



Nature Notes

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IT'S SEPTEMBER AGAIN!

Mark your calendar and plan to attend the first **WGNSS General Meeting** of the fall season on **Thursday, September 7**, at the St. Louis County Headquarters in Frontenac, 1640 S. Lindbergh (just south of Hwy 40/I 64 and east of Lindbergh), starting at **7 PM**. Brian Allan will talk about "Studies of Things that Suck Your Blood." For a synopsis of the talk and information about the speaker, turn to **Page 4**.

IN MEMORIAM – MARGOT MEYER HOLSEN

Margot Holsen died July 10, 2006 at age 76. She and her husband Jim Holsen joined WGNSS in 1976. Marjorie Richardson provided the tribute presented below:

"Any day that Margot Holsen could be with the crew to help put together "Nature Notes" was a good day. For many years she was one of the faithful who met every month mimeographing the stencils, stacking the pages into proper order for stapling, folding, labeling, zoning—in general getting "Nature Notes" ready for mailing (this was pre-computers and commercial printing!). Margot made the monthly meetings fun and interesting with her great stories told with a musical, lilting voice and a lively sense of humor.

"Margot died on July 10 after a long, lingering illness which she accepted with good grace; her sense of humor never left her. She was a very gifted, creative lady with wide interests—family, birding and the natural world, gardening, art, cooking, reading, knitting, politics, and more. She had a rare gift for making everyone she was speaking with seem important. She is greatly missed.

"Margot's family has requested that any memorial funds be sent to the Open Space Council or to WGNSS."

A memorial service for Margot was held on Aug. 12 at the Grace Episcopal Church in Kirkwood. (Editor's Note – A more detailed obituary was published in the July *Post-Dispatch*)

PRESIDENT'S CORNER – Ann Earley

Summer 2006 seemed to go by quickly, in spite of the hot, dry weather. We will not soon forget the strong storms that swept through the St. Louis metro area on July 19 and 21, leaving massive wind damage and power outages in their wake. The fury of the somewhat-unexpected storms reminds us of the power of nature. Even with all of today's high-tech weather forecasting equipment, Mother Nature is still very much in charge!

During July, WGNSS was in the news—literally! The July 5 issue of the *Suburban Journals* contained a feature article about WGNSS, including quotes from several members and information about our activities and projects. Pictures from one of Jackie Chain's Thursday bird walks accompanied the article, along with photos submitted by Randy Korotev. Thanks to everyone who provided information for this article. We hope it will generate interest in WGNSS and bring in some new members.

WGNSS members and friends were saddened to learn of the death of Margot Holsen on July 10. Margot's obituary noted that she was "an enthusiastic birder and member of the Webster Groves Nature Study Society." We are always sorry to lose a member of our WGNSS family, and she will be missed. We extend our deepest sympathy to Jim and the Holsen family.

At our June Board meeting, Paul Brockland was elected to fill one of the vacant Member-at-Large positions on the Board. Paul recently retired from the Boy Scouts of America organization and knows many WGNSS members from his long-time involvement with scouting. Paul will be working with Membership Chair Don Judd on member recruiting and retention. We are very pleased to have Paul on the WGNSS Board.

The September Board meeting will be on September 6 at 7 p.m. at Powder Valley, and subsequent Board meetings will also be held there. WGNSS members are welcome to attend meetings of the Board. We are always looking for members willing to donate their time and talents to our organization, either by serving on the Board or a committee, or by assisting with a Society activity or event. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact me or one of the other officers or Board members. WGNSS needs your skills and expertise!

We hope to see everyone at our first program meeting of the season on September 7!

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL – Don Judd, Membership Chairman

It's that time of the year again! Most memberships are up for renewal in August.

The label on your copy of Nature Notes indicates the month in which your membership began. If that month is September or earlier, and you are not a life member, please take a moment to renew your membership now using the renewal form on the back of Nature Notes and send your dues to the address on the renewal form. If you have a question, refer to the more detailed article about for renewal in the June 2006 issue of *Nature Notes*, page 3, or contact me or Randy Korotev, Treasurer..

HISTORIAN'S CORNER – Jim Adams

A recent book I read about the life of Francis Parkman was so interesting that I decide to tell about it in this month's "Corner". The book, written in 1900, was by Charles Haight Farnham.

Parkman (1823-1893) was born in Boston and this was his lifetime permanent residence. He attended Harvard and in later life served on its Board of Overseers and was eventually elected as a fellow of the Corporation of Harvard College.

As a young man he acquired a strong interest in natural history and the American Indian and in 1846 he made a solo trip to Oregon and described this arduous trip in one of his most famous books, The Oregon Trail. He suffered many hardships and permanently impaired his health. This was the first of his many wilderness trips, many solo, made to obtain first hand information about the locales in his many famous historical works. He concentrated on the history of French Canada and is the premier historian of this area. He visited all the places he wrote about and used only primary sources in his writings. He made several trips to France to obtain information from French archives. He also wrote a famous biography of Robert Cavalier de LaSalle.

In later life he became a famous horticulturist and achieved distinction in this field.

His devotion to natural history is apparent from an essay on the subject he wrote. An excerpt from the essay follows:

"Of all the pursuits the cultivation of natural science tends most to enlarge the mind and improve the understanding. Nature affords for our contemplation subjects from the minutest to the most grand. We may study the animalcule contained in a drop of water, or observe the motions of the planetary bodies as they revolve in their unchanged orbits. No class of pursuits affords so vast a variety of subjects and none is capable of awakening a deeper interest. Nature cannot be exhausted. The farther we investigate her secrets, the wider appears the range she opens to us. The nearer the view we take of her, the more captivating does she appear."

--WHAT'S AHEAD?--

September Program Meeting - Sept. 7
September Board Meeting - Sept. 6
Nature Notes Deadline - Sept. 8
Nature Notes Mailing Party - Sept. 18
Group Activities - See p. 20-21

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--QUOTABLE QUOTES--

Always drink upstream from the herd - Will Rogers

It was a brave man who ate the first oyster.

Next week there can't be any crisis. My schedule is full already.

STUDIES OF THINGS THAT SUCK YOUR BLOOD – SEPT. 7 GENERAL MEETING - Jane C. Walker

Another summer is coming to an end and we can now look forward to cooler weather. A mild winter season last year did not bode well for the summer season of things that bite and suck blood. I know that during my field work, I fed my share of chiggers and ticks this summer and avoided shady places (counter intuitive in the summer heat) to escape the mosquitoes.

Join us at the September general meeting and meet Brian Allan from our first speaker for the season. Brian is one of the 2005 Menke Scholarship recipients and will be talking about the ticks and mosquitoes, the annoying parasites that plague us every year. The following is a synopsis of his talk. "Human mediated landscape change has the potential to alter species distributions, interactions among communities of organisms, and even the functioning of entire ecosystems. Pathogens that cause infectious diseases and the arthropods that vector them are no exception. The generality of these trends is evident from widely disparate disease systems: increasing the prevalence of the mosquito-borne disease, West Nile virus, due to the urbanization in the St. Louis metropolitan area, and the increase in human risk exposure to tick-borne diseases due to logging practices in the Missouri Ozarks. Greater understanding of how human alterations to natural landscapes impacts human risk of exposure to vector-borne pathogens is urgently needed to prevent and control the further emergence of this rapidly expanding class of diseases."

Brian is a PhD student in the Evolution, Ecology, and Population Biology program at Washington University. Originally from Ann Arbor, Michigan, Brian received his undergraduate degree from the University of Michigan and is now studying ecology of infectious diseases at Washington University. In looking at how human changes to the environment impact the prevalence of diseases transmitted from wildlife to human. Part of his investigations includes

working for the Missouri Ozark Forest Ecosystem Project (MOFEP) and collecting ticks all over the Midwest. Brian enjoys hiking, canoeing, camping, hunting and fishing in his spare time.

