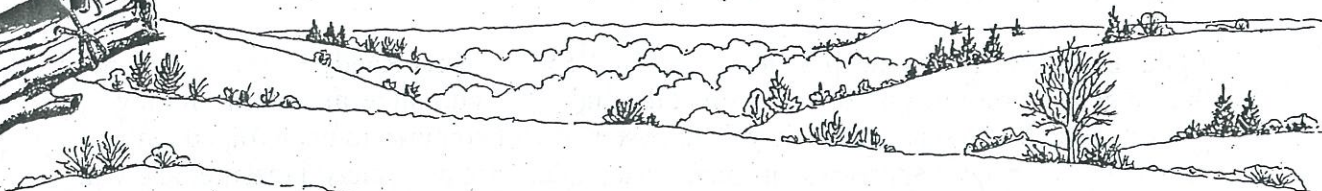


Nature Notes



Call the Nature Line (314) 935-8432 for meeting times & bird sightings

Journal of the Webster Groves Nature Study Society, January 2007, Vol. 79, No.1

First Issue November, 1929

FOR THE NEW YEAR – AN EDITORIAL

(from January 1947 *Nature Notes*. Written by Editor Jack Van Benthuyssen)

Let it be our aim in the forthcoming year to uphold and protect the objects that we believe in and love.

We, the members of the Webster Groves Nature Study Society, twenty odd years ago gathered together and formed an organization with one common interest—nature study. It has been an enjoyable occasion each time when the members gathered together for meetings and field trips. Through these gatherings not one of us has failed to comprehend the urgent need for conservation. But as a man once said, to see a fire and turn in the alarm is not the same as putting out that fire before it spreads too far.

Oh yes, we all believe that conservation is a very good thing and that everything should be done to encourage it, but that is not enough. For conservation to become a reality, it needs the wholehearted support of each one of us. Conservation which means --the protection of all of our natural resources, rational use of our stands of forests, and last but not least, keeping the intended balance of all of our wildlife.

So in this new year that has just dawned, let us each resolve to try to practice what we preach. A few have already made great strides in this line, some have given their all, and yet some of us have done very little. Let us protect those things we love and appreciate so much. The world has stood still too long and we must act quickly if we are not to lose any more time.

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER – Ann Earley

The ice storm and snow that hit the St. Louis area on November 30 and December 1 closed schools, made travel difficult, and caused a half million people to lose power. The WGNSS holiday party was also a victim of the storm. The annual event, scheduled to be held on December 3 with the St. Louis Audubon Society, had to be cancelled when the party venue, Tyson Research Center, lost power. Thanks to everyone who helped to spread the word that the party would not be held, especially since the power outage made communicating by phone and email somewhat challenging. We will hope for better weather for the 2007 holiday party!

Following recent custom, there will be no general program meeting in January. Mark your 2007 calendar for Friday, February 9. On that evening we will have a joint program

meeting with St. Louis Audubon at the Creve Coeur Government Center. Save the date, and watch for further details in *Nature Notes*.

At our December Board meeting, longtime WGNSS Treasurer Randy Korotev announced that he plans to retire from that position at the end of his current term in May. Randy plans to continue to serve as Society Webmaster so will continue to be involved with WGNSS. We greatly appreciate his many years of service as Society Treasurer and will miss having him serve in that capacity but certainly understand his wish to have someone else assume those duties in mid-2007.

Current Society Secretary Mike Olson has agreed to stand for election in the spring to succeed Randy as Treasurer. Mike's financial background and experience make him well-qualified to serve as Treasurer of the Society. Thank you, Mike, for your willingness to succeed Randy and for your interest in filling this important position.

As a result of these changes, we are now looking for a WGNSS member to succeed Mike as Secretary in June. The Secretary must be able to attend Board meetings, held on the first Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. at Powder Valley Nature Center, and to prepare the minutes of those meetings and distribute them to Board members. This position is a great way to get more involved with WGNSS and keep up with what is happening with the Society. New members are especially encouraged to volunteer for this job. Previous Society Secretaries have in the recent past moved into other Board or officer positions, such as newsletter editor and now, Treasurer. For further information about being WGNSS Secretary, or to volunteer, please contact me.

WGNSS Board members have discussed the possible formation of a "special projects committee" to investigate, plan or recommend various types of projects in the local area with which WGNSS might like to become involved. No specific experience is required to join this committee, just a willingness to share ideas and increase awareness of WGNSS and its objectives. Please contact me or one of the Society officers for additional information about this opportunity.

THE MICKEY SCUDDER SCHOLARSHIP IN FIELD BIOLOGY

The Webster Groves Nature Study Society is pleased to announce that applications are being accepted for the Mickey Scudder Scholarship in Field Biology, an annual award to support the field work of a graduate student in natural history. Eligible graduate students are those registered for advanced degrees in universities of the Greater St. Louis Metropolitan area. These institutions include: St. Louis University, The University of Southern Illinois, Edwardsville, The University of Missouri at St. Louis and Washington University.

Mickey Scudder is well remembered for her infectious enthusiasm towards field work, particularly with wild birds. Consequently, graduate students planning field work in such areas as ornithology, systematics of plants or animals, entomology, forestry, ecology, behavior, population genetics, etc. or those desiring to attend a field station to take formal course work in such areas are invited to apply for the competitive scholarship.

(Cont'd on page 4)

HISTORIAN'S CORNER - Jim Adams

Dr. Harold A. Bulger - Distinguished early member: Dr. Bulger was active in WGNSS from 1956 until 1966. He was a frequent contributor to Nat. Notes during this period, contributing articles in almost every one of the WGNSS interest groups. He served as WGNSS president during 1959-61. Dr. Bulger led an investigation that discovered the relationship between the white snake root and the milk sickness that killed Abraham Lincoln's mother. He reported on the investigation at a WGNSS general meeting on Jan. 11, 1963.

