

PRAIRIE SMOKE

NACHUSA GRASSLANDS
ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP REPORT FOR 2012
ISSUE 50, SPRING 2013

The Nature
Conservancy



Protecting nature. Preserving life.

Hello Friends,

In this issue...

Bison time

The first time I thought of the possibility of having bison at Nachusa was during my interview for this job in 1993. My prospective boss, Steve Packard, said “So, we want to introduce bison to Nachusa. What do you think?” My eyebrows went up like when we say the word “wow!”

Nachusa Grasslands has been a project with a hopeful and bold goal of reassembling a diverse natural community of prairie, woodlands and wetlands. Now one-quarter century into the project, we share some of our thoughts on attempting to return bison. Ornate box turtles are also charismatic and our turtle researcher, Kim Schmidt, shows us her affection for this reptile. Cody discusses why fire and thinning brush is good stewardship for oak woodlands. Throughout these pages our volunteer cadre, our two preserve staff, our philanthropy staff (asking for your money...add another zero), and the energetic young seasonal hires shout out their conviction that the results are worth the effort and enriching in the process.

I said to my boss in that interview, “We can do that.” Or, was it “We can do that?”

Bill Kleiman, Project Director

Cody Considine, Ecologist and Editor



The Need for Bison Grazing at Nachusa Grasslands

By Cody Considine, Bill Kleiman and Jeff Walk

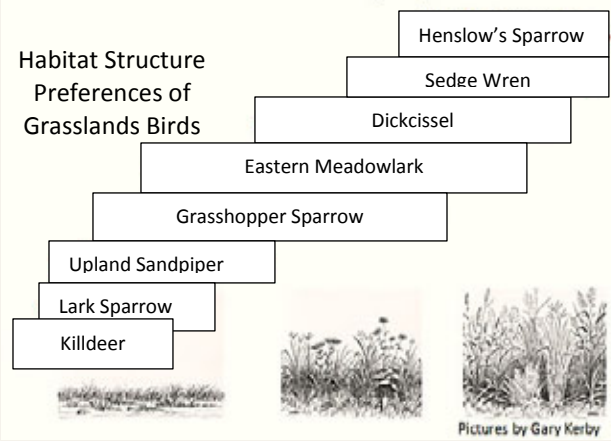


The call of the upland sandpiper was the voice that got the attention of local conservationists and eventually inspired The Nature Conservancy to start Nachusa Grasslands. These birds were once plentiful at Nachusa before and momentarily after the preserve started back in 1986. Today, the upland sandpiper cannot be heard. The cattle were removed to give the prairie remnants a rest; shortly thereafter the sandpipers left and haven't been seen at Nachusa in 15 years. We want them to return, along with a

myriad of other species. Bison grazing is the best way to achieve that in the current context. The reintroduction of bison alone may help bring back the upland sandpipers and, in combination with the addition of more land, will likely increase the feasibility of reintroducing prairie chickens in the future.

Bison grazing will sustain our past and current efforts.

Every year staff and volunteers spend countless hours in the field collecting thousands of pounds of seed from more than 225 species of forbs, grasses, and sedges in an effort to convert agricultural lands back to tallgrass prairie. Bison grazing at Nachusa will protect this investment of financial resources and hard work by assuring that the vast array of native forbs will not be displaced by dominant grass species in future decades. Our observations of prairie restorations at Nachusa suggest that the dominant grasses increase over time. For example, John Taft with the Illinois Natural History Survey (2007) sampled the same Nachusa prairie plantings six years apart and found the top three species that were increasing were grasses. As bison graze they clip the new grass shoots and the roots below ground die back. The grass doesn't die, but this root reduction opens up more space for the wildflower species to hold their own and increase in abundance. This relationship/interaction can be easily seen in the photo below taken at The Nature Conservancy's Konza Prairie in Kansas. The enclosure (fenced off area) shows the grass dominance with few forbs visibly present compared to the grazed area (outside of the enclosure) with many wildflowers present. Also note the structural differences between the two areas. A landscape with a patchwork of both grazed and ungrazed areas will provide habitat for all grassland birds. The area shown below was burned, so the bison focused much of their attention on this lush actively growing grass; they tend to avoid unburned areas. The diversity of forbs and structure differences are apparent. *Continued on next page.*



The Nature Conservancy

Nachusa is one of the leading perspective sites in IL for the Greater Prairie Chicken.



Why bison?

The Nature Conservancy has been managing both bison and cattle on several preserves the last 25 years. As large, generalist herbivores that graze preferentially on grasses, bison and cattle may be viewed as analogues in a broad sense. However, the two species have divergent evolutionary histories and significant differences in biology. We considered using cattle at Nachusa and talked to many Conservancy preserve managers about these two related animals. We have spent a great deal of time reading peer-reviewed journal articles on bison, going to conferences, and most importantly, visiting preserves in North Dakota, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri and Iowa to see their operations. We chose bison based on the ecological and husbandry issues that are highlighted below.

First, a bison's diet is 99 percent grass; cattle also eat mainly grass, but they also eat a lot of forbs (non-grass species). Another main reason we think bison are well suited at Nachusa is how they utilize water. The distance to water strongly affects forage utilization by cattle; specifically, most grazing occurs within 1,500 feet of water sources. These limitations can lead to harmful, recurrent focal grazing disturbances near water resources such as streams, ponds, rivers, wetlands or water stations. Bison are much less dependent on water. This is no surprise since bison evolved and thrived on the North American grasslands where the weather can reach over 100 degrees in summer with intense sun and then drop to 30 degrees below zero in the winter with several feet of snow cover.



