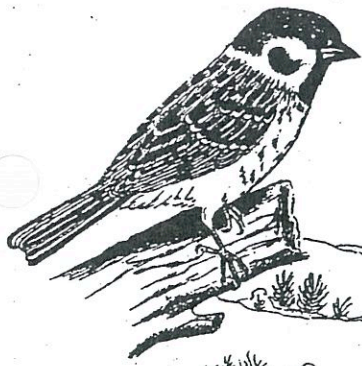


Nature Notes



Journal of the Webster Groves Nature Study Society, October 2008, Vol. 80, No. 8
First Issue November 1929

PRESIDENT'S CORNER – Ann Earley

WGNSS members enjoyed a fascinating program on cave biology at the October general program meeting. Missouri Department of Conservation assistant state cave biologist Christin Dzurick discussed the different areas of a cave, including the entrance area, twilight zone, and dark zone, and she showed many photos to illustrate the unique creatures that inhabit each of these cave environments. The last part of her program focused on bats and the important role they play in cave food webs and ecosystems.

Once again this year, our November program will be presented by you, our WGNSS members! On **Thursday, November 6** at 7 p.m. at the St. Louis County Library Headquarters on Lindbergh, we will have a **members' "show and tell" evening**. Further details may be found elsewhere in this newsletter. Join us for this special event that spotlights the many talents and skills of fellow WGNSS members. As this will be our final general program meeting of 2008, it's a great way to wind down the year and hear about the nature adventures and experiences of WGNSS members during these past months.

Have you heard the news? WGNSS is looking for a newsletter editor to succeed Jim Adams, who has announced he will be retiring from this position in December. If you are interested in being *Nature Notes* editor, know someone who might be interested, or would like more information about what is involved, please let me know.

The WGNSS Board has voted to become a partner organization with St. Louis Audubon Society and St. Louis County Parks in support of the Little Creve Coeur Water Management Project. The partner organizations in late September applied for a 2009 Missouri Bird Conservation Initiative grant for the project, which involves installation of a solar-powered pump and well to provide supplemental water for the Little Creve Coeur Lake wetland mitigation area. Efforts to support the ongoing restoration of wetland, wet prairie, and mesic forest habitat in this area will benefit birds and other wildlife in the Missouri River floodplain. In connection with this partnership, the WGNSS Board has approved financial support of the project, in the form of matching funds, of \$2,500. Many WGNSS members are very familiar with the Little Creve Coeur area, and this project provides an important opportunity to expand and preserve wetland wildlife habitat in St. Louis County. A decision on the grant application is expected by early 2009.

(Cont'd next page)

And speaking of the new year, hard as it is to believe, the holiday season is almost here. Plans are underway for our annual celebration of the holidays and the winter season. Check next month's *Nature Notes* for further details.

OCTOBER GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING - Shawn Clubb

Christin Dzurick, an assistant state cave biologist for the Missouri Department of Conservation, gave a presentation on cave ecology at the October general membership meeting. Eleven people attended to hear her speak about the different cave zones and the life present in them. She spoke about the conservation challenges faced by caves and their species. Christin also talked about Missouri's bat species and brought a tree-dwelling red bat to show the group.

NOVEMBER GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING - Shawn Clubb

November's meeting will be our annual Show and Tell. Members are encouraged to bring no more than ten presentation items to share with the group. Items can include photos, slides, artwork, video and collections. A digital projector, slide projector and screen, DVD player and VCR are available for our use. The meeting will be held at 7 p.m. Nov. 6 at the Main Headquarters of the St. Louis County Library, 1640 S. Lindbergh Boulevard.

Barbara Lawton RECEIVES 2008 HALL OF FAME RECOGNITION

Washington, DC – September 30, 2008 – Barbara Lawton received the Garden Writers Association Hall of Fame Recognition.

Membership in the Hall of Fame is the highest honor the Garden Writers Association (GWA) can bestow. It is reserved for distinguished members whose life and career has materially reflected and advanced gardening, garden communications and the objectives of the Garden Writers Association.

"The Garden Writers Association by inducting an individual into the Hall of Fame, have honored those who have shown long-standing service, dedication, contributions and commitment to the garden communication industry and the values of the Association. Being named a Hall of Fame member is a significant distinction and this year's honoree is a very worthy recipient." says Anne Marie Van Nest, president of GWA.