The following obituary was taken from Nature Notes, Dec. 1966 issue, p. 88

IN MEMORIAM - Dr. Harold A. Bulger

Private funeral services were held, Thursday, November 3 for Dr. Bulger, who died of a cerebral hemorrhage.

Dr. Bulger was an associate professor emeritus at Washington University School of Medicine. He had been associated with the University since 1934. He was also a physician emeritus at Barnes Hospital and a life member of the St. Louis Medical Society

He served the Webster Groves Nature Study Society as president in 1959 and 1960, He was also past president of the St. Louis Astronomical Club and a board member of the Audubon Society and Academy of Science.

He served as anthropologist for Harvard expeditions to the southwest and was considered an authority on the Indians in that area.

He was interested in all phases of nature and he had a keen interest in the history of our country. He was also an excellent photographer. Throughout his membership in the Webster Groves Nature Study Society he presented many fine programs and contributed excellent articles for Nature Notes. He was also an excellent host at his country home near Eureka where we enjoyed some very wonderful field trips.

If I were two-faced, would I be wearing this one?

- Abraham Lincoln

Few things are harder to put up with than a good example - Mark Twain

A problem well stated is a problem half solved - Charles F. Kettering

WHAT'S AHEAD

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 - Jan. 1 - 30 - Bauer Photo Show - p. 15
 - Jan. 1 - Xmas Bird Count - Orchard Farm - p. 17
 - Jan. 24 - Science Seminar, Living World - p. 8
 - Feb. 7 - WGNSS Board Meeting - p. 19
 - Feb. 9 - Joint Program Meeting with SLAS
 - Feb. 16 - Scudder Scholarship Application deadline, p. 5
 - Feb. 16-19 - Great Backyard Bird Count - p. 11
 - Feb. 21 - Science Seminar, Living World - p. 8
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 - May 12 - Birding Big Day - p. 16
- Group Activity Schedules:
- Botany - p. 17
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- A Rare Discovery - Fr. Sullivan - p. 13
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MEMBERSHIP APPLN./RENEWAL FORM - p. 20

I have become a lonely old chap who is mainly known because he doesn't wear socks and who is exhibited as a curiosity on special occasions.

- Albert Einstein

We will either find a way or make one - Hannibal

The amount to be awarded will be up to \$1,000 to a single student. The award period will be 1 June to 31 May of the following year. The award will be made to the applicant's institution which is expected to establish and monitor a fund as appropriate to curate the stipend. The funds may carry over beyond the year of award if such is to the benefit of the awardee's research. The Scudder Scholarship will not pay overhead to any institution.

Applicants should submit the following materials to the review committee:

A. Proposals for support of field research

1. A statement describing the nature of the proposed field work. This statement should include a succinct review of the goals and, where relevant, a clear indication of hypothesis to be tested. A brief description of the field techniques to be employed should be couched in general terms understandable to non-technical reviewers. It is understood that some of the field data will be further analyzed in the laboratory, and applicants should indicate the extent to which this will occur.
2. A budget covering the expected costs. Travel for automobiles will be reimbursed on a mileage basis at the official rate of the applicant's institution. Estimated expenses for air travel for longer trips must be on the basis of tourist class. It is preferred that living expenses in the field be treated as itemized costs (food, room, etc.) rather than as per diem items. Personal expenses are not to be included. Scientific supplies may be itemized in general categories. It is not visualized that equipment costs can realistically be met by this award.
3. Three letters of recommendation from current and former faculty should be submitted independently. One such letter must be from the applicant's advisor who must specify that the applicant is a bona fide student currently registered for a post B.A. or B.S. degree. The advisor should also stipulate that the applicant's field expenses are not already covered by existing funds and that the award would truly enhance his/her field work.
4. Each applicant should submit a brief statement of his/her academic career, *Curriculum Vitae*. Information desired includes: past degrees, the awarding institution and date; a summary of formal courses in the sciences plus grades (formal transcripts need not be submitted); participation in conservation activities; other information as desired by the applicant.

B. Proposals for attending formal courses of a terrestrial, fresh water or marine station.

1. Identification of the station and the courses desired. The applicant should indicate how such courses will supplement those taken on the home campus.
2. The applicant will submit a budget describing the cost of tuition, room and board, and travel up to the limit of the award. Expenses above this limit are the responsibility of the awardee.
3. Three letters of recommendation from former or current faculty. One must be from the applicant's major advisor who should state that applicant is a graduate student registered for a post B.A. or B.S. degree.
4. Each applicant should submit a brief statement of his/her academic career, *Curriculum Vitae*. Information desired includes: past degrees, the awarding institution and date; a

summary of formal courses in the sciences plus grades (formal transcripts need not be submitted); participation in conservation activities, other information as desired by the applicant.

Submit your application by **February 16, 2007** to:

The Mickey Scudder Scholarship in Field Biology
Webster Groves Nature Study Society

- A. Electronic Submission to thomarkas4@sbcglobal.net, to the attention of Richard S. Thoma. Electronic files should not exceed 2 MB to facilitate transmission of the application over the internet. It is permissible to send multiple e-mails as long as they are clearly linked in the documentation. All files must be Microsoft Office XP compatible.
- B. Or Paper Submission (7 copies are required)

C/O Richard S. Thoma
320 Frieda Ave.
Kirkwood, MO 63122

Recipients will be notified on or before April 1 (the funds will be available June 1); you should submit a brief written report within a year of receiving the funds; and you shall acknowledge the scholarship in any resulting published material. You will also be invited to the annual dinner meeting of the Webster Groves Nature Study Society, May 2007.

BUTTERFLYING IN MEXICO – Yvonne Homeyer

On a recent trip to northeast Mexico, our group collectively saw 277 species of butterflies. This number is even more amazing because we tallied these 277 species in just four days! Everywhere we went there were butterflies. Lyside Sulphurs, Large Oranges and Snouts were abundant. Some bushes were covered with 50 or more Snouts at a time – and the bush next to it was the same. Lysides streamed past by the hundreds.