Phil Delochev

Bison are an "umbrella species". They will not only thrive at Nachusa, they will also benefit hundreds of other species on the preserve like the Federally Endangered Prairie Bush Clover.

in the winter months. In contrast, bison remain healthy without winter supplementation. Bison may achieve reproductive rates nearly equal to cattle and tend to have fewer calving difficulties.

The slightest differences between the two species can have a large impact on the land, and since we are focused on conservation grazing, we believe bison are the best animals to reach our preserve goals.



The Nature Conservancy

Wallowing is a common bison activity that provides niche habitat for other plants and animals.



Brady Allred

Oklahoma State University equipped bison and cattle with GPS collars and found that bison prefer to graze further away from water than cattle.

Additional benefits of bison are wallows. Bison use their horns and hooves to create very shallow depressions called wallows that they roll in to rid themselves of biting insects. The ecological benefit of the wallows is that they allow spring rains to form puddles which provide breeding areas for amphibians. Wallows also allow annual plants to gain a foothold in the otherwise perennial plant dominated prairie.

Finally, the husbandry differences between the two animals (the amount of management and inputs needed to maintain a healthy herd) also helped us choose bison. Cattle require more management, including supplemental feeding



The Nature Conservancy

New arrival surveys the landscape.

Volunteer Opportunities with Bison

By John Heneghan

Volunteers have been the backbone of Nachusa Grasslands since the preserve was established in 1986. Nachusa is well known for its dedicated cadre of volunteers who have played a key role in restoration and management of prairies, woodlands and wetlands. Bison reintroduction will present a new set of opportunities for volunteers that will involve all aspects of bison management.

Volunteers have already contributed a good deal of time, preparing for bison. Old fences have been removed, as well as unneeded infrastructure. Funds have been raised by Friends of Nachusa



Mike Carr

The Nature Conservancy

Grasslands in support of the bison reintroduction. The Friends group has also awarded monetary grants for research related to bison reintroduction.



Dave Crites working one of the alley gates in Oklahoma.