Since the early 1980s, the GWA Honors Committee has recognized individuals that have been nominated by the membership. Barbara Lawton received a distinguished plaque and was honored at the 2008 Annual Banquet at the GWA Symposium in Portland, OR.

SEPTEMBER BIRD REPORT – Jim Ziebol /Yvonne Homeyer

Introduction: On March 22, 2008, Bill Rudden recorded a new species of gull for the St. Louis area – a second winter Black-tailed Gull, seen in Illinois near the JB Bridge. Bill photographed the bird and Dan Kassebaum documented it. This is the fifth time that Bill has been the first to find a new gull; the others were Lesser Black-backed, Slaty-backed, Mew, and Common Black-headed Gull. At this point in time, St. Louis is now tied with St. John's, Newfoundland, for the most species of gulls seen in eastern North America (20 species). Niagara Falls, Ontario is in second place with 19 species.

Sightings: About 35 Black-crowned Night Herons were seen at Riverlands on 9/10 (CA, CK). On 9/19, 3 Green Herons were reported in the HL area (JZ). Clarence Zacher encountered 3 Wood Ducks in FP on 9/13. Two Sora and 4 Snipe were seen near HL on 9/28 (B Rudden, JZ). Three Avocets, a Sora, and several Caspian Terns were observed at Riverlands on 9/10 (CA, D Rogles, B Rudden). Jim Hickner visited CC NWR on 9/21, where he found an Avocet, Lesser Yellowlegs, several Semipalmated Sandpipers, 12 Stilt Sandpipers, and others. Hayford Road was a good location in early September, and on 9/4, Charlene Malone reported 5 Hudsonian Godwits there. On 9/18, the Thursday Group saw a Sanderling on the HL Causeway (J Chain). On 9/4, a hatch-year Red Knot appeared at Hayford Road (B Rudden, JE, CM). A White-rumped Sandpiper is a very unusual bird in the fall; one was observed in Monroe County on 9/12 (B Rudden). Red-necked Phalaropes continued to be seen into September, with 3 at CC NWR on 9/1 (D Rogles). On 9/27, 116 Stilt, 50 Least, 2 Baird's Sandpipers, 52 Long-billed Dowitchers, and 2 Wigeons were seen at CC NWR (D Rogles, TB). Mark Seiffert found the first 2 Sabine's Gulls of the fall at CL on 9/11. On 9/20, a Laughing Gull and a Red Phalarope were observed at CL (MT). Two Franklin's Gulls were found at the Borrow Pit, HL, on 9/21 (FH). Jim Hickner recorded 5 Forster's Terns, 2 Buff-breasted Sandpipers, and 2 Baird's Sandpipers in Lincoln County on 9/1.

Osprey sightings included 2 at Riverlands on 9/10 (CA), 2 at HL on 9/15 (JZ), and 3 at CL on 9/14 (MT). On 9/12, a Broad-winged and Red-shouldered Hawks were soaring over Rt. 66 SP (YH, JZ). Fifteen Nighthawks were seen at Powdered Valley on 9/3 (MT) and another was spotted in TGP on 9/18 (Th Group, Jean Cook). For about a week, around 9/9, up to 500 Chimney Swifts were observed swooping into and streaming out of a chimney at Bristol School in Webster Groves, as reported by Marvin & Karen Staloch. An Olive-sided Flycatcher was seen in TGP on 9/10 (PK). After Hurricane Ike hit the Gulf Coast of Texas, two unusual birds showed up in the St. Louis area. A Cave Swallow was reported at CL on 9/12 (CM) and a Violet-Green Swallow was found at Hazlett SP on 9/14 (DK). A Bewick's Wren was photographed in TGP on 9/30 (B Rudden). A Marsh Wren was found near HL on 9/7 (FH). Another Marsh Wren was seen near HL on 9/28 (B Rudden, JZ). Also on 9/28, a Sedge Wren was found on Walker Island (YH, JZ). Ruby-crowned Kinglets were seen at HL on 9/28 (JZ) and on 9/29 in TGP (Sue Schoening). The first report of Golden-crowned Kinglet was in TGP on 9/30 (JChain).

Good birds for Jack Cowan in TGP on 9/29 included Golden-winged Warbler and 2 Sapsuckers. Black-throated Blue Warblers were seen at CL on 9/20 (MT) and on 9/25 in TGP (RAB). Rose Ann Bodman also located a Mourning Warbler in TGP on 9/16.

Also on 9/16, Shawn Clubb found Golden-winged, Blue-winged, and Kentucky Warblers there. On 9/1, Jim Hickner reported 10 species of warblers in Lincoln County, including Blackburnian and Prothonotary. Thirteen warbler species were found at Riverlands on 9/8, including Golden-winged and Blackburnian (D Rogles). A visit to the Blue Grosbeak Trail on 9/21 produced 2 Henslow's Sparrows, a hatch-year Grasshopper Sparrow, and a Savannah Sparrow (D Rogles, TB). A Blue Grosbeak and singing Bell's and Warbling Vireos were found in the HL area on 9/7 (FH). On 9/28, 2 Swamp Sparrows, 3 Savannah Sparrows, 2 Snipe, and a Little Blue Heron were seen near HL (YH, JZ).

A typical day on 9/7 at CC NWR included an American Golden Plover, 10 Semipalmated Plovers, 1 Piping Plover, 10 Killdeer, 5 Black-necked Stilts, a Spotted Sandpiper, 8 Solitary Sandpipers, 5 Greater Yellowlegs, 45 Lesser Yellowlegs, 3 Hudsonian Godwits, 20 Stilt Sandpipers, a Long-billed Dowitcher, a Wilson's Phalarope, and a Red-necked Phalarope (JU).

A typical day on 9/15 in TGP included Tufted Titmouse, several Redstarts, 2 Black-and-white Warblers, Common Yellowthroat, Wilson's Warbler, Olive-sided Flycatcher, several empids, Gray Catbird, Swainson's Thrush, Red-eyed Vireo, and Eastern Wood-Pewee (J Chain).

A typical day on 9/30 at the Blue Grosbeak Trail included 8 Yellow-rumped Warblers, 15 Palm Warblers, 1 Black-throated Green Warbler, 3 Nashville Warblers, 1 Chestnut-sided Warbler, 1 N. Parula, 10 Common Yellowthroats, 25 Field Sparrows, 10 Swamp Sparrows, Lincoln's Sparrow, a Song Sparrow, Golden-crowned Kinglet, 2 Phoebes, 8 Bluebirds, and 6 Cedar Waxwings (Boris Chevone).

Backyard Birds: On 9/7 and 9/30, Sherry McCowan saw Common Yellowthroat at her Soulard home; a Wilson's Warbler on 9/13 was a new yard bird. Bill Rudden found a Common Yellowthroat in his City garage on 9/12. An immature Swamp Sparrow seen on 9/14 was a new bird for Anne McCormack's Kirkwood garden. During September, Connie Alwood had several good warbler days and he regularly hears a pair of Great Horned Owls at his Ferguson home. Dave Haenni reported the following in his yard on 9/27-28: Blue-winged, Black-throated Green, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, E. Wood-Pewee, Sapsucker, and Cooper's Hawk.

Contributors: Connie Alwood, David Becher, Rose Ann Bodman, Tom Bormann, Jackie Chain, Boris Chevone, Shawn Clubb, Jean Cook, Jack Cowan, Joe Eades, Jim Hickner, Frank Holmes, Yvonne Homeyer, Dan Kassebaum, Peter Keyel, Chris Kirmaier, Charlene & Jim Malone, Sherry McCowan, David Rogles, Bill Rowe, Bill Rudden, Mark Seiffert, Mike Thelen, Josh Uffman, Clarence Zacher, Jim Ziebol.

Abbreviations: BCA, Busch Conservation Area; CC, Clarence Cannon NWR; CL, Carlyle Lake; CSP, Castlewood State Park; CBCA, Columbia Bottom Conservation Area; FP, Forest Park; HL, Horseshoe Lake; LCCL, Little Creve Coeur Lake; MBG, Missouri Botanical Garden; MTC, Marais Temps Clair; RMBS, Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary; SNR, Shaw Nature Reserve; TGP, Tower Grove Park.

HISTORIANS CORNER – Jim Adams

Flora and Fauna of the Missouri Ozarks ca. 1820

At this point in time in Missouri was very sparsely settled. There were pockets of civilization along the state's larger rivers. But the heavily forested Ozark region was peopled mostly by small pockets of isolated settlers living under primitive conditions along creeks and small rivers. Because of this low population density the death toll from the great earthquakes of 1812 (the "New Madrid" quakes) was very small. Only sparse information about the natural history of the Lower Ozark region is contained in contemporary accounts of these great tremors. Fortunately an early traveler in southern Missouri, Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, produced a journal containing the earliest documentation of the area's flora and fauna.