The occasion was the El Cielo Butterfly Festival in the state of Tamaulipas in northeast Mexico. The El Cielo Biosphere Reserve is a huge tract of land in the Sierra Madre Mountains, a north/south range in eastern Mexico. The El Cielo festival organizers in Mexico arranged for two vans to pick up the 14 festival participants in four cities in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas (McAllen, Weslaco, Harlingen, and Brownsville). Our trip organizer, Sonia Ortiz, was fluent in English and Spanish. Patricia Luevano assisted Sonia Ortiz with planning and logistics. Our trip leaders were Kim Garwood and Richard Lehman, authors and photographers of *Butterflies of Northeastern Mexico*. In Mexico, we were joined by several local guides who live in the El Cielo area. Throughout the trip, our leaders Kim Garwood and Richard Lehman quickly and easily called out the names of each new species as it appeared, and patiently pointed out butterflies to those of us who needed help spotting them. Our local guides – Sergio, Ricardo, and Eduardo – were good spotters. Everyone in the group was enthusiastic and friendly. (Cont'd next page)

We crossed into Mexico at Brownsville and drove all the way to Ciudad Mante on the first day. Ciudad Mante, which is approximately 250 miles south of the U.S. border, was our base for three nights as we explored La Florida, Gomez Farias (a town near El Cielo), El Naranjo, and the Ocampo road. We spent the fourth night in Ciudad Victoria on the western side of the mountains. On our last day of the trip, we visited Canon El Novillo, a magnificent canyon on the outskirts of Ciudad Victoria.

On our first day of the tour, which was mainly spent traveling, we made several stops once we got past the flat, agricultural fields just south of the border. I immediately started picking up Mexican species that I had never seen, even during my numerous trips to the Rio Grande Valley along the Texas/Mexico border. Being just 200 miles south makes all the difference, and an entire new world of butterflies (and birds) opens up. At an orchard along the highway, we found Glaucous and Gray Crackers, Elf, Green-backed Ruby-eye, Barred Yellow, and Hermit Skipper. I also saw several Malachites and Red Rims. These can be seen in the Valley but are not guaranteed on every visit. I saw so many Malachites and Red Rims on the rest of the trip that they became almost commonplace!

The second day was a constant stream of "lifers". We left Ciudad Mante in our vans after a delicious breakfast at our hotel and spent the morning at LaFlorida, a swimming and recreational area along the Rio Frio. One of our first butterflies was the Regal Hairstreak, a bright green butterfly with a wide red stripe. Striking doesn't begin to describe this beautiful creature. We also had good looks at a Superb Cycadian, whose small iridescent spots glint green and blue against the black wing. Orange Owlet and Lowland Owlet were perched and allowed us to approach them within inches. A Common Morpho was flashing its bright blue wings as it flew along the edge of the woods. A Clearwing species gave us good looks at this unusual butterfly which lacks color scales over most of its wings, so that you can see right through it! Other butterflies of interest were Zebra Hairstreak, Veined White, Pavon Emperor, Isabella Longwing, Ruddy Daggerwing, Many-banded Daggerwing, and Whitened Bluewing.

After a gourmet lunch at Casa de Piedra, a bed and breakfast in the small town of Gomez Farias, we spent the afternoon walking along the road leading out of town. This was my favorite spot on the whole trip. No matter where you looked, there was another new butterfly – and the butterfly landscape changed every few minutes. Butterflies were in constant motion. One of the most interesting finds on the whole trip was a *Prepona laertes*. Pale gray below, it is turquoise and purple above. We got a glimpse of the bright colors as it flew. It kept returning to the same tree, where it perched upside down. A fresh Purple-washed Eyemark was my favorite butterfly of the day, although it was hard to choose! Other notable finds that day were Montezuma Cattleheart, Variable Swallowtail, Andromeda Satyr, Pale-spotted Leafwing, Common Banner, Four-spotted Sailor, Anna's 88, Karwinski's Beauty, Huastecan Crescent, Celerio Sister, Erato Longwing, Gilbert's Flasher, Yellow-tipped Flasher, and Jalapus Cloudywing.

It drizzled on the third day, which was notable for the fact that, after many missed attempts in the Rio Grande Valley, I finally found my life Clay-colored Robin right outside the door of our hotel in Ciudad Mante. The rain did not deter our mission.

however, nor did it dampen the spirits of our group, and we spent the day in the El Naranjo region looking for butterflies in spite of the rain. Silver-studded Ruby-eye, Nikko Skipper and Black & White Mottlemark were some of the species seen that day.

The fourth day dawned cloudy but quickly cleared up and we had full sun the rest of the trip. We drove along the Ocampo highway and at the top of the mountain, we pulled onto a gravel road that led to Ejido Medrano (*ejido* refers to land that is owned communally by a group of families). This road, like the Gomez Farias road, was a gold mine for butterflies. Here I saw my first Narrow-banded Dartwhite, Mexican M Hairstreak, Gold-bordered Hairstreak, Pointed Leafwing, Arcius Swordtail, Common Banner, Chestnut Crescent, Square-tipped Crescent, Mottled Bolla, Orange-spotted Skipper, Crystal-winged Skipper, and many more. Tropical Goatweeds and Common Morphos flew up and down the cliff on one side of the road. A Creamy Stripe-streak greeted us at a brief stop further down the Ocampo highway.

On our last day, we spent the morning at Canon el Novillo on the outskirts of Ciudad Victoria. A narrow road goes up the canyon, where I counted 66 species in a four-hour period. Lyside Sulphurs and Large Oranges numbered in the thousands. One of the most unique butterflies was the Shiny Greenstreak. Small but bright, its turquoise-green color stood out against the truer green background of the leaves where it was perched. Other highlights included Torquatus Swallowtail, Clench's Greenstreak, Mountain Greekstreak, White Scrub-Hairstreak, Tailless Scrub-Hairstreak, Curve-winged Metalmark, Mandana Metalmark, Walker's Metalmark, Blue-eyed Sailor, Pale-spotted Leafwing, Mexican Bluewing, Common Banner, Silver Emperor, Pavon Emperor, Tropical Buckeye, Malachite, Red Rim, Tropical Duskywing, and Texas Powdered-Skipper. The canyon was the last stop of the trip. We spent the rest of the afternoon traveling north to the border and were back in Texas by early evening.