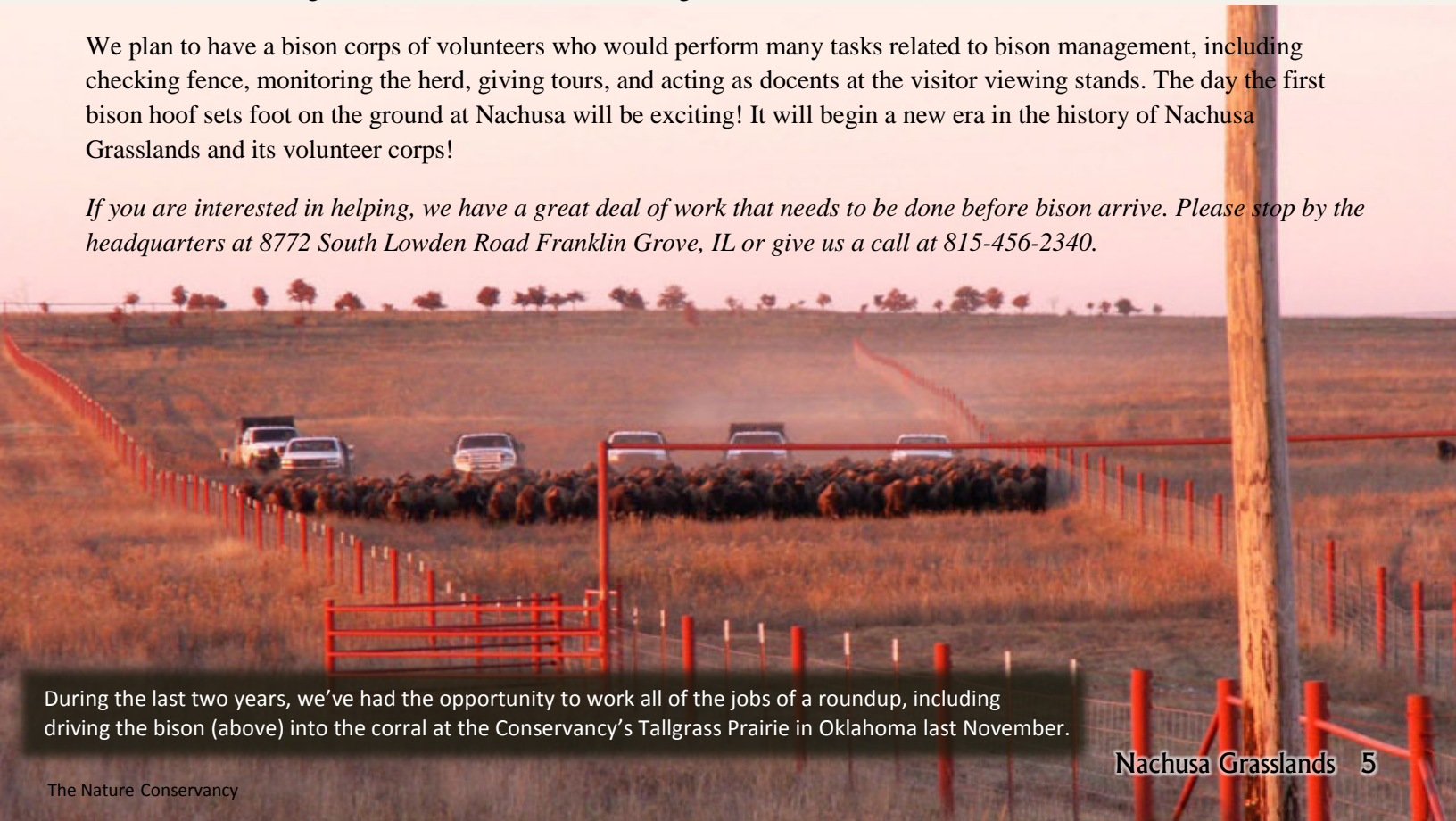
The Nature Conservancy

Every fall, Nachusa will have a bison roundup. The bison will be moved from their large grassland units to a smaller fenced area near the corral and then eventually into the corral. There they will be moved through a series of gates and handling chutes leading to the squeeze chute, where they will be immobilized for inoculation and overall veterinary care; DNA samples from hair will also be taken for genetic mapping and analysis. Then they are released back to the prairie. During the last two years, Bill, Cody, Dave Crites, Mike Carr, Damian Considine and I have participated in various aspects of bison roundup under the tutelage of experienced hands at Conservancy preserves in Iowa, Missouri, Oklahoma, and North Dakota. These

efforts have given us the experience of working and handling bison, while also giving us the valuable time to just be around bison, learning about their behavior and becoming comfortable with them.

We plan to have a bison corps of volunteers who would perform many tasks related to bison management, including checking fence, monitoring the herd, giving tours, and acting as docents at the visitor viewing stands. The day the first bison hoof sets foot on the ground at Nachusa will be exciting! It will begin a new era in the history of Nachusa Grasslands and its volunteer corps!

If you are interested in helping, we have a great deal of work that needs to be done before bison arrive. Please stop by the headquarters at 8772 South Lowden Road Franklin Grove, IL or give us a call at 815-456-2340.



During the last two years, we've had the opportunity to work all of the jobs of a roundup, including driving the bison (above) into the corral at the Conservancy's Tallgrass Prairie in Oklahoma last November.

A Celebration to Bring Back Bison

By Tracy Mlakar

On a warm autumn evening in September, Bill and Cody welcomed nearly 50 guests to a candlelit barn. This was the official kick off a multi-year fundraising effort that will secure bison at Nachusa Grasslands. Featured speaker, Scott Moats, director of stewardship at the Conservancy's Broken Kettle Preserve in Iowa, explained to the crowd the benefits bison will bring to the prairie, including an increase in the rare Prairie Bush Clover and the possibility of the return of the Upland Sandpiper. He also gave an informative presentation based on Broken Kettle's experience introducing bison to their grassland.



Cristina Rutter
Scott Moats, Preserve and Bison Manager for the Conservancy's Broken Kettle Preserve in Iowa.

The fundraising effort to bring back bison to Nachusa also includes funding support for land stewardship, endowment, land acquisition and bison maintenance. Friends of Nachusa Grasslands President Bernie Buchholz helped kick off this goal with a gift from the Friends to The Nature Conservancy that he presented at the event. Bernie also spoke about the Friends' dedication to ensuring the land is protected in perpetuity. Bison grazing will help safeguard the vibrant landscape by assuring that rare prairie plants are not displaced by aggressive native grasses.



Cristina Rutter
Sue Christensen and Scott Dean enjoy the warm fall evening and bison coming back to Nachusa.



Cristina Rutter
Longtime Conservancy members Janet and William Backs show their support for bringing bison to Nachusa.



Cristina Rutter
John Heneghan, Bill, Dave Crites, Scott and Susan Kleiman enjoying the celebration.



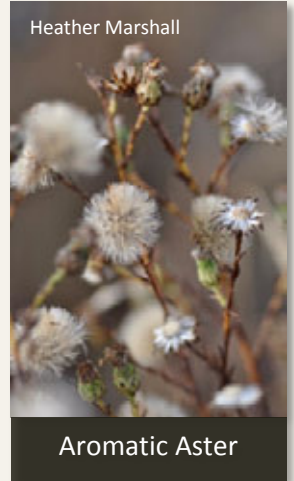
Cristina Rutter
Friends of Nachusa Grasslands President Bernie Buchholz presents a gift from the Friends to support Nachusa.

To give a gift in support of bison reintroduction at Nachusa, please contact Diane Gerrish, associate director of philanthropy at The Nature Conservancy, at (312) 580-2153 or dgerrish@tnc.org.

Planting Prairie, Preparing for Bison

By Jay Stacy

It was the toughest seed-collecting season in memory. We worked harder for less every step of the way. The meager rains in May were followed by a series of overnight hard freezes; the few spring flowers that ran the cruel gauntlet and managed to get themselves pollinated amounted to slim pickings. And then came the stultifying drought of June and July. If not for a few timely downpours in late July and August.....I don't even want to think what might have happened. But we stayed with it, beginning with both species of Pussy Toes during the second week of May, on through to the first week of November when we hand-plucked the tan puffs of Aromatic Aster. When the last seed was processed, weighed and barreled we totaled out at 136 species and 800 lbs., 50 lbs. per acre for each of the 16 acres. Not bad at all for a drought year. Mother Nature is resilient in adversity – and so were we.



Heather Marshall

Aromatic Aster

Special thanks to our devoted core regulars: John & Cindy Schmadeke, Mike Carr, Tim Sherck, Dick Gambrel, and Dee Hudson. Many thanks to the following volunteers-at-large: Dr. Jeff Walk, Dan Thompson, Josh Price, Mark Jordan, Ellen Sherck, Allison Palser, Keith Anderson, Dave Crites, Al & Mary Meier, Kirk Hallowell, Gelasia Croom, Cyndi Pontarelli, Clyde Seeley, Sandy Phillips, Pierce Dhaese, Chris Sonnier, Leslie Uppinghouse, Fui Lian Inger, David Edelbach, Kirsten



Heather Marshall

Jay collecting asters and other fall species.

