

THE PAINTBRUSH PRAIRIE NEWSLETTER

FALL 1994

A Chronicle of The Indian Boundary Prairies of Markham, Illinois Vol. 10, No. 3

GENSBURG • PAINTBRUSH • SUNDROP • DROPSEED

LOCAL RESIDENTS EXPLORE MARKHAM PRAIRIES

Girl Scout leaders, librarians, schoolteachers, country club grounds keepers and members of an exotic plant club were just some of the people drawn by our invitation to explore the Indian Boundary Prairies.

The Exploration Workshop, held on August 9 and 16, was sponsored by The Illinois Nature Conservancy and The Friends of the Indian Boundary Prairies.

We started on Dropseed Prairie. After introductions, steward Pat Brownlow gave a tour and led us in the collection of seeds from the Shooting-star plant. The group then packed the seeds in damp sand to preserve them until the next week. Then we met Ron Panzer on Gensburg Prairie for one of his entertaining and enlightening tours.

One week later, the group met at Sundrop Prairie. Our first job was to

disperse the Shooting-star seeds collected from Dropseed. Sundrop steward, Eric Schiavi, had designated an area with the right type of soil for Shooting-stars to flourish. We raked the seed-filled sand into the ground. Too bad we have to wait until next spring to find out if our efforts were successful.

Next, Pat Brownlow shared her knowledge of how Native Americans

Hands-on workshop
introduces thinkers and doers
to prairie management

used prairie plants in their everyday life. They went to the plants like we go to the drugstore. As she spoke we were all thinking back to the time Native Americans lived in harmony with the prairies.

The workshop ended with a long and comprehensive tour of Paintbrush Prairie by steward Bill Sluis. He pointed out some newly discovered plants found in an area only recently opened to the sunlight.

The varied group of participants all had different reasons for accepting the invitation to join the workshop. We tried to give them a good idea of why the Markham Prairies are so unique and a feel for the type of restoration work needed to preserve them.

Diane Reckless of The Illinois Nature Conservancy deserves a lot of the credit for her organizational skills used in developing the workshop.

Thanks are also due to: Patricia Brownlow, Theresa Stepenski, Caryn Lowther, Ron Panzer, Bill Sluis, and Eric Schiavi and to all the participants for their interest and enthusiasm. Come back any time.



Exploration Workshop participants collected mature Shooting Star seeds during a workshop session on Dropseed Prairie in Markham.



The seeds were then mixed with damp sand and stored for distribution the following week on Sundrop Prairie, approximately 1/2 mile to the north.

INSIDE:

- ◆ LINDA CURTIN REMEMBERED
- ◆ INTERNATIONAL VISITORS
- ◆ MIGHTY ACORNS
- ◆ PRAIRIE WEEK '94
- ◆ NESTING BIRD CENSUS
- ◆ FIRES OF LIFE
- ◆ FRIENDS 10TH COMING
- ◆ WINTER CALENDER