One participant was so inspired by our Mexican butterflying experience that, the day after our return, he boarded a first class bus from McAllen to Ciudad Mante, took a local bus to Gomez Farias the next morning, and met up again with our local guide Ricardo for a few more days of butterflying!

This trip was well worth it. The festival cost (\$545 for a double room or \$650 for a single room) was a bargain, because it included all our expenses – the van, the drivers, the trip organizers, the trip leaders, the local guides, the hotels, and all meals. Sonia Ortiz and Patricia Luevano had everything planned perfectly down to the last detail, and Kim Garwood and Richard Lehman were expert butterfly guides. At five days, the trip was just the right length for me. I was able to see a lot of butterflies without spending too much time away from work. And here's the best part: the butterflying is EASY. The walking is not strenuous and the butterflies are right in front of you. Photography opportunities abound.

For more information about the 2007 El Cielo butterfly and bird festivals, see www.elcielofestival.com or contact Sonia Ortiz in Mexico at 011-5281-8378-5926. Photographs of Mexican, Central American and South American butterflies can be found at: www.neotropicalbutterflies.com, a web site maintained by Richard Lehman and Kim

Garwood. At this web site, you can find information about ordering their book, *Butterflies of Northeastern Mexico*. In addition, Jeffrey Glassberg's field guide to the entire country of Mexico will be available in early 2007 (see www.naba.org, online store).

NEW YEAR'S GREETING FROM THE PRESIDENT

This was on a separate page and was inadvertently omitted from The President's Corner on Page 1:

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL WGNSS MEMBERS AND FRIENDS !

My apologies. - Editor

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

Barbara Perry Lawton was one of 24 senior St. Louisans honored on November 12 for their contributions to the community at the fourth annual Ageless-Remarkable St. Louisans gala. The ceremony at the Chase Park Plaza ballroom was sponsored by St. Andrew's Resources for Seniors, a nonprofit group offering retirement living options to seniors.

The St. Andrew's honor reads, "Barbara is a horticulturist with a writer inside manipulating her green thumb. An award-winning author and naturalist, she shares her expertise with thousands of people. Her horticulture and natural history articles appear in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Gateway Gardener and Outdoor Guide. She has over 1,500 articles and more than six books to her credit. Barbara also is a dedicated volunteer. She staffs the Plant Doctor Help Desk and Horticultural Answer Service at Missouri Botanical Garden and is a member of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources' Stream Team."

NEWS OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

The Academy of Science of St. Louis/The St. Louis Zoo – Science Seminar Series – 2006-2007

All events on **Wednesday** evenings in the Living World (North Side of the Zoo), **7-9:30 PM**. Parking free in the north lot. The general public is invited to attend these **no-cost** lectures on topical issues in science.

Jan. 24 – Pandemic Influenza: Prospects for Prevention. Speaker: Dr. Robert B. Belshe, Professor, Internal Medicine/Infectious Diseases and Director, Center for Vaccine Development, St. Louis University.

Feb. 21. – Alien Invasion: Rare Plants and Invasive Species-Ecological Causes and Conservation Issues: Speaker, Dr. Tiffany Knight, Asst. Professor of Biology, Washington University.

(Cont'd next page)

NEWS OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS (Cont'd)

Mar. 21 – Navigating Clear Waters – Providing Sustainable Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation Across the Globe – Speaker: Dr. Craig Adams, Professor of Environmental Engineering, University of Missouri-Rolla.

St. Louis Rainforest Advocates

Free slide presentation, "Do Fruit-Eating Bats Eat Insects, Too?" Presented by Heather York, Graduate Researcher, Saturday, Dec. 2, at the Missouri Botanical Garden on Shaw Blvd. Questions? Call Rachel Crandell, 314-878-8427.

OCTOBER BOTANY REPORT – George R. Van Brunt

October 2, 2006 Botany Field Trip

Fourteen botanists journeyed to the 1815 acre Long Ridge Conservation Area in Franklin County, a place that the WGNSS botany group has never visited. There we found many species of asters and goldenrods in bloom, but also several other species. Native North American asters used to be classified in the genus *Aster*, but most have recently been reclassified into the genus *Symphotrichum*; a few species have been placed in the genera *Doellingeria*, *Eurybia*, and *Ionactis*. The genus *Aster* in North America now includes only one far northern species and one introduced species, and there are about 180 species of *Aster* in Eurasia. Research over the last 30 years has shown that the current classification of asters better reflects the evolutionary relationships among the species of this very large group. On our walk we identified *Symphotrichum turbinellum* (prairie aster), *S. patens* (spreading aster), *S. laeve* (smooth aster), *S. anomalum* (blue aster), and *Ionactis linariifolius* (flax-leaved aster), a plant we do not often see. *Ionactis* is Greek, meaning violet rays, referring to the ray flowers of this member of the family Asteraceae. Another interesting plant we found was *Monotropa uniflora* (Indian pipe). The genus name, *Monotropa*, comes from Greek and means "one turn". It is so named because the flowering stalk has a sharp bend at the top so that the flower faces downward. The plant completely lacks chlorophyll and cannot photosynthesize but instead is epiparasitic. It has a mutualistic relationship with root fungi which provide it with food and water. The fungi obtain nutrients from decaying organic material and from roots of living trees. The term epiparasitic is used because the plant does not directly parasitize the tree; that is done by the fungus which then supplies the nutrients to the plant.