Walker, Paul Soderholm, and Kevin Kaltenbach. Many thanks also to Ron Cress & the Sierra Club (Dupage Chapter); to the Master Naturalists (University of Illinois Extension): Jackie DeBatista, Maggie Guenzler, Maria Guenzler, Kayse Rushforde, Emmy Lou Studier, Karen Matz, and Brian Heynan; to Sauk Valley College students: Caleb Bradley, Jennifer Rugh, Kelsie Cavanaugh, Jake Kaecker, Breana O'Sullivan, Marissa Kelly, and Kala Karran; to NIU students: Sean V. Burke, Tina Stanelle, Shane Theado, and Thom Koppean.



The Nature Conservancy

Dee Hudson helping mix 785 lbs. of seed on the new concrete floor.

The technical job of planting, accomplished during the second half of November, included seed mixing, harrowing, two even covers of the acreage with 785 lbs. of seed distributed by the tractor seed spreader, “stepping in” 7 lbs. of seed into the moist soils, and hand-planting 2,200 Porcupine Grass quills. All of this took 100 hours. In a low swale, we dug in 400 Hazelnut and American Plum nuts and scattered a pail

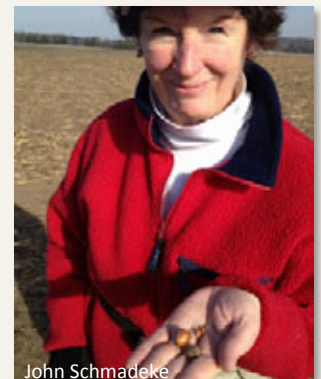


Dee Hudson

“Step in” mix consists of Nachusa’s most conservative and rare species that are individually “stepped in”.

of Hawthorn berries with the Bell’s Vireo, the Chat, and even the Loggerhead Shrike in mind. We concentrated our Bird’s Foot Violet seeds on a sandy north-facing slope to help insure the future of the Regal Fritillary.

Hopefully it will all come up beautifully in the spring, and be new home for Bison and a host of troubled species, a worthy gift to Nachusa from all of us, a gift of our liberty and our labor.



John Schmadeke

Cindy Schmadeke helping plant Hazelnuts and American Plum in the new planting.

Record Harvest and Prairie Planting

By Cody Considine

This year volunteer stewards and staff hand collected more than 6,500 lbs. of seed that planted 85 new acres back to high diversity prairie and overseeded an additional 66 acres. A few highlights below from some of Nachusa's Stewards:



Bill Kleiman

Bernie and Cindy Buchholz planted six new acres and overseeded their six-acre Fame Flower remnant with 412 lbs. of seed.

"Several spring species were damaged by frost. Then, some did not produce seed due to drought. Right or wrong, we tried to compensate for fewer species with bigger volume. Things looked bleak in July but by fall, it felt almost like a normal year. Although I re-evaluate it each year, species diversity is still our leading measure of success."

Kirk Hallowell



"Collecting seeds is a six-month treasure hunt. What we harvest from year to year may change in quantity and location, but we always enjoy the quest."



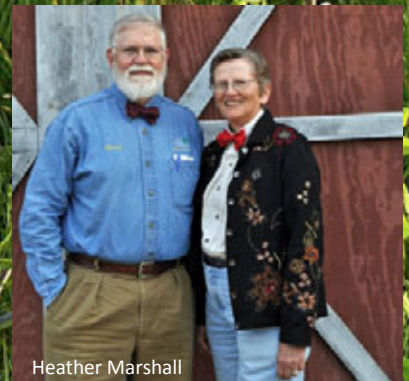
Bill Kleiman

Mary and Jim Vieregg planted six new acres on their Drop Seed Hills Unit with the 233 lbs. of seed they collected in 2012.

"Brutally hot summer!.....but collected enough to plant 6 more acres.....Yay!"

Mary and Al Meier planted three new acres and overseeded 30 acres with the 411 lbs. of seed they collected in 2012.

"The heat in 2012 was unbearable at times and somehow we managed to collect the most seed to date."



Heather Marshall

Becky and Hank Hartman collected more than 700 lbs. to overseed a 30-acre section on their unit.



Heather Marshall

The 2012 Nachusa Crew reaches another milestone, collecting over two-tons of seed that planted 55 acres in 2012.

"Our crew didn't notice the heat wave of 2012 as they hand collected over 4,000 lbs. of seed."

Hope comes in small packages

By: Kimberly Schmidt

Equipped with my receiver and antenna, David and I were on a mission to radio-track a few focal turtles. David was a new summer intern and was interested in learning about radio-telemetry. He asked how I searched for turtles.

“Do you search each burrow?” I shrugged my shoulders and pulled my hat brim over my eyes.

“Sometimes, but what I’ve found is that you just get lucky.” As the words left my lips, I bent over an old abandoned burrow. An invasive plant stood in the middle of the burrow entrance. Annoyed that the weed would drop seeds on the remnant hill, I yanked it from the earth. My eyes scanned the hole once more... did that pebble just move?

“DAVE! You aren’t going to believe this!” I exclaimed. Two tiny eyes looked up at me; its quarter-sized shell was dusted with sand. This hatchling didn’t know it,



Heather Marshall

Telemetry is used to track turtles both above ground to see where they are moving and below ground to see where they hibernate for the winter. This information will be very useful for management considerations at the preserve.



