *Ranunculus abortivus*, *Ranunculus septentrionalis*, *Sambucus canadensis*, *Sanicula odorata*, *Smilacina racemosa*, *Smilax lasioneura*, *Symphytotrichum lateriflorum*, *Symphytotrichum ontarionis*, *Tilia americana*, *Ulmus americana*, *Vitis riparia*, and *Zizia aurea*.



~ (C,D,F,H,J,M,Pp,Pt,S,U,V) *Leaves pedately divided into 5 or more lance-oblong divisions; spadix long-tapering, exerted well beyond the elongate tubular spathe.* 11 MAY – 27 JUN. FACW. C = 6

Arisaema triphyllum (L.) Schott JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT [Gr. = three-leaved] This is a common plant of wet to mesic woodlands. In mesic woodlands, such as in our western sector, associates include *Acer saccharum*, *Actaea pachypoda*, *Allium burdickii*, *Allium canadense*, *Campanulastrum americanum*, *Circaea canadensis*, *Claytonia virginica*, *Cryptotaenia canadensis*, *Dentaria laciniata*, *Erythronium albidum*, *Floerkea proserpinacoides*, *Fraxinus americana*, *Galium triflorum*, *Geranium maculatum*, *Hydrophyllum virginianum*, *Impatiens capensis*, *Laportea canadensis*, *Osmorhiza claytonii*, *Phlox divaricata*, *Podophyllum*

Coming Events

WILD THINGS 2017 Conference

February 18 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. (Doors open at 8 a.m.)

PLEASE NOTE: The Conference has moved to the UIC Forum at 725 W. Roosevelt Road. Paid parking is \$10 in Lot 5 at 1135 S. Morgan. Google WILD THINGS for a full conference program. Please bring a water bottle and travel coffee mug with you to the conference to minimize paper waste.



ANNUAL GATHERING

Friday through Sunday, June 2-4, at Augustana College, Rock Island, IL.

According to Bohdan Dziadyk of the Quad Cities Chapter, the meeting will kick off late Friday afternoon in Hanson Hall at Augustana College with heavy hors d'oeuvres and adult beverages followed by two presentations of 45 minutes each. There will be numerous field trips on Saturday and Sunday on both sides of the Mississippi River.

The main events of Saturday evening will take place in the Wilson Center. These include a silent auction, the traditional banquet, and a plenary speaker on the topic of "plant blindness" in modern society. The organizers will send out an information packet when it is ready.

MARCH EVENTS

March 4, 2017 - Home, Lawn, and Garden Day. Central Catholic High School, 1201 Airport Road, Bloomington, IL. Sponsored by the University of Illinois Extension, the event includes a keynote address by Chris Benda on "Illinois Wildflowers for the Home Garden," a morning session with local certified floral designers, four workshops on horticultural topics, and vendor tables. Registration is \$50 and the event runs from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. For more information on workshops visit <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/units/event.cfm?UnitID=477&EventID=73921>

March 4, 2017 - The Prairie Enthusiasts 30th Annual Conference and Banquet. Eagle Ridge Resort and Spa, Galena, IL. Co-hosted by the Northwest Illinois Chapter and Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation, the theme is "Landscapes of the Future: Challenges & Opportunities." For more information, visit <http://www.theprairieenthusiasts.org>



March 10, 2017 Grow Native! Workshop. Lewis and Clark Community College, LeClaire Room at the Nelson Center, 600 Troy Road, Edwardsville, IL. Speakers at this event will present the latest ideas on the value of native plants in our landscapes. For descriptions of the speakers and registration information, visit <http://grownative.org/events/march-10-2017-grow-native-workshop-in-edwardsville-il-2/>



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Silene regia, royal catchfly
By Henry Eilers

Spring Harbinger February 2017

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- Dodecatheon* (life).....\$2,000.00
- Eriogonum* (life).....\$3,000.00

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The Harbinger Newsletter is sent electronically by email.

Check here to receive the newsletter BY MAIL.

Eriogonum, our scientific journal, is now available digitally as well as in print.

Please indicate your preference for receiving the journal.

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Chapter Affiliation

- Central (Springfield)
- Northeast (Chicago)
- Forest Glen (Westville)
- Quad Cities (Rock Island)
- Grand Prairie (Bloomington)
- Southern (Carbondale)
- Kankakee Torrent
- Other/Uncertain _____

I would like to help with:

- Leadership & Organization (serving on board at State or Chapter level)
- Giving Workshops &/or Seminars
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