October 9, 2006 Botany Field Trip

Thirteen botanists met on a beautiful, sunny, fall morning at Fults Hill Prairie Nature Preserve in Monroe County, Illinois. The Preserve consists of tall limestone bluffs covered with loess soils. The area is mostly forested with little prairie, but the view from the prairie was inspiring. After climbing through steep forest, we arrived at a prairie on the top of the bluffs. Looking west from our vantage point, we could see the hills of Jefferson County, MO and, in the intervening space, the Mississippi River floodplain. The river was on the far side of the floodplain, hidden from our view, but we saw trees in fall colors, farm fields, and a marshy area.

Like last week, we saw many species of asters in bloom, ten in all. They included

Symphyotrichum sericeum (silky aster), whose leaves had long white hairs lying on their surfaces, giving them a silvery appearance. Sericeum is Latin meaning silky. Three of the *Symphyotrichum* species we saw were white asters: *S. lateriflorum* (white woodland aster), *S. ericoides* (wreath aster), and *S. pilosum* (white heath aster). The latter two species were growing on the prairie. Interestingly, although the common name of *S. pilosum* is white heath aster, the species epithet of *S. ericoides* means "resembling heath". Also on the prairie, we identified *Solidago speciosa* (showy goldenrod), *Liatris cylindracea* (cylindrical blazing-star), *Lespedeza capitata* (round-headed bush clover), *Silphium integrifolium* (rosinweed), and *Spiranthes cernua* (nodding ladies' tresses).

October 16, 2006 Botany Field Trip
Rain! More rain! Enough said.

October 23, 2006 Botany Field Trip

Eleven botanists met on a chilly and windy, but sunny fall day at Valley View Glades Natural Area in Jefferson County. For late October, there were a surprisingly large number of species blooming (I counted 12) on this large limestone glade. As in recent weeks, there were a number of asters and goldenrods in bloom. One goldenrod of note was *Solidago gattingeri* (Gattinger's goldenrod) which was in the final stages of its bloom. It is found only in Missouri, Arkansas, and Tennessee; it is listed as endangered in Tennessee, being found in only two counties. We found that Gattinger's goldenrod is very common on the Valley View Glades. Another interesting plant was *Gentiana puberulenta* (downy gentian), with its intensely blue-violet flowers. We found several of these plants growing near the top of a hill on the border between the glade and the forest. The plants here are shaded in the morning and receive full sunlight in the afternoon. The flowers of *Gentiana puberulenta* typically open only in bright light and the flowers we found were mostly closed. *G. puberulenta* is a perennial with tiny hairs on the stem, hence its species name *puberulenta*, which means "markedly downy".

Spiranthes magnicamporum (prairie ladies' tresses) was blooming all over the glade. It was so common that we joked about it being like a weed. This orchid can be distinguished from other similar orchids in the genus *Spiranthes*, especially *S. cernua* (nodding ladies' tresses), by its very strong pleasant aroma, that of freshly mown hay, which would have been even stronger had it been warmer on our trip. The odor is caused by coumarin, a powerful poison for rats and other rodents. After ingestion and absorption, rodents convert coumarin to 3,4-coumarin epoxide, a substance that causes internal bleeding and death in these animals. Is the coumarin in *S. magnicamporum* a defense against predation by rodents, or is it an attractant for pollinators, or is it something else entirely?

October 30, 2006 Botany Field Trip

Nineteen botanists met at 10:00am at the Kevin and Nancy Rice property in Jefferson County. The Rice property and adjoining properties are part of the LaBarque Creek Watershed, an area that we have visited several times in the last year. The exposed bedrock in the LaBarque Creek watershed is St. Peter's sandstone, a mid to lower Ordovician age (~ 475 million years old) formation. This exposed sandstone bedrock and the accompanying acid soil produces some very unusual habitats and plant communities in Missouri. During this visit we explored an area

known as Deer Creek Hollow. We started our exploration on a ridgetop and worked our way down into the hollow. The topography was steep but the plants we found were well worth the effort.

On the ridgetop, we noted *Ilex decidua* (deciduous holly), bearing its small red fruits. *Ilex decidua* is a native plant occurring in the southern part of the United States as far north as northern Missouri and as far west as Texas. Its fruit is a drupe, a fleshy fruit with one or more stone-like pits each surrounding a single seed. The "skin" of these fruits is the exocarp, the fleshy part is the mesocarp, and the pit (excluding the seed) the endocarp. Cherries and peaches are drupes each with a single pit or pyrene. The drupes of holly plants have 4 to 7 pyrenes, each with one seed. A drupe does not open when ripe; it is indehiscent.

Deer Creek Hollow has walls of exposed sandstone on which we found *Mitchella repens* (partridge berry), *Huperzia porophila* (cliff clubmoss), *Polypodium virginianum* (common polypody), and a multitude of mosses and liverworts. Although *Huperzia porophila* occurs in 18 states from the east coast to Minnesota and south to Alabama, it is found in only a few counties in each of those states. Its range is very discontinuous as it grows only on moist ledges of shaded sandstone cliffs; the species is state listed in Missouri. *Pogonatum brachyphyllum*, is an unusual moss that covers bare soil with algae-like threads, called protonema, before it sends up leaves. *Marchantia polymorpha*, an unusual liverwort was growing in lush dark green mats on the moist sandstone bluffs. *Conocephalum conicum*, the 'great scented liverwort', looks like snake skin and was growing in great profusion on the moist sandstone bluffs.

THE GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT – R. Korotev

During February 16-19, 2007, people of all ages, from beginners to experts, are invited to join this event which spans all of the United States and Canada. Participants can take part wherever they are – at home, in schoolyards, at local parks or wildlife refuges. Observers simply count the highest number of each species they see during an outing or a sitting and enter their tally on the Great Backyard Count web site at <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc>.

Visitors to the web site can also compare their sightings with results from other participants, as checklists pour in from throughout the U.S. and Canada. Together these counts offer a real-time snapshot of the numbers and kinds of birds that people are finding., from Boreal Chickadees in Alaska to Anhingas in Florida.