Heather Marshall

but it was about to be the most photographed and loved turtle of the year. David and I flipped out our phones. You could work years in the field and never be graced with such a rare sighting. Volunteers and staff flocked to Leopold’s. We dribbled some water onto the shell of the turtle revealing the ornate radiating streaks that the turtles are so aptly named for.



Heather Marshall

A year ago, a female ornate box turtle would have dug a flask-shaped nest with her hind feet. She would have laid 2-8 eggs, covered the nest, and let nature take its course. The eggs would have hatched a few months later. In warmer seasons the young turtles would emerge and migrate to a different place to overwinter. In colder seasons they might dig beneath the nest to emerge the following spring.

We watched the baby turtle awestruck, wonder in our minds, and smiles on our faces. The turtles are breeding here. The protection of the remnant hills by The Nature Conservancy has allowed a sacred ritual of nesting to continue at the preserve. If the land had been turned into row-crops or been parceled into the subdivision that had been planned, these turtles might have completely disappeared from the landscape. But finding one hatchling amongst the sea of grasses gives us confidence that there are more young turtles hiding. We can hope that there will be sustained recruitment for future turtle generations.

This hatchling found at Nachusa last summer gives us hope that the work we are doing will sustain this species into the future.



Pat Chess

Pat Chess

What do Fire, Chainsaws and Herbicides have to do with Healthy Woodlands?

By Cody Considine



The Nature Conservancy



Barry R McCain

Initially, someone wouldn't associate these words with healthy woodlands, but indeed these are tools critical to restoring and maintaining our healthy woodland ecosystems.

Within Illinois alone, woodlands are classified into 23 different community types. The majority of Nachusa's woodlands are considered upland Oak-Hickory. Prior to European settlement, American Indians were responsible for maintaining and promoting Oak-Hickory woodlands for mast production and hunting, primarily through fire. Without fire, fast growing, shade tolerant, weedy tree species like elm, maple, black cherry, and exotic shrubs will take over the understory and prevent regeneration of oak and hickory and also native shrubs like hazelnut.

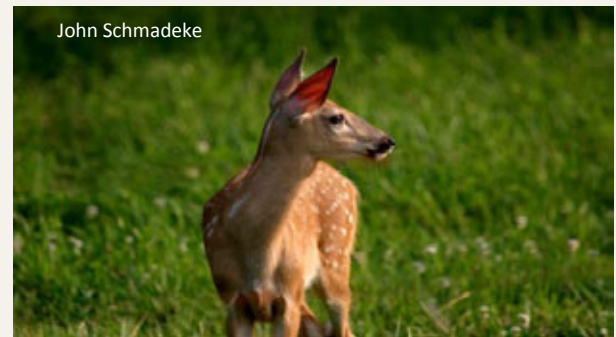
When the Oak-Hickory habitat dies out, so do the all of the other plants and animals, such as Red-headed woodpeckers or the Summer Tanagers which have both been increasing at Nachusa since we started managing for healthy Oak-Hickory woodlands. This transition from

Oak-Hickory to these weedy tree species happens very slowly because oak and hickory trees can live for hundreds of years. However, when these older oaks and hickories die from old age or disease, what will take their place? The fast growing shade tolerant trees which already choked out the understory will then start to dominate the canopy. Unfortunately, most of the Oak Hickory woodlands today are old and in decline.

Even though most of the Oak-Hickory woodlands haven't seen fire for over a century, its not too late to revive them. Our goal is to get these old trees to regenerate before they die. This is why chainsaws, herbicide and fire are brought into the mix. More sunlight needs to reach the ground in order to ensure regeneration. The first step is to cut or girdle all of the weedy invasive trees and shrubs. Herbicide is applied to the cut stump or girdle to prevent the tree from resprouting. Then burn as soon as possible and continue burning to maintain the health of the Oak-Hickory habitat.



Cody Considine



John Schmadeke

Species such as white-tail deer and wild turkeys greatly benefit from oak and hickory management. Implementing fire and selective removal of mesophytic trees promotes oaks and hickories, which in return provides better habitat and more food for wildlife.

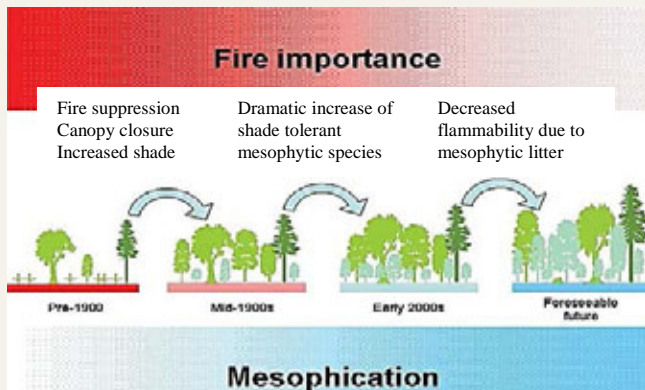


Figure above shows the changes in fire importance (fire frequency and severity) and mesophication (development of cool, moist understory conditions) in oak woodlands. Olive green represent oaks, dark green trees represent pines and aquamarine trees represent mesophytic species (i.e. sugar maple).
Nowacki & Abrams, *BioScience* 2008

One might think since our name is "Nachusa Grasslands" we focus solely on managing and restoring grassland habitats. Prairie restoration and management is indeed one of our major goals, but restoring and managing healthy woodlands is just as important.



David Goldblum

We've teamed up with researchers from NIU to help us determine the best approach in restoring Nachusa's Oak-Hickory woodlands.