IN MEMORIAM – MARGARET (MARGE) RUSCHILL – Jim Adams

Marge Ruschill, a long-time member of WGNSS, died on May 20, 2006, at age 87, shortly after the WGNSS annual banquet on May 2, which she attended with her husband, Jim. She was active with the WGNSS Botany Group for many years, and went on Father Sullivan's weekly botany walk a few days before she died. WGNSS extends its deep sympathy to her husband and family members.

Marge was an extremely active and adventurous member of WGNSS, having joined at an early age. She served as *Nature Notes* Editor in 1937 and 1941, so I feel a special "connection" with her. But she also participated in many special WGNSS adventures and treks, both here and abroad, described below.

Marge was born Margaret Hill on Jan. 23, 1919. A brother, Ludlow Hill, was a distinguished early member of WGNSS. She married Walter Self, a WGNSS member, in September, 1943. A daughter, Nancy Starr Self, was born on Oct. 10, 1944. Walter Self died Feb. 11, 1949. Marge married Jim Ruschill, a one-time WGSS Ornithology Chairman, on April 27, 1974.

Marge and Jim regularly attended the weekly botany walks lead by Father Sullivan for many years, although their attendance became less regular in the past five or so years. The Ruschills also participated in many of Father Sullivan's week long trips to various places in Missouri. "Marge knew her plants well", according to Pat Harris.

Out-of-state Botany Group trips in which she and Jim participated included trips to Door and Oconto Counties in Wisconsin, to Camp Denali in Alaska, and to Ontario (Bruce Peninsula for the Native Orchid Conference).

Two multi-part articles by Marge appeared in the 1973 and 1974 issues of *Nature Notes*. These dealt with trekking in Nepal and in Afghanistan.

(Pat Harris and Marge's daughter Nancy contributed to this article. Nancy, now Nancy Lindisfarne, lives in Oxford, England.)

HIGHLIGHTS OF JUNE 7, 2006 BOARD MEETING – Jim Adams

- Paul A. Brockland was elected as a Member-at-Large of the Board to fill an open position.
- The Board by a 6 to 3 vote approved a motion to support a request by Ted Heisel, Executive Director of the Missouri Coalition for the Environment (MCE), that the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) rescind its recent action in removing the mountain lion from Missouri's endangered species list. This action

was taken by MDC because of a negligible population of the animal in Missouri. The delisting permits livestock producers to shoot marauding lions and will likely prevent the re-development of a lion population in the Mark Twain National Forest, widely used by hikers, bird watchers, hunters, etc. In recent years several hikers have been killed by lions in California forests. The Secretary was directed to transmit a written endorsement by WGNSS of MCE's position in this matter to the MDC..

- Jane Walker presented a tentative list of general meeting programs for the early fall months.
- Randy Korotev reported a \$346 loss on the May banquet, but this was nearly offset by \$325 income from the book auction held at the banquet.

A BLOCKBUSTER NEWSPAPER ARTICLE ABOUT WGNSS – Jim Adams

WGNSS expresses its sincere appreciation to the publisher of the *County Journal* for a splendid feature article about WGNSS in its July 4 issues. The front page article contained an outstanding history of WGNSS and included pictures of several unusual avian species spotted by WGNSS birders during the past year. It described a recent Ornithology Group trip to Elsberry, Missouri. A number of WGNSS birders were pictured in the article, along with comments by members on the psychological benefits of outdoor nature study.

The *Journal* is printed in a number of local editions, with the front page articles often varied with the community covered. For the July 4 edition the WGNSS cover story was observed in the Webster/Kirkwood, University City and Ballwin editions. Such widespread geographic coverage suggests an area wide distribution of the article in the St. Louis metro area. Again, our thanks!

AVIAN FLU – Claudia Spener

Some WGNSS members may remember Marion Andrew, an Australian living in St. Louis in the early 1980s when she was a graduate student at Washington University studying virology. Marion recently retired from CSIRO, the Australian equivalent of our CDC where she worked in animal health. She is doing a post retirement fellowship strategizing on Australia's response to the avian flu should it hit that country. Below is her answer to my questions about bird flu research that I thought might be interesting to WGNSS members, especially birders.
Claudia Spener

Yes, there are lots of surveys of wild birds around the world looking for avian influenza, and birds coming into the US via Alaska are one of the hot targets. However, with all of the survey work done to date, there hasn't been any AI found in living wild birds. What has been found are dead birds that, when tested, are found to have died from AI. So, while migrating bird species certainly do get infected and die, there is not a lot of AI circulating in wild birds – probably because they get real sick, can't fly far and die before they spread it too far. The role they have played

in spreading the virus into Europe and Africa is quite contentious. I think its most likely that they have helped spread the disease, but that the most common and effective way it is spread is via illegal traffic in poultry and poultry products – which is rampant still.

The species most commonly and easily infected are the waterbirds, especially ducks and swans. I don't think waders and seabirds such as petrels etc are as susceptible. A lot of the dead birds that have been found and tested positive in Europe have been swans. I suspect they are big and more likely to be found on or near land. One of the big outbreaks in wild birds was in Bar Headed Geese at Qinghai Lake in western China. They estimate that 10% of the world's population of the species died and it was a major source of virus that was then spread by other birds westwards. But that seems to have been an uncommon event. Also, it turns out that the Chinese are "farming" the Bar Headed Geese as they use their feathers for shuttlecocks (now is very short supply!!) and there are also lots of poultry farms in the same area.

So, while its not impossible that migrating birds could bring AI into the US via Alaska, I don't think its an extremely high risk and as there are unlikley to be many poultry farms up there, it may not be a problem if they do. But that's not a zero risk!

For those who want more information on Bird Flu, Marion recommended clicking on the website ProMed , the international disease surveillance newsletter.

MAY BOTANY REPORT – George R. Van Brunt

May 1, 2006 Botany Field Trip

The spring botanists met at Castlewood State Park on a mild day with sometimes sunny, sometimes cloudy skies. Accompanying Father Sullivan were Jack Harris, Pat Harris, Nels Holmberg, Ed Kullmann, Gladys Kullmann, Wayne Clark, Marge Ruschill, Jim Ruschill, Jeanne Clauson, and George Van Brunt. We walked the lowland part of the River Scenic Trail which wound through rich Meramec River bottomland. Father Sullivan found a sedge, identified by Nels as *Carex radiata* (star sedge), which was just beginning to fruit. We found *Glechoma hederacea* in bloom, and Jack and Wayne studied its flower structure and compared it with that of the related *Lamium purpureum* (dead nettle). Other blooming plants we encountered included *Rubus occidentalis* (common black raspberry), *Gymnocladus dioica* (Kentucky coffee tree), *Erigeron philadelphicus* (Philadelphia fleabane), *Rorippa sylvestris* (creeping yellow cress), *Capsella bursa-pastoris* (shepherd's purse), *Iodanthus pinnatifidus* (purple rocket), *Smilax tamnoides* (bristly greenbrier), and *Hydrophyllum virginianum* (Virginia waterleaf). In addition we identified *Aristolochia tomentosa* (Dutchman's pipevine) with flower buds. Nels also identified *Carex grayi* (Gray's sedge) and *Carex davisii* (Davis' sedge), both in fruit.

As we were crossing a large field, we found the native species, *Allium canadense* (wild onion). This species can be distinguished from the introduced field garlic (*Allium vineale*), a common interloper on suburban lawns, by their solid, flat leaves. The European *Allium vineale* has round, hollow leaves. Both species produce umbels which, instead of producing flowers, produce bulblets. The structure at the tip of the stem gives the appearance of a large flower bud, but instead produces small bulbs by asexual reproduction. The bulblets may sprout leaves even while they are on the parent plant, and eventually separate from the parent and start new, identical plants. These aerial bulblets along with the underground bulblets are an efficient means of reproduction for these species.

May 8, 2006 Botany Field Trip Reported by Father James Sullivan

We met at Faust County Park in Chesterfield, St. Louis County: Dave Alspaugh, Gay Brown,

Wayne Clark, Jeanne Clauson, Pat and Jack Harris, Rex Hill, Ed and Gladys Kullman, Tom Kullman, Tom O'Gorman, Marge and Jim Ruschill, and Fr. Jim Sullivan.