Last year, participants submitted more than 60,000 checklists – and reported 7.5 million birds overall and 623 different species. The count helped chronicle the early spring migratory routes of sandhill cranes, documented lingering migrants such as Orange-crowned Warblers and Tree Swallows, revealed the ongoing range expansion of introduced Eurasian Collared-Doves, and recorded declining numbers of American Crows.

The Great Backyard Bird /count is a free event, sponsored in part by Wild Birds Unlimited. For more information, visit the web site mentioned in the first paragraph or contact Randy Korotev at rlkorote@artsci.wustl.edu or (314) 993-0055.

NOVEMBER BIRD REPORT – Jim Ziebol and Yvonne Homeyer

Sightings: The Saturday Group and SLAS met at HL on 11/4, where they saw 6 Common Loons, 1 Western Grebe, 10 Horned Grebes, 1 Rusty Blackbird, and a Merlin (D Becher). A Pacific Loon was observed at CL on 11/3 (DK). The high count for Horned Grebe was 33 seen at HL on 11/1 (FH). Frank Holmes found a very late Green Heron at HL on 11/9. On 11/19, David Rogles counted 67 Trumpeter Swans at Riverlands. A Tundra Swan, first seen at Riverlands on 10/22 by Connie Alwood, was relocated there on 11/3 (J Chain). The Thursday Group found several Snow Geese and 1 N. Harrier at Riverlands on 11/2 (J Chain). On 11/9, the Thursday Group observed Ross's Goose and 2 White-fronted Geese at Baldwin Lake (J Chain). Another Ross's Goose was seen at Riverlands on 11/16 (Steve Ewer). Frank Holmes reported 70 White-fronted Geese at HL on 11/24. White-winged Scoters were seen at HL on 11/2 (JE) and 11/9 (FH). On 11/15, both Scoters were present at HL (m.ob.). On 11/19, 2 Black Scoters, 2 Surf Scoters, and 2 Lesser Black-backed Gulls were reported at Riverlands (D Rogles). On 11/4, several Hooded Mergansers were found at Teal Pond, Riverlands (J Chain). The first Red-breasted Merganser was observed on 11/10 at HL and the first Goldeneye was found there on 11/7 (HL staff). Several birders were able to find the female Oldsquaw reported at Riverlands by Matt Klosterman on 11/20. A Snipe and Gray Catbird were found at BCA on 11/8 (JZ). On 11/18, Mike Thelen found 6 Snipe and 2 Bonaparte's Gulls at BCA. Seven Dunlin and 2 Killdeer were observed near Baldwin Lake on 11/9 (J Chain). Connie Alwood had a good day on 11/29, when he observed 50 Least Sandpipers, Greater Yellowlegs, and 3 Dunlin at Winfield Dam Slough and 2 Black-bellied Plovers and 15 American Pipits on Hwy. N. More than 100 Bonaparte's Gulls were seen in the HL area on 11/14 (FH). The Thursday Group found a Lesser Black-backed Gull at CL on 11/16 (J Chain). A first-year Glaucous Gull and a Ross's Goose were seen at Riverlands on 11/18 (NB). The first Black-legged Kittiwake was seen at CL on 11/12 (DK).

Margaret Johnson found a Rough-legged Hawk for the Thursday Group on Hwy. 127 near CL on 11/16 (J Chain). On 11/19, Frank Holmes reported that a Harlan's Hawk had returned to its winter territory on Sand Prairie Lane. A Merlin was observed at Confluence Point on 11/6 (M Richardson). Another Merlin was seen near Baldwin Lake on 11/9 (SC). On 11/25 at CL, Dan Kassebaum and Connie Alwood found 1 Saw-whet Owl, 3 Long-eared Owls and 36 Short-eared Owls. The Thursday Group saw the female Rufous Hummingbird at a feeder in Columbia, IL on 11/9. A Phoebe, seen in FP on 11/17, was somewhat late (SM). On 11/18, 2 Harris' Sparrows were found on the Blue Grosbeak Trail, Weldon Springs CA (MT). Connie Alwood reported about 70 Lapland Longspurs on Confluence Road on 11/18.

A typical day on 11/4 at HL yielded 6 Common Loons, 10 Horned Grebes, 1 Western Grebe, 2 Great Egrets, 1 Rusty Blackbird, and a partial albino/leucistic Coot (MT).

Backyard Birds: On 11/18, a Chipping Sparrow appeared in Sherry McCowan's Soulard residence, and on 11/19, Sherry saw Oregon Junco and an Am. Tree Sparrow, a very rare sighting in the city. During November, Sherry observed 8 species of sparrows at her home. On 11/22, a Purple Finch was seen at the Fenton home of Paul Ziebol. A Brown

Creeper visited Margy Terpstra's yard on 11/24; Margy is still seeing Great Horned Owls at her home on a regular basis. On 11/22, Mike Thelen was awakened at 4 a.m. by a Great Horned Owl hooting outside his University City home. A very late Northern Waterthrush appeared at the home of Michael John Voss on 11/19.

Miscellaneous: An apparent Gadwall x Pintail hybrid was seen at HL on 11/21 (JZ). Two possible hybrids of Ross's Goose x Snow Goose were found at Riverlands on 11/22 (MT). In late October, Mike Thelen observed 3 River Otters on a log at Lake 33, BCA.

Contributors: Connie Alwood, Nick Barber, David Becher, Jackie Chain, Shawn Clubb, Joe Eades, Frank Holmes, Dan Kassebaum, Sherry McCowan, Mick Richardson, David Rogles, Mike Thelen, Jim Ziebol.

Abbreviations: BCA, Busch Conservation Area; CC, Clarence Cannon NWR; CL, Carlyle Lake; CSP, Castlewood State Park; FP, Forest Park; HL, Horseshoe Lake; LP, Lafayette Park; LCCL, Little Creve Coeur Lake; MTC, Marais Temps Clair; TGP, Tower Grove Park.