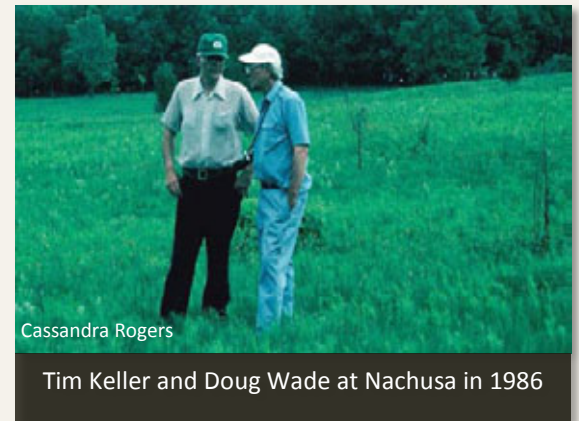
42 Years at Schafer Knob

By *Becky Hartman*

Dot and Doug Wade moved to Illinois in 1964 and began looking for Illinois prairie. Tim Keller's daughter, Laura, included the following in a paper she wrote for a school assignment. "Although the area [Schafer Knob] did not look very promising at the time, Mr. Wade and my father put up fences in 1974 and 1975 to keep the cattle from grazing in test areas. They also burned these areas in the spring and were delighted when many native plants reappeared. Largely due to their continued efforts, the 612-acre Nachusa Grasslands was saved in 1986, when it was purchased by The Nature Conservancy."

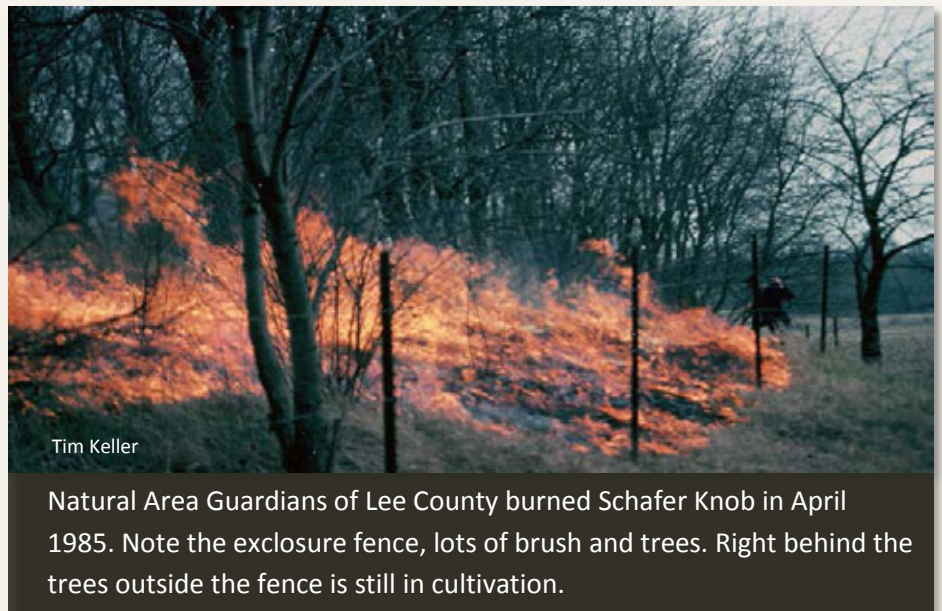
George Fell of the Natural Land Institute in Rockford paid for the electric fence for the five test areas. Tim Keller reports that the little bluestem recovered so strongly that the cattle kept pushing down the electric fence to get in and graze. There were also lots of forbs and the late Dr. Bob Betz surveyed the 80 acres of Schafer Knob, creating a plant list in 1974. Tim Keller began burning the area as soon as 1970, perhaps even earlier.

David Edelbach and Gerald McDermott focused on Schafer, beginning in 1995, with Ray Derksen joining them in 2002. David and Ray continued improving the area until 2007. Dave says "The best thing about Schafer Knob Workdays were Gerald's cookies, brush clearing with big burn piles and having Ray and Gerald to work with every month. The worst thing was the weeds."



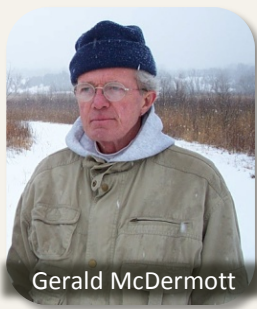
Cassandra Rogers

Tim Keller and Doug Wade at Nachusa in 1986



Tim Keller

Natural Area Guardians of Lee County burned Schafer Knob in April 1985. Note the enclosure fence, lots of brush and trees. Right behind the trees outside the fence is still in cultivation.



Gerald McDermott



David Edelbach and Ray Derksen

Jim Hodder, the most recent steward to care of Schafer Knob, began work in September 2011. "I did a little bit of everything in 2012: gathering seed, clearing brush, and killing weeds. The weed list included sweet clovers, honeysuckle, buckthorn, black cherry and Queen Anne's lace. I'm just clearing out the bad stuff and staying out of the way of the good stuff. The best experience is when I need help and **everyone** steps up to help me."



Becky Hartman

Jim Hodder and Tim Keller on Schafer Knob last summer. Jim is now carrying the torch from a long list of past stewards who've cared for Schafer Knob the last 42 years.



Friends of Nachusa Grasslands Reaching Goals

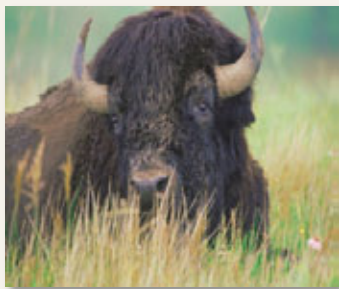


Last year we experienced a severe drought on the prairie, but, like the native flora, the Friends of Nachusa Grasslands prevailed and made great progress toward our goals. Support for the mission of Friends

has been broad, sustained, and generous.