Schoolcraft was born on March 28, 1793 in Albany County, New York State. He spent his boyhood in Hamilton, New York. He studied chemistry and mineralogy at Middlebury College in Vermont. With the collapse of the American glass industry after the War of 1812, Schoolcraft decided to see the American West. In 1817 he journeyed down the Mississippi to Herculaneum, south of St. Louis. In Herculaneum he met Moses Austin, who helped him make a tour of the Missouri lead mining district. He wrote a book that provides the best available description of lead mining in the district as it existed in 1818.

After completing his exploration of the lead mining district, he declined an invitation from the Austins to join their Texas settlement project. Anxious to explore territories to the south, he left Potosi on Nov. 5, 1818 with a frontiersman named Levi Pettibone and a packhorse named Butcher for a walking tour of the Missouri and Arkansas Ozarks. Pettibone soon returned to Potosi and Schoolcraft pushed on alone. Schoolcraft's journal gives a detailed day by day account of this winter trip through what was then a trackless wilderness.

By November 11 Schoolcraft reached the Current River and on Jan. 1, 1819 reached the James River. From there he visited the White River and the northern Arkansas country. He returned to Potosi on February 4, 1819 having survived many hardships. During the entire trip he subsisted on game and other wild foods. He covered more than 900 miles on this three month walking trip. (Today Schoolcraft is honored as the founder of Springfield, Missouri.)

In 1832 he led the military expedition that discovered the source of the Mississippi River at Lake Itasca. In 1847, after marrying the daughter of an Indian chief, he was commissioned by the U.S. Congress to collect and put into writing all the information known about the American Indian. This task occupied him for the rest of his life. He died Dec. 10, 1864.

References:

- i. Schoolcraft in the Ozarks (Reprint of Schoolcraft's Journal). Edited by Hugh Park, Press-Argus Printers, Van Buren, Arkansas, Nov, 5, 1955.
- ii. In the Footsteps of Schoolcraft, *Missouri Conservationist*, May 1993, p. 9-15

ANOTHER HONOR FOR A WGNSS NATURALIST

Editor's Note – A letter from the Field Museum of Natural History is reproduced below. I recommended that Dr. Gerber contact the Librarian at the Missouri Botanical Garden for photocopies of Hubricht's Articles. The Garden's library has a complete, bound file of *Nature Notes*. Such inquiries strongly reinforce my belief that the venerable *Nature Notes* file (founded 1929 by Stuart O'Byrne) is an important natural history archive.

Dear Mr. Adams,

I have been working on a bibliography of the late Leslie Hubricht (1908-2005), one of the past century's preeminent specialists for land snails and slugs in North America. His immense collection of 43,000 lots of gastropods is now in the Field Museum in Chicago under my care. Hubricht grew up in St. Louis and was as a young man a member of WGNSS. While I knew this all along, I only recently learned that Hubricht apparently made a number of contributions to *Nature Notes* between 1929 and 1940.

Naturally I want to include his *Nature Notes* publications in the bibliography. I combed through the listings on the WGNSS website and found Hubricht mentioned as a contributor 11 times. I attach a list of his *Nature News* publications, as far as I was able to find them, to this email.

Unfortunately, I learned about these publications only very recently and I have a deadline coming up for the submission of my manuscript. Assuming that WGNSS has a complete set of *Nature News*, I would like to ask you whether you can provide photocopies (or scans) of Hubricht's *Nature News* publications, and of the title page of each relevant issue (for bibliographical purposes). Of course, if you have knowledge of any additional publications by Hubricht that have eluded me, I would be much obliged to learn about them as well.

I assume that all of Hubricht's *Nature Notes* publications were rather short notes which would limit the amount of work needed for copying them. Nevertheless, I am aware that I am imposing on you. Any help you can provide will be greatly appreciated and acknowledged, and if I can ever be of assistance to you or WGNSS please don't hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely,
Jochen Gerber

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BOTANY FIELD REPORTS – George Van Brunt

August 4, 2008 Botany Field Trip

Thirteen botanists met at 8:30 am in the city of St. Charles on a very warm, humid, cloudless morning. We first explored the area around the Lewis and Clark Boathouse and Nature Center on the Missouri River at Bishop's Landing. There, we botanized a trail called the Walk of Discovery through a small planted prairie. On the other side of the boathouse was a very small wetland area which we briefly examined. After about an hour, we decided to explore Bangert Island, a nature preserve owned by the Missouri Department of Conservation and administered by St. Charles County Parks Department. We drove several miles to the access point and started to walk the trail to the island. Due to recent high water, the normally walkable slough between the mainland and the island was water and mud. Since everyone was already very warm and not at all interested in wading through deep mud, we decided to call it a day (at 9:40 am) and retire to a local gourmet restaurant for brunch.

The Walk of Discovery prairie, though small, was very diverse; Father Sullivan's assessment was that the species were well chosen. Blooming species included *Ratibida pinnata* (gray-headed coneflower), *Silphium terebinthinaceum* (prairie dock), *Hibiscus lasiocarpus* (rose mallow), *Silene regia* (royal catchfly), *Liatris pycnostachya* (prairie blazing star), *Rudbeckia subtomentosa* (fragrant coneflower), *Spartina pectinata* (cord grass), *Eupatorium perfoliatum* (perfoliate boneset), *Hibiscus laevis* (halberd leaf), *Silphium perfoliatum* (cup-plant), *Silphium integrifolium* (rosinweed), and *Helenium autumnale* (yellow sneezeweed). Species in fruit were *Cephalanthus occidentalis* (button bush), *Chasmanthium latifolium* (inland oats), and *Eryngium yuccifolium* (rattlesnake master).

In and around the small wetland, we found *Phyla lanceolata* (fog-fruit) and *Mimulus alatus* (winged monkey-flower) blooming, and *Saururus cernuus* (lizard's tail) in fruit.

Lizard's tail is a native species distributed over much of the eastern half of north America as far west as Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. In Missouri, it is found in most counties south of the Missouri River. These are emergent plants meaning that the roots and lower parts of the plant are submerged in standing water and the upper plant parts emerge from the water; they can be found growing in ditches, marshes, and other wetlands. The inflorescence is a spike of white flowers resembling a bottlebrush. In the fruiting stage, the spike becomes a string of nutlets that remind one of a lizard's tail. The scientific name, *Saururus cernuus*, is pronounced saw-roo-rus SER-new-us or SERN-yoo-us. The genus name comes from Greek, σαυρος (sauros) meaning "a lizard" and ουρα (oura) meaning "a tail". The species name, cernuus, is a Latin word meaning "drooping", referring to the drooping inflorescence.

August 11, 2008 Botany Field Trip

Thirteen WGNSS botanists met at Valley View Glades Natural Area in Jefferson county on an unusually mild, sunny day. The effects of the excessive rain this year were immediately evident as the glades were still green and flowers and their attendant butterflies abounded.

In the past, we have noted the presence of *Heliotropium tenellum* (slender heliotrope) and even some blooms of this species at Valley View Glades, but on this day the glades were covered with the flowers of slender heliotrope. Father Sullivan commented that he had never seen so many of these plants in bloom. Heliotropes are included in the family Boraginaceae and most species are native to Central and South America. As recently as a few years ago, heliotropes were classified in the family Heliotropiaceae, and so, are not included in the Boraginaceae in Steyermark's Flora of Missouri, Volume 2. *Heliotropium tenellum*, a native species, has been reported in 14 states ranging from Texas to Iowa to West Virginia to Georgia. In the states east

of the Mississippi River, slender heliotrope is present in a few scattered counties and is classified as endangered in Illinois and threatened in Indiana. *Heliotropium tenellum*, the only native heliotrope in Missouri, grows on limestone glades and rocky prairies; it is found primarily south of the Missouri River and is particularly abundant in the Ozarks of Missouri. The genus name comes from the Greek words $\eta\lambda\iota\omicron\varsigma$ (helios) "the sun" and $\tau\rho\omicron\pi\eta$ (trope) "turning". *Heliotropium*, turning with the sun, refers to a disproved idea that the flowers of these plants turned with the sun.

Members of the Asteraceae in bloom on the glade included *Helianthus hirsutus* (hairy sunflower), *Helianthus occidentalis* (naked-stemmed sunflower), *Liatris cylindracea* (cylindrical blazing star), *Solidago gattingeri* (Gattinger's goldenrod), *Silphium terebinthinaceum* (prairie dock), and *Rudbeckia missouriensis* (Missouri coneflower). The latter was as abundant and widespread as the slender heliotrope.

Other glade plants that we found in bloom were *Ruellia humilis* (wild petunia), *Croton capitatus* (woolly croton), *Euphorbia corollata* (flowering spurge), *Lobelia spicata* (spiked lobelia), *Aureolaria grandiflora* (yellow false foxglove), *Hedyotis nigricans* (slender-leaved bluets), *Pycnanthemum pilosum* (hairy mountain mint), *Croton monanthogynus* (croton), and *Trichostema brachiatum* (fluxweed).

Myrmecologist James Trager found a bush katydid of the genus *Scudderia* which had recently mated and had a large translucent mass attached to her abdomen. This mass was composed of a spermatophore and a spermatophylax. The spermatophore, which is secreted first by the male katydid, consists of a bulb containing sperm and a tube. The spermatophore tube is inserted in the female's genital opening and allows the passage of sperm from the bulb into the female's genital tract. The spermatophylax is a mass of gelatinous protein material that the male secretes around the spermatophore. The female eats the nutritious spermatophylax while the sperm cells are passing into her genital tract. Finally, the female eats the empty spermatophore. This interesting bit of natural history prompted a flurry of photography.

August 18, 2008 Botany Field Trip

On a beautiful, sunny morning with temperatures in the 70's to low 80's, twelve botanists made the long drive to Taum Sauk Mountain State Park. This park is located in the St. Francois Mountains in Iron County. The bedrock in this area is 1.5 billion year old rhyolite, a rock of igneous origin. Bedrock is the raw material for soil formation and thus has an important effect on the kinds of plants able to grow on it. We were looking for *Rhexia virginica* (wing-stemmed meadow beauty) and other plants adapted to life in this region.

We took our walk on the Mina Sauk Falls Trail which led through oak-hickory forest and rocky glades. We found *Rhexia virginica* growing in a savannah-like area near the beginning of our walk. Although most of us did not walk as far as the Mina Sauk Falls, two botanists did, and they reported *Rhexia virginica* growing there as well. Wing-stemmed meadow beauty belongs to the family Melastomataceae, a primarily tropical family of herbs, shrubs, and trees. The family Melastomataceae is named for the genus *Melastoma* which means "black mouth", so-called because eating the berries of the plants in this genus stains one's mouth black. Of approximately 5000 species in this family, only two are native to Missouri, both belonging to the genus *Rhexia*. There are 12 species of *Rhexia* in the eastern half of North America, found in scattered counties. Some, including *Rhexia virginica* are used as garden ornamentals. The leaves of *Rhexia virginica* were a source of tea for Native Americans in eastern Canada. The anthers of *Rhexia* are geniculate (bent) and open via an apical pore. If the anthers are shaken, the pollen pours out

in a shower similar to salt pouring from a salt shaker. Its pollinators are usually bumblebees which visit the flowers to collect pollen, as there is no nectar. The bees collect the pollen by vibrating the anthers. *Chamaecrista fasciculata* (partridge pea), an unrelated species, uses the same system to disperse its pollen. The fruit of *Rhexia* is a capsule enclosed by the persistent hypanthium (a cup-shaped structure formed by the bottom parts of the sepals, petals and stamens).

Other species that we found in bloom included *Polygala sanguinea* (field milkwort), *Liatris squarrosa* (blazing star), *Rudbeckia missouriensis* (Missouri coneflower), *Vernonia missurica* (Missouri ironweed), *Agalinis tenuifolia* (narrow-leaved false foxglove), *Diodia teres* (rough buttonweed), *Euphorbia corollata* (flowering spurge), *Pycnanthemum tenuifolium* (slender mountain mint), *Bidens coronata* (tall swamp marigold), *Oenothera biennis* (common evening primrose), *Helianthus hirsutus* (hairy sunflower), *Lobelia inflata* (Indian tobacco), *Hypericum gentianoides* (pinweed), *Helianthus mollis* (downy sunflower), *Desmodium nudiflorum* (bare-stemmed tick trefoil), *Ruellia humilis* (wild petunia), and *Solidago ptarmicoides* (white upland aster). Fruiting species were *Asclepias stenophylla* (narrow-leaved milkweed), *Lysimachia lanceolata* (lanceleaf loosestrife), *Scutellaria elliptica* (hairy skullcap), *Ligusticum canadense* (angelico), *Crotalaria sagittalis* (rattlebox), and *Liatris pycnostachya* (prairie blazing star).

Solidago ptarmicoides (white upland aster) formerly was classified as *Aster ptarmicoides*; the flower looks more like an aster than a goldenrod. In the early 1970's, the species was reclassified as *Solidago* because it was discovered that it hybridizes with some goldenrods but does not hybridize with asters. The flowers of this species differ from all other goldenrod and aster species in Missouri in that both its ray and disc florets are white.

August 25, 2008 Botany Field Trip

Fifteen botanists met at Dresser Island, a part of the Upper Mississippi Conservation Area in St. Charles County. The day was sunny and mild with below normal temperature. After walking across the short causeway to the island, we explored east on the trail that skirts the southern edge of the island. Normally, this trail would be dry and dusty in late August, but due to the excessive rainfall this year, the trail was green and lush.

Iva annua (marsh elder) was in bloom and abundant; marsh elder was domesticated by Native Americans for its edible seeds. Large numbers of *Phyla lanceolata* (fog-fruit), *Sida spinosa* (prickly sida), and *Ipomoea lacunosa* (whitestar) were blooming along the trail. An interesting find was *Bacopa rotundifolia* (water hyssop). The water hyssop was growing in a low area which had recently been covered by water. *Bacopa* is a Native Guyanan Indian word that was applied to this genus by Jean Baptiste Christophore Fusee Aublet (known as J.B.C.F. Aublet), 1720-1778, who traveled to Cayenne, French Guiana from 1762 to 1764 and collected many plants as the apothicaire-botaniste du roi (the royal apothecary-botanist of France). *Lindernia dubia* (false pimpernel), *Rorippa sylvestris* (creeping yellow cress), *Physostegia virginiana* (obedient plant), *Persicaria pensylvanica* (pink smartweed), *Eclipta prostrata* (yerba de tajo), *Amaranthus rudis* (water hemp), *Spermacoce glabra* (smooth buttonweed), and *Tribulus terrestris* (puncture-weed, caltrop) were also blooming along the trail.

Tribulus terrestris is an introduced species of the family Zygophyllaceae; it is native to southern Europe, southern Asia, Northern Australia, and all of Africa. Caltrop is a prostrate plant, its branches spreading along the ground, as indicated by its specific epithet, *terrestris*. The genus name *Tribulus* is an ancient Greek name, τριβόλος, later borrowed by the Romans, for this species. The branches bear opposite leaves which are evenly pinnately compound; there is

an even number of leaflets, so it has no terminal leaflet. The two leaves at each node are of unequal size; one leaf typically has 12 leaflets, while the other has 8. The number of leaflets can vary somewhat and not every pair of leaves is a 12/8 leaflet pair. Each flower of puncture-weed produces one pistil composed of 5 fused carpels. As the fruit develops, each carpel forms two large prickles and many smaller prickles of various sizes. The fruit is a schizocarp, which, when mature splits into 5 sections, each formed from one carpel. The prickles of these fruits are very sharp and account for one common name, "puncture-weed". A caltrop is an iron ball with four sharp spikes arranged like the angles of a tetrahedron so that, when placed on the ground, it always has one spike projecting upward. The caltrop was used in warfare to obstruct the advance of cavalry and foot soldiers, functioning as a nonexplosive mine. Although the 10 largest spines of the schizocarp are not arranged tetrahedrally, the fruit is located on the ground and is sufficiently intimidating as to remind one of a caltrop. In some states, caltrop is classified as a noxious weed.

Flowering euphorbs included *Chamaesyce nutans* (nodding spurge), *Euphorbia dentata* (toothed spurge), and *Acalypha rhomboidea* (rhombic copperleaf). Nodding spurge is named *Euphorbia nutans* in Steyermark's *Flora of Missouri* Volume 2. An updated version of the names and classification of species in Steyermark's *Flora of Missouri* can be found by visiting www.efloras.org; at this website, click on the link **Flora of Missouri** (or any of the other links in which you may have an interest). **Caution:** www.eflora.org is a different website with no link to the **Flora of Missouri**. According to the **Flora of Missouri** website, the current scientific name of nodding spurge is *Chamaesyce nutans*, a name that it had before it was called *Euphorbia nutans*. **Note:** George Yatskievych, author of the new *Flora of Missouri*, informed me that the website is not yet up to date, it is a work in progress.

August 2008 Botany Field Trips Non-botanical Nature Sightings contributed by Jeannie Moe

Monday August 11, Valley View Glade

BUTTERFLIES: Spicebush, **Hoary-edged Skipper**, Silver-spotted Skipper, Eastern Tiger Swallowtail (2, one a Black Morph), Eastern-tailed Blue, Giant Swallowtail

DRAGONFLIES: Black Saddlebags, Widow Skimmer

Monday August 25, Dresser Island

BUTTERFLIES: Eastern-tailed Blue, Least Skipper, Fiery Skipper, **Duke's Skipper**, Least Skipper

DRAGONFLIES: Common White-tail, Pond Hawk – Male and Female, **Great Blue Skimmer**

BIRDS: Great Blue Heron, Common Egret, Green Heron, Fish Crows

A WELL-DESERVED BOUQUET!!!!

From: Nick Boutis [mailto:nboutis@antioch.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2008 11:52 AM
To: aee623@prodigy.net
Subject: ETS thanks

Ann,

Just wanted to send along my thanks to the WGNSS for Randy Korotev's excellent and thorough guide to finding Eurasian Tree Sparrows. I was in St. Louis the past weekend for a friend's wedding, and, using his guide, was able to locate several tree sparrows in Dogtown within a few minutes of searching.

I really appreciate the effort that was put into creating that document, and am grateful that WGNSS makes it available online.

Regards, Nick

Nick Boutis
Executive Director

Glen Helen Ecology Institute
405 Corry St.
Yellow Springs, OH 45387

Webster Groves Nature Study Society
Founded 1920

GROUP ACTIVITY/WALK SCHEDULES

October 2008 Update

Date Meeting Place Time Leader

ORNITHOLOGY – SATURDAY BIRD WALKS – David Becher (314-576-1146)
(If destination not given, it's "Where the Birds Are". Always bring lunch.)

Date	Meeting Place	Time	Leader
Oct. 25 .	Riverlands (Teal Pond Pkg. Lot)	8 AM	Becher
Nov. 1	Des Peres Park	8 AM	Becher
Nov. 8	Riverlands (Teal Pond Pkg. Lot)	8 AM	Becher
Nov. 15	Des Peres Park	8 AM	Becher
Nov. 22	Riverlands (Teal Pond Pkg. Lot)	8 AM	Becher
Nov. 29	Des Peres Park	8 AM	Becher
Dec. 6	Riverlands (Teal Pond Parking Lot)	8 AM	Becher
Dec. 13	Des Peres Park	8 AM	Becher

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

A change for fall/winter trips. The Thursday group will meet at 8:30 AM at Des Peres Park for fall/winter trips beginning with the Sept. 4th trip.. On birding days my cell phone will be turned on at 314-497-1628. Possible changes will be advised as necessary.

ORNITHOLOGY - ADDITIONAL BIRD WALKS – Jim Ziebol (314-781-7372)
(New birders are cautioned to dress for the weather. Bring binoculars if you have them.)

Date Meeting Place Time Leader

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 42nd yr. in January, 2008)**

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, October 26, 2008 at 7 PM – Niki Miller, Washington University Graduate student and winner of the 2008 WGNSS Mickie Scudder Scholarship will present a program “Plant-Pollinator Interactions and Endemism in a Glade System”. Niki has spent the summer gathering data from her research and will present the results from her study. We will be meeting at the regional MDC office at Busch Wildlife area. Directions to Busch Wildlife area are as follows: From St. Louis, take highway 64/40 west. Cross the Missouri river. Take the first exit, highway 94 in St. Charles county. Make a left turn on 94 going southwest and drive approximately 1 mile. Make a right turn on highway D going west approximately 1 mile. Go in the main entrance to Busch Wildlife area and drive to the main visitors building. Someone will be at the building entrance to guide you to the meeting room. Should you lose your way, call 314-541-4199 for additional help.

Sunday, November 23, 2008 at 6:30 PM – Ed Spevak, Curator of Invertebrates at the St. Louis Zoo will discuss “Native Pollinators and the Native Pollinator Initiative”. Come and find out how the St. Louis Zoo is studying native pollinators, bees, wasps and butterflies. The meeting will start off with a behind the scenes tour of the Insectarium at the St. Louis Zoo. Meet at the entrance to the Insectarium at 6:30. After the tour, we will then move to the Monsanto Auditorium in the lower level of the Living World. For both events, park on the north side of the zoo and come in the Living World entrance. Someone from the entomology group will be there to guide you to the auditorium.