A RARE DISCOVERY – Father Jim Sullivan

Years ago Art Christ and I were laughing at the language in Steyermark's *Flora of Missouri*. Some Ste. Genevieve County plants were found on bluffs in the "upper reaches of the River Aux Vases." That certainly sounded like an exotic location for a rare plant to be found!

On one occasion Art had found an unusual clubmoss. When we looked it up, that's what the book said—the upper reaches of the River Aux Vases. But I looked at Art and said "that is where we were today!" Our canyon was on the upper most stretch of the River Aux Vases. So we had rediscovered a very rare Missouri native.

Nowadays Nels Holmberg has been scouring the branching canyons of the LaBarque Creek watershed. Steyermark's River Aux Vases was in a sandstone area of the LaMotte formation. LaBarque Creek is in St. Peter formation sandstone. Nels has been looking for flowering plants like *Sullivantia sullivantii*, but he has also been looking for unusual mosses which he brings to Carl Darigo for identification. Recently Nels found an unusual clubmoss. You guessed it—it was the same one Art Christ had found many years ago. They used to call it *Lycopodium obscurum* var. *dendroideum*, but now they call it *Lycopodium dendroideum*. It was a new county record (Jefferson County) for a very rare Missouri plant.

This clubmoss was probably very common here when the glaciers were in northern Missouri. Now it hangs on in shady, north-facing, sandstone bluffs, where it is protected from a hotter and drier climate. Nels' discovery revealed a second location for the plant in Missouri. And only a short distance from where he also found *Spaghnum fallax*, a new moss species for the state.

Editor's note – Art Christ (1906-1991) was an early distinguished WGNSS botanist-naturalist. He also serves as WGNSS president in 1942-43.

WGNSS WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

Malinda Slagle	Kirkwood, Missouri 63122
Jerry Brown	Hawk Point, Missouri 63349
Martha Schmitt	Webster Groves, Missouri 63119
Jack Cowan	Webster Groves, Missouri 63119

UPDATED COLOMBIAN YARD LIST – Peter Hoell (Dapa, Colombia)

Some time ago I submitted a report on the first fifty birds to make my yard list after moving in to a mountain home above the city of Cali, Department of Valle, Colombia. We've occupied the two acre property for over a year now and the list has doubled. To recap, the house is at 2100 meters or about 7000' above sea level. It sits on the eastern slope of the western Cordillera and is bordered on the up hill side by fairly wet "cloud forest" where the trees are festooned with mosses ferns, bromeliads, aroids and orchids. The typical daily temperature range is from about 56F to 73F. The forest above the house is uninterrupted up to the ridge of the cordillera except by a foot trail. I won't comment on each individual species on the list but I find it interesting that Steven Hilty states in *Birds Of Tropical America* that hummingbirds make up 20% of the bird species in this habitat and that matches up closely with my list to date. Also I'd like to think that some of the recently arrived winter visitors swung through the yard at my old house on the Big River in Eureka on their way south. The list follows.

Long Tailed Sylph	Yellow Vented Woodpecker
Buff-tailed Coronet	Golden-olive Woodpecker
Bronzy Inca	Red-headed Barbet
Fawn-breasted Brilliant	Barred Becard
Speckled Hummingbird	Rusty Flower-piercer
White-necked Jacobin	White-sided Flower-piercer
Purple-throated Woodstar	Emerald Toucanet
Booted Racket-tail	Crimson-rumped Toucanet
Western Emerald	Scarlet-fronted Parakeet
Andean Emerald	Masked Trogon
Brown Violet ear	Collared Trogon
Sparkling Violetear	Golden-headed Quetzal
Collared Inca	Green-and-black Fruiteater
Greenish Puffleg	Scaled Fruiteater
Green Violetear	Squirrel Cuckoo
Shining Sunbeam	Highland Mot Mot (formerly Blue-crowned)
Green-fronted Lance bill	Eared Dove
Tawny-bellied Hermit	Band-tailed Pigeon
Blue-headed Sapphire	Ruddy Quail-Dove
Wedge-billed Hummingbird	White-throated Quail Dove
Crowned Woodnymph	Variable Chachalaca
Steely-vented Hummingbird	Sickle-winged Guan
Blue and White Swallow	Golden-crowned Flycatcher
White Collared Swift	Tropical Kingbird
Blue-winged Mountain Tanager	Great Kiskadee
Golden tanager	Cinnamon Flycatcher
Saffron Crowned Tanager	Canada Warbler
Blue-necked Tanager	Russet-crowned Warbler
Ash-throated Bush Tanager	Black and White Warbler
Multicolored Tanager	Golden-winged Warbler
Hepatic Tanager	Blackburnian Warbler
Beryl-spangled Tanager	Mourning Warbler

Scrub Tanager
 Summer Tanager
 Fawn-breasted Tanager
 Golden-naped Tanager
 Purplish-mantled Tanager
 Metallic-green Tanager
 Blue-grey Tanager
 Flame-rumped Tanager
 Blue-naped Chlorophonia
 Chestnut-breasted Chlorophonia
 Orange-bellied Euphonia
 Golden-rumped Euphonia (formerly Blue-hooded)
 Barred Becard
 Black-billed Peppershrike
 Black-winged Saltator
 Chestnut-capped Brush Finch
 Yellow Throated Brush Finch
 Glossy Black Thrush
 Black-billed Thrush
 Swainsons Thrush
 Andean Solitair
 House Wren
 Grey-breasted Wood Wren

Three-striped Warbler
 Tropical Parula
 Bananaquit
 Slate-throated Redstart
 Brown-capped Vireo
 Rose-breasted Grosbeak
 Streaked Xenox
 Montane Foliage-gleaner
 Red-faced Spinetail
 Montane Wood Creeper (formerly Spot-crowned)
 Uniform Antshrike
 Roadside Hawk
 Broad-winged Hawk
 Kestral
 Black Vulture
 Colombian Screech Owl (by voice)
 Lyre-tailed Nightjar
 Yellow-bellied Seedeater
 Lesser Goldfinch
 Yellow-bellied Siskin
 Shiny Cowbird
 Rufous Collared Sparrow

I've also been able to identify a few of the butterfly visitors with the help of **Mariposas Comunes de la Cordillea Central de Colombia** (most of which are found in the western cordillera where I am as well) by Carlos García-Robledo, Luis Miguel Constantino, María Dolores Heredia and Gustavo Kattan . These include *Heliconius clysonymus*, *Adelpha olynthia*, *Marpesia corinna*, *Mesosemia mevania*, *Eurytidesserville columbus*, *Mechanitis polymnia*, *Epiphile chrysites*, *Pyrrhopyge zenodorus* and *Hamadryas feronia*.

Some of the exotics in the flower gardens on the property include: *Abutilon vexillarium* (popular with White-sided Flower Piercers and Long-tailed Sylphs), *Cuphea ignea*, *Hibiscus sp.* (a common escaped species in warm regions of the country), *Impatiens hawkeri*, *Impatiens walleriana* (this impatiens commonly grows along road sides and quickly colonizes disturbed ground in cooler regions. It is visited by a number of hummer species including the *Booted Racket-tail*), *Pachystachys lutea*, *Pachystachys coccinea*, *Pentas lanceolata* and *Thunbergia alata*. This last, a climbing species is quite a plague. Since there is never a freeze to kill it off it expands continuously along forest borders where ever there is strong sunlight killing off the trees it climbs on. Unlike *I. walleriana* it attracts few if any insects and no hummingbirds.

And finally one reptile note. On a recent visit to the department of Chocó on the Pacific coast I entered a bat cave and while resting against a rock shelf I discovered I was sharing it with a *Lachesis acrochorda* or Chocoan Bushmaster (identified by my guide). I am happy to report that I do NOT claim that as a "yard species".

PAUL BAUER PHOTO SHOW

Paul Bauer's photo show "On The Wing" will be at the Green Center during the month of January, 2007. 40 bird photos by Paul will be on display. Admission is free. For information about dates and show hours call the Green Center at (314) 725-8314.

Webster Groves Nature Study Society – Founded 1920
GROUP ACTIVITY/WALK SCHEDULES
 January 2007 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.)			
Jan. 6	North Side County Library. 1640 S. Lindbergh (just south of Hwy. 40/I-64)	8 AM	Becher
Jan. 20	Riverlands Teal Pond Parking Lot	8 AM	Becher
From I-270 go north on Route 367 toward Alton			
Feb. 3	County Library	8 AM	Becher
Feb. 17	Riverlands Teal Pond	8 AM	Becher
March 3	County Library	8 AM	Becher
March 17	Riverlands Teal Pond	8 AM	Becher
March 24	County Library	8 AM	Becher
March 31	County Library	8 AM	Becher
April 7	County Library	8 AM	Becher
April 14	Busch Wildlife Area Aiden Knight Hampton Lake	8 AM	Becher
Exit from US 40 at first exit after crossing Missouri River (Rt. 94) and follow signs			
April 21	County Library	8 AM	Becher
April 28	Tower Grove Park Gaddy Bird Garden Entrance	8 AM	Becher
May 5	Castlewood State Park Near Boat Launch	8 AM	Becher
From Manchester Road, go south on New Ballwin Rd. to Kiefer Creek Road and follow signs east to park.			
May 12	WGSS BIRDING – BIG DAY		
May 19	Tower Grove Park Gaddy Bird Garden Entrance	8 AM	Becher
May 26	County Library	8 AM	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

Jan. 14	Riverlands Hdqtrs.	8 AM	C. Alwood
Feb. 4, 2007	Baldwin Lake	9 AM	K. Lannert
	Boat Launch Parking Lot		
Feb. 11, 2007	REDA (Riverlands)	8 AM	M. Thelen
	Visitor Center Parking Lot		

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

Monday, Jan. 1 – Orchard Farm - Contact Randy Korotev (rlkorote@artsci.wustl.edu or 314-993-0055) for more information or to volunteer.

Saturday, Dec. 30 – Weldon Spring – Meet at the Busch Wildlife Area parking lot at 8 AM. Contact Tom Parmeter (tksp@charter.net or 314-921-6017) for more information or to volunteer.

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 41st yr. in January, 2007)**

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, January 21, 2007, 7 PM – WGNSS member Phil Koenig will talk about his efforts to find "Butterfly of Northwestern Missouri". As one of Missouri's top Lepidopteran experts, Phil will be talking specifically about those butterfly species found on Missouri's Species of Concern Checklist. The meeting will take place at Phil's home, 823 Lauralee Dr., O'Fallon, MO. Call 636-281-1313 for directions. For those of you who have never been to Phil's home, it is well worth the visit. One could spend days looking at all the butterfly specimens in Phil's collection.

(For information about WGNSS, call Paul Brockland at (314) 961-4461)

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ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION (Cont'd)

Making Nature Notes Useful

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 - Stuart O'Byrne, June 1948 issue.

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Jim Ziebol - Busch WA Breeding Bird Survey
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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 at time noted 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 below

NN Deadline	Mailing Party
Fri. 1/5	Wed. 1/17, 10-1, A/P
Fri. 2/9	Tues. 2/20, 1-4 P
Fri. 3/9	Mon. 3/19, 1-4 P
Fri. 4/6	Mon. 4/16, 10-1 A/P
Fri. 5/11	Mon. 5/21, 10-1, A/P
Fri. 8/10	Mon. 8/20, 10-1, A/P

Next Board Meeting

Wednesday, February 7, 2007 at Powder Valley Nature Center, 11715 Cragwold, 63122, Tel. 314-301-1500. Near I-44/I-270 intersection, enter from Geyer Road. Visitors are welcome. Come see your Board in action!
(If snowy or icy conditions prevail, call ahead to find if the meeting has been canceled.)

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 or transmit via E-mail to adams9054@sbcglobal.net

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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.

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