We have been seeing the wintering green leaves of the Adam and Eve Orchid (*Aplectrum hyemale*) for years, but it is difficult to find the few plants that actually bloom in the early days of May. The Governor Bates Trail is an answer to that. The valley it crosses has more of the plants than any place we have seen, and a large number of them actually bloom. They are hard to spot, but there are many blooming plants. Some are higher on the slope near us, others are deeper in the valley. Most of the orchids are on the east end of the trail. Enter from the Lamella Barn, not from the Thornhill Mansion.

We discussed the flowers. The 3 long sepals and the 2 lateral petals are all maroon at their tips (sometimes purplish, sometimes brown). They are a pale olive green basally. The lateral sepals are spreading. The top sepal is often curved back at its tip. The lateral petals are shorter and projecting forward. The bottom petal, the lip, is largely white, and wavy on its edges.

Moonseed (*Menispermum canadense*) was in bloom near the parked cars. Doll's eyes (*Actaea pachypoda*) was surprisingly abundant in the lowest part of the trail, and one plant was still in bloom. We recognized *Thuja occidentalis* (arbor vitae, or white cedar) where it had been planted above. We saw a blooming catkin with staminate flowers on *Gleditsia triacanthos* (honey locust).

May 15, 2006 Botany Field Trip Reported by Father James Sullivan

We visited the Franklin County portion of Meramec State Park (the park extends into Crawford and Washington Counties too). We welcomed a new member, Tina Mathes. The rest of us were Nancy and Wayne Clark, Jeanne Clauson, Pat and Jack Harris, Martha and Rex Hill, Nels Holmberg, Kathy Thiele, and Fr. Jim Sullivan.

Years ago, when you visited Meramec State Park, the entrance road would reach the bottom of the hill at the parking lot for Fisher Cave. That same road is no longer used, but the old pavement makes a great nature trail. In its lower portion, the larger yellow lady's slipper (*Cypripedium parviflorum* var. *pubescens*) still flourishes today. Rex had seen them blooming last week, but the cool weather has kept them fresh for our visit today.

In more than one place we saw the springtime coralroot orchid (*Corallorhiza wisteriana*). The woodland milkweed (*Asclepias quadrifolia*) was in good bloom. The Virginia waterleaf (*Hydrophyllum virginianum*) was in bloom at the entrance to the cave. A large population of *Tradescantia subaspera*, the tall and broad-leaved spiderwort was just beginning to bloom.

May 22, 2006 Botany Field Trip

The LaBarque Creek watershed is a 13 square mile area in northwestern Jefferson County that is characterized by clear flowing streams, sandstone cliffs and ravines, and a very diverse flora and fauna. Many state listed plants and animals reside here and the area is particularly rich in native fish species, having 42. The Missouri Department of Conservation purchased 330 acres of this area from The Nature Conservancy and, more recently, an adjoining 170 acres from private owners. The entire 500 acres is called, at least temporarily, the LaBarque Creek Conservation

Area. MDC has hired Nels Holmberg to do a survey of the flora within the new 170 acre purchase. This area was the subject of our field trip.

A large, eager group of spring botanists met in the parking lot of the Young Conservation Area which is also located within the LaBarque Creek watershed, though not contiguous with the LaBarque Creek Conservation Area. The group included Father Sullivan, Rex Hill, Martha Hill, Wayne Clark, Nancy Clark, Tom O'Gorman, Del Johnson, Nels Holmberg, Kathy Thiele, Nancy Rice, Bob Coffing, Kathy Coffing, Jack Harris, Pat Harris, Tom Kullman, Carolyn Clark, Dave Schilling, Linda Virga, Nathan Pate, Jim Wiant, and George Van Brunt. Presently there is no parking area in the LaBarque Creek Conservation Area, but we had permission to park a few cars on neighboring private property, so we carpooled. We parked near LaBarque Creek and proceeded to walk downstream along the banks and in the creek. A few people managed to keep their feet dry, but most did not. A few of the many species we identified along the creek included *Aruncus dioicus* (goat's beard), *Cardamine bulbosa* (spring cress), *Cicuta maculata* (spotted water hemlock), *Osmorhiza longistylis* (anise-root), *Carex torta* (twisted sedge), *Saxifraga pensylvanica* var. *forbesii* (Forbes saxifrage), *Packera aurea* (golden ragwort), *Atrichum crispum* (a state listed moss), and *Phegopteris hexagonoptera* (broad beech fern). After a while the group began to split up into smaller groups and climb the forested hills on the western side of LaBarque Creek. The groups were very fluid, rejoining and reforming frequently as personal interests took hold. We explored bottomland, St. Peter's sandstone outcrops, glades, ravines, and forested slopes. In addition to the many plant species we found, we saw three ichneumon wasps, each with its ovipositor in a crevice in a fallen tree trunk; they were laying eggs in beetle larvae. We also found a fawn lying absolutely still next to a tree. Both of these findings prompted a flurry of photography, the latter from a respectful distance. We gradually worked our way back to LaBarque Creek, crossing back and forth several times before we returned to the cars to go back to the Young Conservation Area Parking Lot. I would like to thank Rex Hill for generously letting me ride in his van to the parking lot even though my feet were so wet that water oozed out of my shoes with each step I took.

May 29, 2006 Botany Field Trip

We met at the Valley View Glades Natural Area in Jefferson County on a mild, sunny morning. Accompanying Father Sullivan were Michele Lee, Ron Goetz, Wayne Clark, Nancy Clark, Jack Harris, Pat Harris, Dan Lehocky, Dana Barhard, Dave Alspaugh, June Jeffries, Bernice Feldkamp, Rick Deschu, Jane Deschu, Jeanne Clauson, John Oliver, and George Van Brunt. We walked through some forested areas, but spent most of our time on the glades. On the glades, we noted a large number of blooming *Oenothera macrocarpa* (Missouri evening primrose), *Echinacea simulata* (glade coneflower), and *Coreopsis lanceolata* (tickseed coreopsis). We also found *Verbena simplex* (narrow-leaved vervain), *Rosa carolina* (pasture rose), *Asclepias viridis* (green-flowered milkweed), *Asclepias viridiflora* (green milkweed), and *Baptisia australis* (blue wild indigo). The genus name *Baptisia* comes from the Greek word βαπτω (bapto) which means to dip or to dip in dye. Members of this North American genus have sometimes been used as a substitute for true indigo, *Indigofera tinctoria*, for dyeing cloth. The word baptize also comes from βαπτω.

We found Fremont's leather flower, *Clematis fremontii*, in flower and in fruit. *Clematis fremontii* has a limited distribution, being found only in 23 United States counties. Three of these counties are in Nebraska, 13 in Kansas, and 7 in Missouri. The Missouri counties are St. Louis, Jefferson, Franklin, Washington, St. Genevieve, St. Francois, and Ozark. This plant has

leathery flowers and leaves and is named in honor of General John Fremont, who explored the west in the middle 1800's. The drooping, vase-shaped flowers consist of 5 thick, leathery sepals which are purple on the outside and white on the inside; there are no petals. *Clematis fremontii* is in the buttercup family, and like all members of the Ranunculaceae, each flower has many stamens and pistils. The fruit is a spherical head of achenes that resembles a sea urchin with wavy spines.

On our walk in the forested areas we found *Polygala senega*, Seneca snakeroot, in bloom. We also found leaves of *Manfreda virginia* (American agave).

SPRING 2006 ENTOMOLOGY SPEAKERS – Richard S. Thoma

The entomology group had a great series of speakers in the winter and spring of 2006. Three WGNSS members and two guest speakers gave presentations on varying subjects including the taxonomy of braconid wasps, field research on prairie obligate butterflies, butterfly farming in the tropics, an entomologist's experiences in Afghanistan as part of the U.S. army reserve, helping third world farmers grow insect resistant crops, and the use of the internet as a tool for insect study. A short review of each presentation follows:

In January, Dr. Joe Fortier, Assistant Professor of Biology at St. Louis University, talked about a group of wasps few people know much about. The wasps (Hymenoptera), Dr. Fortier talked about have no common name, just the scientific name *Aleiodes* in the family Braconidae. The taxonomy of the genus *Aleiodes* is Joe's specialty and he has published extensively on this group. Dr. Fortier has described several new species in this genus and he believes that the number of species of parasitic wasps could rival those of beetles. His interests in this group include the evolution, systematics, biological diversity, biogeography, and host relationships of these parasitoid wasps. We learned that parasitoid wasps save the agricultural and forestry industries millions of dollars a year by controlling population densities of nearly all pest species.

The subject for the February meeting was on our endangered butterfly fauna found on Missouri's prairies. Phil Koenig, a long time WGNSS member talked about a week long trip to Missouri's prairies in the summer of 2005. With special permission from the Missouri Department of Conservation, Phil was able to make natural history observations and collect butterflies listed on Missouri's species of concern checklist from many of the few remaining prairies including state listed natural areas. One butterfly on the list, the Regal Fritillary (*Speyeria idalia*) was seen often by Phil. This species is known as a prairie obligate because it can only be found in this habitat. The reason the Regal Fritillary is a species of concern is because there are so few prairies left in the state. Unfortunately, no other butterfly species from the species of concern checklist were found on this trip. However, Phil found the Arogos Skipper (*Atrytone arogos iowa*) common on several prairies. This was Phil's first observation of this species in Missouri. Phil believes this skipper should be placed on the species of concern checklist because it too is a prairie obligate like the Regal Fritillary. On a side trip to Roaring River State Park, Phil reported that he had once again found Northern Metalmark (*Calephelis borealis*). The last reported collection of this species at this particular site was over 20 years ago.

March's meeting took place at the Sophia M. Sachs Butterfly House in Chesterfield. Brian Heinold, entomologist at the butterfly house gave a presentation on butterfly farming in the third world. Almost all the Heliconius, Swallowtails, Morphos and other exotic butterflies seen on display at the Butterfly House come from tropical countries, many of which are very poor. Butterfly farming has become a way for people to earn an income and in several countries it has become a good business. The easiest way to ship butterflies is to transport them while they are a chrysalis. This is how they arrive at the butterfly house. The butterfly house will spend anywhere from \$0.25 to \$5.00 per chrysalis. To see all the many butterflies on display, the Butterfly House will order thousands of chrysalises per month. Almost all of the cost goes to these third world butterfly farmers. Brian informed us that butterfly farming has become a very good way to earn a living in a third world country. We learned that there is an added environmental benefit to butterfly farming. Unlike the trade in other wildlife, it is far easier to raise caterpillars than to collect them in the wild. Other than the original stock to start the farm, butterflies are not removed from the wild. In fact we learned that the farmers will often release any unsold butterflies back to the wild. Brian explained that this is one trade where everyone benefits: farmers make a good living and help to protect the habitat where the butterflies live and in return we get to enjoy beautiful jewels from far off lands.

In April, John Greenplate, Monsanto entomologist and army reserve specialist talked first about his experiences in Afghanistan. While part of the U.S. presence in Afghanistan, John was part of a team looking out for the health and well being of soldiers and Afghan citizens. John's specific role was to monitor mosquito populations, looking for potential outbreaks of various insect borne diseases. While in Afghanistan, John was able to document a number of insect related ailments not normally seen in the U.S. The second part of John's talk was on his travels to the country of Burkina Faso in French West Africa as part of a research effort to develop insect resistant crops in Africa. The cotton growing areas are under intense pressure from a number of insects including five species of bollworm, three defoliators and three true bugs. The biggest pest is the cotton bollworm (*Helicoverpa armigera*). John spoke about the growing trials now underway using transgenic cotton. So far these field trials have shown great success at protecting the cotton from the insect pests. When compared to non-transgenic plants subjected to normal insecticidal sprays, the transgenic plants show far less insect damage and produce more cotton per plant. In addition, John explained that there is an added health and environmental benefit. Both the farmer and environment benefit from lower exposures to pesticides.

Our final topic for the 2005-2006 entomology series of speakers was given by the author, on using the internet as tool to help identify insects. There are many ways to identify an insect. Most of us start by using field guides. As we want to know more, most of us will ask experts for help (and there are a lot of experts on many families of insects that are members of WGNSS). As one delves deeper and becomes more interested in difficult to identify insects, looking at museum collections and using dichotomous keys are the ultimate tools used. To this list of insect identification tools, we should now add the internet. The internet has become a vast warehouse of information that is available to anyone with the time to look. One can think of the internet as one would view the wild-west, where almost anything goes. It is still in the early days of its usefulness. On the internet, one can find: field guides for many insect groups, such as butterflies, moths and grasshoppers; asking an expert is an e-mail away; museums have begun listing their holdings on the internet; and if one looks hard enough interactive dichotomous keys can be found for specific groups of insects. The internet shows great promise but it has a ways to go. The author envisions a day, not too far in the future where one will be able to take a pocket computer into the field (just like we take field guides now). This computer will have the vast storehouse of knowledge at our fingertips to help identify all those insects we find out in the field.

Entomology talks scheduled for the fall of 2006 promise to be just as exciting as the ones we heard over the past year. The first meeting of the Entomology group is known as the "Show and Tell" evening. This year the meeting will be on Sunday, September 24 at 7:00 at the home of George Winkler. At this meeting, anyone who comes will have a chance to show and talk about all the insect related activities they did over the summer. It's a great chance to find out what your fellow entomologists have been up to. If you caught something over the summer, it's a great chance to have someone help you to get it identified. These meetings are open to all who have an interest in insects. Come and join in on the excitement we all feel when the subject is insects.

APRIL BOTANY REPORT – George R. Van Brunt

April 3, 2006 Botany Field Trip

We met on a cool, windy, cloudy morning at Pacific Palisades Conservation Area in Jefferson County. Accompanying Father Sullivan were Kathy Thiele, Jack Harris, Wayne Clark, Nancy Clark, Jim Wiant, Jeanne Clauson, Dick Russell, and George Van Brunt. We set off through the trailless, rich, bottomland forest. Our ultimate goal was a north facing outcrop of Ordovician age St. Peter's sandstone that supports a different plant community than the surrounding woodland. On our way to the outcrop we encountered many spring species in full bloom. These included traditional spring favorites like *Prunus americana* (wild plum), *Anemonella thalictroides* (rue anemone), *Dicentra cucullaria* (Dutchman's breeches), *Cardamine concatenata* (toothwort), *Claytonia virginica* (spring beauty), *Erythronium albidum* (trout lily), *Phlox divaricata* (wild sweet William), *Collinsia verna* (blue-eyed Mary), *Ranunculus hispidus* var. *nitidus* (marsh buttercup), *Isopyrum biternatum* (lowland rue anemone), *Viola pubescens* (yellow violet), *Chaerophyllum procumbens* (wild chervil), and many others. As we approached the sandstone outcrop, we found *Dicentra canadensis* (squirrel corn) a close relative of the more common Dutchman's breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*), and *Mertensia virginica* (bluebells). Growing on the

rock face, we found two members of the family Saxifragaceae. They were *Mitella diphylla* (bishop's cap) and *Saxifraga pensylvanica* (eastern swamp saxifrage). The name Saxifragaceae means rock-breaker, from the Latin words saxum, a rock, and frangere, to break. The family was named this because of the tendency of many species to sprout up between rocks, leading to the belief that these plants were capable of breaking rocks. Ancient physicians and herbalists deduced from this that members of Saxifragaceae were medically important in breaking up kidney stones. Ornamental plants belonging to this family include *Astilbe* (false goat's-beard) and *Heuchera* (coral-bells). These are often used in rock gardens where they thrive. Near the end of our walk Wayne Clark and Jim Russell found a beautiful *Psychomorpha epimenis* moth (grapevine epimenis) near some wild plum trees where it feeds.

April 10, 2006 Botany Field Trip

We met at Washington State Park on a warm, sunny, beautiful spring day. Walking with Father Sullivan on the 1000 Steps Trail were Jack Harris, Pat Harris, Wayne Clark, Nancy Clark, Gay Brown, Jim Wiant, Kathy Thiele, Jim Ruschill, Marge Ruschill, Bill Knight, Dave Alspaugh, Leslie Lihou, Penny Holtzmann, Jeanne Clauson, Anne Kettler, Nels Holmberg, Tom O'Gorman, and George Van Brunt. The variety and profusion of blooming plants along the 1000 Steps Trail in early April makes this trail one of the premier wildflower walks in Missouri. Some flowering plants we identified were *Phlox divaricata* (wild sweet William), *Viola sororia* (common violet), *Erythronium albidum* (trout lily), *Isopyrum biternatum* (lowland rue anemone), *Claytonia virginica* (spring beauty), *Dicentra cucullaria* (Dutchman's breeches), *Mertensia virginica* (bluebells), *Collinsia verna* (blue-eyed Mary), *Staphylea trifolia* (bladdernut), *Stylophorum diphyllum* (celandine poppy), *Trillium recurvatum* (purple trillium), *Trillium viride* (green trillium), *Viola pubescens* (yellow violet), *Asimina triloba* (pawpaw), *Dicentra canadensis* (squirrel corn), *Uvularia grandiflora* (bellwort), *Hepatica acutiloba* (sharp-lobed hepatica), *Euphorbia commutata* (wood spurge), and *Oxalis violacea* (purple wood sorrel).

Plants are not the passive organisms that they may appear to be. Plants are chemical factories, and they use these factories to influence and control animal behavior. Bright colors, odors, and sugary fluids attract various pollinators to the plants. Nutritious, colorful, pleasant tasting fruits attract animals which eat the fruits and scatter the seeds. Thorns, bitter tastes, and toxic substances protect leaves, stems, and roots from damage by herbivores. Two spring flowering species we have seen recently, *Sanguinaria canadensis* (bloodroot) and *Stylophorum diphyllum* (celandine poppy), each make a toxic sap. Both of these species are members of the poppy family, Papaveraceae, which consists of about 230 species found primarily in the northern temperate zone of the Old World. Species in the Papaveraceae have a characteristic milky or colored sap; bloodroot is so named because its sap is red. This sap contains the alkaloid sanguinarine. Sanguinarine kills animal cells by blocking the action of some cell membrane enzymes. If bloodroot sap is applied to the skin it will destroy cells and cause the formation of a large scab called an eschar. Celandine poppy has a toxic yellow sap throughout the plant which repels mammalian herbivores. Also included in the Papaveraceae is the opium poppy, *Papaver somniferum*. This plant's milky sap contains toxic alkaloids which have medical uses in pain relief but which are highly addictive and lethal in large enough doses. Opium and its derivatives, morphine, codeine, and heroin, are narcotic substances which have been used and abused by humans for many centuries.

April 17, 2006 Botany Field Trip

We met at Matson Hill County Park for the third time since December 26, 2005. We have discovered that this park is a gem; steep topography with slopes facing different directions, rich loess soil, small streams, and few invasive plants. Each time we go there, we discover more Missouri species. Exploring with Father Sullivan were Kathy Thiele, Jack Harris, Wayne Clark, Nancy Clark, Bill Knight, Jim Wiant, Jeanne Clauson, Jane Deschu, Rick Deschu, Dave Alspaugh, and George Van Brunt. As noted in the December 26 report, we found a "patch" of *Allium burdickii* (wild leek) which is very rare in Missouri. On our March 26th visit, we searched unsuccessfully for more *Allium burdickii*. This visit, however, was different. We found 3 more "patches" of *Allium burdickii*, causing a great deal of excitement among the botanists. The *Allium burdickii* hasn't flowered yet, only leaves are evident above the ground. In a month or two the leaves will turn yellow and die, and the plants will send up flowering stalks.

We saw many of the same species in flower that we have seen the past two weeks, but, in addition, we identified *Hydrastis canadensis* (golden seal), *Osmorhiza claytonii* (sweet cicely), *Geranium maculatum* (wild geranium), *Camassia scilloides* (wild hyacinth), *Tradescantia virginiana* (Virginia spiderwort), *Delphinium tricorne* (dwarf larkspur), *Viola striata* (cream violet), *Packera obovata* (round-leaf ragwort), *Podophyllum peltatum* (mayapple), and *Ribes missouriense* (Missouri gooseberry). Another plant we saw, though not yet in bloom, was *Circaea lutetiana* (enchanter's nightshade). This plant is actually not a nightshade (family Solanaceae) at all but is a member of the evening primrose family (family Onagraceae). In Greek mythology, the enchantress, Circe, was supposed to have used this plant to work magical spells, turning men into animals. This is reflected by the genus name *Circaea*. The species name, *lutetiana*, is named after Lutetia, a settlement on an island in the Seine River in Gaul. This settlement later became Paris, France.

April 24, 2006 Botany Field Trip

The spring botanists met on a sunny, mild morning at Engelmann Woods Natural Area in Franklin County. Botanizing with Father Sullivan were Wayne Clark, Nancy Clark, Jack Harris, Tom O'Gorman, Rex Hill, Martha Hill, Ed Kullman, Gladys Kullman, Gay Brown, James Trager, Jim Wiant, and George Van Brunt. This area is covered by mature forest growing in rich, loamy soils underlain by dolomite. We started our walk along a ridge and then descended into a valley with a small stream. The area was rich with plants in flower. Along our way we identified *Viola palmata* (three-lobed violet), *Galium aparine* (cleavers), *Potentilla simplex* (common cinquefoil), *Orobancha uniflora* (one-flowered broomrape), *Corallorhiza wisteriana* (coral-root orchid), *Myosotis verna* (small scorpion-grass), *Erigeron philadelphicus* (Philadelphia fleabane), *Carex albursina* (white bear sedge), *Oxalis violacea* (violet wood sorrel), and *Sanicula odorata* (common black snakeroot). In the valley, there was a profusion of flowering plants including *Hydrophyllum appendiculatum* (woolen breeches), *Osmorhiza claytonii* (sweet cicely), *Stylophorum diphyllum* (celandine poppy), and *Trillium flexipes* (white trillium). On our ascent from the valley, we met *Hybanthus concolor* (green violet), *Asclepias quadrifolia* (whorled milkweed), and *Triosteum angustifolium* (yellow-flowered horse gentian).

Parasitism is an extremely common way of life, with an estimated two thirds of all species being parasitic. All kingdoms of living things include parasites, and the plant kingdom is no exception.

One of the plants which we saw on this trip, *Orobanche uniflora* (one-flowered broomrape), is a parasitic plant. As a seedling, *Orobanche uniflora* produces a root-like growth which attaches itself to the roots of a nearby plant and thereby gets its water and nutrients. No part of the plant is visible above ground until the flowers are produced. The floral stems are completely lacking chlorophyll and are straw colored. The entomophilous flowers are 5 petaled, white with purple stripes, and a yellow "beard" on the lower part of the floral tube. The genus name, *Orobanche*, means to strangle bitter vetch. Orobo is the Greek name for the bitter vetch, *Vicia ervilia*, and anche is the Greek word for strangle. Some of the approximately 150 species of *Orobanche* are parasitic on vetches. The common name, broomrape, comes from the medieval Latin *rapum genistae*, the root of genista. Some species of broomrape grow on the roots of the shrub genista, also called broom.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

Information about Christmas bird counts in Missouri can be found on MOBIRDS.org, the website of the Audubon Society of Missouri (ASM). Our Treasurer, Randy Korotev, maintains statewide Xmas count data on this website. According to Randy, the website contains data on Missouri counts from 1901 forward—what a treasure trove! The current issue of the ASM newsletter, *The Bluebird*, June 2006, carries a report on the most recent 26 state-wide Christmas counts (2005/06) by Korotev, p. 36-38. It makes interesting reading.

PUBLICATIONS BY MEMBERS

Darigo, Carl and Holmberg, Nels – *Hypnum pratense* (Musci: Hypnaceae) New to Missouri – *Evansia* 23 (1):12

Uffman, Josh - Fifth State Record. Yellow-billed Loon. Thomas Hill Reservoir. *The Bluebird*, June 2006, p.14-16.

Terpstra, Margy – The Owlet of Green-Kirk. *The Bluebird*, June 2006, p. 48-53

NEW PUBLICATION OF INTEREST

Roedel, Michael and Kennedy, Gregory – *The Compact Guide to Missouri Birds* – Lone Pine Publishing, spring 2006

This guide to Missouri Birds is packed with all the information that beginners need to start identifying birds. It contains accounts of over 80 species found in Missouri, complete with color illustrations, photographs of bird eggs, a range map and extensive natural history. It also contains a glossary of terms, a color-coded reference charts and a checklist of all the species that are regularly seen in the state.

AN UNEXPECTED OTTER SIGHTING – Mick Richardson

On May 16 I drove to Horseshoe Lake to observe the black terns reported there. As I was driving across the causeway about 5:30 p.m., an otter crossed in front of the car. I

stopped and watched it through my binoculars. This was my first otter sighting in the St. Louis region.

WGNSS WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS – MARCH-MAY

Gay Brown – High Ridge, MO 63049
Patty McGuirk – Glencoe, MO 63038
Patrick Myers – Webster Groves, MO 63119
John Spitler – St. Louis, MO 63116
Lorrie Vit – St. Louis, MO 63104

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

In April Susan Mintz, an environmental scientist and educator took over the directorship of the Green Center, replacing Shelly Welsch.

Ted Heisel left the the Missouri Coalition for the Environment this past spring after serving as Executive Director for more than five years. He has assumed a staff attorney position with the Washington University Environmental Law Clinic. WGNSS wishes Ted well in his new position. Ted has been replaced as Executive Director by Kathleen Logan-Smith.

NEW OZARK TRAIL SECTION ADDED

The new addition is a 25-mile stretch in Iron County called the Middle Fork section. The opening of this new section provides 200 miles of continuous trail from near Onandaga Cave in Crawford County to the Eleven Point River in Oregon County.

MISSOURI PRAIRIE FOUNDATION CELEBRATES ITS 40TH ANNIVERSARY, OCT. 20-21, AT CUIVRE RIVER STATE PARK

On Saturday, Oct. 21, MPF will host a Prairie Restoration Seminar, including a hands-on seed collection workshop lead by Bruce Schuette (a WGNSS member). Seminar registration will be \$20. For seminar registration and for information about camping and other activities, contact Justin Johnson at 573-356-7828 or by email at missouriprairie@yahoo.com.

THANK YOU, PHIL KOENIG – Jim Adams

Phil has sent me, as Historian, selected information from a file of correspondence with Missouri lepidopterists over the years that he has been given access to. Included is information on Harold O'Byrne, E. P. Meiners, Marlin Perkins and others. This material will hopefully provide information for future Historian's Corner articles.

ALFRED F. SATTERTHWAIT'S MIDDLE NAME – Jim Adams

Having gotten no feedback on a query in *Nature Notes* this past spring, I'll fill you in on a bit of trivia. His middle name was **Fellenberg** (per Dorothy Heinze in a long ago issue

of *Nature Notes*).

WE DID IT AGAIN!!!!!!!

In the Aug. 8 election Missouri voters resoundingly approved an extension of the one-tenth per cent dedicated state parks/soil conservation tax for ten more years. WGNSS members played a major role in getting this tax instituted and preventing (some years ago) attempts to divert part of the revenue from this tax to other uses. This large approval vote indicates that the state citizenry approve of the way the tax revenue has been used.

35 YEARS FOR DR. RAVEN AT MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

WGNSS extends its congratulations to Dr. Peter Raven for his highly successful tenure. The Garden now ranks among the world leaders in the botanical field and is one of the most treasured institutions in St. Louis. His 35 years of service were observed at the Garden on Aug. 15 with a 35 cent admission fee to the Garden for all comers.

MAY BIRD REPORT – Jim Ziebol & Yvonne Homeyer

Sightings: Early Arrival Dates:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer</u>
5/1	Common Nighthawk	Horseshoe Lake	FH
5/2	Red-necked Phalarope	Riverlands	J&NS
	Acadian Flycatcher	Shaw Nature Reserve	WG
	Veery	Shaw Nature Reserve	WG
	Clay-colored Sparrow	Riverlands	LB, D Becher
5/3	Hudsonian Godwit	Riverlands	BK, SE
	Wilson's Warbler	Shrewsbury	NB
	Eared Grebe	Horseshoe Lake	FH
	Willow Flycatcher	Horseshoe Lake	FH
5/4	Mourning Warbler	Shaw Nature Reserve	WG
5/6	Glossy Ibis (2)	Indian Lake	SC
5/8	Least Bittern	Little Creve Coeur	Al & Lois Smith
	Philadelphia Vireo	Castlewood	SM
5/13	Black-throated Blue	Shaw Nature Reserve	M Thelen, CA
5/14	White-faced Ibis (9)	B.K. Leach	JE, JM, JU
5/15	Common Moorhen	Forest Park	SC
	Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow	Busch	D Rogles
5/17	Whimbrel (3)	Riverlands	JE
	Canada Warbler	Tower Grove Park	SC
5/19	Virginia Rail	Little Creve Coeur	M. Andrews
5/21	Black-billed Cuckoo	Kirkwood	M Terpstra
	Alder Flycatcher	Tower Grove Park	D Becher

5/27 Alder Flycatcher
Ruddy Turnstone

B.K. Leach
Riverlands

JU
D Becher, BK

Sightings: Eared Grebes were seen at Horseshoe Lake on 5/3 (FH) and at Riverlands on 5/7 (CA). Mick Richardson located an American Bittern at HL on 5/4. Least Bitterns were seen at LCCL on 5/8 (A&L Smith) and on 5/9 (MD). On 5/7, a Yellow-crowned Night Heron was found at Collinsville Road & Hwy. 203 (P&BJ). Two Glossy Ibises were a very good find at Indian Lake on 5/6 (SC). Common Moorhens were located in FP on 5/15 (SC) and two were seen at the Hwy. 203 exit on 5/17 (SM). Two Soras were found in the early morning at LCCL on 5/21 (DB). A Virginia Rail (JU) and an American Bittern plus 1 King Rail (D Rogles) were seen at BK Leach on 5/21. Whimbrels are becoming regular in the spring at Riverlands, and Joe Eades located 3 there on 5/17. Six Hudsonian Godwits were reported at Riverlands on 5/20 (CA, LS). The Solodars found a Red-necked Phalarope, 2 Wilson's Phalaropes and 10 Semi-palmated Plovers on 5/2 at REDA. On 5/3, Steve Ewer and Bob Kleiger reported a Willet at Horseshoe Lake on 5/3 and a Hudsonian Godwit at REDA. Three Wilson's Phalaropes were observed at REDA on 5/4 (J Moe, KP). On 5/9, John Solodar reported one Black Tern and 13 Caspian Terns at REDA. Fifteen Black Terns and 40 Common Terns were observed at HL on 5/16 (FH). On 5/6, 17 Forster's Terns were seen along the north shore of HL (SM, JZ). The following terns were reported on 5/13 by David Becher: Forster's Terns and Black Terns at HL, and Common, Black and Caspian Terns plus a Franklin's Gull at Riverlands. An amazing 24 Least Terns were present at REDA on 5/21 (DC). Jackie Chain also observed the Least Terns, plus 36 Black Terns. On 5/26, Stilt, Semipalmated, and White-rumped Sandpipers, plus a Wilson's Phalarope and Dunlin, were found near REDA (D Becher). Mississippi Kite reports included 1 in Kirkwood on 5/2 (MAA), a pair copulating in Kirkwood on 5/2 (B&MG), 2 in University City on 5/2 (RK), one hawking insects in Cedar Hill on 5/2 (WG), one soaring with a Cooper's Hawk over Shrewsbury on 5/11 (JZ), and one on 5/25 at Blue Grosbeak Trail (J Chain, Th. Group). Dick Coles was the lone observer of a Golden Eagle at Katy Access on 5/13. Mike Brady reported the following raptors from Castlewood on 5/3: Bald Eagle, Osprey, Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Peregrine Falcon, and 2 Mississippi Kites. Bill Rudden observed 2 Black Vultures in Monroe County, IL on April 28 and Ron Goetz found one there on 5/23. Ron Goetz commented that he had been looking for a Black Vulture in Monroe County since 1973.

On 5/9, Sherry McCowan found 2 Western Kingbirds in Soulard at 2nd and Barton. Tom Bailey observed an Olive-sided Flycatcher in Blackburn Park on 5/6. On 5/21, 2 Alder Flycatchers were present at BK Leach (JU) and 1 was located in TGP (D Becher). A late Ruby-crowned Kinglet was seen in TGP on 5/5 (MT). Another Ruby-crowned Kinglet was seen on 5/19 at REDA, along with 2 Gadwalls and 2 Shovelers (SM). Nick Barber observed about 200 Chimney Swifts entering an old smokestack in Shrewsbury on 5/2. Two Philadelphia Vireos, several Gray-cheeked Thrush, and a Veery added up to a good day at CSP on 5/15 (MB). The best bird of the day on a SLAS field trip to SNR on 5/13 was a female Black-throated Blue, plus as many as 7 singing Prairie Warblers (MT, CA). Late warblers at TGP on 5/22 included a Palm and a Yellow-rumped (SM). Joe Pennell observed several Golden-winged Warblers, Blackpolls and Chestnut-sided Warblers in TGP on 5/1. *Oporornis* Warblers were scarce this spring, with a Mourning in TGP on 5/28 (M Richardson) and a Connecticut in Carondelet Park

on 5/12 (JZ). A rare spring Sharp-tailed Sparrow, along with a Henslow's and a Marsh Wren, were seen at BCA on 5/15 (D Rogles). On 5/5, Charlene Malone located 2 Henslow's Sparrows and a Blue Grosbeak in BCA. A Grasshopper Sparrow was a good find at Tyson on 5/8 (NB). Loy Barber found a Clay-colored Sparrow, along with a Black-bellied Plover, at REDA/Confluence State Park on 5/2 (DB). On 5/31, Shawn Clubb found 3 Lark Sparrows at the Weldon Spring Katy Access. The Painted Bunting at Katy Access was first seen on 5/9 (D Rogles). Steven Wren reported a Blue Grosbeak on Blue Grosbeak Trail on 5/8. Rad Widmer counted 50 Bobolinks and 2 Upland Sandpipers at Columbia Bottoms on 5/6. Sherry McCowan found 2 flocks of Bobolinks, with as many as 20 males, at Steppig and Merrimac Roads in Monroe County on 5/16. High counts of warbler species included 22 species seen at SNR on 5/2 (including a Mourning Warbler) (WG) and 15 species in Shrewsbury and in Blackburn Park on 5/3 (NB). While leading a trip for SLAS at LVT and Blue Grosbeak Trail on 5/6, Josh Uffman reported 9 warbler species, 3 vireo species, a Sharp-shinned Hawk, a Bell's Vireo, and 15 Bobolinks.

A typical day at Blackburn Park on 5/2 included Great-crested Flycatcher, Pewee, Red-eyed Vireo, 2 Swainson's Thrush, 1 Gray-cheeked Thrush, 1 N. Parula, 1 Tennessee, 2 Nashville, a Black-throated Green, 10 Yellow-rumps, 5 Palm, and 1 Black-and-white Warbler (NB). A typical day in TGP on 5/16 included 1 Veery, 1 Mourning Warbler, 1 Wilson's Warbler, 1 Lincoln's Sparrow, 1 Swainson's Thrush, 3 Catbirds, 3 Ovenbirds, a Blackburnian Warbler, 9 Redstarts, a Louisiana Waterthrush, a Common Yellowthroat, 1 Nashville, 3 Magnolia Warblers, and 7 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks (SC).

Backyard Birds & Miscellaneous: Wally George got a yard record with a Mississippi Kite on 5/3, and he saw a Pine Siskin on 5/13. Mike Brady had a Whip-poor-will on 5/5. On 5/7, Margy Terpstra had 41 species at her Kirkwood home, including Bay-breasted, Golden-winged, Black-and-white, Redstart, Summer Tanager, and Gray-cheeked Thrush. Other good birds at her home included Golden-winged on 5/4, a Kentucky on 5/15, Mourning Warbler on 5/16, Black-billed Cuckoo on 5/21, Hooded Warbler on 5/20, and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher on 5/21 and 5/22. Shawn Clubb reported a Wood Duck with 7 ducklings and a Mallard with 6 ducklings on 5/9. A pair of Screech Owls fledged 4 young at Josh Uffman's Ferguson home. Ron Goetz's best yard birds this spring were Philadelphia Vireo and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. On 5/6, 3 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks visited Jack Harris's feeder. Since several people reported non-bird animals this month, I am including a mink seen at Indian Lake on 5/26 (Bill Rudden), an otter at HL on 5/30 (M Richardson), and on 5/30, a magnificent adult Broad-headed Skink at Weldon Spring Katy Access (JZ, SM).

Contributors: Gail Ahumada, Connie Alwood, Mary Anne Auer, Nick Barber, Bob Bailey, Tom Bailey, Paul Bauer, David Becher, Torrey Berger, Rose Ann Bodman, Tom Bormann, Dennis Bozzay, Mike Brady, Sharon Bunch, Jackie Chain, Shawn Clubb, Dick Coles, Dan Curran, Mary Dueren, Joe Eades, Steve Ewer, Bob & Martha Gaddy, David Garcia, Wally George, Ron Goetz, Steve Griffaw, Frank Holmes, Yvonne Homeyer, Ian Hunt, Les Jenkins, Margaret Johnson, Dan Kassebaum, Bob Kleiger, Randy Korotev, Vivian Liddell, Pat Lueders Jurek Majka, Jim & Charlene Malone, Anne McCormack, Sherry McCowan, Mark Mittelman, Jeannie Moe, Mark Peters, Mick Richardson, David Rabenau, David Rogles, Bill Rowe, Eric Schuette, John & Nancy Solodar, Claudia

Spener, Margy Terpstra, Mike Thelen, Josh Uffman, Rad Widmer, Clarence Zacher, and Jim Ziebol. An asterisk means "documented". Please submit sightings by the last day of the month to Jim Ziebol (314-781-7372) or Yvonne Homeyer (homeyer@earthlink.net).

Abbreviations: Busch Conservation/Wildlife Area, BCA; Carlyle Lake, CL; Clarence Cannon, CC; Forest Park, FP; Horseshoe Lake, HL; Little Creve Coeur Lake, LCCL, Lost Valley Trail, LVT; Marais Temps Clair, MTC; Riverlands, REDA; Shaw Nature Reserve, SNR; Tower Grove Park, TGP; World Bird Sanctuary, WBS.

THE HARRIMAN ALASKA EXPEDITION – 1899 – Jim Adams

During my past year as Editor/Historian I've included several articles about exploration of the American West following Lewis and Clark. I've recently learned of another western expedition that I hadn't known about—to Alaska. The only other reference I've ever seen to this expedition was a one-liner, spotted after I learned about the event from a Harriman biography.

E. H (Henry) Harriman (1848-1909), as a youth developed a strong interest in the out of doors. However, he pursued an eminently successful but sedentary career in the Eastern financial establishment. He maintained a strong interest in the American West and eventually "finagled" a spot on a committee to supervise the operation of the western Union Pacific Railroad, then in bankruptcy. He quickly advanced to the leadership of the railroad, removed it from bankruptcy, and took other measures that helped the railroad earn its present pre-eminent position among American railroads. After the San Francisco earthquake he rushed to the scene to direct rescue operations. When the Colorado River overflowed its banks and threatened to immerse California's Imperial Valley, he directed the long and expensive effort to force the river back into its bed. A son, W. Averell Harriman, later headed the Union Pacific. Averell left the railroad to serve his country during World War II as a roving diplomat for President Franklin Roosevelt.

In 1899, as a sabbatical, he turned a vacation cruise to Alaska into "a major scientific expedition that left a major legacy (thirteen volumes) of knowledge about the region", an expedition which he planned and financed as an extremely wealthy railroad tycoon. With the help of C. Hart Merriam, head of the biological survey of the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, he assembled a team of scientists ("two top men from each field") and personally recruited famed naturalists John Muir and John Burroughs. He refitted a steamer, the *George W. Elder*, into a comfortable modern cruiser. The 50-person expedition (including his family) left Grand Central Station in New York on May 23 by special train, and with numerous sightseeing stops along the way arrived at Seattle. The group boarded the steamer and sailed to Vancouver Island and points north.

Harriman, always physically frail, participated vigorously in expedition activities, suffering serious injuries and narrowly escaping death on more than one occasion. He also raced his children along the deck of the ship. In the cramped quarters of the ship his unaffected manner and willingness to shoulder any responsibility impressed the scientists. The *Elder* returned to Seattle on July 31.

Reference: *The Life and Legend of E. H. Harriman* – Maury Klein – The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill and London, 2000, 521 pages.

Webster Groves Nature Study Society – Founded 1920
GROUP ACTIVITY/WALK SCHEDULES
 September 2006 Update

<u>Date</u>	<u>Meeting Place</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Leader</u>
ORNITHOLOGY – SATURDAY Bird Walks – David Becher (314-576-1146) (If destination not given, it's "Where the Birds Are". Always bring lunch.)			
All Sats. in Sept.	North Side County Library (1640 S. Lindbergh)	8 AM	D. Becher

ORNITHOLOGY – THURSDAY BIRD WALKS – Jackie Chain – Leader (314-644-5998)

The Thursday trips will continue to meet at Des Peres Park. Beginning with the first Thursday in September (Sept.7), the meeting time will change to 8:30 AM to help accommodate the increased road traffic once school begins. There will be no formal trip on Thanksgiving Day. The 8:30 time will continue until Spring with the date for the time change to be advised later. Also, any changes following 2007 Highway 40 chaos will be decided upon in 2007.

ORNITHOLOGY – SUNDAY BIRD WALKS

(New birders are **cautioned** to dress for the weather. Bring binoculars if you have them.)

Note: For more information about these events, call Jim Ziebol at (314) 781-7372

Sept. 10 Meet at Maddy Bird Garden	Tower Grove Park	8 AM	I. Hunt & M. Richardson
Sept. 24	Hawkwatch at Mark Peters' Prairie	9:30 AM	M. Peters & D. Rabenau
Hwy. 21 S. to Old 21 – Meramec Heights Exit. Go approximately 3 miles and turn left on Lions Den Rd. After one mile turn right on gravel road just past bridge.			
Oct. 8 Meet at Headquarters	Castlewood State Park	8 AM	S. McCowan & M. Terpstra
Oct. 29 Meet at the Causeway	Horseshoe Lake State Park	8 AM	F. Holmes & J. Ziebol
Nov. 5	REDA (Riverlands)	8 AM	T. Berger

Meet at Visitor Center parking lot

Nov. 19	Busch Conser. Area	8 AM	T. Parmeter
Meet at Hampton Lake Parking Lot			
Feb. 4, 2007	Baldwin Lake	9 AM	K. Lannert
Meet at Boat Launch Parking Lot			
Feb. 11, 2007	REDA (Riverlands)	8 AM	M. Thelen
Meet at Visitor Center Parking Lot			

For more information about the above event, call Jim Ziebol at (314) 781-7372

BOTANY WALKS – Jeannie Moe – Co-Chair , Co-Leader (636-946-9802)
George Yatskievych – Co-Chair (314-577-9522) – Work Phone
Leader – Fr. James Sullivan (starting his 40th yr. in January, 2006)

Botany walks are on Monday. The Botany group visits many of the same locations as the Bird and Butterfly Groups: Busch Conservation Area, Shaw Nature Preserve, the Missouri Botanical Garden, Babler State Park and Cuivre River State Park. Learning plants will help you learn butterfly host plants. Sign up for Botany Group E-mails from Jack Harris (jahar@mac.com) or 314-368-0655 and receive an E-mail every Sunday, sometimes earlier, about the next Monday's trip.

ENTOMOLOGY GROUP ACTIVITIES – Rich Thoma, Chair (314-965-6744)

Sunday, September 24, 2006, 7 PM - "Insect Show and Tell Night. Come and hear stories about insect collecting trips over the summer. This is an opportunity to show everyone all those insects and insect related items that have been added to your collection. Experts will be present to help with insect identifications. We will be meeting at the home of George Winkler, 10 Covington Ln., Olivette, MO (314-993-1652). A computer and projector will be available for powerpoint photos.

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Jim Ziebol - Bird Report Compiler
Jim Ziebol - Busch WA Breeding Bird Survey
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Jack Harris - Botany Walk Coordinator
George Van Brunt - Botany Report Compiler
Sherry McCowan - Nature Line Coordinator

Call The Nature Line!

Call (314) 935-8432 for a summary of the latest bird sightings in the St. Louis Area and dates and times of bird and botany walks; there are occasional schedule changes. Please report any unusual birds to Sherry McCowan (314) 664-2381 and press "3" or wait for the prompt. You can also leave a message at the end of the Nature Line recording.

Nature Notes Deadline and Mailing Info.

The mailing party meets at the Oak Bend Library, 842 S. Holmes, Kirkwood, 10 AM-1 AM to prepare N.N. mailings. We could use your help! Call Marjorie Richardson (314) 965-8974 to volunteer. Deadline and mailing party dates for future months are given below.

NN Deadline	Mailing Party
Fri 8/11	Mon. 8/21
Fri 9/8	Mon 9/18
Fri 10/6	Mon 10/16
Fri 11/10	Mon 11/20
Fei 12/8	Mon; 12/18

Next Board Meeting

Wednesday, September 6 at the Powder Valley Nature Center, 11715 Cragwood, 63122, Tel. 314-301-1500. Near I-44/I-270 intersection; entrance from Geyer Road. Visitors are welcome. Come see your Board in action!

Publication Policy

Notices/Proposed Articles/Letters to the Editor must be signed to be considered. They will be considered for publication based on content and availability of space. Some editing may be done. Communications from non-member individuals or organizations must include the name and title (if any) of the sender along with a mailing address and telephone number. Send communications to the Editor, 35 Tulip Drive, Webster Groves, MO 63119, Tel. 314-961-2494, new E-mail address pending.

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Society Objectives

The objectives of the Society are: to stimulate interest in nature study on the part of adults and children; to cooperate with other organizations in nature study; to encourage amateur research in the natural sciences; to promote conservation of wildlife and natural beauty. Open to all with an interest in nature.

Making Nature Notes Useful - S. L. O'Byrne

Nature Notes, the Journal of the Webster Groves Nature Study Society, has long been published because of its utility in furthering the work of the Society. Its most important function is bringing the monthly program of the Society to the members....from June, 1948 issue of Nature Notes

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Call the Nature Line at 314-935-8432 for meetings and bird sightings

Membership categories (circle one):

Individual or Household.....\$20

For 1st class mail.....add \$8

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Please mail this form with check to:

Treasurer: Randy Korotev, 800 Oakbrook
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Make check payable to Webster
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