Stewardship Endowment Permanently Established

The Friends are committed to funding a \$3 million Endowment for the long-term protection of Nachusa Grasslands. The first major threshold was surpassed in September 2012 when total gifts to the Nachusa Grasslands Stewardship Endowment exceeded \$100,000, the minimum funding requirement set by the Conservancy to permanently establish an endowment. Amazingly, the goal was met three years before the deadline. Subsequent funding and investment returns have raised the Endowment total to \$180,000.



Bison on the Horizon

Gifts to the Friends of Nachusa Endowment from September 2012 through August 2015 will count toward the Friends' goal to raise \$250,000 towards the Conservancy's fundraising efforts to

reintroduce bison at Nachusa. By supporting the endowment, the Friends are helping to create a permanent funding source to reduce annual expenses, thereby sustaining Nachusa and these majestic animals long into the future.

Celebrating Success with Friends

Friends celebrated at the 4th Annual Prairie Potluck in June 2012. About 100 folks enjoyed food, music, and prairie tours in what has become a favorite event of many of our friends, family, and neighbors.

Save these 2013 dates:

Friends Prairie Potluck: June 22, 2013

Friends Annual Meeting: July 20, 2013

Announcing 2013 Friends Science Grants

Science is fun and so is funding it. Encouraging education and science at Nachusa is a cornerstone of the Friends mission and is made possible through the support and commitment of our donors and volunteers. Information on the next round of applications will be available on our website in the fall of 2013. We welcome to the prairie and congratulate the following 2013 Friends of Nachusa Grasslands Scientific Research Project Grant recipients:

~Tom Anton and Phillip Willink: \$1,600

Anton and Willink will be conducting an updated fish survey and issuing a report on the status of amphibians and reptiles at Nachusa Grasslands.

~Clinton R. Bailey: \$950

Bailey's project will identify the source waters for the iron rich and clear water sand boil flow networks located within the Nachusa Grasslands conservation area using geochemical sampling and stable isotope analyses.



~Kimberly Schmidt: \$1,125

Schmidt's ongoing study will determine the population, characteristics, and habitat use of the ornate box turtle in Nachusa's restored and planted prairie and oak savanna. Friends grants to Schmidt span three seasons and total \$4,625.

~Flora of the Chicago Region: An Ecological Synthesis: \$325

Conservation Research Institute in conjunction with the Indiana Academy of Sciences is leading the effort to update and dramatically expand the scope of the landmark reference book *Plants of the Chicago Region*. The authors of this new resource, Gerould Wilhelm, Director of Research, Conservation Research Institute, and Laura Rericha, Wildlife Biologist, Forest Preserve District of Cook County, are blending floristic, faunistic, and geological observations in this original reference. To date, Friends has donated \$825 to support the project.

Prairie People: We Need You!

The Friends of Nachusa Grasslands welcomes new members and supporters throughout the year. No matter what your passions and talents are, there is much to do. Harvesting, planting, monitoring, communications or photography: let us know your interests, and we'll find a place for you.

www.NachusaGrasslands.org

Friend us on Facebook

NachusaGrasslands@gmail.com 708-406-9894

The following donations were made to Nachusa Grasslands in 2012.

\$100,000 and above

The Crown Family
Grand Victoria Foundation
Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation

\$25,000 - \$99,000

Anonymous
Friends of Nachusa Grasslands

\$5,000 - \$24,999

Anonymous
Ms. Susan L. Christensen
M.R. Bauer Foundation

\$1,000 - \$4,999

David & Nani Boyce
Mr. & Mrs. Bernard Buchholz
Mr. & Mrs. Steven Godby
Janice Grainger
Mrs. Ann Haverstock
Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Ingraham
Mr. & Mrs. Alan Meier
Northern Illinois University
Mrs. Robin M. Read

\$100 - \$999

Anonymous
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Adolph
Mr. David Edelbach
Ms. Virginia L. Jendrzejczyk
Ms. Nancy Joseph
Ms. Joanne Kiley & Mr. Ken Modzelewski
Ms. Lisa M. Lanz & Mr. John Ayres
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Lawson
Ms. Hazel L. Reuter
Mr. and Mrs. John Schmadeke
Rebekah F. Snyder
State Farm Companies Foundation
Tawani Enterprises
Mr. Daniel E. Thompson
Mr. Lucas Vereline

Other

Ms. Harriet Ann Badger
Ms. Carol A. Brown
Ms. Margery J. Christensen
Douglas & V. Elizabeth Considine
Mr. Ronald J. Cress
Mr. & Mrs. George Dilling
Mr. Gary Hoover
Mr. Joseph A. Johnson
Ms. Georgia L. Pearson
Joanna M. Saxton
Mrs. Kathleen Saxton & Mr. Ronald Saxton
Nelly Sizgoric

