

Iowa Prairie Network Newsletter

Winter 2017-18



Neal Smith NWR - Photo by Justin Davis

2018 - Looking Forward

Submitted by Tenlea Turner

Iowa Prairie Network (IPN) is all about bringing people together to share in the prairie experience. Whether you are a first-timer or a seasoned pro there is always a new adventure to look forward to and knowledge to be gained when you join us on the prairie. IPN hosts, sponsors, and promotes prairie-related events throughout the year at regional, state, and national levels.

Are you interested in learning more about prairie plants and wildlife? Would you like to learn more about conservation, restoration, and stewardship opportunities? Maybe you just want to spend some time strolling through the tallgrass while hanging out with some really great people. If any of these apply to you, then start planning your adventure today.



Listed below are just some of the events you can look forward to in 2018. Some are still in the early planning stages so keep your eye on our Calendar of Events at www.iowaprairienetwork.org for details as they develop, or follow us on Facebook or Instagram. *See you on the prairie!*



IPN Region 5 Winter Seminar: **January 27, 2018** - Ames High School

Take a break from the winter doldrums and spend the day with IPN. The Winter Seminar offers prairie related presentations throughout the day in the auditorium. Other activities include a silent auction that benefits a particular group or project, numerous vendor displays, door prizes, and a pizza party afterwards for those who wish to participate. The IPN Region 5 Winter Seminar is a great way to learn new things and meet new friends. Updated details can be found at www.iowaprairienetwork.org

Day of Insects: **March 24, 2018** - Reiman Gardens at ISU

The annual Day of Insects brings together professionals, academics, advocates and enthusiasts of all levels from across the country to explore and celebrate entomology (the study of insects). Topics often include insects native to Iowa, exotic insects, endangered insects, conservation efforts and new educational programs aimed at advancing the appreciation of all invertebrates. Events are open to anyone interested and also include informal time for food and socialization on the night before the Day of Insects, and snacks and lunch during the day. Look for details at www.reimangardens.com



Loess Hills Prairie Seminar (LHPS): **June 1-3, 2018** – Loess Hills Wildlife Management Area

Since 1977 the LHPS has brought people together to explore, learn, enjoy, and relax in the Heart of the Loess Hills. This is a family friendly, 3-day event that includes camping (if you choose), evening talks, entertainment, children's programs, field sessions, campfires, great food, and great conversation. Learn more at www.loesshillsprairieseminar.com

2018 North America Prairie Conference: **TBD –possibly Late June to Mid July** in the vicinity of Houston, TX (specific date and location yet to be determined)

Like the Iowa Prairie Conference, the NAPC brings experts in the field of prairie restoration, conservation, and reconstruction together to present the most recent trends, technology, and innovations to interested parties, but on a national scale. The focus this year will be the prairies' role in flood control. Details are still in the works, so stay tuned to www.iowaprairienetwork.org for further developments. NAPC and IPC are held every other year on opposite years. The next IPC is scheduled for 2019.



Iowa Prairie Heritage Week (IPHW): **September 9-15, 2018** – State wide

By proclamation of the Governor of the state of Iowa – one week each year is designated to celebrate Iowa's natural prairie heritage with events occurring across the state. No matter where you live in Iowa, you can find a family-friendly, entertaining and educational event near you. Keep your eye on the IPN calendar for updates.

Prairie Highlight



Page 2

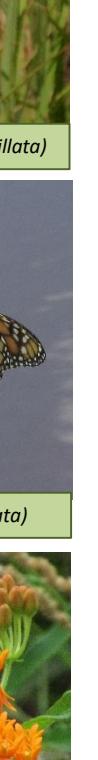
Landscaping with Native Plants

Contributors: Michelle Biodrowski and Tenlea Turner

Many people believe that planning a landscape design with native plants will leave their yard looking disorderly and unkempt when in fact it doesn't have to be that way at all. You don't have to sow seed across the entire yard to enjoy the benefits of native plants. Whether you are thinking of grasses or flowering plants, full sun or shade, moist areas or dry; native species offer a wide variety of colors, shapes, sizes, and textures that can compliment any landscape design.

Here are a few things to keep in mind. Native plants have evolved to thrive in the different weather and soil conditions that occur across the state. They can tolerate extreme temperate changes and even long periods of drought. That means less fertilizing and watering; saving you time and money. Pollinators, birds, and other wildlife rely on our native plant species for food and shelter throughout all seasons. And, native plants have extensive root systems that filter water, prevent runoff, and store carbon; improving water and air quality too.

When considering what to plant in your landscape, consider native. Bring color and beauty to your backyard, benefit pollinators and wildlife, and enjoy the beauty and low maintenance of a native landscape.



For more information, support, and guidance contact:

- IPN www.iowaprairienetwork.org,
- Blank Park Zoo www.plantgrowfly.org
- Iowa Native Plant Society (INPS) www.iowanativeplants.org
- Loess Hills Wild Ones www.loesshillswildones.org

They can also direct you to reputable suppliers that provide plants or seeds specific to your location.



Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*)



Whorled Milkweed (*Asclepias verticillata*)



Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)



Butterfly Milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)

1) Big Bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*) 2) Indian Grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*) 3) Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*)

4) June Grass (*Koeleria macrantha*) 5) Prairie Lily (*Lilium philadelphicum*) 6) Prairie Dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*)

7) Common Cinquefoil (*Potentilla arguta*) 8) Prairie Blazing Star (*Liatris pycnostachya*) 9) Ironweed (*Vernonia baldwinii*) 10) Compass Plant (*Silphium laciniatum*) Top of page: Foxglove Penstemon (*Penstemon digitalis*) with Ohio Spiderwort (*Tradescantia ohiensis*). Inset: Turk's cap lily (*Lilium michiganense*)

"Anybody can love the mountains, but it takes soul to love the prairie." - Anonymous

What's New with the IPN Board of Directors

Welcome to Our Newest Board Members



Region 4 - Lance Brisbois is currently a Project Coordinator at Golden Hills Resource Conservation and Development, where he coordinates a wide variety of conservation and rural development projects. He helped coordinate the 2017 Iowa Prairie Conference, held in the Loess Hills. Other recent projects have included capacity building for the Loess Hills Alliance and updating the Western Skies Scenic Byway's Corridor Management Plan. He is a Natural Areas Management volunteer with Pottawattamie County Conservation Board and has completed basic wildland fire training. He is currently training to become a certified Prairie Strips consultant. Lance is hopeful about prairies' potential for improving water quality, and has been certified in Iowa DNR's IOWATER water quality monitoring program. He has helped coordinate programs with The Naturalist School and Loess Hills Nature School, in addition to participating in many of their events. He has also done advocacy and community organizing for environmental organizations in the past. He has a bachelor's degree in Urban Studies from the University of Minnesota and a Master of Public Administration from University of Nebraska-Omaha. Lance is a native western Iowan and has always preferred spending time outdoors. He enjoys hiking, biking, paddling, and exploring prairies in his free time.



Region 5 – Luke Gran is the owner of Prudenterra, and a Certified Forester by the Society of American Foresters (SAF). What began as the team name of a group project in his thesis capstone course at Iowa State University (B.S. Forestry, 2008), the company was founded shortly thereafter to create a framework to allow Luke and others to help interpret ecological communities and agroecological opportunities to landowners in Iowa. For five years, he worked at the non-profit organization Practical Farmers of Iowa. During that time, Luke continued to work for private landowners part-time while learning from his mentor, naturalist Carl Kurtz, and gaining farming experience. In 2014, he transitioned to full-time work at Prudenterra and began expanding its services to meet the needs of Iowa landowners. Luke is from Newton, Iowa and enjoys the diversity and beauty of Iowa's native ecosystems. He lives outside of Nevada, Iowa on a farm with his partner, Sally.

New Officers Elected at the July 15, 2017 Board Meeting



President
Kody Wohlers



Vice President
Jon Judson



Secretary
Anna Golightly



Treasurer
Ed Sibley

IPN Committees

Communications

Chair: Anna Golightly
Newsletter Subcommittee
Editor: Tenlea Turner

Events

Chair: Pam White

Finance

Chair: Joyce Hornstein
Membership
Chair: Leesa McNeil

Region 1



Leesa McNeil

Region 2



Donald Nelson

Region 3



Daryl Smith

Region 4



Lance Brisbois

Region 5



Anna Golightly

Region 6



Tenlea Turner

Region 7



Ray Hamilton



Dotty Zales



Vacant



Vacant



Kody Wohlers



Luke Gran



Pam White



Jennifer Nieland

At Large



Andy Asell



Michelle Biodrowski



Jon Judson



Jacob Pitzenberger



Ryan Schmidt



Ed Sibley





2017 Iowa Prairie Conference - A Look Back

Recap courtesy of Golden Hills RC&D

The 2017 Iowa Prairie Conference was held Friday and Saturday, July 14-15, at Iowa Western Community College in Council Bluffs. The Iowa Prairie Conference is a biennial event for prairie practitioners and enthusiasts to meet and learn about all the great things happening across the state. This year's conference focused on prairie protection, restoration and reconstruction in the central and southern Loess Hills. More than 130 people attended from across the state, as well as from Nebraska and other states.

Our keynote speakers were John Price, an author, Creative Writing professor, and Council Bluffs resident (Friday), and Steve Chaplin, Senior Conservation Scientist with The Nature Conservancy in Minnesota (Saturday). There were a total of 12 breakout sessions - 6 each day - that included topics such as prescribed fire, invertebrates, invasive species, pollinators, landowner options for prairie protection, restoration, and reconstruction, and more. Attendees also had the opportunity to take two of the three field trips offered each afternoon. On Friday evening, following the tours, the participants gathered at Hitchcock Nature Center for dinner and live music.

We would like to extend our gratitude to the many hosts, sponsors, presenters, and planners that made this year's conference a monumental success! Planning is underway for the next Iowa Prairie Conference which is scheduled for 2019 at Central College in Pella, Iowa.



Honoring Dianne Blankenship



Dianne Blankenship has been with IPN since its inception in 1990. She joined the first IPN Board as the first Region 1 representative and she has worn many hats over the years. She was Secretary and Newsletter Editor from 1991-94; editing the first IPN Newsletter. Dianne rejoined the board in 2005 after retiring from teaching and was an At-Large representative before returning to her position as a rep for Region 1. She has kept the IPN Calendar up-to-date, helped to restart Iowa Prairie Heritage Week, was instrumental in the rejuvenation of IPN in 2013 and 2014, served as Treasurer in 2014, and coordinated the Loess Hills Prairie Seminar from 2006 to 2016. Dianne retired from the IPN Board in 2016 but is still dedicated to prairies and native plants through serving on several boards (INPS, Woodbury County Conservation Foundation, Spirit Mound Trust, and Loess Hills Wild Ones), and by working on her own prairie. In honor of her work with IPN and other prairie conservation efforts she was presented with this original, signed and framed Mark Müller illustration at the 2017 IPC. Thanks again Dianne! Your contributions are greatly appreciated by all of us.

Membership Corner



IPN has 166 members that share an enthusiasm for prairies! Consider joining today!

Name(s): _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____ County: _____

Email: _____

Phone (optional): _____ Circle one: home - work - cell

Membership Levels & Dues (check one):

- Student Free; please provide a valid school email address or ID
 Intern \$10
 Individual \$20
 Family \$30

Newsletter Options (check one):

- Prefer to receive newsletters via e-mail at the address listed above \$0
 Prefer to receive printed newsletters via mail add \$5

IPN is an IRS approved 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization

Please make checks payable to:

Iowa Prairie Network

c/o Edward M. Sibley, Treas. 4015 Sergeant Road, Sioux City, IA 51106

The membership form can also be downloaded from our website – click “Join Us”

Don't forget to **RENEW** your membership! Go to www.iowaprairienetwork.org.

Thank you!

Help *Plant.Grow.Fly.* reach its goal of 1,000 registered pollinator gardens by the end of 2017, and mention IPN on your registration form! Blank Park Zoo is offering discounted zoo membership to PGF Gardeners when they register their garden!

www.plantgrowfly.org



Plant. Grow. Fly.
BLANK PARK ZOO

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www.plantgrowfly.org

The Iowa Prairie Network is a grass-roots, volunteer organization that is dedicated to the preservation of Iowa's prairie heritage. IPN was formed in 1990 by Iowans concerned that our prairie heritage was disappearing. People needed an organization that would bring those who know about prairie together with those who wanted to learn, to form a network of advocacy for Iowa's natural heritage.

Winter 2017-18 Events

Upcoming Events – check the IPN calendar for details, updates and more events!

www.iowaprairienetwork.org

December		Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to all!
January	4-6	Conference: Combating Herbicide Resistant Weeds and Palmer Amaranth: Multiple Perspectives – Simpson College, Indianola, IA
	27	IPN Region 5 Winter Seminar – Ames High School, Ames, IA
February	TBD	IPN Region 6 Winter Meeting – Date and location to be determined.



Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge -
Thorn Valley Savanna
Photo by Justin Davis



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www.iowaprairienetwork.org

IPN's Mission: To Learn About, Teach About, Enjoy, and Protect Iowa's Prairie Heritage

Winter 2017-18

Inside this issue:

2018 – Looking Forward	1
Prairie Highlight: Landscaping with Native Plants	2
What's New with IPN Board of Directors	3
2017 Iowa Prairie Conference – A Look Back	4
Honoring Dianne Blankenship	4
Membership Corner	5
Upcoming Events	5



Like us on Facebook! Join the group!

We use our Facebook Page and Group to share prairie-related news and updates. Join our online community!



www.facebook.com/IowaPrairieNetwork



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