The Nature Conservancy Staff

Michelle Carr, State Director

Bill Kleiman, Project Director

Cody Considine, Restoration Ecologist

Volunteer Unit Stewards

Big Woods: Hank and Becky Hartman

Co-Stewards: NIU's Committee for the Preservation of Wildlife

Crosby Prairie: Shannon and Steve Godby

Dot & Doug Wade Prairie: Al & Mary Meier

Dropseed Hills: Mary & Jim Viereg

Eight Oaks Savanna: Jan Grainger

Fen: Kevin Kaltenbach

Gobbler Ridge at CCK: Bernie & Cindy Buchholz

Jay Stacy

Keith Anderson

Gobbler Bottoms at CCK: Dave Crites

John Heneghan

Hamill-Winter Prairie: Mike Adolph

Bob Shone

Bob Brown

Edith and Anna Heinkel Savanna

East Unit Mike Crowe

West Unit Jay Stacy

Orland Prairie SE Unit Mike Carr

Rolling Thunder Prairie: Sally Baumgardner

Co-Stewards: George Bouska, Lorraine Gawlik, Max

Baumgardner

Schafer Prairie Jim Hodder

Tellabs Savanna

East Unit: Mark Jordan

West Unit: Keith Anderson

Thelma Carpenter Prairie: Tom & Jenny Mitchell

Holland Savanna: Kirk Hallowell

Open units:

Prairie Potholes, Coneflower, Barn Steward, Tellabs West Savanna, Tellabs Middle Savanna, Bennett Savanna, Clear Creek, Harold Walkup, Kitten Tail Unit, and Hook Larson.

Other Stewards

Damian Considine, Ron Cress, Ray Derksen, David Edelbach, Karen Newman, Timothy Sherck, Dee Hudson, Dick Gambrel, John and Cindy Schmadeke, Josh Price

Autumn On The Prairie Committee

Mary Meier, Mike Adolph, Carol Brown, Lisa Lanz, Susan Kleiman, Bill Kleiman

Science Stewards: *inquire for more details* **Open**

Grassland Bird Monitoring: Ann Haverstock

Savanna Bird Monitoring: Karen Lund

Herbarium Steward: Dwight Heckert

Insect Collector: **Open**

Prairie Bush Clover Monitor: **Open**

Photo Monitors:

Charles & Emmy Lou Larry

Education Coordinator: Ron Cress

Publicist/Liaison/Presenters: **Open**

Youth Stewards Leaders: Mike Adolph, Sally Baumgardner, George Bouska, Bob Brown, Ron Cress, Lorraine Gawlik, Susan Kleiman, Bob Piros, John & Cindy Schmadeke

2012 Seasonal Assistant Stewards

Pat Chess, Heather Marshall, Paul Bane, David Crady, Michelle Crites, Kim Schmidt, Parise Henry, Emily Berg, and Austen Slone.

Prairie Smoke Annual Stewardship Report for 2012

Issue 50, 2013

Editor: Cody Considine

Cover and Back Cover Photo: Kirk Hallowell

Calendar of Workdays and Special Events 2013-2014

April – Brush and Fire Season

- 6 Holland Savanna
- 13 Hamill-Winter Prairie
- 20 Big Woods
- 27 Tellabs Savanna – East Unit

May – Weed Season

- 4 The Fen
- 11 Tellabs Savanna – West Unit
- 18 Schaffer Prairie
- 25 Crosby Unit

June – Weed and Seed Season

- 1 Tellabs Savanna – East Unit
- 8 West Heinkel Savanna
- 15 Dot & Doug Wade Prairie
- 22 Fame Flower Knob
5th Annual Friends Prairie Potluck
- 29 Orland Prairie – Southeast Unit

July – Weeds and Seeds

- 6 The Fen
- 13 Big Woods
- 20 Fame Flower Knob
Friends of Nachusa Annual Meeting
- 27 Dot & Doug Wade Prairie

August – Seeds

- 3 Tellabs West Unit
- 10 Holland Savanna
- 17 Rolling Thunder Prairie
- 24 Dot & Doug Wade Prairie
- 31 Big Woods

September – Seeds

- 7 Fame Flower Knob
- 14 Big Woods
- 21 24nd Annual Autumn on The Prairie Celebration
10 A.M. to 5 P.M. Wild walks, different expert
leaders, hikes leaving every 20 minutes all day,
children's tent, food, and music.
- 28 Orland Prairie – Southeast Unit

October – Seeds

- 5 Crosby Unit
- 12 Fame Flower Knob
- 19 Hamill-Winter Prairie
- 26 Holland Savanna

November – Brush, Planting, and Fire Season

- 2 Big Woods
12 P.M. 2013 Seed Harvest Celebration Potluck
2 P.M. Preserve Tour by Bill Kleiman
- 9 Orland Prairie – Southeast Unit
- 16 Dot & Doug Wade Prairie
- 23 Gobbler Bottoms
- 30 Tellabs Savanna - West Unit

December – Brush and Planting Season

- 7 East Heinkel Savanna
- 14 The Fen
- 21 Holland Savanna
- 28 Tellabs Savanna – East Unit

January 2014 – Brush Season

- 4 Orland Prairie
- 11 Tellabs Savanna – West Unit
- 18 Tellabs Savanna – East Unit
- 25 Gobbler Bottoms

February 2014 – Brush Season

- 1 East Heinkel Savanna
Annual Nachusa Planning Meeting
- 8 Orland Prairie
- 15 Kitten Tail Unit
- 22 Gobbler Bottoms

March 2014 – Brush and Fire Season

- 1 Annual Fire Refresher for Nachusa Crew
- 8 Orland Prairie
- 15 Big Woods
- 22 Fame Flower
- 29 Tellabs Savanna – West Unit

The Nature Conservancy
Nachusa Grasslands Preserve
8772 S. Lowden Road
Franklin Grove, IL 61031
(815) 456-2340
www.nature.org/illinois



Protecting nature. Preserving life.™

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage

PAID

Permit No. 6632
Franklin Grove,
Illinois 61031

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



September 21, 2013
24th Annual Autumn on
the Prairie Celebration

Nachusa Grasslands is owned and operated by The Nature Conservancy, a private, non-profit organization whose mission is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends.